

**FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE AND QUOTA SYSTEM IN  
NIGERIA: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE RECRUITMENT  
EXERCISE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE. A CASE STUDY OF FEDERAL  
INLAND REVENUE (FIRS) SOKOTO STATE**

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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work has been submitted to the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto (UDUS) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bsc Public Administration.

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## **DEDICATION**

This Research Work is dedicated to ALMIGHTY ALLAH for HIS Immeasurable Blessings, Mercies and Grace which provided me with the strength, patience and wisdom through which I tried this challenging path of glory.

To my beloved parents Late Alhaji Shaba Tukur and Mallama Bilkisu Ibrahim, my lovely brothers Tukur Muhammad Attahiru, Tukur Muhammad and Abubakar Suliman, caring sisters Tukur Aisha, Tukur Safiyya and Tukur Habiba all for thier love, prayers, support and encouragement. And finally to my friends AbdulWahid AbdulGafar, Yunusa Idris Kuta, Muhamammad Ilias Lanre, Ladan Kabiru, AbdulHafiz Olarinde, Usman Kure Shaba, Aliyu Bala Sambo, Aliu Sadisu Eragbe, Shuaibu Zayyanu, AbdulAziz Usman Muhammad, and Muhammad Bello Dabai.

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

TITLE PAGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
CERTIFICATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
DEDICATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
ABSTRACT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vi
<b>CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</b>										
1.1	BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1.2	STATEMENT OF PROBLEM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.3	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.4	OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.5	RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
1.6	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
1.7	SCOPE OF THE STUDY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
1.8	SCHEME OF CHAPTERS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
1.9	DEFINITION OF TERM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
	REFERENCE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>										
2.1	LITERATURE REVIEW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11

2.2	FEDERALISM AND FEDERAL STRUCTURE OF NIGERIA -	11
2.3.	THE FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE- - - -	13
2.4	THE QUOTA SYSTEM - - - - -	29
2.5	MERITOCRACY AND WORKABILITY OF THE FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE - - - - -	31
2.6	THE FEDERAL CHARACTER COMMISSION - - -	33
2.6.1.	COMPOSITION AND POWER OF THE COMMISSION - -	33
2.6.2	EXAMINATION OF THE POWER OF THE COMMISSION -	34
2.6.3	THE ENFORCEMENT POWER OF THE COMMISSION -	39
2.7.	THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK - - - - -	41
	REFERENCE - - - - -	-43

**CHAPTERS: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1	INTRODUCTION - - - - -	46
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN - - - - -	47
3.3	POPULATION OF THE STUDY - - - - -	47
3.4	SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES - - -	48
3.5	SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION - - - - -	48
3.6	INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION - - -	49
3.7	VALIDATION AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENT -	49
3.8	METHOD OF ANALYSIS - - - - -	49

3.9	TESTING OF HYPOTHESES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
	REFERENCES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

4.1	INTRODUCTION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
4.2	SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
4.3	SECTION B: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
4.4	TESTING OF HYPOTHESES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62

**CHAPTER FIVE:**

5.1	SUMMARY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68
5.2	CONCLUSION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69
5.3	RECOMMENDATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
	APPENDIX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77

## **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this research work was to examine the Federal Character Principle and Quota System in Nigeria and its relationship with the recruitment exercise in the public service. This was prompted by the fact that there is growing disenchantment in some quarters about the implementation of the federal character principle and quota system, which they believe leads to the violation of the merit principle and lowering of standards in the recruitment of personnel into the public service which will serve as a way of recruiting and promoting less competent staff into the service resulting inevitably to poor performance. Therefore, the research recommended that the application of merit system or meritocracy should become the Linchpin in the recruitment of personnel into the Nigerian public service in order not to endanger standards and professionalism. It was also recommended that there is the need to strike a balance between the application of federal character principle, quota system and the Merit principle in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the service, and for equity, unity and fairplay to prevail in the country.



## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

Today in Nigeria the use of federal character and quota system has become an instrument for recruitment into federal, state and local government civil service. In most federal system of government, the major issue is usually that of resources sharing among the federal units at horizontal and vertical level. According to Elaigwu (1992) where the sharing arrangements are working well, there are less agitations and citizens have a feeling of belonging and equity. On the other hand where the quota system is not working well the citizen agitates and makes all sorts of demands such as call for national conference, etc. However, in Nigeria, after a series of debate in 1975 the constitutional drafting committee was set up which established federal character commission as a body charge with the responsibility of implementing the federal character principle in order to ensured equitable sharing of posts in the public services. This was also enshrined in the 1999 federal constitution of federal republic of Nigeria.

The federal character and quota system as enshrined in the constitution of Nigeria is to ensure equitable distributions of bureaucratic and political roles in the public service at federal, states and local government levels. The objectives of the policy are to foster national unity and give every Nigerian a sense of belonging in the country. In support of this view Usman(2004;117) said that it was an effort to

readdress the unbalanced structure and ethnic domination in government so that national integration could be achieved. The federal character principle which is implemented under the federal character commission is therefore designed and initiated to correct adverse impact resulting from opportunities and resources provided by the federal government to the citizens of the country that appears neutral but have a discriminatory effect on a protected group. The federal character principle is therefore structured to ensure strong and indivisible nation based on justice and fairness, while also ensuring that a sense of belonging of all Nigerians is still maintained. As laudable as the above policy maybe, and the empowerment of the concept in the nation's constitution, its application has remain a debatable topic to which some critics have claimed that the policy comprise the merit system which will create an enabling environment for those that are only qualified to be employed into the Nigerian civil service, thereby fostering quality service rendering for the development of the country. According To Ekeh(1989) Federal character principle has become a problem instead of solution to problems it was expected to tackle. Bodunrin(2003) also in assessing the Federal Character from the merit perspective, asserts that the federal character principle is counter-productive. Therefore it is important to note that, efficient manpower utilization is determined through effective credible recruitment. But Idumange(2008) specifically lists two areas where the Federal government has been most

successful in implementing the federal character principle; The National Youth Service Corps(NYSC) and recruitment into the Armed Forces. Thus this ensures Nigerians get their own share of the ‘national cake’ rather than agitations which has prevented another civil war in the country.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

There is no doubt that every research work must have statement of problem to which this research works is not an exception. There are many cases going on in Nigeria that the federal character principle has been unjustly implemented. Also the annual reports from the publications of the federal character commission shows that a lot of complaint arise as a result of breach of federal character principles by some establishments for example in the federal character monitor, a quarterly publication of the commission (2008:5) accused and summoned the Nigeria communication commission over breach of federal character principles.

More so, the inefficiency of the policy in recruiting manpower potentials into the organization and the selection of employees which is not based on merit but the federal character principles are some of the problems that affect the efficient performance of the Nigerian public service. Furthermore, the poor performance of employee’s discovered by the president Olusegun Obasanjo led administration was traced to poor manpower utilization and poor quality of civil servants, also testify to this weakness. Thus, in view of the above problems, the

need to analyze recruitment process in government establishments are strategic and must be structured properly..

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. To what extent is the federal character principle and quota system jeopardizing merit in the recruitment of personnel in the public service?
2. How efficient and effective is the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment of personnel into the public service?
3. What are the probable problems in the application of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment exercise of the public service?
4. What are the overall implications of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment exercise at public service?

### **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To examine the extent to which the federal character and quota system is jeopardizing merit in the recruitment and of personnel in the public service.
2. To identify the effectiveness and efficiency of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.
3. To identify probable problems in the application of the federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment of personnel into the public service.

4. To examine the overall implications of federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment exercise in the public service.

### **1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES.**

1. The application of federal character principle and quota system is largely to an extent jeopardizing merit in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.
2. That the federal character principle and quota system is inefficient and ineffective in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.
3. That there are probable problems in the application of the federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment of personnel into the public service.
4. That the federal character principle and quota system has numerous implications on the recruitment exercise in the public service.

### **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of this research work cannot be over emphasized. However, this study intends to examine the application of federal character principle and quota system in the Nigerian public service: jeopardizing the meritocracy of the service, particularly examining recruitment exercise at the FIRS and assess the commission in charge of the application of the federal character principle in the Nigeria public service. Also the study examines and reviews the implication of federal character principle on manpower utilization in public service at federal, states and local government level in Nigeria. Therefore, this research work is

meant to assist both undergraduates and graduates of social science and other future researches who may find this research work beneficial in terms of planning, researching and rational decision making in regards to recruitment into public service organizations in Nigeria.

## **1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This research project focuses on the analysis of recruitment exercise of personnel at Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Sokoto based on federal character principle and quota system in Nigeria and how it jeopardizes merit of the service. Thus, this research work will be analyzing the utilization of manpower capability at the FIRS assessing the process of selection, recruitment and performance. The work is centered on FIRS sokoto as a chosen case study for the project work. FIRS have its employees recruited from all states of the federation based on the federal character principle being an organization that belongs to the federal government. Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Sokoto state branch was established on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1982. It has four (4) Departments: The Tax payers service (TPS) department, The Government Business Tax operation (GBTO) unit, The Revenue preparation programme (RPP) department, The Administration office and The security unit. Thus, the study focuses on the date of establishment till date.

## **1.8 SCHEME OF CHAPTERS**

This research work is undertaken to examine Federal character principle and quota system Nigeria: A critical assessment of the recruitment exercise in the public service using Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS) sokoto state as the case study, comprises of five chapters. Chapter one which include background to the study, statement of research problem, research questions, objectives of the study ,hypotheses, significant of the study, scope and limitations and scheme of chapters. Chapter two tackles literature review (conceptual and theoretical works).Chapter three is the research methodology which comprises of introduction, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques and method of data collection, instrument and method of data analysis. Chapter four focuses on data presentation and analysis; which include introduction, interpretation of data, and analysis of the interpretation and testing of hypotheses. And chapter five deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations.

## **1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS.**

1. **FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE:** A principle of representativeness in which recruitment, promotion and distribution of other state resource are aimed at establishing a fair balance of ethnic and regional representation in all federal government agencies and parastatals (Agbodike 2003)

2. **FEDERAL CHARACTER COMMISSION:** A body charged with the responsibility of implementing federal character principle in Nigeria to ensure compliance with state objectives concerning the distribution of public officers on even basis among the various sections of Nigeria in all federal government agencies and parastatals (Nwizu 2002).
3. **MERIT SYSTEM:** According to Ndoh (2002:145), merit system means a personnel system in which comparative merits or achievement governs each individual selection and progress in the service and in which the conditions and reward of performance contributed to the competency and continuity of the service.
4. **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT:** Human resource management according to Beach (1975) is the activities of recruitment and employment, manpower planning, employee training and management development wage and salary administration, health and safety (at work), benefits and services, union-management relations and personnel research.
5. **PUBLIC RECRUITMENT:** Public recruitment according to Nwizu(2002:238) is the process of getting potential employees willing to apply for a job or jobs into an organization (government agencies or parastatals).
6. **PUBLIC SERVICE:** Public service is viewed by Akpan (1982) as comprising members of all public institution financed and maintained by the tax payer, and



the emoluments of whose member, regularly authorized by the legislature acting in concert with the executive.

7. **MANPOWER:** This refers to individual's ability or capability available for labor to be employed into any organization.
8. **MANPOWER UTILISATION:** This refers to affective utilization of manpower capability available through the process of motivation, training, rewarding, evacuating etc. in the organization.
9. **FIRS:** - Federal Inland Revenue Service

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## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The review of the federal character principle and quota system in the Nigeria: A critical assessment of recruitment exercise in the service, will be centered on the concept of federalism as a reason for the principles, the federal character principle, quota system, meritocracy, and The federal character commission being a body established to implement the federal character principle in all government agencies and parastatals in Nigeria.

#### **2.2 FEDERALISM AND THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE OF NIGERIA**

An understanding of the concept of federalism, its basic features and its applicability in the Nigeria context is paramount to the discussion of the principle and practice of federal character in Nigeria's administration. Jordan (1978:303), defines federalism as that form of government which has two levels of authority existing side by side, in some cases sharing powers and in other cases not, usually several local or regional governments exist in a semi-independent relationship with a central government. Adebayo (2002:203), says that federalism requires that the general and regional that the general and regional governments of a country shall be independent of each other within its sphere, and shall not be a subordinate to one another but co-ordinate with each other. Neither history nor politics nor

economics has given cause of “federalism” in Nigeria a smooth ride. However, a lot depends on what one means by the plain word “federalism”.

Federalism according to Tekena (2011) is that form of government where the component units of a political organization participate in sharing powers and functions in a cooperative manner through the combined forces of ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity, among others, which tends to pull their people apart. To Suberu (2009) ‘Federalism’ involves constitutional and irrevocable division of governmental powers and functions on a territorial basis within a single country. It entails the division of power between central and constituent authorities. Although the arrangement of functions and responsibilities within a federal state is usually based on some constitutional or legal framework, the constitution may be a poor guide in determining whether a political system is federal or otherwise. To this school of thought, federalism should be understood not just from the narrow perspective or confines of legal formulation but from the general and systemic interaction of socio-cultural and political factors.

Nigeria is a federation with 36 States and 774 local governments existing in a coordinate and autonomous relationship. Power are shared among the federating unit that makes up the federation i.e. federal, state and local government and each unit has it own autonomous power within it area of jurisdiction usually the federal government have a greater bound of unity with power in the center. However the

sharing of power between the center and the component units is in accordance with the constitutional provisions. The federal constitution of Nigeria defined closely the allocation of legislative and executive power between the levels of government; given references to section 4 of the 1999 federal constitution of Nigeria, The constitution provides three lists, the exclusive list, the concurrent list and the residual list. The exclusive list consisted of forty-five provisions on which the federal government only could legislate. The concurrent list contained twenty-nine provisions on which both the federal and states government could legislate, but with the provision that, in the event of any inconsistency in the legislation of the government, federal law will remain supreme. Thus, all subjects or matters not mentioned in the two lists fell to the state government to legislate.

More so, the Nigeria federal structure made provision for bicameral legislature i.e. two house system, house of representatives and house of senate, a ministerial executive system who are directly responsible to the president for political conduct, a judicial system with provision for appeals to federal supreme court, a public services with its own commission, and an overall Head of government (president) whose duties are spelt out in the constitution

### **2.3. THE FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE**

The phrase “Federal character” came after a number of debates and dialogue that ensured the members of constitutional drafting committee (CDC) inaugurated

by General Murtala Ramat Mohammed military administration on the 18 October, 1975 to draft a new constitution with democratic face for Nigeria. The committee thus adopted the phrase “federal character” as a the viable means of ensuring ethnic balancing in federation activities and therefore defined the federal character as; “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 notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, cultural language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the federal republic of Nigeria”. The phrase “federal character” was however incorporated in the 1979, 1989 and subsequently in section 14(3) (4) of the 1999 constitution and interpreted as;

“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 its agencies”. The composition of the government of a state, a local government council, or any of the agencies of such government or council such agencies will be carried out in such a 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 people of the federation. (Ogunna, 1999: 256)

According to Ogunna (1999), the federal character principle as enshrined in the constitution demands that all appointment, allocation of amenities and benefits at the federal, state and local governments and their agencies should have a “national spread”. This is to say that all appointments and allocation of amenities should reflect proportionately the diverse composition of the federal, state and local government respectively. This ensures that no one area of the country dominates the other in appointments and distribution of amenities as to endanger the unity of the federation.

Agreeably perhaps, the federal character principle was conceived to foster a sense of belonging and participation by the multi ethnic groups and political interest in the governance of post-colonial Nigeria. It was the result of the years of domination that characterize ethno-regional relation Nigeria. Since the creation of states to twelve and further to nineteen states structure could not truly address the problem of North-South imbalance, the need for other methods of achieving the much desired unity arose. One can say that in terms of distribution of post among the ethnic groups, the federal character principle is a form of the representative bureaucracy of the pre-independence Nigeria.

Inherent in the 1979 constitutional provision include section 15(4) which expects a fostering of a feeling of belonging and of involvement among the various peoples of the federation, section 135(3) stipulates that at least one indigene of each state of

the federation should be considered by the president in ministerial appointments. Similarly, section 157 has it that the appointment of the secretary to the federal government, head of the civil service of the federation, ambassadors or equivalent, permanent secretaries or equivalent or any personal staff of the president must take into account the federal character principle of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, even the composition of the officer corps and other ranks of the Armed forces shall reflect the federal character of Nigeria (section 197:2). In all the federal character principles have to reflect in all government agencies and Parastatals which the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) is not an exception. Ayoade (2003) viewed federal character as an instrument of eclectic redistribution of bureaucratic roles and industrial sites . He went a bit further to say that federal character is based on the recognition of ethnic differences.

Abubakar (2003) asserts that federal character principle is intending to build a sense of belonging and participation by the diverse ethnic groups and power seeking groups in the governance of the post colonial Nigeria. Udege (2003) observed that in the course of taking care of equitable geographical power sharing, the principle of federal character was reaffirmed. He pushed forward to say that the principle was clamored for in order to promote sense of belonging in the country so as to eliminate or at least minimize domination resulting from imbalance in appointments. Bala (1977) in Tamuno (2003) registered fear on the practical



problems in the thorough implementation of any given policy or directive on federal character .He noted that federal character has deepened the reach of ethnicity, and, extended its rivalries and thus federal character is the solution that has deepened the problem it was devised to tackle. Close to the above assertion. Nowadays, even with the adoption of federal character, job and political appointment are not strictly based on the formula of federal character but tend to be directed toward connection, patronage and bootlicking which of course are clear derogation from the doctrine of federal character. Ekeh and Osaghae (1987) observed that federal character was intended to command its own laws of equity, different from definitions of individual merit. They added that its aim is to achieve national unity by minimizing the disadvantages of ethnic groups that stand to lose in a plain contest for political power and for benefits that derive from the public realm .To buttress this observation , the federal character formula though still associated with loopholes is to an extent making a breakthrough in its quest to sustain Nigerian federalism by employing all possible means to reduce the dichotomy between advantaged ethnic groups and disadvantaged ethnic groups in the country .Beside ,if the country was to separate on the principle of survival of the fittest , the minority groups and even some of the majority groups would rarely squeeze their way attaining political power or even see themselves in the realm of public responsibilities . Notwithstanding, the federal character formula ought to be

readjusted in such a way as to make it achieve a goal of national unity which it has earlier envisaged.

According to Gboyega (1989) federal character principle is merely an elite ploy which would not in real sense improve the lot of the common men in whose name it is designed. He cautioned that the application of the principle was likely to create many problems, as grave as that it was supposed to solve. For example, the southerners who are already advanced on terms of education may feel as if the policy was intending to deprive them of jobs for the benefit of the northerners since merit is not the only yardstick. He further opined that even promotion is also tied to ethnic consideration and it affects the esprit de corps of the service. Afigbo (1986) describes the federal character principle as “unsophisticated every day usage” in Nigeria’s multi-ethnic character. He further said that in this case, to reflect federal character means simply to ensure “Nigerian affairs are not dominated by persons” from a few states or ethnic groups. Ideally, the federal character is basically designed to meet up with ethnic-balancing, but a close look at its operation would reveal a derail from this end. Besides since its adoption, it has not been able to address the problem of under-representation and over-representation with only few instances of working within the spectrum of the federal character formula. To add to this, is that the federal character may only succeed in reducing the domination of government affairs by some states or

ethnic groups but for several reasons such as education imbalance and financial strength of some states or ethnic groups would make them to continuously to dominate the helm of the affairs in the country.

Oni (1989) viewed federal character as means of attaining equality of opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students. He that the theory and practice of federal character principles as spelt out in Nigeria constitution with respect to education is meant to eliminate discrimination and build room for equal representation. He later observed that the interpretation of this philosophy may indeed call for a change in the criteria for admissions into institutions of learning in the country. It will be axiomatic to analyze the above idea particularly the concept of equality which cannot be ascertained within the context of Nigeria because even the federal states of United States; Canada and Switzerland which are deemed as classical federal system could not arrive at equality in all ramifications. Moreover even when for a long term the quota system operates in the educational setting, it has not brought about equality in education among the regions, states and ethnic groups. Uroh (1988) says federal character means lowering of standards in favour of some preferred groups, and against others who cannot be deemed to have wronged the preferred groups in the past. He then added that it looks a bit unnatural that the federal characters as it relates to intakes into higher institutions appear to work only to hold down a part of the country considered to be

educationally advanced states, so that those follows compatriots who are from reverse side could catch up with them. Agbodike (2003), once more, noted that one of the major and most problematic features of federal character principle, as presently operated in the complexity of the interests and sections as represented by the North, South, state, local government, ethnic and religious group affiliations. He gives an instance that the creation of more states and local governments and the establishment of federal educational institutions in every state to promote greater representational opportunities pave way for the multiplication of government and administrative units and facilities which become disturbingly expensive to the nation. He added that this is often done against the evidence of the inability of the new states and local government to discharge their statutory duties as a result of their inability and thus federal character principle has compounded the problem it was expected to manage.

Ademolokun (1985) in Agbodike (2003) cautioned that recruitment to post which require specialist training such as those of medical practitioners, pilots, architects and engineers should be essentially based on merit. As matter of fact, no any reasonable society would ever contemplate compromising the specialist skills enumerated above for a mere ethnic balancing through federal character formula except if such society is intending to suck the legs of its citizens with petrol and set of fire under a pot to boil a rice otherwise in terms of recruitment into any of the

specialist skills federal character formula should be subdued and made second to merit. Obasanjo in Agbodike (2003) cautioned that the principle of merit should not be completely sacrificed on alter of federal character. He stressed that appointment of persons to various positions should be made from the best available in any group or section in the country. Lawson (1985) in Agbodike (2003) conjectured “the standards that enable this sense of belonging to be achieved are not necessarily the highest obtainable or variable”. Onyeozi (1989) in Abubakar (2003) noted that federal character merely “white washes” the surface while abstaining from the inner core of antagonistic attitude. Abubakar (2003) once more, opine that in the quest of ethnic balancing and national unit, federal character allows ethnic-regional patrons and their clients to exploit and misappropriate states resources without any resource to meaningful development. He stressed that by focusing on regional and ethnic representation, federal character fuels differentiation instead of promoting mutual trust, accommodation of national unity. Uroh (2001) once more, noted that one of the reasons why the principle of federal character, quota system, educationally disadvantaged sections and soon have become noticeable in the recent dispensation in Nigeria is as a result of too much political, economical, bureaucratic power that is concentrated at the centre. He added that for this, every group aspires to control the power at the centre just in the same manner the hegemony of the central government is visible in all

the nooks and crannies. Udegbe (1998) once more, contend that federal character principle may be perceived to be contradictory to the principle of democracy, however since the principles was adopted to tackle geopolitical differences it would not be against constitutional provisions to also apply into gender differences and a conservative model of democracy largely untouched. The scholar's observation on the inability of federal character to ameliorate tensions among the segments and ethnic groups of its country is more open in the street when one systematically looked at the manner in which the three major ethnic groups that play a dominant role in the state affairs continue to tread with one another along their ethnocentrism not to talk of the minority groups that have been suffering from neglected and wail to no avail, and somewhat resort to faith and consider their surviving a day as blessing and that of the next day as bonus. The status quo ought to be changing otherwise the resultant effect of these long silent and perseverance may be too pathetic.

According to Shettima in Asgbodike (2003) the federal character principle can enhance efficiency of service. Gboyega (1989-182) reasoning in the same direction say that it can be obtained only through fair representation which would attract and control public confidence and greater cooperation, mutual trust and mutual respect among the public servants themselves. Perhaps, the above scholar is unaware of the fact that the federal character has specifically reserved percentage

for each of the sex and fill it with another sex when the number of the require sex could not fill the vacancy provided. Ayoade, once more, contended that federal character facilitates polarization of the ethnic individuality instead of dismantling and breaking the ethnic identity. This is true because when people discovered that federal character's operation emphasizes on the ethnicism and statism they became more conscious and sensitive to their ethnic affiliation than the national conscience that was supposed to be major concern of all and sundry. Izah (2003) says that federal character is mainly concern with providing each part of the country with adequate representation in the entire sphere of government establishment. He adds that the intention of the designers is to spread access to state power that hitherto generated serious heat in the body policy of the nation. Ekeh, opined that the recent history of federal character politics shows an unmistakable trend toward the division of loyalties and elitism. He said that the doctrine has it that no one in Nigeria can be directly recognized for his merit and contributions without coming via ethnic and regional enclaves. He then noted that one of the greatest threats posed by the doctrine of federal character is that it caused damage to the prospect of economics and social development by confronting the principles of excellence the absence of which any modern nation is considered inferior.

Okpu (1989) asserts that federal character is designed to regulate the sharing of the aggregate of the country's gross national product. He goes further to say that

as a strategy, federal character thus intending to maintain the situation threatened by the continuous onslaught of the minorities and the creation of few states as well as providing greater access to the national cake through control of its implementation of the majority groups. Abubakar once more, noted that federal character principle zoning quota system and of recent rotational power sharing in the six geo-political groups, the usual problem of the ethno-regional, religious and sectional bigotry continue in Nigeria. He further added that these problems portray a serious threat to the survival of Nigeria federation, thwart the march to nationhood and indeed the attainment of a stable democratic socio political order. Tablib, argue that federal character is a subject which though vague in meaning is full of meaning especially with respect to the hopes and aspirations of Nigeria. According to Tom Forest (1993-760) in Abubakar (2003) contended that the application of federal character principle in the second republic of Nigeria has brought it wake poor appointment at ministerial levels and boards of federal parastatal as well as promoting mediocrity at the expense of meritocracy. Tahir in Ayoade (2003) contend that federal character is a device for ventilating or arising historical wrongs. Bagudu (2003) asserts that federal character is meant to ensure that appointment is carried out in a manner that reflects the composition of federation so as to enable all to reap the benefit from the federation. Masari (2006) noted that the principles federal character contained by the constitution has been thoroughly



and seriously abused by several government establishments thus causing havoc to the unity of the country and its peaceful co-existence in a bid to build strong and virile nation where no group will be heard crying for marginalization or neglecting. Osagae (1989-453) in Agbodike (2003) says that discrimination is one of the paradoxes of federal character principle, whereby instead of attaining unity via balancing, the country is further segregated. He then warned on the dangers inherent in strengthening statism in the quest of federal character principle which in his words threaten the effectiveness of the formula and the unity as well as stability of the federal system in Nigeria. Agbodike once again contend that federal character has been maneuvered and directed to serve the entire interest of the few affluence ruling class. He added that it is the member of the class who formulated and implement the principle. Reasoning in similar line is Agbaje (1989-117) who noted that when the debate on the principle is carried out by the press in the country, it has been mainly on elite preoccupation. Agbodike noted that under these circumstances there can emerge acrimony and socio economics conflict between the haves and have not. He said unless the yearning and aspiration of the hoi polloi is taken care of in the application of federal character so much they have access to the basic necessities of life otherwise the formula will have little effect to the integration problem of Nigeria. Osagae (1989) once again asserts that federal character revolves around how fair and effective representation can be accorded to

the various component units and communal groups in the country institutions, agencies and positions of power, status and influence. He further said that federal character is part of parcel of all federal system of government it politics however vary from one federation to the in Nigerian. He then maintained that two factors make federal character problematic in Nigeria. He links the first one with the historical reasons that gave one part an upper hand in terms of education above others and attached the second factor to the large size of some ethno-regional areas with others relatively small. He said sequel to these, areas and communities with small size are at risk of losing in any free-for-all and unregulated competition and struggle for federal power status and influence. He however, said that it is both the consciousness of the phenomenon and quest to deal with it that unavoidably brought the doctrine of federal character. He added that the rationale is anchored on the promise that by power application of the doctrine of federal character, all ethno-regional areas, groups and indeed communities will have to participation in the socio-economic and socio-political life of a country. Therefore, federal character is aiming at instilling the sense belonging to the nation state by all the groups in the country. He concluded that the doctrine of federal character, therefore, touches on an array of problems in the federal political process. Such problems includes ethnicity, nationality questions and citizenship, lack of

opportunity for the less-privileged groups, blatant discrimination on the basis of place of origin, resources allocation and power sharing and many yet unmentioned.

Ojiake (1983) opines that federal character as a tool or device for national administration triggered much controversy in the entire federation. He said that people from less advance education states reap the benefit while those from educationally developed parts or states condemned it as a whole and deem it as an enemy of national unity and progress. He however, mentioned that the system is detrimental to the country as it encourages segregation in people's mind against the citizens of the country that fall victims to such style of political practice. It is imperative to know that from the foregoing discussion, one can convincingly assert that attempt at a water-tight definition of federal character will altogether be a semantic escapism. This is because the phrase "federal character is nebulous and defies an objective assessment". However, federal character in a simple parlance connotes a policy employed by multi-ethnic society with federal arrangement to reduce to the barest minimum the manifestation and even the latent marginalization in its entire ramification and then attain fair or proportionate participation of the section, segments and ethnic groups in the running of the state so that harmonious co-existence and national cohesion will prevail. Federal character formula as applied in Nigeria shows that it has a seed of discord especially with mix-reaction over it as a viable measure to attaining fairness particularly in terms of ethnic

representation in sharing resources, allocating government establishments, employment opportunity and appointment into position of responsibility and the likes. The commentators contended if holding or access to public responsibility is to be tied to merit alone, then the educationally advanced areas of the country would be highly placed over and ahead of other section(s) with less education. While other commentators vehemently greeted the federal character formula with apprehension on the ground that the formula negate merit which of course is a gateway or stopping stone to effectiveness and efficiency that should be sought for by nations.

From the above scenario, it is described and necessary to note that the use of any criteria whatsoever in place of merit or the use of merit in place of any criteria already adopted by the commission will further compound the tension and jeopardize unit that is being envisaged. Therefore, it is worthwhile to work round the clock to strike a balance between the criteria currently in operation and merit. This may be arrived at by selecting the best from the available ones in each of the ethnic groups or section in terms of employments and political appointments exemption.

## **2.4 QUOTA SYSTEM.**

The quota system was introduced by the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's government in 1960 for the recruitment of military personnel. Successive government uses the system for the recruitment of personnel into the public service as well as the establishment of institutions and admission of student into schools (Daily news and analysis of Nigeria 1979-2009, April 6, 2014. Editorial page 5). Under the Yakubu Gowon's administration (1967-1975) a lot of measures were provided in other to address the issue of structural imbalance and divisive nature in Nigeria. For total national integration Gowon establish unity colleges in all state of the federation. Enrollment into these colleges was strictly based on quota system in other to ensure that student from all the nooks and crannies of Nigerian society were equitable represented. In the vein he promulgated the national youth service corps (NYSC) scheme in 1973 aimed at promoting national cohesiveness patriotism and sense of belonging by exposing young graduates to different culture and tradition of Nigerian people. Gowon also went ahead to jettison unitary arrangement in favour of federalism where the authority was divided between the centripetal and centrifugal levels of government. The intergovernmental personnel act of 1970 defined the merit principle has consisting of recruiting, selecting and advancing employees on the bases their relative ability knowledge and skills including open consideration of qualified applicant in competitive and

rigorous interview      Training employees is needed to ensure high quality performance in other words the definition emphasis that the employees be recruited and promoted based on individual ability and not on the basis of political affiliation, state of origin ,ethnic background , sex or religious creed.

According to Ekeh (1989) the system was designed to give opportunities in education, appointment and employment to disadvantaged groups and areas and to enable them to compete and catch up with the more advanced areas and sections of the nation”. The quota system was also used for recruitment into the army, the police force and other defense and security services. Civil servants were also recruited and appointed on the basis of representative quota system. However, when the hues and cries for inequality, imbalance, oppression, social exploitation, domination, victimization, nepotism, discrimination and bigotry continue to find a lasting solution to these issues and bring about structural balance of claims and gains by the various groups and interest in Nigeria, the federal character principle was conceived and its application became imperative as a directive principle of state policy. But despite the lofty and articulate nature of these policy measures, claims of marginalization and exploitation still persist among some groups in Nigeria.

In the public service positions from grade level 7-12 are filled based on quota system, but also on grade level 13 and above, because every state wants to

get a top management officer. Others are recruited based on political consideration rather than merit. In the educational sector, part of their admission is based on quota system and part of based on merit:

i. Federal government colleges (for boys and girls)

20% on merit, 50% on equity of states, 30% on geography.

ii. Federal government technical college, Yaba and kings college, Lagos

20% on merit, 80% on equity of states.

iii. Universities, polytechnics, schools of art and science, advance teachers colleges. 60% on merit, 40% on equity of states (AHMAD SANUSI 2008).

## **2.5 MERITOCRACY AND WORKABILITY OF FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE.**

According to young 1958, meritocracy is a system in which power or position are allocated according to merit measured by some functional criteria as 20<sup>th</sup> century term its contrasts with systems in which status influence and rewards are allocated by such principles birth and descent or by personal connection and influence. The notion of merit as criteria for achieving position originated in the west in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when, as in Great Britain and the United States, dissatisfaction arose with the prevailing habit of appointing and promoting civil servant by patronage or even bribery. Civil service reforms in both countries let to the establishment of civil service commissions to recruit and promote according

objective criteria relevant to the duties and envisaged. Other societies have had much earlier, though often corrupted, systems of appointment by merit, as in imperial China. The advocate strict implication of meritocracy regards the federal character principle and quota system as synonymous with lowering of standards. They see it as way of promoting or recruiting less competent staff into the services which will inevitably lead to low productivity. It also seen promoting the feeling of alienation and demoralization among workers; in addition it will open the door for nepotism. They cite the example of the Nigerian police force whose situation is pathetic because “promotions in the police are based on quota, god fathers, bribery and such extra legal considerations rather than merit.

The application of merit in the public service has amounted to a confuse balancing of the merit principle and the quota system based essentially on the state of origin. This has had adverse consequences for all institutions in terms of discipline, moral and overall effectiveness and efficient. In other to achieve equity, fairness, justices and fair play in the Nigerian public service, application of merit system should be upheld and respected (Ahmad Sanusi, 2008). Agbodike (2003) once more, noted that in the application of the formula of federal character, more often than not merit is being compromised. The quota system as applied in the education leads to lowering of standards against national interest. In the army it leads to the production of sub grade soldiers and officers. In the civil and public



services of the federation, standards and professionalism are endangered and compromised. By way of eschewing meritocracy without resources to standards, the quota system becomes morally reprehensible and an act of injustice. He finally observed that viewing from the perspective, the quota system (factor) in the federal character principle becomes not only counterproductive but divisive and such constitutes a cog in the wheel of peaceful and orderly progress and development of Nigeria.

## **2.6. THE FEDERAL CHARACTER COMMISSION**

The commission was first introduced in 1995 under the military regime led by General Sanni Abacha. By section I (1) of the Act, the commission was established and by virtue of subsection (2) the commission has the following features;

- a) Shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession
- b) Sue and be sued in its corporate merit
- c) Shall have it's headquarter in the Federal capital territory, Abuja and
- d) Shall establish an office in each state of the federation

The commission is one of the federal bodies established under section 153 (1) of the 1999 constitution

### **2.6.1 COMPOSITION AND POWER OF THE COMMISSION**

The composition and its power are spelt out in the third schedule, part1 (c) of the 1999 constitution. Paragraph 7 (1) provide:-

The federal character commission shall comprise the following members;

- a). A chairman and
- b). One person to represent each of the states of the federation and the federal capital territory, Abuja.

In essence, the commission has 37 ordinary members besides the chairman and the secretary. In general term the chairman is a member of the commission. The equitable representation by each state of the federation as envisaged by the provisions is undermined by the fact that the chairman and the secretary would come from any state which would have been represented by virtue of paragraph 7(1)(b) of the provision under reference. This problem would have been eliminated if there has been no duplication of membership from the chairman/secretary's states.

### **2.6.2 EXAMINATION OF POWER OF THE COMMISSION**

By virtue of section 5 of the federal character commission Act 1995, the commission shall have power to:

- (a). Formulate and provide guidelines for Government agencies and other employers and providers of services and socio-economic amenities;
- (b). Monitor compliance with the guidelines and formulae at Federal, State, local government and zonal levels in the employment and provision of socio-economic amenities.

- (c). Enforce compliance with its guidelines and formulae in areas of the provisions of employment opportunities, distribution of infrastructural facilities, socio-economic amenities and other indices.
- (d). Compel boards of directors of government – owned companies and other enterprises, which are subject to the provisions of this Act to comply with the guidelines and formulae on ownership structure, employment and distribution of their products.
- (e). Demand and receive return on employment and socio-economic indices from any enterprises or body corporate and penalize any enterprise which does not comply with a request from the commission.
- (f). under take the recruitment and training of staff of government agencies or departments where desirable;
- (g). Institute investigate into any matter relating to any institution or organization where the institution or organization shall be required to bear the cost of such investigation; and
- (h). Do anything which in the opinion of the commission is incidental to its functions under this Act.

As a follow-up to the provisions of the Act which enables the commission to formulate and provide guidelines from Government agencies and other employers and providers of services and socio-economic amenities, the commission in 1996

published the “Guiding principles and formulae for the Distribution of posts in the public service” (hereafter Guiding principle).

The guiding principles provide for general principles under Colum A as follows:

- (a) That each state of the federation is to be equitably represented in all national institutions and in public enterprises and organizations.
- (b) That the best and most competent persons are recruited from each state of the federation to fill positions reserved for the indigenes of that state
- (c) That once a candidate has attained the necessary minimum requirement for appointment to position, he/she should be qualify to fill a relevant vacancy reserved for the indigenes of his/her states
- (d) That, where the number of positions available cannot go around the states, than sharing should be on zonal basis, but that in the case where two items only are available, they should be shared between northern zones and the southern zones
- (e) That if the indigenes of a state are not able to take up all the vacancies meant for them the indigenes of other state(s) within the same zone should be given preference in filling such vacancies.
- (f) That in an ideal situation, posts to be distributed among the indigenes of the states and Abuja on the formula of equality would be 2.75% of the indigenes of each state after reserving 1% for the indigenes of Abuja.

However, in the spirit of give and take, the commission has decided to adopt a range so that the indigenes of any state should not constitute less than the lower limit or more than the upper limit of the range.

- (g) That the six zones and the states they comprise are:-
- i. North Central: Benue, FCT, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger and Plateau States
  - ii. North East: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states.
  - iii. South West: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kastina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States.
  - iv. South East: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states.
  - v. South South: AkwaIbom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers States.
  - vi. South West: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States.

That for the zones, depending on the number of states within each zone, the commission has adopted three ranges such that the indigenes of any state within a zone should not constitute less than the lower limit or more than the upper limit of the range applicable to the zone.

Column B of the guiding principles entitled “Definition of indigenes adopted by the commission” state:

- (a) An indigene of a Local Government: An indigene of a local government is a person:
- i. Either of whose parents or any whose grandparents was or is indigene of the local government concerned: or
  - ii. Who is accepted as an indigene by the local government concerned provided that no one can lay claim to more than one local government.
- (b). An indigene of a state: An indigene of a state is a person who is an indigene of one of the local government in the state that is to say, an indigene of a state is a person either of whose parents or grandparents belong or belonged to a community indigenous to the state or a person who is accepted as such by a local government in the state. No person should be allowed to lay claim to more than one state in the application of the federal character principle.
- (c) An indigene of the Federal Capital Territory: An indigene of the Federal Capital Territory is a Nigerian citizen other than by naturalization, who cannot lay claim to any state of the federation in other words, the indigenes of the territory are those Nigerian (and their descendants) who lived in the area now constituted as the Capital Territory before 26th February, 1976 and decided to continue to reside in the territory after that date.

- (d) Indigenous status of a married woman: A married woman should continue to lay claim to her own state of origin for the purpose of implementation of federal formulae at the national level.

### **2.6.3 THE ENFORCEMENT POWER OF THE COMMISSION**

The commission is vested with power to take such legal measure including the prosecution of the head of any ministry or government body or agency which fails to comply with any federal character principle or formulae prescribed or adopted by the commission. According to Ndoh (2002:276), he said “the constitutions make it impossible for the presidents or the State Governors who are vested with power to make the important appointment or the chief executive authorizing the appointment to be immediately prosecuted. Further examination of the point being raised here may be made clear by the examination of section 171(5) of the 1999 constitution which provides: In exercising his power of appointment under this section, the president shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity. By this provision the president is brought under the jurisdiction of the power of the commission. This is because paragraph 8(1) (a) of the third schedule part 1c of the 1999 constitution is wide enough to include the appointments required to be made under section 171(1)-(4) of the constitution.

Section 14 of the 1995 act provides for some offences that might be committed in respect of the functions of commission. The section provides as follows:

1. Information supplied by the commission shall not be made public by any person except it is duly authorized by the executive chairman of the commission.
2. Any person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) of this section is guilty of an offence under this decree.
3. Any person, body corporate or unincorporated who:
  - a) Required to furnish any information to the commission under the decree but fails to do so or in purported compliance with such requirements to furnish information knowingly or recklessly make necessary statement which is false in any materials particular or its incomplete or inaccurate;  
or
  - b) Wilfully obstruct, interfere with, assault or resists any member of the commission or any officer or servant of the commission in the performance of his duty under this act; or
4. Any person who is found guilty of abuse of office in the observance of any matter under this act is guilty of an offence.

Section 15 of decree imposes terms of the fine ranging from N50, 000 to N100,000 or term of imprisonment for six month or both.



## **2.7 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK.**

This research work is to assess the implementation of federal character principle and quota system in Nigeria, and how it jeopardizes merit in the recruitment and performance of the public sector. Thus in the course of assessment, the theory that the writer consider most appropriate for the analysis is the Webber's merit theory of organizational recruitment and promotion.

The merit system of organizational recruitment as advocated by max weber which assumes that the organizational recruitment must be squarely based on merit alone without giving any credence to a person's socio-cultural, political or ideological background . The merit convention is of the contention that to promote the common interest and achieve specific extension the country in general , ideological , religious , gender, ethnic and class difference have to be discarded in favour of merit in either social , economic or political spheres of the country . Gaining a balance to analysis this theory; one will see that the merit system of organizational recruitment where state responsibilities are vested in the hands of the most skilled, best trained and most experienced personnel will further strengthen the nation public service and by implication help the nation to achieve its short and long term economic, political and social goals.

The justification thereto in selecting this theory is that the theory suggests an ideal state will create a framework that places the quality of personnel over any

other factor, and concluded by saying performance of nations public service depends largely on the strict application of the merit system in the selection, recruitment and promotion of personnel.

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## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In academic environments, research is essentially an investigation, a recording and improvement on existing knowledge. Research is a systematic method of acquiring knowledge other than by chance trial and error. According Ezeani (2011:2), Research is the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problem through the planned and systematic collection, presentation analysis and interpretation of data. Research introduces system planning and purpose into investigation hence kerlinger (1979) sees it as empirical, controlled, systematic and critical investigation of hypothetical prepositions about presumed relations among natural phenomenon.

According to the Encarta dictionary (2009) methodology means the methods or organizing principles underlying a particular art, science, or other area of study. Merriam-Webster's dictionary and thesaurus (2008) sees methodology as a body of methods, rules and postulates employed by a discipline: a particular procedure or set of procedure.

In carrying out this research work, certain methods are employed. This chapter explain in depths the procedures the researcher intends to follow in arriving at the inferences of this work .In this chapter issues concerning the

research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, sources of data collection, Instrument for the data collection, validation and reliability of instrument and the method of analysis will be discuss in depth.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This is the specification of procedures for collecting and analyzing the data necessary to help solve the problem at hand; such that the difference between the cost of obtaining various levels of accuracy, and the expected value of information associated with each level of accuracy is maximized.

The research design applied here is aimed at examining The Federal character principle and Quota system in Nigeria: A critical assessment of the recruitment exercise in the public service, with Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Sokoto as the case study. The type of research design adopted for this research is the survey approach which is carried out through observational studies and selecting sample from the population (of the staff) ranging from The Administration Office to various departments in the organization.

### **3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

This simply means the aggregate of persons from whom data to the study were collected. The population of this research work constitutes an aspect of the employees at the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Sokoto being the

organization under study, a sample which was selected on purpose. Although, the organization has 50 employees in total.

### **3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

According to Nwizu.G (2008), a sample is a truly representative subset of a population. Sampling arise in research, because of the need to avoid bias and also because of neither time nor other resources would permit a complete census in other words it is a plan on how elements should be drawn from the entire population. They are various method of sampling techniques but for the purpose of this research, The Purposive sampling method is adopted. The responses of an aspect of the employees are chosen on purpose.

### **3.5 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION**

Data are defined as research relevant information. Two sources of data collection was used in obtaining the research relevant information, they are the primary and secondary source of data.

Primary sources of data collection are source of materials which contain direct accounts of phenomena or events. The primary source of data collection adopted is questionnaire methods, which is said to be a list of question sent to the respondents to complete and return to the researcher. The type of questionnaire used, are structured questionnaire.



The second sources of data collection which is the secondary source of data collection, were derived from the used of document, both published and unpublished which include text books, articles, official reports and statistics, newspapers and journals.

### **3.6 INSTRUMENT USED IN DATA COLLECTION**

The instrument used in the research work is questionnaire method. Questionnaires were administered to some of the staff of the FIRS.

### **3.7 VALIDATION AN RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT**

Validation refers to the extent to which the researcher is measuring what he intends to measure. The research instrument used by the researcher as certified content validity, face validity, predictive validity and construct validity. Reliability according to Nzeribe (1994), is the accuracy and precision of the results obtained over time.

The instruments used for data collection were objectively constructed and the questionnaire was submitted to the researcher's supervisor for validation. The questionnaires constructed were simple and direct to enable the employees of the FIRS to be able to understand the questions easily and give accurate information.

### **3.8 METHOD OF ANALYSIS**

The type of statistical techniques used for hypothesis testing is chi –square. The data collected from the respondent were presented and analyzed in a tabular

form. The table is showing respondent views based on the questionnaire administered to them on the Federal character principle and Quota system in Nigeria and an assessment of its implications on recruitment exercise on their organization i.e The Federal Inland Revenue Service Sokoto.

### **3.9 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES.**

Testing of hypothesis is an aspect of statistic that enables one to make an inference about a group. According to Elekwa (2007), Hypothesis is a statement or assumption about the relationship of variables. Hypothesis testing or testing of hypothesis is a procedure that is adopted in order to accept or reject a hypothesis.

. The formula is:

$$X^2 = \sum_{\sum i} (o_i - \sum_i)^2$$

Where  $x^2$  =chi – square

$o_i$  = observed frequencies

$\sum_i$  =expected frequencies

Decision Rule: Accept  $H_1$  if  $x^2$  calculated is greater than  $x^2$  critical.

Reject  $H_1$  if  $x^2$  calculated is less than  $x^2$  critical.

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**CHAPTER FOUR:**  
**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The essence of this chapter is to present and analyze the data collected for the study. The presentation and analysis were based on the responses gotten from the respondents (Staff of Federal Inland Revenue Service FIRS Sokoto) through the questionnaire administration to them.

The data are presented and analyzed with table and simple percentage. The questionnaires were distributed to members of staffs selected on purpose out of which 20 copies were returned. The researcher decided to concentrate on the responses of the 20 people at his disposal at the time given for his analysis.

**4.2 SECTION A- PERSONAL DATA**

Table 4.1 sex Distribution

<b>SEX</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Male	17	85%
Female	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table shows the sex distribution of the respondents from the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS). The FIRS has 17 male and 3 female staffs who responded to the questionnaire administered in the cause of these researches.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution.

<b>AGE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Below 29	6	30%
30-39	8	40%
40-49	4	20%
50 above	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: Field survey (2015)

The above table shows the age distribution of the respondent of the respondents. It shows that 30% of the respondents are below 29 years of age, 40% are between 30 to 39, 20% are between 40-49, while 50 years and above constitute 10% of the respondents.

Table 4.3 Marital Status.

<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Single	7	35%
Married	12	60%
Widow/widower	1	5%
Divorced	-	-
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table shows the marital status of the respondents. It shows that 35% of the respondents are single, 60% married. 5% widow and widower and none divorced.

Table 4.4 Education level of respondents.

<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
First school Leaving cert.	0	0%
WAEC/NECO/GCE	1	5%
NCE/OND or Equivalent	5	25%
HND/BSC	12	60%
Post graduate/PHD	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table shows the level of skill (qualifications) of the respondents, based on their educational qualification, their numbers and percentage.

Table 4.5: working experience

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
1-10 years	10	50%
11-20 years	5	25%
21-30 years	3	15%
31and above	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table shows the working experience year of the respondents, 50% of the respondents have 1 to 10 years working experience in FIRS, 25% have 11 to 20 years working experience in FIRS, while 15% of the respondents have 21 to 30 years working experience in FIRS, and 10% have 31 years and above working experience in FIRS. Sokoto state.

#### **4.3 SECTION B: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES.**

**QUESTION 1:** Is recruitment exercise in FIRS Sokoto state based on federal character principle and quota system?

Table 4.6

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

In the table above 75% of the total respondent agreed that recruitment exercise in Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) sokoto state is based on Federal Character Principle and quota system while 25 % of the total respondents disagreed with the opinion.

**QUESTION 2:** Is the federal character principle and quota system efficient and effective enough in the recruitment of personnel in FIRS sokoto state.

Table 4.7

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	7	35%
No	13	65%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

From the table above 7 respondents who makes up about 35% agree that the federal character principle and quota system are efficient and effective enough in



the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto state, while 13 respondents representing 65% disagree that the federal character principle and quota system are efficient and effective in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto.

**QUESTION 3:** Does the application of federal character principle and quota system jeopardize merit in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto?

Table 4.8

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	6	30%
No	14	70%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The table above shows that 30% of the respondents agree that the application of federal character principle and quota system jeopardizes merit in FIRS while 70% of the respondents disagreed.

**QUESTION 4:** Are there any probable problems in the application of federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS sokoto?

Table 4.9

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

Table 4.9: shows that the largest percentage of respondents which is 55%, agreed that there are probable problems in the application of federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto, while 45% of the total respondents disagreed.

**QUESTION 5:** Is the application of federal character principle and quota system having any implications on the recruitment exercise at FIRS sokoto state?

Table 4.10

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	13	65%
No	7	35%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

In the above table 65% of the respondent agree that the application of federal character principle and quota system is having implications on the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto state, while 35% of the respondent disagreed.

**QUESTION 6:** Does the application of federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto improve workers permormance?

Table 4.11

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	12	60%
No	8	40%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

In the above table 12 respondents who makes up 60% agree that the application of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment process ion FIRS Sokoto improves workers performance, while 8 respondents representing 40% disagreed.

**QUESTION 7:** Does the federal character commission properly supervise the application of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto state?

Table 4.12

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	5	25%
No	15	75%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

The table above shows that 25% of respondents agreed that the federal character commission properly supervise the application of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto, while 75% of the respondents disagreed.

**QUESTION 8:** Has the application of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment processes in the public service solved the problem of unequal representation across the country?

Table 4.13

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	6	30%
No	14	70%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

From the above table 6 respondents who make up 30% accept that the application of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment processes has solved the problem of unequal representation across the country , while 14 respondents representing 70% disagreed.

**QUESTION 9:** Is the federal character principle and quota system properly applied in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto state?

Table 4.14

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	13	65%
No	7	35%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

In the table above 65% of the total respondents agree that the federal character principle and quota system is properly applied the recruitment process exercise at FIRS Sokoto, 35% of the respondents said that the federal character principle and quota system is not properly applied in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto.

**QUESTION 10:** Do you support the continuous use of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment exercise in the Nigeria public service?

Table 4.17

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	17	85%
No	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Source: field survey (2015)

From the above 85% of the respondent support the continuous use of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment exercise into the Nigeria public service, while 15% did not support the continuous use of the federal character principle and quota system in recruitment exercise in the Nigeria public service.

#### **4.4 Testing of Hypothesis.**

Testing of hypothesis is an aspect of statistic that enables one to make an inference about a group. According to Elekwa (2007), Hypothesis is a statement or assumption about the relationship of variables. Hypothesis testing or testing of hypothesis is a procedure that is adopted in order to accept or reject a hypothesis.

The three (3) hypotheses formulated for this study in chapter one will be tested using the chi-square test ( $X^2$ ) based on the data collected through the administration of questionnaires. The formula is:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(o_i - \sum_i)^2}{\sum_i}$$

Where  $x^2$  = chi – square

$o_i$  = observed frequencies

$\sum_i$  =expected frequencies

Decision Rule: Accept  $H_1$  if  $x^2$  calculated is greater than  $x^2$  critical.

Reject  $H_1$  if  $x^2$  calculated is less than  $x^2$  critical.

#### HYPOTHESIS ONE (1)

$H_1$ : That the application of federal character principle and quota system largely to an extent is jeopardizing merit in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.

This hypothesis is tested based on the responses of research question 3

Table 4.8

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Yes	14	70%
No	6	30%
Total	20	100%

$o_i$	$\sum i$	$o_i - \sum i$	$(o_i - \sum i)^2$	$(o_i - \sum i)^2 / \sum i$
14	10	4	16	1.6
6	10	-4	16	1.6
				3.2

$X^2$  Calculated = 3.2

Degree of freedom is given as  $(r-1)(c-1)$

Where  $r$  = number of row

$c$  = number of columns.

$DF = (2 - 1)(2 - 1) = 1$

Level of significance = 5% Or  $5/100 = 0.05$

From the critical values of chi-square table,  $x^2$  critical value = 3.841 at the degree freedom of 1. While the  $x^2$  calculated = 3.2

### **DECISION RULE**

If  $x^2$  calculated is greater than  $x^2$  critical value, accept the alternative hypothesis, otherwise reject.

### **DECISION**

Since  $x^2$  calculated (3.2) is less than  $x^2$  critical value (3.841) the researcher reject the alternative hypothesis, which implies that the application of federal character principle and quota system does not jeopardize merit in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.



## HYPOTHESIS TWO (2)

H<sub>1</sub>: That the federal character principle and quota system is inefficient and ineffective enough in the recruitment of personnel into the public service.

The hypothesis is tested based on the response of research question 2.

Table 4.9

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGES
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%
Total	20	100%

$o_i$	$\sum_i$	$o_i - \sum_i$	$(o_i - \sum_i)^2$	$(o_i - \sum_i)^2 / \sum_i$
11	10	1	1	0.1
9	10	-1	1	0.1
				0.2

$X^2$  Calculated =0.2

Degree of freedom is given as  $(r-1)(c-1)$

DF =  $(2 - 1)(2 - 1) = 1$

Level of significance =5% Or  $5/100 = 0.05$

From the critical values of chi-square table,  $X^2$  critical value = 3.841 at the degree freedom of 1. While the  $x^2$  calculated =0.2

### **DECISION RULE**

If  $x^2$  calculated is greater than  $X^2$  critical value, accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), otherwise reject.

### **DECISION**

Since  $x^2$  calculated (0.2) is less than  $x^2$  critical value (3.841), the researchers reject the alternative hypothesis, which implies that the federal character principle and quota system is efficient and effective enough in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto.

### **HYPOTHESIS THREE (3)**

$H_1$ : That there are probable problems in the application of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment of personnel in the public service.

The hypothesis is tested based in the response of research question 4.

Table 4.16

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>NO.OF RESPONSES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENT</b>
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%
Total	20	100%

$o_i$	$\Sigma_i$	$o_i - \Sigma_i$	$(o_i - \Sigma_i)^2$	$(o_i - \Sigma_i)^2 / \Sigma_i$
16	10	6	36	3.6
8	10	-2	4	0.4
				4

$X^2$  Calculated =4

Degree of freedom is given as  $(r-1)(c-1)$

$$DF = (2 - 1)(2 - 1) = 1$$

Level of significance =5% Or  $5/100 = 0.05$

From the critical values of chi-square table,  $X^2$  critical value = 3.841 at the degree freedom of 1. While the  $X^2$  calculated =4

### **DECISION RULE**

If  $X^2$  calculated is greater than  $x^2$  critical value, accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), otherwise reject.

### **DECISION**

Since  $x^2$  calculated (4) is greater than  $x^2$  critical value (3.841) the researchers accept the alternative hypothesis, which implies that there are no probable problems in the application of federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This research work centered on federal character principle and quota system in Nigeria, with a critical assessment of the recruitment exercise in the public service and the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Sokoto state used as a case study. The choice of the topic arose from the recognition of the fact that the continuous implementation of the federal character principle and quota system can lead to the violation of the merit principle and lowering of standards in the recruitment of personnel into the public service which will serve as way of recruiting and promoting less competent staff into the organisation which will inevitably lead to poor performance.

The work attempted to uncover the critical issue involved in the federal character principle and quota system through the review of related literature on the functions of the federal character commission, composition and powers of the commission, general principle and formulae for recruitment process, federalism and the federal structure of Nigeria. Etc.

Four hypotheses were developed in the beginning of the research project which serve as a guide, and tested based on the data collected through the use of questionnaire with statistical analysis “chi-square”, consequent upon a thorough

research on analysis of the data. The following was the result of the hypothesis; The application of federal character principle and quota system largely to an extent jeopardizes merit in the recruitment of personnel into the public service, the federal character principle and quota system are inefficient and ineffective in the recruitment of personnel into, that there are probable problems in the application of the federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment of personnel into the public service, and that the federal character principle and quota system has numerous implications on the recruitment process in the public service..

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion we can agree that recruitment exercise in FIRS is based on federal character principle and quota system, The federal character principle and quota system are not efficient and effective enough in the recruitment Of personnel into FIRS Sokoto. The application of federal character principle and quota system does not jeopardize merit in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto. There are probable problems in the application of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment process in FIRS Sokoto, The application of the federal character principle and quota system is having implications on the recruitment exercise in FIRS Sokoto, The application of federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto improves workers performance, The Federal Character Commission does not properly supervise the application of the

federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto, that the application of federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment exercise in the public service has not solved the problem of unequal representation across the country, and that there should be the continuous use of the federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment exercise in the public service.

From the finding of the research work the researcher discovered that the federal character principle and quota system has some deficiencies. The actual application of the federal character principle negates the merit system of civil/public service in which the FIRS is not an exception since appointments and promotion are not always based on merit. This is to say that positions in FIRS sokoto state are traditionally reserved for some persons against others who may be more qualified for such positions. This creates the impression of discrimination and sectionalism.

Notwithstanding the deficiencies inherent in the application of federal character principle and quota system on the recruitment of personnel into the public service which has resulted in endangering of the standards and professionalism in the organization, it has in many ways helped in solving the problem of marginalization or unequal representation in the Nigerian public service.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATION**

In view of the research finding, the following recommendations are made in order to enhance the general effectiveness of the application of federal character principle in the appointment and promotion in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) sokoto state and the Civil / Public service in general.

1. The Application of Merit system or meritocracy should become the Linchpin in the recruitment of personnel into the Nigerian public service in order not to endanger standards and professionalism.
2. The need to strike a balance between the application of federal character principle, quota system and the Merit principle in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the service, and for equity, unity and fairplay to prevail in the country.
3. The problem of political selfish manipulation of the principle of the federal character and quota system for personal or sectional gain should be checked, defaulters punish and prosecuted.
4. Even educational developmental programmes should be carried out in Nigeria by the government, in order to enable each state, provide qualified persons to represent them in the distribution of positions in the public service.

5. The federal Character commission should always inspect public service institutions to ensure proper implementation of federal character principle and to guard against violation of the merit principle.



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## QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Public Administration,  
Faculty of Management Sciences,  
Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto,  
P.M.B 2346,  
Sokoto State.

Dear Respondent

I am a final year student of the above mentioned department and institution, i am carrying out a research on the topic: Federal Character principle and The Quota System in Nigeria: A Critical Assessment Of The Recruitment Exercise In The Public Service.A Case Study Of Federal Inland Revenue Service(FIRS) Sokoto.

Kindly assist in completing the attached questionnaire in respect of the research topic, your response to these questions in the questionnaire will be treated with utmost confidentiality and would be gladly and strictly used for the purpose intended. Thanks, for your cooperation

Yours faithfully,

Tukur Aliyu



**SECTION B: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE:** QUESTION 1-6 is to be answered by The Head Of Department and Principal Officers Of The Administrative Department or Unit, and QUESTION 7-10 is to be answered by all other selected members of staff.

1. Is the recruitment exercise in FIRS Sokoto based on federal character principle and quota system?

Yes ( ) No ( )

2. Is the federal character principle and quota system efficient and effective enough in the recruitment of personnel in FIRS Sokoto state?

Yes ( ) No ( )

3. Does the application of federal character principle and quota system jeopardize merit in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto ?

Yes ( ) No ( )

4. Are there any probable problems in the application of federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process at FIRS Sokoto?

Yes ( ) No ( )

5. Is the application of federal character principle and quota system having any implications on the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto?

Yes ( ) No ( )

6. Does the application of federal character principle and quota system on recruitment process in FIRS improve workers performance?

Yes ( ) No ( )

7. Does the federal character commission properly supervise the application of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment process in FIRS?

Yes ( ) No ( )

8. Has the federal character principle and quota system on recruitment process solve the problem of unequal representation across the country?

Yes ( ) No ( )

9. Is the federal character principle and quota system properly applied in the recruitment exercise at FIRS Sokoto?

Yes ( ) No ( )

10. Do you support the continuous use of the federal character principle and quota system in the recruitment exercise in the Nigerian public service?

Yes ( ) No ( )