

Regional Agitations in Nigeria: Challenge to Democracy, National Cohesion and Nigeria's Sovereignty

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Abstract

Very few studies in the literature have examined the effect of regional agitations on democracy in Nigeria, national cohesion, and Nigeria's sovereignty, especially in developing economies like that of Nigeria. Thus, amounting to a gap of knowledge in the literature. To close this knowledge dearth, this study examined the effect of regional agitations in Nigeria on the democracy in Nigeria, national cohesion, and Nigeria's sovereignty. To this effect, two hypotheses were developed in null form for testing after a review of literature. Using questionnaires that were modified from those written by various writers, data were gathered from participants. Study participants of this study comprised members of five communities in Rivers State – Eleme, Okrika, Opobo and Oyigbo. Questionnaires were distributed using simple random sampling to the respondents of the study. A total of 184 copies of questionnaire were used for analysis using structural equation modelling on Smart PLS2. The study found out that regional agitations in Nigeria have negative influence on democracy in Nigeria, national cohesion, and Nigeria's sovereignty. Consequently, increase in regional agitations in Nigeria will lead to decrease to democracy in Nigeria, national cohesion, and Nigeria's sovereignty. Therefore, the study recommends that the federal and state governments in Nigeria work to ensure that all citizens feel that their voices are heard and valued. This can be done by devolving power to state and local governments, giving them more control over their own affairs, and engaging citizens in meaningful dialogue about the issues that affect them.

Keywords: Regional agitations, national democracy, national cohesion, Nigeria's sovereignty.

Introduction

It goes without saying that Nigeria's long period of military control had a horrible effect on the people's standard of living, sense of purpose, and belief in their own sovereignty. These effects are substantially reflected in her current socioeconomic stagnation, particularly on the periphery of national growth. The thriving democracy that has been ushered in over the past 20 years may not have lessened Nigeria's problems in terms of social, political, economic, and other areas, despite the fact that the long military rule left little to be desired, no thanks to violations of human rights and restrictions on freedom of speech (Egugbo, 2020). For instance, there are more protests now than there were at the beginning of the 4th Republic in Nigeria (Eluozo, 2019). The scenario is depressing as well as illuminating on the issues and difficulties associated with Nigerian nation-building. Although many people may not agree that democracy cannot solve all of a country's issues, it is nevertheless important to understand what the fundamental reason for unrest in Nigeria is. In order to adequately respond to this query, it is necessary to examine the Nigerian Republic's organisational structure and how it could have contributed to underlying national problems. Understanding the philosophical perspective of the socioeconomic issues of nation-building in Nigeria requires comprehending this overview in detail.

Nationalities existed historically before Nigeria was created in 1914, when the Southern and Northern Protectorates merged (Mbalisi & Okeke, 2021). These nationalities are best described in terms of existentialism as separate countries connected by freedom of choice, a shared sense of purpose and meaning in life, and awareness of one's own existence as well as that of others. The fact that they engaged in foreign hostilities attests to their independence before union (Paine, 2019).

In order to facilitate the administration of what would eventually grow to be the greatest black country in Africa, colonial supremacists subjugated various nations rather than unifying them to form Nigeria. Insight into the independent status of many ethnic groups before colonisation may be found, for instance, in Paine's (2019) assessment of ethnic instability or violence in Africa and the catastrophic legacy of pre-colonial states. Paine claimed that the cultural legacies of these independent kingdoms had been "destroyed" by the colonial activities of the late 19th century. So, the Nigeria of today was only a bureaucratic creation by the British, not a sociocultural gathering of people with similar or common origin, culture, mission, or aspirations. This is what happened to the nation and sovereign state known as Nigeria, whose multicoloured character permeated nearly every part of daily life and set the stage for agitations.

The multi-ethnic makeup of the Nigerian state is one of its structural characteristics that immediately attracts the attention of careful observers. Nigeria was created as a direct result of colonialism (Odum, 2016a). Many communities had functioned independently inside the enormous territory that thus became a part of the Nigerian project before the invasion of the colonialists. Mimiko and Adeyemi (2005) refer to the nation as "a merger of numerous and generally independent ethnic nations that had existed under different governmental configurations, including empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms, city-states, and caliphates." Similar to the majority of other multi-ethnic African governments that underwent colonial rule, the colonial masters united the diverse populations without getting their approval.

The troublesome nature of this forced marriage and its evident rejection by the diverse stakeholders started to materialise even before colonial rule came to an end, as shown by the political character of the parties formed during the time frame and the philosophies encased in the Northernisation policy (Balogun, 1983). Awolowo (1947) proclaimed the name "Nigeria" to be just a geographical phrase, probably in response to the obvious instances that suggested mutual mistrust, animosity, and disintegration. Nigeria kept her "united" status at independence despite the festering suppurations. Yet, the Nigerian leaders who succeeded the colonial rulers did not only fall short of fostering true unity among the constituent groups, but they also made choices that increased the impression of division in the state. Consequently, warning indications of impending disaster emerged as early as the country's first decade of independence, when separatist movements first appeared.

In order to maintain her unity, Nigeria engaged in a civil war. Although the administration first chose to handle the issue through conversation and a peaceful resolution, she quickly changed her mind and chose to maintain the country's unity through force—in the same way it was founded. As the nation grew older, a number of issues that threatened its unity continued to arise, but the government remained steadfast in its commitment to preserving the union by force, and as a result, it disregarded the possibility of (re)negotiation. There are clear signs that the country's unity still exists solely in rhetorical terms and has failed to permeate the minds of the various peoples fifty years after the Nigerian government rejected the route of negotiation and began the battle of "unity." The government's stance has not altered, and she claims that the country's unity is fixed and unchangeable despite obvious signs that it has not yet achieved real unity and recent separatist movements. Who will be involved in "settling" the problem and how it will be done are yet unknown. It also continues to be unclear how authors like Oche (2015) came to the conclusion that the majority of Nigerians appear to be in favour of the nation continuing to be a political entity. Notwithstanding what the administration may claim, it is clear that Nigeria is struggling to maintain its unity, as seen by the threats and separatist agitations emanating from various parts of the nation. The fact is that if talks about unification were to be put on hold, one of two things would happen: either the nation would erupt in a way that would be extremely catastrophic, or it would remain forcibly together with the calm of a graveyard. As a result, these regional agitations may have an impact on Nigeria's democracy, sense of unity, and sovereignty.

Despite these reported links in the literature regarding how the regional agitations in Nigeria may affect democracy, national cohesion, and sovereignty, very few studies in the literature have actually empirically examined these relationships. Other related studies focused on other issues. For example, Igboke (2020) did a study on agitations for regime change and political restructuring: Implications on national integration and development in Nigeria. On the other hand, Mbanefo (2021) carried out a study on agitations for separation and the non-negotiability of Nigeria's unity. Finally, Abegunde (2013) examined ethnic militancy and democracy in Nigeria. Consequently, very little is known about the effect of regional agitations on democracy, national cohesion, and sovereignty. This has thus led to a significant dearth of knowledge in the literature. This study is thus carried out to fill this knowledge. Hence, this study will assess the effect of regional agitations in Nigeria on democracy, national cohesion, and Nigeria's sovereignty.

Research Objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

- i. To examine the effect of regional agitations effect on national democracy in Nigeria.
- ii. To assess the effect of regional agitations on national cohesion in Nigeria.
- iii. To examine the effect of regional agitations on the sovereignty of Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed in null form for testing:

H01: Regional agitations has no significant effect on national democracy in Nigeria.

H02: Regional agitations has no significant effect on national cohesion in Nigeria.

H03: Regional agitations has no significant effect on the sovereignty of Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The Democratic Consent Theories' adherents, according to Tom (2015), agree that there is, to some degree, a direct connection between democracy and formal power. inevitably associated legitimacy, and when someone agrees to the formation of a political community, they unavoidably agree to the use of majority rule in determining how the political community is to be organized. These are the relevant presumptions we can glean from the theory traced to John Locke for the intent of this paper. The main objection to the idea is that it treats the majority's approval as if it were universal. The reason for this is that because the majority dominates the vote, even if the minority had a differing view and was vehemently opposed to the majority's position, they were still obligated by the ruling and were deemed to have granted consent in an equal amount. But it is important to keep in mind that, as Nwanegbo (2016) pointed out, there is a necessary connection between democracy and good governance, which is defined by, among other things, inclusion, equality, the rule of law, openness, and accountability. If we assume that this is true, then it follows that good governance makes sure that minorities' interests and worries are taken into consideration, even when doing so requires abiding by the choices of the majority.

Notwithstanding the critiques, the Democratic Consent Theory seems to be quite applicable to this study. To discuss the issue of Nigeria's unity, it would be necessary to ascertain whether, when, and how the consent of the people had been gained prior to arriving at the Nigerian project. In light of this, it is easy to ask whether or not the pronoun "we," which is present in the Nigerian constitution and upon which the government must have founded its justification for unity, is suitable. This hypothesis would be useful in establishing if the assertion that Nigeria's unity is non-negotiable and already resolved was made by the people or by those who lacked the authority to do so. Also, this will aid in evaluating the Nigerian state's democratic component, particularly in relation to good governance.

Conceptual Clarifications

Democracy

The word "democracy" was first used in Greek in the fifteenth century to describe a form of governance based on the "rule of the people." There are two primary types of democracy in the modern world. These two types of democracy are concerned with how the entire body of eligible persons uses their right to vote. There are two types of democracy: direct democracy and representative democracy. Direct democracy is a procedure that enables all eligible individuals to directly and actively participate in governmental decision-making. In a direct democracy, the whole body of all eligible citizens maintains sovereign authority, whereas in a representative democracy, political power is indirectly exercised through elected representatives. It is a form of popular administration where the people, or their chosen representatives, hold ultimate authority after a transparent and free election process. Although there is no universally accepted definition of democracy, it is crucial to remember that equality, freedom, and the rule of law have always been fundamental components of the system from its origin in antiquity. Democracy therefore stands in contrast to forms of administration where authority is either centralised, as in the case of a monarchy, or controlled by a small number of people, as in an oligarchy. It is ironic that in order to symbolise democracy, the architects of contemporary and emerging democracies have blended aspects of oligarchy, monarchy, and democracy.

Democracy has grown to be a very popular form of administration in most of the world's countries despite the shortcomings associated with it due to the positive attitudes related to it. According to Huntington (1991), the third wave of democratisation, which saw many nations of the world yearning to join the democratic system—whether truly or pretentiously—was the catalyst for the shift that gave rise to its enormous popularity. According to Fukuyama (2011), just 45 of the then-existing 151 nations were considered to be under democratic influence in 1973, but by the late 1990s, that number had increased to roughly 120. According to Nnoli (2011), democracy has

grown to be a highly prized ideal to the point that even nations with blatantly divergent political ideologies and those that are violent, tyrannical, and unjust but desire to defend their actions claim it. According to Omelle (2005), democracy is still the finest form of government that has ever been created by humans.

There are several definitions of democracy proposed by academics, but the most basic and well-known one is the one attributed to Abraham Lincoln, which sums it up as "government of the people, by the people, for the people" (Nnoli, 2011). The importance of the people in a democratic system is the common thread connecting many formulations of the idea, as may be inferred from the body of current literature.

As a result, Jinadu (2007) believes it appropriate to raise the issue of "whose democracy?" in order to determine if a certain administration has democratic substance or not, whereas Nnoli (2011) discusses demystifying the people. This implies that a democratic government's actions must correspond with the people's desires and choices.

Agitation, Separation, Unity, Non-Negotiability

Hornby (2015) provides a broad overview of their meanings. A state of being united together to create one unit, or a state of agreement and cooperation, is referred to as unity. In this article, we are not merely examining the act of unification or the shared territorial existence of people. Before claiming that there is unity, there must be proof of harmonious cohabitation and shared goals. As a result, we cannot claim that there is unity in a setting where there are frequent instances of disunity. Being split is the exact opposite of being unified; hence, it is impossible to claim to be in unity when there are obvious signs of separation.

Agitation refers to outspoken demonstrations aimed at influencing changes to the law or to societal norms. There are a variety of agitations taking place in Nigeria, including those that concern the expansion of the number of states, gender equality, the release of the Chibok girls, pay increases, resource management, breaking away from Nigeria and establishing a sovereign state, etc. Here, we are addressing the problem of people staging demonstrations in public to obtain permission to leave Nigeria and establish their own independent state.

Simply put, to negotiate is to make an effort to come to a consensus through formal dialogue. Threats or the use of force are prohibited. The goal is to come to a consensus position that all sides can support. Essentially, non-negotiability implies excluding the likelihood of reaching an understanding through such a formal conversation. The assertion that Nigeria's unity is predetermined and unassailable implies that the status quo must be preserved and that further debate on the subject must be avoided.

Regional Agitations in Nigeria

Other separatist agitations have been eclipsed by the Biafra agitations, giving the erroneous impression that Biafra is the only threat from separatists in the country. It is a fact that there are separatist movements in practically every part of Nigeria, which shows how unstable the country's foundation still remains. For instance, among the Yoruba, there are undertones of separatism that range from those calling for the Oduduwa Republic to those calling for a sovereign national conference to decide whether or not the nation's federating units still want to live together and, if so, under what circumstances (Adibe, 2017). There are periodic demands for the Arewa Republic, and some individuals refer to the "north" as a nation inside a nation. Separatist undertones may be detected in the Niger Delta's calls for "resource management," in addition to the desire for a "Niger Delta Republic" from local activists. In essence, there is a very pervasive feeling of alienation and discontent among the members of the many Nigerian federations, which has increased distrust and stoked separatist agitations (Ojo, 2019). It is impossible to tell if the leaders of the various separatist parties actually reflect the aspirations of the population of those regions or whether the agitations are just fronts for furthering other agendas, though, because none of the regions pushing for independence have ever had a referendum.

The Kaduna Declaration, which gave the Igbos until October 1, 2017, to leave the 19 northern states, was published on June 6 by a group of northern youths acting under the auspices of the Coalition of Arewa Youths. They claimed that an inventory of the Igbos' belongings in the north would be gathered and seized after the deadline expired. The so-called Kaduna Declaration increased tensions and the socioeconomic gap among Nigerians (Adibe, 2017).

Although no studies on the economic effects of these tensions and separatist agitations are known to exist, it is possible to assume that they are slowing down trade. For instance, there were rumours that certain Igbos who control the retail trade in numerous northern towns had already started moving to the east immediately after the quit notice for the Igbos (Adekunle, 2020). Given the amount of tension and standoffs, it may also be predicted that the northerners who predominate the cattle trading market in the southeast will be very cautious.

Empirical Review

Aladekomo researched secessionist activities in Nigeria, the escalation of secessionist agitations, and the status of global human rights law in 2021. Since Nigeria's independence, the Yoruba and Igbo ethnic majority, which is native to southern Nigeria as well as some areas of northern Nigeria, has agitated for secession from the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Our study begins by examining these persistent protests and demonstrations. Information for the study is gathered from primary and secondary sources in both local and national forums using a theological methodology. It is found that a popular movement for secession or a self-determination referendum is an intrinsic, fundamental, and transnational right under international law and Nigerian municipal law; these movements, however, must be carried out legally.

Resource control in the Niger Delta was the main topic of Abegunde's (2013) study on ethnic militancy and democracy in Nigeria. This article looks into the disputed distribution and management of resources within the contemporary democratic federation of Nigeria.

It asserts that political or economic agitation for resource control is closely tied to ethnic militancy. The article argues that real federalism and efficient administration in Nigeria must be achieved through constructive transfer of power at the municipal level in order to guarantee that the federating units have full influence over the wealth created from the mineral wealth in their areas.

Mbanefo (2020) examined the separatist and intransigent forces opposed to Nigeria's unity. This article examines the basis of Nigeria's unity, the template of togetherness between the different groups within the Nigerian state in connection with the extent to which they display a predilection for, as well as factors that continue to advocate against, national reconciliation, the method in which the government encourages national unity, and the factors that fuel separatist tendencies. It achieves this by relying on facts, observations, and descriptive analysis. The findings of this paper indicate that the failure to foster a feeling of belonging and public conscience among the different groups, the continuing motivation of inter-ethnic hatred and unhealthy competition, poor leadership based on corrupt practices, and disunity are the major causes of the agitation for separation.

Research on the effects of political agitations and restructuring on Nigeria's national integration and development was conducted by Igboke in 2020. The primary goal of this essay was to examine the effects of ethnic group agitation on national integration and development in Africa. The research also examines the relationship between leadership failure and Nigerian growth. The research, which examined agitations and violence among ethnic groups in Nigeria, was founded on the structural functionalism hypothesis. According to this idea, the political system must be restructured in order for each of its constituent parts to work efficiently for the sake of sustainable development. The study heavily relied on information that was taken from secondary sources, including books, the internet, magazines, newspapers, journals, etc. The report concluded that ethnic tension and conflict posed a threat to national growth and integration, citing examples such as the militant Niger Delta movement and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The study came to the conclusion that national integration was the cornerstone of Nigerian peace and progress.

Methodology

A cross-sectional research design was used in the study because it was thought to be the most appropriate given that longitudinal surveys need more time to complete than cross-sectional surveys do (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Individuals residing in four specifically chosen villages in Rivers State made up the population of this research (Eleme, Okrika, Opobo, and Oyigbo, 2020). The population of the study is thought to be unlimited because there are hundreds of thousands of people living in these villages. As a result, 200 residents of these localities served as the study's sample. For the study, primary sources of data were employed. A questionnaire was used to obtain the data. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed personally to the participating respondents of the study using simple random sampling.

Using composite reliability, the instrument's internal reliability was evaluated. The variables were independently assessed to ascertain if the survey items used for the study were sufficiently trustworthy. The results showed that the items measuring each latent construct exhibited internal consistency, as shown by their composite reliability coefficient, which is greater than 0.7. (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The items that made up the study's measurement variables were modified from the original designs. A total of 184 copies of the questionnaire were returned by respondents and used for further analysis. The 184 questionnaires that were obtained from respondents make up 84% of the study's overall sample size and are deemed appropriate for further research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The study utilized structural equation modeling to analyze the data collected for the study, which was processed on Smart PLS2.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Construct Reliability and Validity (Measurement Model) n=184

Construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Agitations	AG1	0.71	0.56	0.88
	AG2	0.72		
	AG3	0.74		
	AG4	0.71		
Nigeria's Democracy	ND1	0.77	0.55	0.89
	ND2	0.76		
	ND3	0.75		
	ND4	0.76		
National Cohesion	NC1	0.73	0.51	0.85
	NC2	0.73		
	NC3	0.78		
	NC4	0.76		
Nigeria's Sovereignty	NS1	0.76	0.54	0.85
	NS2	0.77		
	NS3	0.70		
	NS4	0.72		

Note: AVE represents Average Variance Extracted; CR represents Composite Reliability.

Table 1 displays the constructs used in the study's validity and reliability. In accordance with Garson's advice, construct reliability and convergent validity were examined using composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (2016). Lee and Chen (2013) state that the AVE coefficient should be 0.5 and the composite reliability coefficient should be 0.7 (Garson). Items must have loadings larger than 0.5 (Hair et al. 2014). Each item met the basic benchmark requirements for item loadings (item loadings of 0.5), composite reliability (item loadings of 0.7), and AVE, as shown in Table 1. (i.e., 0.5). As a consequence, it is believed that the items in Table 1 exhibit validity and reliability. The data were next subjected to a discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Discriminant Validity using Fornell-larckercriterion (n=184)

		1	2	3	5
1	Agitations	0.75			
2	Nigeria's Democracy	0.37	0.74		
4	National Cohesion	0.42	0.10	0.71	
5	Nigeria's Sovereignty	0.38	0.08	0.05	0.73

Note: The bolded diagonal numbers represents the square root of the AVE of each latent construct.

The study used the Fornell-Larcker criterion to demonstrate the discriminant validity of AVE. For discriminant validity to exist, the square root of the AVE must be larger than its correlation with other latent variables (Garson, 2016). The AVE's square root for each latent component is shown in bold in Table 2. The AVE square roots of each concept are larger than the correlations with other latent constructs. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the data was discriminantly valid. To assess the study's hypotheses, the structural model was computed, and the data were bootstrapped 5,000 times.

Table 3

Direct Path Coefficient

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta Value	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Value	Decision
H ₀₁	AG->ND	-0.45	0.07	-6.43***	0.00	Rejected
H ₀₂	AG->NC	-0.32	0.08	-4.01***	0.00	Rejected
H ₀₃	AG->NS	-0.39	0.07	-5.57***	0.00	Rejected
R Square	0.56					

*** p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p <0.1

Regional Agitations (AG) have a negative relationship with the national democracy in Nigeria (ND), significant at less than 1 percent ($\beta = -0.45, p < 0.01$). Hence, an increase in regional agitations will lead to a corresponding and significant decrease in the democracy of Nigeria. Thus, H01, which states that regional agitations have no significant effect on national democracy in Nigeria, is rejected. In addition, Regional Agitations (AG) are negatively and significantly related to the National Cohesion in Nigeria (NC) at less than 1 percent ($\beta = -0.32, p < 0.01$). To this end, an increase in regional agitations will lead to a corresponding and significant decrease in national cohesion in Nigeria. Thus, this study empirically rejects H02, which states that regional agitations have no significant effect on national cohesion in Nigeria. Finally, regional agitations (AG) are negatively and significantly related to the sovereignty of Nigeria (NS) at less than 1 percent ($\beta = -0.39, p < 0.01$). Consequently, an increase in regional agitations will lead to a corresponding and significant decrease in the sovereignty of Nigeria. Thus, this study empirically rejects H03, which states that regional agitations have no significant effect on the sovereignty of Nigeria. R square 56 percent, which means 56 percent variance in the democracy of Nigeria, national cohesion, and sovereignty of Nigeria are accounted for alone by regional agitations in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study discovered a detrimental association between regional unrest in Nigeria and its democracy. Hence, the existence of agitations like Biafra, Oodua, and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) has eroded national democracy and damaged national unity. These agitations have divided the nation's diverse ethnic groups and heightened the level of mistrust and hostility between distinct geographic areas.

As a result, there is now a climate of violence and instability that has undermined democratic institutions and procedures. Regional unrest has also reduced the number of individuals who vote in national elections since people are less likely to vote when they believe their region isn't being represented. As a result, the legitimacy of the Nigerian government and the efficiency of democracy in the nation have both decreased.

The study also discovered that regional unrest has a negative and considerable impact on Nigeria's national cohesiveness. Increased conflicts between various areas and ethnic groups can result from particular groups becoming more outspoken in their demands when they believe their interests are not effectively represented at the national level. Regional upheavals can also result in greater political engagement and participation in the national conversation, which may eventually result in more inclusive policies and better representation for all. Eventually, regional unrest in Nigeria may have both beneficial and negative effects on national cohesion; therefore, it's critical for the government to make sure it can strike a balance between these conflicting interests in order to strengthen national cohesion.

Regional unrest in Nigeria does affect the country's sovereignty in both direct and indirect ways. Increased demands for independence or autonomy may directly result in separatist movements, which may pose a challenge to Nigeria's sovereignty by weakening the nation-state and casting doubt on the unity of the country. Such agitations may also result in civil unrest and violence, which might harm the country's social structure and make it more difficult for the government to uphold law and order. Moreover, separatist movements may cause investors to lose confidence in the stability of the country, which would limit foreign investment and negatively impact economic activity. Regional unrest may potentially significantly affect Nigeria's sovereignty on a more indirect basis. For instance, growing regionalism may result in a decline in the strength of the national government and an increase in regional power. This might lead to a situation where regional administrations have the ability to contest the legitimacy of the federal government, undermining the sovereignty of the whole country. Moreover, regional unrest can cause the country to become divided as various areas adopt distinct policies that may clash with those of the central government and one another. This might exacerbate differences already present throughout the country, compromising national cohesion and the viability of the nation-state.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the study concludes that regional agitations in Nigeria have a negative and significant effect on democracy in Nigeria, national cohesion, and the sovereignty of Nigeria. The government should take a variety of actions to lessen regional unrest and safeguard Nigeria's democracy, national unity, and sovereignty. First and foremost, the government needs to make sure that everyone feels heard and respected. This may be accomplished by delegating more authority to state and local governments, allowing them to manage their own affairs better, and encouraging individuals to participate in substantive conversations about the topics that matter to them. The government should also establish public discussion and debate venues and promote citizen participation in them. The government should also work to narrow the gap in economic prosperity across the various parts of the nation. This may be accomplished by offering possibilities for economic growth in economically underdeveloped areas and investing in social services and infrastructure there. Finally, the government must guarantee that all residents have access to top-notch services, including healthcare, education, and

other necessities. The government may contribute to the development of a more cohesive, prosperous, and just society by making investments in various sectors. Fourth, through public festivities, remembrances, and other activities, the government should seek to foster a sense of oneness among the country. This can lessen tensions in the region and foster a sense of national identity and common purpose.

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