

Ethno-Religious Conflicts and the Dilemma of Democratic Sustainability in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria in the last decade has been characterized by crisis of ethnic and religious dimensions. The nature of the Nigerian state seems to be not only responsible for the regrettably deepening ethno-religious crisis that have become endemic, pervasive and unfortunate, but also is increasingly proving incapable of evolving credible and competent strategies that should address this ugly trend. Indeed since 1966, the Nigerian state has embarked on structural reforms aimed largely at addressing inter-ethnic relations. While reforms like federalism and state creation have transformed the Nigerian state on one hand, they have not been able to fundamentally address the problem of ethnic mobilization and conflict. The inability of successive governments to demonstrate capacity to handle the country's multifaceted socio-economic and political challenges has exacerbated the ethnic and religious identity conflicts made worse by several years of bad governance. The pertinent questions to ask therefore are: To what extent can ethnic and religious conflicts be said to be expressions of cultural and religious differences? And how has ethnic and religious conflict impacted on the sustenance of democratic governance in Nigeria? This paper adopts the instrumentalist model as an analytical tool in understanding the contingent situational and circumstantial use of ethnicity and religion in the pursuit of material advantage. Among other recommendations, Nigerian democracy should strengthen its institutional frameworks and structures to a broad based popular and participatory brand that will give the people a sense of belonging. It requires a reorientation of the elite towards production rather than consumption, as this will reduce tension, acrimony and conditions that predispose Nigerians to the vulnerability of ethnic and religious manipulations. Thus, the promotion of democratic principles of representation of all nationalities and interests in the governance process can enhance the sustainability of democracy.

Keywords: ethnicity, religion, conflict, democracy, governance, democratic sustainability, Nigeria

Introduction

This work begins with the premise that the guarantee of the primacy of the general good of a group largely constitutes the main task liberalism assigns to the leadership of any socio-political group. Thus, the nature and constitution of the state are very important and central in the realization of this general good. It therefore implies that if the state itself is unstable, hegemonic and illegitimate, there is often the tendency of instability and crisis arising from the unhealthy rivalry often associated with such a state. Obviously, the stability of a system is guaranteed when it evolved from the platform of consensus and fair play. We quickly make the point here that the Nigerian reality is one that boycotted the due course of legitimization at its formation and this has portended serious consequences for its stability and the sustainability of democratic practice.

Democracy and the democratic practice in Nigeria have been at the crossroads, and national development, manifested in the inscrutable imagination of Nigeria's national development planners, has not radically been achieved. Subsequently, political instability, ethno-religious tensions, abject poverty, acute youth unemployment, heightened crime rate, poor health prospects, widespread national insecurity, and so on, have become the main features of Nigeria's political economy. It is within this prism that the country has continued to experience a great deal of ethnic and religious conflicts since the inception of its nationhood. Some analysts have explained these conflicts in the context of the differences in traditional values, political attitudes and perspectives on authority. Others have concluded that the groups in Nigeria are irreconcilably predetermined not only to competition but conflict and crises and therefore Nigeria's contemporary problems are inevitable consequences of primordial loyalties and attachments. Although the potency of these propositions in affecting the political system and nation building cannot be underestimated, it must be stated immediately that in themselves alone, they are not sufficient prerequisites for intergroup conflicts and the emergence of ethnic and religious conflicts.

It is on this note that the paper examines the phenomenon of ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria and takes the stand that though conflicts are a perennial feature of all human societies, their persistence has affected the institutionalization and sustenance of democratic practice especially as increasingly as the failure to manage them effectively and precisely is attributable to the state's inability to handle political and economic governance and the absence of a democratic culture at the leadership level. The central thesis of this paper therefore is that the absence of effective and efficient governance in Nigeria is responsible for ethno-religious conflict and this has affected democratic practice and sustainability.

Conceptual Clarifications

Ethnicity

A cursory look at the social composition and organization of nearly all extant nation-states suggest that they are rarely modern societies, culturally homogenous (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1992). According to Osaghae (1992), ethnicity refers to a social formation resting upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology. It denotes a group of individuals who consider themselves or are considered by others to share common characteristics which differentiate them from other collectivities within a society. Despres (1975) has earlier stated that ethnicity is a largely subjective process of status

identification. Ethnic groups are formed to the extent that the actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for the purpose of interaction and competition for social resources. Aleyomi (2012) has opined that ethnic groups are fluid in composition and subject to changes in definition and they tend to have myths of common origin, and ideologies. It is a pattern of relationship which tends to develop among members of a distinct group when they coexist and interact on the basis of their ethnic groups. Ethnicity can be seen as an interaction or relationship that exists among people of different ethnic groups who decide to base their relationship on difference, which normally brings about competition on issues like power and wealth (Fawole and Bello, 2011).

It therefore follows that ethnicity is the contextual discrimination by members of one ethnic group against the others in the competition or struggle for resources within a nation-state and this often results in conflict.

Nnoli (1998) had put this rather succinctly:

Ethnicity and ethnic conflicts have acquired a bad reputation of the potential inherent in ethnic conflict to split society into different states. The need to preserve the territorial integrity of the state against secession and irredentism inevitably involves the state in a war. The attendant loss of lives, destruction of property and dislocation of populations and development projects are usually unacceptable to local and international opinion. (p. 26)

Ethnicity is often interchangeably used with tribe and tribalism but scholars such as Wallerstein Cohen and others associate ethnicity with the modern, urban setting leaving tribe and tribalism to relate to primitive or traditional setting. Though it appears that ethnicity in Nigeria originated in the colonial era, the contention also is that inter-ethnic competition for the crumbs from colonial production in the urban centers was the major motivating factor for the emergence of ethnicity.

Religion

Religion, much more than ethnicity, is a difficult concept to define and conceptualize. Egwu (2001) notes that this is not only because of the problem of objectivity encountered by the scholar because of the emotion-laden nature of the concept but also because of the difficulty of penetrating the inner essence of religion. Aleyomi (2002) has argued that there is a belief that there is an unseen order and that our supreme good lies harmoniously and we are adjusting ourselves to this being. Connelly (1946) had earlier opined that religion should be seen in terms of the sacred and spiritual. He asserts further that religion originates in an attempt to represent an order, beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses.

Yinger (1994) refers to religion as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggle with the ultimate problem of human life-suffering, injustice and meaninglessness. Apam (2011) has posited that both conservative and revolutionary strands can be found within one particular religion as it is well exemplified by the two dominant religions in Nigeria – Islam and Christianity. Religion has provided the vehicle for mobilizing discontents of the oppressed and marginalized even

though sometimes this occurs in a rather sporadic and restrained manner. Religion has largely provided a sense of community pervading all known cleavages and can thus be constituted as an ideological space for all social classes, ethnicities and gender for purposes of negotiation (Egwu, 2001).

There is thus a close affinity or interface between ethnicity and religious violence, hence the coinage ethno-religious conflict. One huge explanation for this close affinity between ethnically and religiously induced violence, Apam (2011) notes, is the congruence in several respects between ethnic and religious identities such that the two forms of identities are mutually re-enforcing. Egwu (2001) notes that:

The integration of ethnicity and religion into a system of common identity is most relevant in the Nigerian situation where the boundary of ethnic identity and religious allegiance tends to overlap. (p. 24)

When religious identity becomes a part of an ethnic identity based on the narrative of an ethnic myth of a common descent, a volatile social mixture emerges. For an illustration, among the many minority groups in the former northern Nigeria, Christianity is not just a component of the definition of ethnic identity but a cultural weapon in the struggle against what is perceived as Hausa-Fulani hegemony and for self-determination. The Hausa-Fulani are largely Muslims. Islam provides a primary element in the definition of Hausa ethnicity. While those who are Hausa by descent but have lost the ability to speak the language can claim the identity, it can also be conferred on other Nigerians who are not Hausa through ties of blood but have embraced Islamic religion.

Democratic Sustainability

Democracy as a form of government has fascinated philosophers since the first democracies appeared in ancient Greece close to 2,500 years ago (Fleck and Hanssen, 2002). *Demokratia* means *impirimis*, the power of the people: the publicly manifested power of the *demos* to make things happen. It is the authority or dominance of the *demos* in the *polis* (Ober, 2007, p. 99).

Ober (2008) further states that the original meaning of democracy is the capacity to do things, not majority rule. Chukwudi (2014) states that this is instructive within our context of democracy, its sustainability and national development in Nigeria where there is an apparent Nigerian orthodoxy that equates democracy to majority rule. However, a basic assumption of democracy is that it should guarantee the welfare of the citizens. In Nigeria, however, Ojatorotu and Allen (2009) have demonstrated that democracy neglects the welfare of the citizens, and any system of government that fails to guarantee the welfare of the citizens will be difficult to market as democracy. It may be more germane to call such a system ceremonial democracy (Chukwudi, 2014). It does appear however as if the underpinnings of Nigeria's brand of democracy fully express the unfortunate realities of the inability to address these requirements of the populace. Thus, by extension it offers explanation as to why democratic practice has suffered a continuum both in terms of democratization process and the development of democratic institutions and structures that should sustain the system. This is the dilemma of democracy in Nigeria, and ethno-religious conflicts arising largely from the inability to address the aspirations of the people have gravely affected the capacity of the Nigerian state to ensure that democracy grows and is sustained. In the next subsection, we will examine ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Trends and Manifestations

Ethno-religious conflicts have become a recurring decimal in Nigeria's socio-political development. While Nigerian federalism has long attempted to find ways to appease ethno-religious relations and unify the people of Nigeria, many of the structures and institutions in the system perpetuate the tensions and do not effectively address the root causes. Successive administrations have struggled to create institutions which create an imagined political community that will foster peace and unity, thereby creating a state or multiethnic nation. But unfortunately, many of the government's policies and programs designed to consolidate the diverse ethnic and religious groups have often been poorly conceived, are counter-productive, ineffective or misunderstood (Huber, 2013).

There are a number of analytical models that seek to explain ethnicity and other identities. Primordialism for instance emphasizes the archaic cultural basis of ethnic identities and plays out the traditional versus modern dichotomy of the modernization theory, as well as the earlier colonial and anthropological stereotypes of stagnant and unchanging tribal societies in the less developed societies such as Nigeria. That means in this case that ethnicity is as a result of the absence of modernism. This model insists on the non-instrumentalist, deeply affective and emotional character of ethnicity and its origin in real cultural experiences that differentiate it from other bases of political identity and mobilization (Apam, 2011).

The instrumentalist model on the other hand lays emphasis on the contingent, situational and circumstantial use of ethnicity and other identities in the pursuit of material benefits. The focus is on the manipulation of such identities and loyalties for political and economic gains. This model is based on the understanding of the tenets of the social contract theory. The collapse of the social contract comes about when the rules agreed upon in the distribution of both political power and economic benefits in a society are grossly overlooked by the state. This is exacerbated when the state fails to protect lives and property across the various segments of the society such that citizens consider violence or armed struggle as legitimate alternative to either showing their grievances or protecting themselves against usurpers.

Collier (2000) posits that potential sources of such grievances may include distance from economic opportunities, proxied by lack of government presence, general social, economic resources and repression, historic ethno-linguistic and religious hatred or intolerance. These issues are cast within the instrumentalist explanatory model and so it is rather preferred in the analysis of the conflicts in this study.

We note here that since 1966, the efforts to address inter-ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria have had very limited successes. The structural reforms like federalism and associated state creation exercises have transformed the Nigerian state but without correspondingly resolving the problem of ethnic mobilization and conflict. Unfortunately, successive governments have not demonstrated enough capacity to handle the country's multifaceted socio-economic and political problems created first by the nature of the Nigerian state and the many years of bad leadership and bad governance. Opinions have converged that democracy as it is currently practiced in Nigeria has produced negative consequences, one of which is the heightened tensions amongst the ethnic nationalities (Toyo 1994, Nwigwe 2003, Ogundiya 2010). Toyo and Nwigwe agree on the outcome of democratic practice in Nigeria, believing that our democracy has been violence ridden, characterized by wanton destruction of lives and properties, and the peoples' vote seems not to count in determining who governs, as elections are rigged or election outcomes determined before the poll. Indeed, Toyo (1994) has argued that Nigeria has not really

experienced democratic rule but rather a return to civil rule, as all we have do not approximate the trappings of democratic practice. Procedurally, therefore, democracy in Nigeria is lamed, and in terms of its conceptual outcome, it has failed to meet the expectations of the people.

Ogundiya (2010) refers to this line of argument by stating that the outcome of such governmental practice such as ours has promoted great inequality rather than equality. There can be no genuine democracy in a country where citizens are grossly unequal in wealth and the poor who are invariably in the majority are dependent on the wealthy. Since wealth is power, where such a cleavage and dependency exist, political power is inevitably in the hands of the rich and thus democracy finds it difficult to exist and be sustained. In reality what may be available might just be plutocracy. This forms the broad compass in which ethnic and religious conflicts and other governance crises have expressed themselves in Nigeria.

Gwamna (2011) stated that the genesis and manifestation of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria began with the 1987 Kafanchan riot, and that this introduced a dangerous dimension of religious crisis between Christians and Muslims. Opeloye (2001) however traced the history of Muslim-Christian conflicts in Nigeria to the 1979 controversy over the status of Sharia in the nation's legal system. According to him, this development has caused mutual suspicion, rivalry, acrimony, discord and hostility amongst the religious adherents. Tilde's (2011) comprehensive documentation however dates ethnic and religious conflicts to 1945. The May 1966 riots for instance consumed over 100,000 Igbo Christians and other southerners in northern Nigeria. Ethno-religious conflicts have littered the political landscape in Nigeria. Examples of these conflicts include:

1. The Maitatsine sectarian crisis in 1981.
2. The Kaduna and Bulunkutu (Maiduguri) in 1982.
3. The Ilorin Muslim-Christian riot during Christian Easter procession of March 1986.
4. Zaria and Funtua religious riots of March 1987.
5. In October 1990, there was a clash between Christian and Muslims in Kano. The Christians had invited a German Christian preacher, Reinhard Bonke but the Muslims felt cheated for the fact that Ahmed Deedat, a Muslim preacher was previously denied to preach in South Africa. In retaliation, crisis erupted and left behind a casualty of over 500 lives and property worth millions (Adebayo, 2010). There were also the Kano civil disturbance of December 1991 and Jos crisis of April 1994 (Bagaji, 2012).
6. The March 13, 2001 communal clashes at Owo, Ondo state.
7. The April 13, 2001 religious riot in Kano.
8. The May 12, 2001 communal clashes between the Ijaws and the Itsekiri in Delta state.
9. The July 2, 2001 communal clashes between the Odimodu and Ogulagba communities of Delta state.
10. The September 7, 2001 religious clash in Jos, Plateau state.
11. The September 16, 2001 religious riot in Kano.
12. The September 18, 2001 religious riot in Benue state.
13. On February 2, 2002, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and Hausa people clashed at Idi-Araba, Lagos state.
14. The February 26, 2002 communal clashes between Apprapum and Osatura communities of Cross Rivers state.
15. The August 31, 2002 communal class at Ado-Ekiti.

16. The September 3, 2002 renewed communal clashes at Owo, Ondo state.
17. The November 21, 2002 religious riots in Kaduna and Abuja.
18. The December 26, 2002 religious crisis in Bauchi state.
19. The February 2003 religious riot in Ibadan, Oyo state.
20. The March 2003 religious killings at Kardako village in Wase, Plateau state.
21. The 2006 riots in northern Nigeria in the cities such as Katsina, Bauchi, Kano, Minna, Potiskum, and so on over the alleged depiction of Prophet Mohammed's cartoon in Denmark.
22. The 2007 religious riot in Tugor, Adamawa state.
23. The July 26, 2009 religious riots in Maiduguri, Yobe, Bauchi and Kano states.
24. The December 30, 2009 religious riot in Bauchi.
25. The January 11, 2010 renewed religious crisis in Bauchi.
26. The January 19, 2010 renewed religious crisis in Jos.
27. The May 16, 2011 post-election violence that turned religious all-over northern Nigeria, and this left hundreds dead and enormous property destroyed (Tilde, 2011, pp. 1-7).

By far the most worrisome of these crises is the recent large number of unimaginable bomb attacks by the Boko Haram movement which continue on a daily basis. The group's modus operandi is related with the Maitatsine sectarian group in terms of philosophy and objectives coupled with its organizational planning and armed resistance. Despite the Bill passed on anti-terrorism by the Nigerian National Assembly on February 17, 2011 as well as the negotiation efforts made by former President Jonathan, cease-fire has proved abortive and Boko Haram activities are spreading to other parts of the country. With the abduction of the Chibok girls at Federal Government Girls College in Chibok, Borno state, the federal government has deployed the Joint Military Task Force to not only rescue the girls but to restore sanity in the area. This is in addition to the two-year State of Emergency that was declared by the federal government in four states within the north-eastern axis of the country. The implication is that the taxonomy of 'One Nigeria' is being questioned due to the fall-out of Boko Haram chronicle and this accounted for the convocation of the National Conference that ended at the Federal Capital, Abuja in August 2014.

It should be noted that the increase in the wave of ethno-religious bigotry in Nigeria can be linked to the birth of the Fourth Republic (Aleyomi, 2012). With the establishment of democratic rule on May 29, 1999, and with the freedom provided therefrom, ethno-religious conflicts have been on the increase. For instance, during the Oro Cult Ceremony in Sagamu, Ogun state (in July 1999), a Hausa woman was accused of intruding into the procession of the occult with their gnome. This generated a lot of trouble which eventually led to a full-blown crisis and many Hausa and Yoruba innocent people were killed and a lot of property were destroyed. As a mark of vengeance for the massive killing of the Yoruba ethnic group in Kano following the reprisal that earlier erupted, another crisis sprang up in Lagos. The O'dua Peoples Congress (OPC) moved against the Hausa traders in Mile 12 market and turned the place into a battle field for two consecutive days (Adebayo, 2010).

The Introduction of the Islamic Legal Code (popularly known as the Sharia Law) by Ahmed Yerima, a former governor of Zamfara state in October 1999 caused protests which later escalated to violence when Governor Mohammed Makarfi attempted to introduce same in Kaduna state in February 2000 – a state where the population of the two religions is at par. Lives and properties were lost.

All the crises that occurred before and since the coming of democracy in 1999, most especially the insurgence of Boko Haram with its devastating effects on the sustainability of Nigeria's democracy, remind us that the conflict time bombs around the country are always steaming and ready to explode at the slightest provocation. It can also be noticed that there is hardly any sharp distinction between ethnic and religious conflicts. What this means is that a conflict that begins as an ethnic conflict may end up as a religious crisis and vice versa. Their effects undoubtedly are always quite devastating.

Implications of Ethno-Religious Conflicts on the Sustenance of Democracy in Nigeria

Nigeria's democracy is based on a federal arrangement. Federalism as we know it involves the organization of the state in such a manner as to promote unity while at the same time preserving existing diversities within an over-throbbing national entity (Aleyomi, 2012). Essentially, federalism should mediate the potential and actual conflicts that arise from the heterogeneity within a political entity. This has been difficult because of problems of ethnicity, resource control, ethno-religious crisis, electoral crisis, legitimacy crisis, poverty, and so on. This is the context in which the dilemma of democratic practice and its sustainability can be viewed.

Ethno-religious conflicts present grave challenges to security and pose serious threat to the corporate existence of the country. The Boko-Haram insurgency for instance has caused great insecurity not only in the region it predominantly operates but has caused fear and dissent in the entire country. In Borno state, there have been killings and displacement of people. The Nigerian media was awash with the takeover of Bama, the second largest town in Borno by Boko Haram militants, despite the presence of the Joint Military Task Force deployed in the region (Daily Trust, September 3, 2014, p. 4). The United Nations High Commission for Refugees on September 2, 2014 alleged that more than 10,000 people fled from fresh Boko Haram attacks in north-eastern Nigeria to Cameroon and Niger seeking refuge.

UNHCR is very concerned that even when they have crossed into Cameroon, they are still being pursued by insurgents and we have already started to relocate some of the refugees to a refugee camp where they can enjoy safer conditions. (UNHCR Spokesman, Adrian Edwards, in Geneva)

The disturbing news is that the sect is now forcing the youths to carry arms against the military or they will be killed. This has made many to flee the village (Miringa, 2014). The Nation Newspaper on September 4, 2014 had also reported how towns in Borno and Yobe states have been overrun by the insurgents thus causing great anxiety to the people. Many people have been displaced from their families. Daily Trust Newspaper in September 2014 reported how one man displaced from Bama town can't trace his wife and six children. 7 emirs have fled their homes in both Borno and Yobe as a result of this crisis.

In such circumstances, the people have lost their means of livelihood and living becomes precarious. There is hardly any trust and belief in the political system. In a situation where ethnic and religious bigotry have resulted into conflicts, civil stress, lack of cordiality and underdevelopment are vividly noticed. These certainly are not good recipes for democratic stability. It is a known fact that conflicts (ethno-religious inclusive) exist when deprived groups and individuals experience oppression, domination, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization, and so on. The marginalized will usually seek to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology.

The overall consequences of these have rendered the polity insecure, and development becomes quite illusive. Democracy cannot be sustained where the process of development is crisis-ridden.

The threat to democratic sustainability in Nigeria by ethno-religious conflicts has a high impact on nation-building and sustainable development. The insecurity caused by these conflicts does not provide the right environment for economic development. No serious investor whether foreign or local would put resources in a climate of insecurity, and no economy can grow without savings and investments.

Increasingly, ethno-religious cleavages have impacted on public life in areas of elections, governance and the public services. This has largely defined leadership recruitment and appointments that are hardly based on merit, specialization and due process. This has also affected government public policies which hardly approximate the aspirations of the people, and so the legitimacy of the government and the states is generally questioned by the people. The government does not command acceptability from the people and there is palpable discontent and disillusionment. This is the dilemma of Nigeria's democratic practice.

Huber (2013) has argued that instead of constitutional provisions encouraging homogenization of the nation through programs and measures, they have accentuated ethnic and religious tensions by labeling and officially recognizing ethno-religious groups. Such provisions have encouraged the use of both ethnicity and indigeneity and so engendered socio-political crisis which have affected the process of national integration. The development of a national identity and the unifying of distinct and strong ethnic and religious groups are important for a cohesive nation. This, in turn, is necessary for the promotion of democratic norms and values.

Conclusion

Nigeria needs to sustain its democracy and development. This will further translate into economic security that is person-centered. Democracy devoid of economic security for the people is simply an economic abstraction. Nigeria is perceived to be running the costliest democracy in the world and Ejurbekpokpo (2012) has abundantly demonstrated that excessive cost of governance has hampered economic development.

Indeed, Onyisi and Eme (2013) have also shown that under the Jonathan presidency in Nigeria, the cost of governance was rather outrageous. The same applies to the administration of president Buhari. According to Enwegbara (2013) and Chukwwudi (2014), government after government in Nigeria, since the return to democracy in 1999, has talked about reducing the country's high cost of governance, but ironically each successive government appears worse off than the previous one. This has sadly affected job creation and increased inequalities. Economic growth and development have remained stagnated with a largely impoverished population. In the midst of this, the government has not done much. As a result, the people are easily swayed to identity politics for survival and protection.

The legislative arm of government would have to provide adequate checks on abuses of power by the executive and recklessness of the opportunistic elite that is inefficient and ineffective. Effective legislature contributes to good governance and this is done by the performance of legislative oversight over the finances of the government and it serves as a catalyst for the sustainability of democratic governance. The legislature should not just make laws for the safety and general wellbeing of the people but must also manage resources in order to promote good life for the entire citizenry.

The institutional frameworks for tackling corruption must work to stamp out corruption, which is endemic and persistent. When corruption is endemic, as witnessed in the last decade, institutions of governance are abused by illicit and self-serving behaviors of the political leadership. The consequence is that poverty becomes inevitable, which in turn will cripple basic health and education services as well as the building of infrastructure. Most Nigerians are unable to have a minimally acceptable standard of living. This is compounded by acute youth unemployment put variously at between 20% and 50% (Asemota, 2005). And the consequence is general insecurity and high crime rate.

Nigeria needs to tackle the governance crisis that manifest in corruption, injustices, inequality, integration crisis, ethno-religious feuds, and so on, in order to achieve democratic sustainability. The government must be open and accountable in its processes and priority in terms of public policy and must invest in areas that address the needs of the people.

Such openness must allow for popular participation by the people. The production and development of the economy can bring about greater life opportunities for the people. This will reduce the vulnerability of the people to ethnic and religious manipulations. In this way the state will be seen as meeting up its expectations of providing for all the people irrespective of where they come from or what their religious persuasions are.

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