

CONSOCIATIONAL GOVERNANCE: AN IMPERATIVE FOR STABLE POLITY IN NIGERIAN

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ABSTRACT

Despite the 25 years of uninterrupted civilian rule, the 4th Republic cannot be said to be stable because of deep-seated issues including political corruptions, regional agitations, insecurity and the need for electoral reforms. The objective of the paper is to justify the strides in consociational governance in Nigeria, the need for it to persist and why it should be developed, expanded and sustained in present day Nigeria. Nigeria being a plural society with many segmented cleavages need to tread the part of consociationalism. The consociational democracy model attempts to account for the phenomenon of the stable yet fragmented' democracies. Adopting consociational model approach where inspiration was drawn, the paper notes that this modification of pluralist version of democracy/governance stressed the role ascribed to the political elites in spite of existence of social cleavages. The consociational model is preferred where political stake is high like Nigeria; it becomes more appropriate option than the government versus opposition pattern. The paper utilized secondary sources of data collection such as reports, libraries, journals, newspapers, television, books and the internet document search. The Games Theory was used to analyze the work. Here we were able to know why political stake is so high in Nigeria because it is a zero sum game. It explains also the indulgence in thuggery, killings, manipulation, rigging and other electoral malpractices. The paper concluded that team-work, which consociationalism encourages should be practiced. Mutual veto, grant coalition, segmental autonomy and proportionality principle should all be implemented for more united and stable country.

Keywords: Imperative, Consociational Governance, Elite Cooperation, Nigerian Experience, Polity.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a heterogeneous nation-state because it is made up of many and variegated ethnic groups which were independent of one another prior to colonialism. Nigeria is the largest of the countries in the African continent in population; and in terms of size and its complex diversity, Nigeria has much to distinguish it from other areas (Coleman, 1958). The country is said to be composed of between 250 to 450 ‘ethnic groups’ (Ige 1999). The British, through a combination of force and cunning, had subdued the different nationalities in the Nigerian territory and brought them into one political fold to become modern Nigeria. The amalgamation of 1914 brought together in one polity different nationalities at different stages of economic and political development. (Report of Political Bureau 1987). At independence in 1960, there was the intensification of ethnic consciousness and rivalries. The British skewed the population figures in favour of the North and also ensured that the Northern elites took over the reins of power at their departure (Ohwahwa, 2000). Even though they were separated from one another by great distances, by differences of history and tradition and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers (Obasanjo, 1980).

The lack of consensus, a feature characteristic of plural society has its roots in colonial period – based on the manipulation of ethnicity by the Nigerian elites. As a political strategy, the colonial policy of divide and rule used ethnic and regional sectionalism to curb pan-Nigerian nationalism and to maintain colonial power. Structurally, the British colonial administration emphasized differences among Nigerians rather than similarities. For example, official British policy in the North separated the Northern ethnic groups from their Southern counterparts through the Land and Native Rights Ordinance of 1910. The ordinance discouraged free migration of Southerners to the North. It was reinforced by the policy of “Sabongari” which forced the Southern migrants to live separately from their Northern hosts. It was no surprise therefore, that our politics had become theatre of “words”, conflicts, antagonism, thuggery, arson, election rigging, and the election results have become the play ball of the judiciary instead at the ballot-box. There has never been any presidential election in Nigeria since the first republic between 1963 to 1966 and the present day, that has never been without irregularities and manipulations.

They have always been beseeched with election arson, thuggery, rigging, etc. These are in spite of the various reform of different electoral management board over a long period of our election history. The aggravated contestants have always gone to court but the courts have usually affirmed the election results. It is so bad that presumed or declared winner and their supporters will shout the slogan “Go to court”. How do we now have a stable political recruitment process? How do we stabilize our democracy? Many schools of thought have therefore suggested diarchy that is, military cum politicians’ government since the military inject a sizeable number of civilians into military government or better still an outright military regime. This gap is what this paper is out to fill.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to critically assess the role of consociational governance approach in sustenance of democracy in Nigeria.

Specific objectives will include:

- To unravel the mechanisms to make consociationalism work and be better
- To elaborate the idea of consociational governance approach to usher in political stability and development in Nigeria;
- To proffer avenues that will ensure every segment of the country is carried along

POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND NIGERIA

The cause of political instability in Nigeria has been attributed to the heterogeneity nature of the country with its attendant centrifugal forces tending towards conflict and antagonism. There are however variables that give impetus to these forces. The writers on political instability like (Gradstein, 2002), (Giesing & Music, 2019), (d' Agostino, (etal), 2012), Samba, E (etal) 2001) in the literatures have come to agree with ideas that can be grouped into three headings, which have some relationships with political instability. According to Gordon Smith these are:

- (a) The level of economic development of a country;
- (b) The compatibility of various social groupings, and
- (c) Concentration on the values and belief of the mass of the people as well as key social elites (Smith 1972).

As a panacea to political instability, many schools of thought have suggested diarchy for governance since the military are always intervening in Nigerian government and politics. Some others believe that bribery and corruption which have eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria social, economic and political lives should be tackled if we intend to move forward. There is also a school of thought which believes that primordial and personal considerations are more perpetuated to the detriment of national or common interest. There is a further school of non-elite cooperation and understanding. This school believes that the issue of corruption, primordial and personal considerations, the clamour for states creation, the hue and cry of marginalization, the choice for two party system, are all enmeshed in the school of non-elite cooperation. These issues and problems are the concern of this paper.

CONSOCIATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND THE CONSTITUTION

The authors of the Nigerian constitution are attuned with realities of the heterogeneity of the country. They knew in order to promote unity, peace, harmony, loyalty from all segments, development and progress, all segmented cleavage groups must be carried along in government. (Nikki, 1999). In Chapter 11, Section 15; Subsection (1) of the constitution, the political objectives state that ‘The motto of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be unity and faith, peace and progress’. How do we actualize unity and faith of every citizen with a sense of belonging? How do we achieve peace and progress in a society with centrifugal forces that are diametrically opposed? In the same chapter 11 section 14, sub-section (3) and (4) state respectively ‘The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the Federal Character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby, ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies’. Sub-section (4) states ‘The composition of the Government of a state, a local government council, or any of the agencies of such Government or council, and the conduct of the affairs of the Government or council or such agencies shall be carried out in such manner as to recognize the diversity of the people within its area of authority and the need to promote a sense of belonging and loyalty among all the peoples of the federation’.

These constitutional provisions are geared towards having a stable polity because:

When a single individual savour in the wealth of a group there will be antagonism for equitable distribution.

FEATURES/ELEMENTS OF CONSOCIATIONAL GOVERNANCE

In a consociational democracy, the centrifugal tendencies inherent in a plural society are counteracted by the cooperative attitudes and behaviour of the leaders of the different segments of the population. Elite cooperation is the primary distinguishing feature of consociational democracy; four closely related complementary characteristics are discussed below:

Grand Coalition

This is the main element of consociational government because it is focused on the fundamental principle of elite cooperation in spite of differences of communal consideration, especially political leanings. This consociational element contrasts government – versus – opposition model, as in Britain. This is what (Heisler 1974) suggests ‘adversarial’. Here (consociationalism) the style of the government and its leadership is coalescent. A coalition can be small or large. The smaller coalition are formed

usually because not only it accommodates fewer view points and interests to reconcile but closed in choice to the winner takes all. This common sense notion is in accord with William H. Riker's 'Size Principle' based on game theory assumption. The principle states"

'In n-person, zero-sum games, where side-payments are permitted where payers are rational, and where they have perfect information, only minimum winning coalition occur'.

In Nigeria, the outcome of political elections is by the appointments of the 'unseen' hand of the 'power that be' from above. The result is known. It is a war fought by pump-action (Guns and ammunition) instead of votes cast by the electorates. In a political system like Nigeria with clearly separate and potentially hostile population segments, virtually all decisions are perceived as enabling high stakes, and strict majority rule places a strain on the unity and peace of the system. 'In western democracies, it is an accepted practice in times of emergency for opposition parties to sink their differences and join together in forming a national government' (Nyerere 1963). In plural societies like Nigeria, it is the nature of the society that constitutes the 'crisis', it is more than a temporary emergency and calls for a longer-term grand coalition.

Mutual Veto

This is a concept that complements grand coalition in consociational government. The members of minorities are usually represented in a grand coalition, this does not however imply that they cannot be outvoted in decision making but the fact that they are there gives the opportunity to use their presence to protect their own minority interest. If they are outvoted in a decision that affects their vital interest, such a defeat will be regarded as unacceptable and will endanger intersegmental elite cooperation. Therefore it is advisable for the minority veto to be added to the principle of grand coalition. That is what will completely guarantee political protection see (John C. Calhoun 1953) 'concurrent majority'.

Proportionality

Proportionality is a major deviation from majority rule. Like the mutual veto, is closely related to the grand coalition principle. Proportionality serves two important functions. It is a method of allocating civil service appointments and scarce financial resources among the different segments. Secondly, it can be contrasted with the winner-take-all principle of unrestrained majority rule. One of the major motivations behind the struggle and acquisition of political power is the amount of share one gets from the 'bootious national cake' what Arend Lijphart calls the 'spoils' of government. Proportionality gives a sense of belonging to different segments and also provides the impetus for active participation in national affair with high morale. This is stressed by Jurg Steiner 'A roughly proportional distribution of influence in policy problems (as well as solutions) can usually only be assured if the

decision is bargained over with the participation of all the groups (Steiner 1971). But proportionality adds refinement to the grand coalition concept. This is because not only are different segments represented in decision making organs, but are proportionally represented. In Nigeria, the appointment of ministers in the Federal Cabinet with every state of 36 including Abuja the Federal Capital been represented is a constitutional requirement. The Federal Character Commission is an operational tool for the realization of the concept of proportional representation in Nigeria.

Segmental Autonomy and Federalism

The final deviation from majority rule is segmental autonomy, which entails minority rule: rule by the minority over itself in the area of the minority's exclusive concern. On all matters of common interest, decisions should be made by all segments together through the central government on behalf of all other segments. On other matters relative to different segments, the decisions and their execution can be left to the separate segments. In Nigeria the constitution play an important role in spelling out these lines of authorities and influence. Each level of government has its own distinct and spelt out functions decided upon by the constitutional arrangement. In such arrangement, there is usually the:

- Exclusive list where the Federal government adjudicate;
- The residual list which is the preserve for states; and
- The concurrent legislative list which entertains both the central and states governments simultaneously (Osunbor-Ojiemuada 2000).

Federalism can be used as a consociational method when the "plural society" is a "federal society": a society in which each segment is territorially concentrated and separated from the other segments, or, to put it differently," a society in which segmental cleavages coincide with regional cleavages" (Stein 1968).

NIGERIA'S MATCH IN CONSOCIATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The operational tool through which chapter II, section 14, sub-section (3) and (4) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are expressed in the polity is the agency of the Federal Character Commission. The Federal Character Commission was founded by Decree 34 of 1996. It has the primary responsibility and mandate to make sure every state in the federation has 2½ of Federal appointments but not more than 3% (Onobun:2003). This arrangement is supposed to be reflected in states and local government councils nation-wide. Nigeria is composed of thirty-six (36) states including Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. She also has seven hundred and seventy-four (774) local government councils. Thus to equitably distribute and allocate resources to these vast interests constitute the major problem of the Federal Character Commission. Even though the Federal Character content of the Nigeria

nation is supposed to be reflected in all facets of our national life, it is constraint by some consideration of dexterity, skill and personal ingenuity of individuals as well as logistic and cleavage loyalty.

The Federal Character Commission has been established to implement the decision of the National Constitutional Conference provided in Section 15 Sub-section 3 and 4 of the 1995 draft constitution. Similar provisions were expressed in the 1979 constitution, which in fact formally defined the Federal Character as:

“the distinctive desire of the people of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the Nation”.

The 1994/1995 constitutional conference recommended the establishment of Federal Character Commission to remedy the defect of the 1979 Constitution which even though made specific provision for states to be equitably represented at all levels of Government of the federation, but nevertheless fell short of creating means to enforce compliance. The Commission’s primary mandate include among other things:

- (a) Work out an equitable formula for the distribution of all cadres of posts in the public services of the Federation and the States, and government-owned companies and parastatals of the States;
- (b) Promote, monitor and enforce compliance with the principles of proportional sharing of all bureaucratic, economic, media and political posts at all levels of government; and
- (c) take such legal measures against any individual or any Ministry or Government body or agency which fails to comply with any Federal Character principle or formula prescribed or adopted by the Constitution.

The Federal Character Commission (FCC) was established under Section 153 (1) (C) and detailed in part 1 of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution.

There is guiding principles and formulae for the distribution of posts.

The six zones that shall consist of the following in the country are as follows:

- (a) North Central - - Benue, Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plataeu;
- (b) North East - - Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe;
- (c) North West - - Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara;

- (d) South East - - Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo;
- (e) South South - - Adwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers;
- (f) South West - - Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo.

Depending on the number of States within each zone, the Commission shall adopt three ranges such that the indigenes of any State within a zone shall not constitute less than the lower limit or more than the upper limit of the range applicable to the zone as set out under application of General Principles: National Level Paragraph (c).

STATE	NO OF L.G.A.	AVERAGE FOR L.G.A.	% RANGE FOR SHARING
Abia	17	5.88	4/7
Adamawa	21	4.76	4/7
Akwa ibom	31	3.23	2/4
Anambra	21	4.76	4/7
Bauchi	20	5.00	4/6
Bayelsa	8	12.50	10/14
Benue	23	4.34	3/5
Borno	27	3.70	2/4
Cross river	18	5.55	4/7
Delta	25	4.00	3/5
Ebonyi	13	7.69	6.9
Edo	18	5.55	4.7
Ekiti	16	6.25	5/7
Enugu	17	5.88	4/7
Gombe	11	9.10	8/10
Imo	27	3.70	2/4
Jigawa	27	3.70	2/4
Kaduna	23	4.34	3/5
Kano	44	2.27	1/3
Katsina	34	2.29	2/5
Kebbi	21	4.76	4/7
Kogi	21	4.76	4/7
Kwara	16	6.25	5/7

Lagos	20	5.00	4/6
Nassarawa	13	7.69	6/9
Niger	25	4.00	3/5
Ogun	20	5.00	4/6
Ondo	18	5.55	4/7
Osun	30	3.33	2/4
Oyo	33	3.03	2/4
Plateau	17	5.88	4/7
Rivers	23	4.34	3/5
Sokoto	23	4.16	3/5
Taraba	16	6.25	5/7
Yobe	17	5.88	4/7
Zamfara	14	7.69	6/9
FCT	6	16.67	15/18

Source: Nigeria, Federal Character Commission, Nigeria:
First Annual Report 1996. P.26.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term consociational democracy (government) was first used by Arend Lijphart in 1969. See (Lijphart 1969). Since then there are very few writers in the literatures with the usage of the term. However this is not to say that the ideals and thinking of consociationalism are not bound all over the place. In this regard therefore, we have comments and writings that are supportive enough of this concept.

Nigeria cannot hope to survive as a nation unless it is able to produce leaders of right quality and caliber to guide its affairs, he (leader) should ignore tendencies or activities which are likely to work against national interest, the stability of the government and the maintenance of the principles of justice and fair play are effectively checked. There should be need to ensure that the custodians of power remember always that they are trustees of power for a limited time and that the public at large (and not a political party or a few individuals) are the true owners of the great powers of the state entrusted to them. In plural society attention must be paid to inter-community relations or inter-ethnic relations and causes of friction and hostility must be identified and cured. Promotion of national unity and the fostering of national loyalties' nothing would be more dangerous than to ignore the problem of inter-communal relations in a plural society (Ogunleye, 2001). The rotation of the presidency must be among the three major ethnic groups with the minorities inclusive. We should unite with peoples and like-minded organisations across the length and breadth of our nation, and to unite and collaborate for good of our people and the peace and progress of Nigeria. (Akhomu, 2001) That there should be elite cooperation

irrespective of party – leanings was put succinctly by Ige: ‘President Obasanjo invited me to serve Nigeria and I accepted in spite of our party political differences both of us (Sunday Afolabi) work harmoniously in the government of President Obasanjo, and there was nothing like a crack in the cabinet.’ (Ige 2001).

The elites have something to do with stable polity, especially in a society with multiplicity of diverse cleavages. Therefore, the current situation of distrust and rivalry for the ascendancy between and among different people of Nigeria, which has resulted in instability in almost every sphere of the nation’s life need to be urgently addressed. (Awa 1976) identified values and beliefs over which minimum consensus must be reached namely – constitutional arrangements, fundamental freedoms, principles of majority (by implication minority rule), political equity, popular control of policy maker, among others. These values and beliefs are closely in harmony with basic consociational elements of grand-coalition, mutual veto, proportionality principle and segmental autonomy.

David E. Apter, the first modern author to use the term ‘consociational’, uses Nigeria as his main example of a consociational system. He defines this kind of regime as ‘a joining together of constituent units which do not lose their identity when merging in some form of union’. He went further it ‘may range from relatively loose confederation of groups and states to federal arrangements with a recognized structure’. Other characteristics are its willingness to ‘accommodate a variety of groups of divergent ideas in order to achieve a goal of unity’, its ‘collective or corporate leadership’, and the necessity for forging compromises that constitute ‘a minimal program acceptable to all’ (Apter; 1961). The coalition of the three main parties in the pre-independence federal cabinet from 1957 to 1959 undoubtedly influence Apter’s characterization of Nigeria as a consociational model state in his book but no more grand coalitions were formed after the federal elections of 1959.

The cabinet in power from 1959 to 1964 was a coalition of the largest Nigerian party, with its political base in the North and the party that was dominant in the East. The political party in the West became the major opposition party. And instead of any movement towards an inclusive cabinet, the trend was toward one party majority rule (Lijphart opcit:162). Nigeria cannot be said to have practiced consociational governance as segmented autonomy in federal practices has not be quite in the right till date. He posits ‘Federalism in Nigeria failed in its objective of building governmental units upon fairly homogeneous social groupings in order that they should manage their internal affairs within the unity of the whole’. Instead, the states in the federation ‘were structured, unhappily, upon the nucleus of a major tribe, commanding about two-thirds of the population of the (state), with a number of minority tribes clustered around it (Nwabueze 1973).

Lijphart, (1977) finally concludes that democracy would have survived in Nigeria if consociational governance had been adopted because the multiple ethnic balance of power, and the geographical concentration of the segments were favourable factors.

A cursory look at the literature has common strands inter-alia along: need for –

- Justice, Equity and Fairness:
- Cooperation in Diversity:
- The Issue of True Federalism or not to be:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Game Theory

Thomas Schelling has defined the game theory as ‘the formal study of the rational, consistent expectations that participants can have about each other’s choices’ (Isaak 1975) quoting Tomas Schelling. A political scientist might use it to suggest the possible behavior of political actors or explanations of various kinds of political decisions. At the heart of the game theory is an assumption of rationality. That is to say that it is assumed that in a game situation, the players – decision makers, politicians etc are trying to maximize gains or minimize their losses. Put differently, they want to get as much as they can from the game when they put as less as they could. This assumption applies to poker, football, and political situations. The game theory has basic elements with which the political analyst can use to describe, explain and predict political phenomenon. It also helps the analyst to know whether or not the player (politicians) conforms to the principles of the game of politics and government. These elements are: Players of participants, strategy, payoff, framework and choice of alternative.

Application of Game Theory

When we think about game theory and its possible applications to politics; it becomes more and more obvious that there are actually several game models. They can be classified according to how many players the game has and what kinds of payoff the game provides (Shubik 1964). These includes: The two-person zero-sum game i.e. Winner takes all. This kind of game involves head-to-head conflict. The two-person nonzero-sum game. In this the gains and losses of the two players do not cancel out, do not equal zero. There is also the n-person nonzero-sum game. The mixed-motive game etc. However, games theory must be modified to effectively deal with the situation one is applying it to. In this regard the ‘information effect’ and the concept of ‘rationality’ are very fundamental to the application of this theory. The main value of the game approach is that a knowledge of the rules of the game makes it possible for the Scholar analyst to pass judgement on action of players – whether the game is been played according to the constitutive and regulatory rules. It therefore helps to explain coalition, realignment of forces and the issue of cross-carpeting to other political parties. On the contrary, political tuggery, assassinations, electoral malpractices, etc, are also explained. Furthermore, the game approach is not interested in ethics – hence corruption and greed pervade the system as the ‘end justifies the means’ in Machiavellian dictum.

COUNTER VIEWS TO CONSOCIATIONAL GOVERNMENT

If one regards the presence of opposition as an important ingredient of democracy, consociational governance by definition is less democratic. This is not entirely true as there is parliament to which a grand coalition is responsible and furthermore, the supporters of the other party can prevail on their members in the coalition for non-performance. Some critics of consociationalism see the politicians clamouring for it as political failures who have no faith in themselves. There is also those who believe they are too anxious, too much in a hurry to acquire power that they cannot wait for their turn. This presupposes that parties alternate in government and opposition. The reality of plural societies shows that segmental cleavages tend to be inflexible and do not allow much movement of votes between parties. Ethnicity as a cleavage has 'continuously been reflective in the pattern of electoral victory of the major political parties in Nigeria since 1959 -1993 General Election'. (Idahosa and Otoghile 2001). Does it augur well for a country if the minorities are continuously excluded from governance or to participate in matters that affect them? This is bad governance and does not guarantee peace and tranquility. Our democracy currently is unstable and beclouded by segmental strife as witnessed in the Warri axis of the Niger-Delta.

Perhaps the most serious and fundamental criticisms of consociational democracy concerns not its undemocratic character but its potential failure to bring about and maintain political stability (collectively), several of its characteristics may lead to indecisiveness and inefficiency: (Lijphart 1977).

- Government by grand coalition means that decision-making will be slow. It will be easier with a small coalition in reaching decision than a grand coalition that span the entire range of plural society.
- The mutual veto may bring about stagnation and instability that consociationalism is designed to avoid. An answer to this is that the mutual veto should be the last resort and must be used with moderation.
- Segmental autonomy has its price to the extent that, there is multiplicity of the number of government and administrative units. It also establishes large number of separate facilities for different segments. It thus makes consociational governance very expensive. If that is the price for peaceful coexistence, it is not too much to bear when compared to civil strife, pipeline vandalization, illegal oil bunkery etc.
- Proportionality as a standard of recruitment to civil service entails a higher priority to membership in a certain segment than to individual merit and may thus be at the expense of administrative efficiency. This is however a convenient and time saving method for allocating resources and appointment, which are very volatile and are usually at the heat of the struggle for supremacy in the power game of politics.

The issue of ineffectiveness has to be weighed both in the short-run and in the long-run. The adversarial system may be a great deal more decisive and effective in plural society than a consociational governance approach. But the price that probably has to be paid for this 'favourable' result is the increasing antagonism and suspicion of those segments that have been denied participation in the government and rightly or not, feel unjustly treated. Short term efficiency is therefore likely to lead to a breakdown in the long-run. Conversely, consociational democracy may seem slow in the short-run but has a greater chance to produce effective decisions overtime, particularly if the leaders apply the mutual veto with moderation.

When all the above explanations are followed the salient function of achieving national cohesion, integration and unity in diversity for enduring political stability would have been achieved.

CONCLUSION

The concept of consociational governance is both a political and constitutional options which has been tested in both theoretical and empirical realms. It has constitutional justification and has explanations and solution for democracies in plural societies with segmental cleavages of culture, religion, race, tribe, region etc. It is a veritable instrument for political stability where democratic game of politics is regarded as a do-or-die affair where winner takes all perception drags in tension that elicit anxiety. Gabriel Almond contends that 'where the stakes are too high, the tone changes from excitement to anxiety'. Because the political stakes are often high in Nigeria, it is advisable not to conduct politics as if it were a game: consociational government is sure a more appropriate option than the government versus opposition pattern.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consociational governance must be backed by system performance to be real determinant of stable democracy (government). Leadership is not synonymous with repository of knowledge. Therefore team work which consociationalism encourages will not only bring about increased productivity and progress but commitment and effective actualization of governmental policies.

In as much as one would like to commend the federal government for making federal character principles a Constitutional matter – being entrenched in constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, thereby making proportionality principle to bear in the country. It is high time we entrench other elements of consociational governance in our constitution. This will make manipulation and exploitation of minorities and other major tribe to be reduced if not completely eradicated. These elements are; mutual veto to address, protect and safe-guard the interests of the minorities in our polity. Because from available

information and experiences the Nigerian Nation has never taken the minorities seriously as ‘equal-partners’ in the ‘Nigerian enterprise’ instead it has been exploitation and inconsequential set to be manipulated.

The coalition principle among political parties has failed to stabilize our polity. It has proven to be an instrument to win a particular election. Furthermore it, to an extent, alludes to the selfish principle of zero-sum game of politics; i.e. it is personal aggrandizement based, selfish and parochial. Therefore, grand-coalition should be encouraged, because it serves more of the common good or the universal order.

Therefore, we propose consociational government based on elites’ cooperation and team work for better governance of the Nigerian States, devoid of zero-sum game with its potentiality for tension and high-level anxiety that induce political gladiators to engage in all vices for survival that is, irregularities and manipulations. The hue and cry about resource control and true federalism is in line with the thinking of the element of segmental autonomy. This is why true federalism should be practiced for a better stable Nigerian state.

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