

Review

Migration and citizenship question in Nigeria: A study of the Berom and Hausa/Fulani conflict in Jos

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Jos, an ancient city in Northern Nigeria, had been known for its relative tranquility and peace until the manifestation of hostilities and outbreak of violent confrontations, which became particularly monumental in September, 2001 between the Berom “indigenous” ethnic group (the majority), the Anaguta and the Afizare (the minorities) on one hand; and the “migrated or settler” Hausa/Fulani(majority) ,other ethnic nationalities such as the Yoruba, Urhobo, Igbo, on the other hand. The crisis, which has some historical undertone, has been over the “true” ownership of land and the attendant struggle for the control of political and economic resources of the area. This paper critically examines the indigene- settler syndrome within the context of citizenship and interrogates the practicality of same, as found expressed in both the 1979 and 1999 constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Essentially a historical and survey research, the study made use of data collected form archival sources and social survey to expose the structural disjuncture in the Nigerian constitution and the plight of Nigerian citizens who find themselves in areas other than their places of origin within the Federal Republic. It is concluded that the problem of citizenship in Nigeria and particularly with regards to the movement of the people across the length and breadth of the country actually derives from the ambiguous definition given to it in the 1999 constitution and the unwillingness of the state to address this through governance and institutional mechanisms which are the hallmark of democracy and national integration.

Key words: Migration, citizenship, conflict, indigene

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is the most populous black nation in the world. The country is endowed with human and natural resources, enormous enough to make the country one of the greatest in the world and a major pride of the African continent. As we know it today, Nigeria was brought into existence through British colonial experiments in Africa. The colonialists found the extant indigenous system strange and inadequate for administrative purposes and

imperatively transplanted the metropole’s (British) system of administration and government to Nigeria (Yakubu, 2003: 5). Evidence from the over 350 ethnic nationalities that constitute the Nigerian State shows that the country is a highly pluralistic entity.

It is expected that the plurality and diversity of the Nigerian State would be sources of strength in all facets of socio- political and economic life of the country but the

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reverse has been the case as this unique feature of diversity has become one of the banes of the country effort at national integration and peaceful co-existence. People's attachment to primordial interests and the mobilization of sentiments for political and economic resources of the state has made the indigene – settler syndrome a major issue in the citizenship question in Nigeria.

While Nigerians who find themselves in areas other than their native communities believe that they should be accorded the same rights and opportunities available in the socio-economic and political spheres as those that were born in the areas in question because they are the same citizens of Nigeria; the so called indigenes however question such aspirations, as people always see the difference between “we and them” particularly in terms of political and economic allocation of resources. The definition of who is actually a citizen of Nigeria, as presently expressed in the 1999 constitution of the federal republic does not help matters as it is also enshrined with some notable ambiguities.

As “man's history is essentially a story of movement, of conquest of land from nature and from fellow (Scott, 1972: 3); people cannot but move out of their place of birth and upbringing in search of greener pastures or as a result of circumstances beyond their control. This is the case of the Hausa/Fulani community in Jos North Local Government in Plateau State, Nigeria. History relates that Jos North Local Government is populated predominantly by the Berom ethnic group – who are historically more indigenous to the area and the Hausa/Fulani group – who migrated to the area. These two groups are the most prominent in the struggle for resource allocation in Jos North and hence are the major contenders in the ethno-religious conflict in this hitherto peaceful and harmonious environment.

Right from the pre-colonial period, the Plateau area has been known for tin mining and a resort site for refugee fleeing from invasion (Dunmoye, 2003:26). Historical account has it that the Berom entered into the plateau from the north, expanded and displaced other groups in the area now known as Jos. The Hausas also migrated to Jos in the early period of British colonialism and expanded in numbers because of mining opportunities. They also engaged in commerce and farming. The acrimony between these two groups has a long historical antecedent. It stated during the colonial period when in the 1940s Britain attempted to evaluate the Beroms to Hawan-Kibo-Sabon Zawan in order to make Jos more conducive for mining operations.

The Berom had accused the Hausas of attempting to force them out of Jos. They claim to be the original owners of Jos and regard the Hausas as settlers, who should not be allowed to dominate the “sons of the soil”, particularly in the political arena. This was what led to the crisis that greeted the 1992 splitting into two of Jos local government. However, ethnic violence ensued when in

1994; a Hausa man was appointed as the chairman of Jos North Local Government by the then military administrator of plateau state. Many lives and properties were destroyed. The government set up the Justice Aribiton Fiberesima's Commission to investigate the causes of the conflict. Since then Jos has been thrown into a lot of violent situations borne out of suspicion, electoral disagreement and the struggle for economic cum political opportunities by the “indigenes” and the “settlers”.

Other groups in Jos North include: the Anagata and the Afizare – who constitute the minority native people; there are also the Yoruba, Urhobo and Igbo – who constitute the minority migrants in Jos North. This simply means that Jos is home to many ethnic groups. But it is the Berom – the largest indigenous group, who are the most aggressive in the claim of ownership of Jos. On the other hand, it is the Hausa/Fulani group – the largest of the migrated groups, who had become assertive in the competition for the politico-economic resources of the area. The Hausas went ahead to adopt the name Jasawa which allows them certain level of ownership claim of Jos North.

This paper is an attempt to situate the entire crisis in Jos North and other similar cases in the federation of Nigeria within the context of political manipulations by the elite group largely encouraged by the structural disjuncture in the Nigerian Constitution. It questions the practical unwillingness of the state to properly define citizenship in the constitution particularly as the country now consolidates its democratic experience with a decade record of civil governance.

PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

In its simplest meaning and context, migration is the movement of people from one place to another; which could be internal or international. When people move from one place to another within a sovereign state, the form of migration is internal, but when there is movement from one country to another, this is referred to as international migration.

Historical accounts show that migration (internal or international) could be due to a number of reasons or motives. Practically, migration could be due to “push” and/or “pull” factors. Harsh and usually deplorable conditions of a place could make the people move out of their domain to a more conducive and peaceful atmosphere. Practical factors in this case may include socio-political and economic factor such as civil strife, joblessness, poverty, and unfavourable political conditions, particularly oppression and repression – all of which represent the possible push factors for migration. On the other hand, the pull factors for migration may include peace and safety factors such as political freedom, job availability or opportunities, a guarantee of

better living conditions, better education and a general atmosphere of peace.

Citizenship is a status of full and equal membership in a self-governing political community that entails rights and obligations and supported by certain virtues; which means that citizenship connotes nationality – a formal affiliation to a state (Baubock, 2002: 4). Using the Swahili civilization in East Africa as a case in point, Adesoji and Alao (2009: 152) argue that citizenship could be defined not only in terms of obligations or responsibilities alone, but also in terms of rights and privileges. They observed that:

There was no discrimination on the basis of descent, period of arrival or even extent of stay, although the princely and merchant/business class among others continued to enjoy the privileges conferred on them by their ascribed or achieved status.

Although, the concepts of state and citizenship have changed in time and space, the idea of modern citizenship is still closely connected with that of the state; citizenship is tied up with the evolution of the state (Adejumobi, 2001: 78-79). The concept of Citizenship derives from the French word – *citoyennete*; to describe the relationship between a person and the city. The concept originally connotes “the free man of the city”; it was conceived in the context of the town particularly, the medieval and ancient city-state and hence it historically has an urban orientation (Longva, 1995: 201).

Citizenship is moral choice and action, that had been “extolled by so many different societies, pagan and Christian, because it has been viewed not only as an instrument useful in controlling the passion and attenuating private concerns, but also as a means well suited to draw out the best in people (Riesenberg, 1992). In the Romans and Greeks societies, citizenship has along history as having been one of the basic factors for achieving an attractive ideal community. It is for the reasons of its importance to the creation of an ideal relationship in the state that:

Citizenship has survived so long and served in so many political environments because of this great inspirational challenge to individuals to make their neighbour's, their fellow citizen's life better and, by so doing, make their own nobler (Riesenberg, 1992: xi).

Citizenship is a continuing series of transactions between persons and agents of a given state in which each has enforceable rights and obligations uniquely by virtue of: the person's membership in an exclusive category, the native born plus the naturalized; and the agent's relation to the state rather than any other natural authority the agent may enjoy (Tilly, 1996: 8). The concept could be viewed from four analytic perspectives of: Category, role, tie and identity. As a category, citizenship designates a

set of actors-citizens-distinguished by their shared privileged position in a particular state; as a role, citizenship includes all of an actor's relations to others that depend on the actor's relations to a particular state; as a tie, citizenship identifies an enforceable mutual relation between an actor and state agents and; as an identity, citizenship can refer to the experience and public representation of category, tie or role (Tilly, 1996: 7-10).

As a form of symbolic relation between the individual and the state, citizenship connotes a regime of rights privileges and duties which could be broken down into civil, political and social rights, which include: the right to speech, association, due process, and equality before the law, franchise and social welfare (Marshall, 1964). Citizenship, is a mutual agreement between the citizens and the state for reciprocal privileges and rights, and obligation, loyalty and commitment; with the rule of law as the umpire and justice and fairness the Watch words. (Adejumobi, 2001: 80). In this form of social pact, by the dual elements of reciprocity and exchange between the individual (citizen) and the state, the individual enjoys those rights and privileges which no other social or political organisations offer, and reciprocally, gives his obligations, loyalty and commitment to the state. The implementation of the pact does not presuppose class, but civic equality: equality of access and opportunities in state institutions and structures, and fairness and justice in the interactions between the state and individuals amongst individuals and in a political community (Adejumobi, 2001: 80-81).

CITIZENSHIP IN THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTION

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria confers citizenship on every Nigerian on “equal basis”. Both the 1979 and the 1999 constitutions guarantee that every Nigerian is free to reside in any part of the federation without hindrance. As explicitly expressed in Chapter III of the 1999 Constitution, the citizenship of Nigeria could be by birth, registration and naturalization. The constitution (1999) states that:

- (a) any person born in Nigeria before the date of independence (October 1, 1960), either of whose parents or any of whose grand-parents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria, is a citizen of the country.
- (b) every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and
- (c) every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.

The constitution further states in section 26(1-2) that:

Subject to the provision of section 28 of this Constitution,

a person to whom the provisions of this section apply may be registered as a citizen of Nigeria, if the President is satisfied that:

- (a) he is a person of good character;*
 - (b) he has shown a clear intention of his desire to be domiciled in Nigeria; and*
 - (c) he has taken the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the Seventh Schedule to this Constitution.*
- The provision of this section shall apply to:*
- (d) any woman who is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria; or*
 - (e) every person of full age and capacity born outside Nigeria any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria.*

There are also opportunities for naturalization as a citizen of Nigeria as explained by Section 27 (1-2) of the 1999 constitution:

Subject to the provision of section 28 of this Constitution, any person who is qualified in accordance with the provisions of this section may apply to the President for the grant of a certificate of naturalization.

The under mentioned are the conditions under which the citizenship of Nigeria is granted upon application to the president of the country. The applicant must prove that:

- (a) he is a person of full age and capacity;*
- (b) he is a person of good character;*
- (c) he has shown a clear intention of his desire to be domiciled in Nigeria;*
- (d) he is, in the opinion of the Governor of the State where he is or he proposes to be resident, acceptable to the local community in which he is to live permanently, and has been assimilated into the way of life of Nigerians in that part of the Federation;*
- (e) he is a person who has made or is capable of making useful contribution to the advancement, progress and well-being of Nigeria;*
- (f) he has taken the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the Seventh Schedule to this Constitution; and*
- (g) he has, immediately preceding the date of his application, either:*
 - (i) resided in Nigeria for a continuous period of fifteen years, or*
 - (ii) resided in Nigeria continuously for a period of twelve months, and during the period of twenty years immediately preceding that period of twelve months has resided in Nigeria for periods amounting in the aggregate to not less than fifteen years.*

The definition of citizenship in the constitution, as presented above and coupled with the provision of fundamental rights in Chapter IV of the same 1999 Constitution: the right to life, dignity of the human person, personal liberty, fair hearing, freedom of movement,

freedom from discrimination, etc., are instituted with the aim of promoting the “national political objectives of building a united and free society for all Nigerians, and to as much as possible promote reciprocal obligations between state and citizens” (CFCR, 2002: 5).

These objectives re-echo in many important national documents such as the Second National Development Plan. The Second Development Plan clearly stated that the goal of national development is to build a strong and buoyant economy, a free, democratic and egalitarian society in which no one is oppressed on the basis of sex, ethnic and religious differences (CFCR, 2002: 6).

However, in implementation and application, citizenship has become problematic. It could be likened to a mere nominal phenomenon, as Nigerians are largely denied citizenship rights. It is this experience that has made people to make sub-national identities the basis of support and real identification. Citizenship therefore in the Nigerian context has a dual derivative and the consequence of this is the indigene-settler syndrome with its attendant socio-economic and political struggles as found manifest in inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts in many parts of Nigeria.

More worrisome is the way and manner in which this syndrome is entrenching into the consciousness of Nigerian from all walks of life. For instance, a Nigerian whose parents or grandfather did not come from his place of residence will find it difficult to get elected or even appointed to a political office, even though he/she was born or has lived in that area for the whole of his/her life. In virtually all parts of the Nigerian state, the invocation of primordial sentiments and attachments as the basis for actual citizenship has become an increasingly visible feature of social interaction. The situation is pre-eminent in the political arena, as elite political groups continue to rely on this illogical and ambiguous understanding of migration and citizenship dynamics as available strategy to sensitise and mobilise people for socio-economic and political gains. The effects of this on the political economy of the country are unquantifiable. Less qualified people are elected or appointed to offices in place of more qualified and technocratic individuals who are not from the state where such elections or appointments are taking place.

Perhaps the most problematic of the citizenship question in Nigeria is the constitutional ambiguity that is conspicuous with regards to who is a citizen of the country. Yardsticks such as descent and birth are more pronounced in determining who a Nigerian citizen is and not place of livelihood or residence. The indigeneity clause in the 1979 constitution was used to legitimize discriminatory practices against Nigerians of certain ethnic and linguistic backgrounds living in states “other than their own”. To be an indigene of a state, your parents or grandparents must have been members of a

community indigenous to that particular state (CFCR, 2002: 7).

This issue of whose is a native of a place and who is not, metamorphosed into a major obstacle to the definition of the citizenship of Nigeria. Migrants who live outside their place of birth or their grandparents' hometown find it difficult to claim the citizenship of Nigeria, as the autochthonous people of such places always display attitudes or behaviours to remind the so called "settler" that "this is our own land and not your own". On the other hand, the migrants have also come to be convinced that one day they will return to their own home. Amongst the Yoruba ethnic group in Nigeria, there is a popular saying that: "Ile labo sinmi oko", meaning that after working on the farm, one normally returns home for rest; hence the Yoruba see any place other than where their parents originate from as a mere farmland where they had gone to look for daily bread but to return home at the end of the day's work. This orientation is applicable to other ethnic groups in the country. A typical Igbo man for instance will prefer to erect a building in his home town before thinking of doing such in Lagos, or Kano where he had lived all his life.

An attempt to remedy this citizenship problem by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is further truncated by the surreptitious inclusion of the indigeneity clause regarding the appointment of some public office holders (such as the ministers). The intention might be to forge for national cohesion through the operation of the federal character principle; but the implication it has for the proper implementation of citizenship rights as provided for by the same constitution makes it ambiguous. As lucidly stated in section 147 of the 1999 Constitution in sub-section (3):

Any appointment under subsection (2) of this section by the President shall be in conformity with the provisions of section 14(3) of this constitution: provided that in giving effect to the provisions aforesaid the President shall appoint at least one minister from each state, who shall be an indigene of such state.

The claimers to ownerships of their "native" homes are emboldened by the provisions of the constitution and the operation of same by the Nigerian state which is not in line with the universal application of citizenship and the rights accruable to the concepts. As observed by the Citizen's Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR, 2002: 9):

More often than not, so-called indigenes and natives are pitched against settlers in deadly confrontations over access to local power resources and questions of identity. To this extent these categories are used in a very negative manner to mobilize peoples sentiments and feelings that negate the national political objectives of integration and the evolution of a harmonious political

community.

The scenario described above is epitomized in the Ife/Modakeke conflict, the Zango-Kataf crisis, the Tiv-Jukun conflict, Bassa/Ebira and other ethno-communal strife that have dealt a heavy blow on the stability of the Nigerian State. A similar pattern of competition and contest has been the root of the Hausa/Fulani – Berom conflict in Jos North Local Government of Nigeria.

THE HAUSA/FULANI – BEROM CONFLICT IN FOCUS

Before the terrible communal clashes that took place on the 12th of April 1994, Jos, an ancient city in northern Nigeria was known for its tranquility and peaceful co-existence amongst diverse communities and groups. Thereafter, for almost a decade, Jos and its environs experience another cycle of long peace which was terminated by the September 7th, 2001 outbreak of hostilities and violent confrontations between the Berom – the majority indigenous ethnic group and the Anaguta and the Afizare the minority ethnic group on one hand and the migrant or settler Hausa/Fulani – the majority and other ethnic nationalities such as the Yoruba, Urhobo, Igbo, etc. on the other.

The September 2001, crisis and the attendant socio-economic and political relations among the people of Jos North has been subjected to various dimensions of interpretation. According to the report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the crisis, which was set up by the Plateau State government and received the blessing of the federal government of Nigeria, the crisis has both immediate and remote causes. The Justice Niki Tobi (who was then the presiding Justice of the Court of Appeal, Benin City, Nigeria and later Justice of the Supreme Court of the Federation) commission identify two major events as the immediate causes of the conflagration between September 7th and 12th, 2001 in Jos.

The first immediate cause of the crisis was the attempt and effort by one Miss Rhoda Haruna Nyam to pass through a road at Congo – Russia area of Jos on Friday 7th September 2001. Confrontation ensued when the Muslim congregation that have gathered for their Juma'at prayers in this area refused the lady to pass through the prayer ground.

As a matter of fact, it was agreed by the contending parties and indeed by all the witnesses who testified before the Commission of inquiry that the fracas which sparked off or set in motion the gruesome events of 7th to 12th September, 2001 occurred at the Congo-Russia area of Jos on a road just in front of a small mosque belonging to, Alhaji Tijani Abdullahi. It was a Friday and as was usually the case on all previous Friday afternoons since early 1996, the Muslims who normally held their Juma'at prayers there had gathered to pray when, Miss Rhoda

Haruna Nyam, a Christian, attempted to return to her place of work after the lunch break, as usual, through the portion of the road blocked by the worshipers. She was denied passage. These facts are echoed in virtually all the memoranda submitted to the judicial commission of inquiry which dealt with this aspect of the crisis. The only divergence in the evidence of the witnesses is in the details of exactly when and how the trouble began, whether or not Rhoda was attacked and the very material question of whose property was first destroyed before the fight spread to other parts of the city.

The second immediate cause of the Jos crisis was the appointment of Alhaji Mukhtar Usman Mohammed as the Chairman of the Local Government Monitoring Committee of the National Poverty Eradication for Jos North Local Government. By a letter dated 20th June 2001 and signed by the National Coordinator of the programme (NAPEP), Alhaji Mukhtar Mohammed was directed to convene and preside over the inaugural meeting of the Local Government Monitoring Committee of the NAPEP so as to facilitate the proper and immediate take-off of this laudable federal government established programme in Jos North Local Government council. He was also mandated to "oversee the NAPEP projects implementation, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation at the Local Government level".

However, Mukhtar's appointment was greeted by a lot of grievances and vehement oppositions. Certain groups in Jos North protested and wrote a lot of petitions to the Chairman of Jos North Local Government and the Governor of Plateau State calling for the immediate removal of Mukhtar as NAPEP Coordinator. The Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the crisis; reported that:

all of these protests are unanimous not only in their condemnation of the appointment on the basis that Mukhtar is not an indigene of Jos North Local Government Council, but also in their demand that he be removed and replaced with an indigene. While some of them are no more than passionate appeals for a review of the situation, others are more violent in their language and actually contain veiled, if not open threats to the peace of the area should the authorities ignore their demand.

They ("the indigenes") called on the authority to act "appropriately" in order to avoid crisis in the area. In particular, parts of the exhibits submitted to the commission reads:

We however call on the Government to urgently look into this matter for the interest of peace. Our peaceful posture should not be taken for granted.

On the other side of the divide is the Jasawa Development Association, a predominantly Hausa group, which wrote a letter dated 20th August, 2001 to the Executive Governor of Plateau State, defending Mukhtar's

appointment and urging that it be allowed to stand. The letter was also admitted in evidence as exhibit to the commission. The writers of the letter drew the Governor's attention to certain posters pasted in front of Mukhtar's office by some unidentified persons who were clearly opposed to his appointment. In making their case for the retention of Mukhtar's appointment, the Jasawa condemned any reference to him as a non-indigene of Jos North and gave instances of acts of marginalization of their Community by previous Governments in terms of appointments and the refusal by the then Chairman of Jos North local government council, Dr. Frank Tardy to give their members certificates of indigeneship.

Investigations into the Jos North crisis, which the Judicial Commission of Inquiry also corroborated, reveals that there were also a number of remote causes which precipitated the violent outbreak of hostilities among diverse groups of a hitherto serene and peaceful environment. Amongst these were the issue of who are the "true" owners of Jos; the alleged efforts at Islamization of Jos and Plateau State in general; a long standing animosity, mutual distrust and suspicion between the Fulanis and some Berom communities over the trespass of the Fulanis on their (these communities) farmlands. Other remote causes include: the practice or habits of blocking roads in their immediate vicinity of worship by both Christians and Moslems on Sundays and Fridays respectively; the complaint of imbalance in the delimitation of electoral wards by the Afizare, Anaguta and the Berom, in which they claim that the Hausas are unfairly favoured; and the failure of government to implement the recommendations of the Justice J. Aribiton Fiberesima's Commission of Inquiry into the riots, demonstrations and counter-demonstrations that took place in Jos metropolis on 12th April, 1994; the issue of indigeneship which had caused so much bad blood between the Afizare, Anaguta, Berom – who claim to be the only indigenes, and the Hausa-Fulani group – who are also claiming to be indigenes in addition to the former three groups.

Many scholars and policy makers had attempted to analyse the Jos crisis as to the factors responsible for the dispute, and several interpretations had been offered. There are dimensions alluding to the role or impact of socio-cultural, religious and political factors in the crisis (Sha, 2005; Goshit, 2006; Higazi, 2007). This paper however argues that the constellation of both the remote and immediate causes into the 1994, 2001 and other crises in Jos North reveals that constitutional ambiguity, imprecise and improper definition of citizenship by both the 1979 and especially 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, is a also major contributing factor in the crisis and this also applies to other similar cases elsewhere in the federation of Nigeria. There is no law in Nigeria which deals directly with the issue of indigeneship, either at the Federal or Plateau State levels. All those using indigeneship as a basis for categorisation and identity in the political, social and economic spheres in any state of the federation has

no legal or lawful basis to do so. But most often than not, they claim that what they do or demand for is what is in vogue and practiced in other parts of the country.

So, the role of the state through the constitution comes to the fore here. The report of the highly esteemed panel of inquiry into the Jos crisis was of the understanding that the Nigerian state does not respond to issues of public concern swiftly until such issues become highly volatile and problematic. As rightly observed by the commission:

We think the time has come when, for the good of our society, our laws ought to be respected and enforced. It is our view that had the authorities acted swiftly and decisively when the residents of Congo-Russia cried out persistently against the blockage of roads for religious reasons, one of the major causes of religious antagonism between Christians and Muslims would have been eliminated at a very early stage.

It is no longer in dispute that the 1999 Constitution is essentially flawed and hence the attempt at a review. The process of this review as being presently organized by the federal government is shallow, elitist and restrictive, and does not involve the people of the country (Igbuzor, 2002: 10). The Constitution should therefore be made to provide answers to some of the critical issues disconcerting the federation of Nigeria, as it is only a people's constitution they would significantly address these problems (Igbuzor, 2002: 10).

Regarding the movement of Nigerians across the length and breath of the federation, the constitution needs amendment in order to confer citizenship rights and privileges on all Nigerians irrespective of state of origin and place or region of residence. The constitution should be made to tell all contending parties in the Jos North crisis that every person either of the Berom, Afizare, Hausa, Anaguta, Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo or Urhobo origin, is a citizen of Nigeria. It then logically follows that anybody so found qualified by the constituted authority can become the coordinator of Jos North Local Government National Poverty Eradication programme and any other public agency for that matter. The constitution should be made to unequivocally and explicitly state that the home of a Nigerian citizen is the place that he/she has found conducive for residence and livelihood. Hence, the Jos North people would understand that they are at liberty to vote and be voted for any person or group of persons of their choice irrespective of whether he/she is from Oyo State or Plateau State; whether he/she is an Hausa, Berom, Igbo or Itshekiri.

Conclusion

Both in conceptual definition and in application, citizenship has become a manor problem in Nigeria. It is at the forefront of the indigene-settler imbroglio that has been responsible for many inter-communal and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. The pluralistic nature of the Nigerian

federalism has meant that people would but move across the length and breadth of the country.

Either due to the pull or the push factors, the consequence of this migration is expected to be of great benefit in terms of national cohesion, integration and the building of an enduring nation-state.

The imprecise and ambiguous conceptualization of citizenship in both the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions of Nigeria, and its application and practice in the Nigerian sense, has continued to hamper the process of national integration. Consequently, there is always a sorry tale by Nigerians who find themselves in areas other than their places of origin within the federal republic. As practically illustrated by the Berom and Hausa-Fulani crisis in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, migration and citizenship crisis in Nigeria has resulted in many monumental conflict with their attendant loss of lives and destruction of properties worth millions of Naira.

Genuine and sincere constitutional amendment becomes imperative in order to adequately define citizenship in terms of the universal application irrespective of where the Nigerian was born or originated from. Regardless of the state of origin, the Nigerian citizenship should be statutorily made tenable to all Nigerians with the entire associated rights and privileges. In the words of Paul Adujie, 2009:

A citizen of Nigeria is a citizen of the locality and state, which such Nigerian has adopted and where such Nigerian has lived in, meaningful and where such Nigeria may choose and such Nigerian has demonstrated and indicated, whether she is Adamu, Bola or Chima! And this, definition should be regardless of whether Adamu's grandparents were originally from Kaduna as Adamu has chosen Lagos as his home state, from where he can be the best Nigerian he can be. This will be regardless of whether Bola's parents or grandparents are originally from Ondo, and now, Bola has adopted Yobe State as her home state, Yobe would suffice for Bola. And Chima should be free to create wealth, health and happiness in Ogbomosho, regardless of the fact that his grandparents and parents were originally from Nnewi or Oguta. A Nigerian's home state should be where he chooses.

It is this explicit definition of citizenship of Nigeria and the readiness and willingness of the state to summon the political will to address whatever constitutional ambiguity through peoples orientated governance, that will form the bedrock of democratic stability and the practice of true federalism in Nigeria.

Evidences at the Justice Niki Tobi led Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Civil Disturbances in Jos and its Environ in 2001 which submitted its report in 2002, brought to the fore the level of acrimony among the ethnic groups in jos. This paper find the report very illuminating in assessing the level of citizenship crises in Jos and other parts of the Nigerian State.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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