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**IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE: FOCUS ON  
RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA TEACHING  
HOSPITAL, ABUJA, NIGERIA.**

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**Abstract**

*This study evaluated the implementation of Federal Character principle with focus on recruitment and selection exercises at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH), Abuja, Nigeria. The primary purpose of the research was to determine the degree to which the federal character principle was adhered to during recruitment and promotion at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH). The study employed a survey design whereby relevant information were gotten from distributed questionnaire and journals, books, official documents, periodicals and internet articles. Using Taro Yarmane's statistical sample size instrument, 89 individuals were selected from a total population of 2,742. Data collected through the questionnaire were arranged in cumulative frequency tables while mean average and the Chi-square statistical tool were used to analyse the data and test the hypotheses (using SPSS version 23). The study findings revealed that recruitment and promotion processes at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital through the federal character principle is poorly implemented and this has been as a result of poor feedback mechanisms, poorly trained personnel and favouritism. The federal character principle sacrifices merit for quota and political patronage syndrome, which led to the marginalisation of some ethnic groups. This has remained a significant obstacle for the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital's recruitment and promotion efforts. The study recommended that the management of UATH in collaboration with the Federal Character Commission should ensure strict compliance to fair representation of applicants in the recruitment and promotion process by publishing recruits or appointees for public knowledge. Also, efficient feedback mechanism on recruitment and promotion process should be implemented and personnel in charge of recruitment and promotion should be adequately trained so as to promote efficiency in the recruitment and promotion in the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.*

**Keywords:** Implementation, Federal Character, Recruitment, Promotion, Marginalisation

## Introduction

There are a large number of different tribes or ethnic groups that make up Nigerian society. The many geopolitical zones in the nation serve as a dividing line between the various ethnic groups in the nation as a whole. The formation of the Federal Character Commission (FCC) by Act No. 34 of 1996 was among the successful means of handling the cultural diversity that exists today. As a consequence of this, Section 153 of the Constitution of 1999 (in its amended form) included a provision for the existence of the Federal Character Commission. This commission's job is to "implement and uphold the Federal Character Principle of equality and fairness in the allocation of governing posts and socio-economic facilities among the various federating regions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria," which translates to fairness and equity in the distribution of public posts and socio-economic infrastructures among the various federating units (Gberevbie and Jide, 2013),

The purpose of the Federal Character principles, which are established in the Constitution of Nigeria from 1999 (in its revised form), is to guarantee an equitable distribution of bureaucratic and political roles in the public service of the federal, state, and local government levels. Gberevbie and Jide (2013), the purpose of the policy is to promote unity among Nigerians and to instil in every Nigerian a feeling that they are integral component of the larger population of the nation. Therefore, the Federal Character Principle, which is executed under the Federal Character Commission, was established and launched to rectify the negative consequence that results from opportunities and resources provided by the federal government to the citizens of the country that show up neutral but have a detrimental effect on a protected group. This was done in order to fix the damaging impact that resulted from the federal government providing opportunities and resources to the citizens of the nation that appeared to be neutral. Therefore, the purpose of the federal character concept is to create a powerful and united nation that is founded on justice and fairness, while also ensuring that a sense of belonging is still preserved for all Nigerians. Some opponents have asserted that the policy in question undermines the merit system, which in turn lowers the quality of services that are provided for the growth and development of the nation. Despite the fact that the policy in question may be praiseworthy, its execution has remained a contentious matter (Elaigwu, 1992).

In most federal systems of government, the most important problem is often that of resource sharing among the federating units at horizontal and vertical level, in addition to other problems like recruiting and promotion in the Nigerian public service. This is also the case in most other federal systems of government. In communities in which the systems for sharing resources are successful, residents report fewer agitations and report having a stronger sense of equity and belonging. On the other side, in places where the concept of sharing is not being implemented effectively, individuals would become agitated and raise a variety of demands, such

as a request for a national conference (Elaigwu, 1992).

Studies have demonstrated, as Gberevbie (2012) points out, that no nation can achieve sustainable development for the purpose of improving the living standards of its people if it does not have a public service that is well organised and is responsible for carrying out the policies of the government. The University of Abuja Teaching Hospital is a public service organisation that is staffed by a diverse group of individuals hailing from a variety of cultural and racial backgrounds. As a result, it is anticipated of the hospital that it would adhere to the federal character concept whenever it engages in activities related to recruiting and promotion.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria, there are a great number of ongoing instances in which the Federal Character Principle has been enforced in an unfair manner. Additionally, it is shown in the yearly reports that are published by the Federal Character Commission that a significant number of complaints are received as a direct result of certain businesses' violations of the Federal Character Principle. For instance, the Nigerian Communication Commission was accused of violating the Federal Character Principle in a magazine called the Federal Character "Monitor" (2008), which is a quarterly publication produced by the Commission. In addition to this, the ineffective execution of the policy in recruiting manpower potentials into the organisation and the selection of personnel that is not based on the federal character principles are some of the difficulties that influence the efficient performance of the Nigerian public service. Both of these issues are among the problems that impact the efficiency of the performance of the Nigerian public service. Additionally, the issue in the Niger delta, which develops as a consequence of protests from the population about marginalisation by the leaders, is another indication that the programme is being implemented in an unfair manner (Nwogwugwu and Sosanya, 2015).

Furthermore, the poor performance of workers that was identified by the government that was headed by former President Olusegun Obasanjo was related to poor personnel utilisation and low quality of civil officials, also witness to this weakness. This was revealed by the administration that was led by President Olusegun Obasanjo. In light of the aforementioned issues, it is essential to investigate how a public sector organisation, such as the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH), is applying the federal character concept to its processes for personnel recruitment and promotion exercises.

**Therefore, in order to accomplish this goal, the following inquiries are going to be looked at as part of this study:**

- (i) To what extent has the federal character been utilised in the recruiting and promotion exercises at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH)?

- (ii) What are some of the issues that are preventing a seamless application of the federal character concept in the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital's (UATH) recruiting and promotion exercises?
- (iii) What steps may be taken to enhance the implementation of the concept of federal character in the processes of recruiting and promotion at UATH?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The major objectives of this study are to:

- i. Examine the extent to which the federal character principle has been adhered to in the recruitment and promotion exercises at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.
- ii. Determine the obstacles that prevent the federal character concept from being smoothly implemented at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH).
- iii. To suggest possible solutions with the goal of ensuring that the Federal Character Principle is applied without any hitches in the processes of recruitment and promotion at UATH.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is insufficient adherence to the federal character concept in UATH's hiring practises and promotion procedures.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: Workers from various geopolitical zones at the UATH do not significantly differ in their opinions about federal character principle implementation.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Federal Character Principle**

Ayoade (2003) posited the concept of federal character should be seen as a tool for the eclectic redistribution of governmental tasks and industrial locations. He went on to explain that the federal character is built on the awareness of racial diversity, which is a bit of an extreme statement. For Ogunna (1999), the Federal Character Principle is something that came forth as a result of the federal system in Nigeria. In section 14(3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979, it is stated that the structure of the government of the federation or any of its agencies should be carried out in such a way as convey the federal character of Nigeria and the need to foster national unity while also commanding loyalty. This provision was added to the constitution in 1979. Consequently, guaranteeing that there will not be a preponderance of individuals hailing from a certain number of states or from a select number of ethnic or other sectoral groupings within that government or any of its agencies (Ogunna, 1999).

Ogunna (1999) posited that the Federal Character Principle, which is written in the

constitution, requires that all appointments, allocations of amenities and benefits at the federal, state, and local governments and its agencies should have a "National Spread." In light of this, it should go without saying that all appointments and the distribution of facilities should represent proportionately the diverse makeup of the respective federal, state, and municipal governments. This guarantees that no one region of the country has an unfair advantage over another in terms of employment and the allocation of amenities, which might threaten the integrity of the federation as a whole. It is possible that the Federal Character Principle was created with the intention of encouraging a sense of belonging and involvement on the part of Nigeria's many different ethnic groups and political interests in the post-colonial government of the country. It was the product of years of dominance that characterised ethno-regional relations in Nigeria, which led to the foundation of states in a framework with twelve states, and then subsequently expanded to nineteen states (Nwogwugwu and Sosanya, 2015). Nevertheless, this cannot in any way alleviate the issue of the imbalance between the North and the South. As a consequence of this, the necessity for other approaches to accomplishing the much-desired oneness emerged. One may argue that in terms of the allocation of posts among the various ethnic groups, the Federal Character Principle is a version of the representative bureaucracy that existed in Nigeria before the country gained its independence (Nwogwugwu and Sosanya, 2015).

#### **Advantages of Adhering to the Federal Character Principle**

Shettima proposed in Agbodike (2003) that the use of the federal character concept might improve the effectiveness of service. Gboyega (1989), thinking in the same direction, says that it can only be gained by fair representation, which would attract and control public confidence and increased collaboration, mutual trust, and mutual respect among the public workers themselves. In other words, it can only be acquired through fair representation. Perhaps the aforementioned scholar is ignorant of the fact that the federal character has an expressly reserved proportion for each of the sexes, and that when the number of people of the requisite sex is insufficient to satisfy the vacancy supplied, that percentage is filled with another sex. According to Ayoade (1989), the federal character contributes to the polarisation of ethnic uniqueness rather than the shredding and shattering of ethnic identity. When people found out that the federal character's operation emphasises on ethnicism and statism, they became more conscious and sensitive to their ethnic affiliation than the national conscience, which was meant to be the primary concern of all and all. This is because the federal character's operation emphasises on the ethnicism and statism.

Okpu (1989) observed that the federal character of a country is intended to control how the whole gross national product of the country is distributed among its citizens. He goes on to say that as a strategy, federal character thus intending to maintain the situation threatened by the continuous onslaught of the minorities and the creation of few states as well as providing greater access to the national cake through control of it

implementation of the majority groups is intended to maintain the situation threatened by the creation of few states. For Adamolekun (1986), the federal character concept is the solution to the issues of bigotry in Nigeria stemming from ethno-regional, religious, and sectional prejudice. He went on to say that these issues posed a significant risk to the continued existence of the Nigerian federation, impeded the process of transitioning to a nation-state, and prevented the country from achieving a democratically stable and socially just system.

Scholars have argued that federal character is a topic that, although being difficult to define precisely, is rich in meaning, particularly in regard to the goals and ambitions of Nigeria. For Bagudu (2003), the purpose of the concept of "federal character" is to guarantee that appointments are made in a way that accurately represents the make-up of the federation in order to make it possible for all members to enjoy the benefits of the federation.

#### **Implementation of the Federal Character Principle (FCP)**

The Federal Character Commission (FCC) is a federal executive body that was established to implement and enforce the federal character principle of fairness and equity in the distribution of public posts; socio-economic amenities; and infrastructural facilities among the federating units of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This principle states that public posts; socio-economic amenities; and infrastructural facilities should be distributed in a manner that is fair and equitable (Emmanuel, 2014).

The Constitution of 1999 gives the Commission the authority to carry out its duties in a democratic atmosphere. It is possible to trace its roots back to the time of colonial rule in Nigeria, when the Nigerian Armed Forces implemented a quota system with the purpose of ensuring that no one region of the country predominated in the armed forces. The culmination of the demand for the application of the federal character policy in the Nigerian federal civil service was the successful adoption of the policy in the military that is run by the federal government. Regrettably, despite the fact that the federal character policy was favoured in certain parts of Nigeria, the execution of the policy was rejected in certain other parts of the country (Bagudu, 2003).

The following is a summary of the provisions of the Act that established the Commission, with particular reference to Part IV of the Federal Character Principles and the Selection Process for Recruitment into the Federal Public Service. These provisions were outlined in the Federal Character Commission Handbook (1996).

- (i) According to Section 4 (1) (g) of its Enabling Statute, the Federal Character Commission is required to ensure, among other things, that all Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments, Parastatals, and other Government Agencies have clear criteria, including conditions that need to be fulfilled, and comprehensive guidelines on the procedure for determining eligibility, as well as the procedure for employment into the Public Service. This provision of the

statute gives the Federal Character Commission the authority to carry out this responsibility.

- (ii) In light of the information presented above, and in order to guarantee the smooth implementation of the Federal Character Policy on employment into the Federal Public Service without in any way compromising merit, the Commission mandates that all employers of labour in the federal civil service comply with the employment regulations that are currently in effect from the Commission (Emmanuel, 2014).
- (iii) The goal of the rules is to simplify the selection process in such a way that the most qualified and experienced individuals from each state of the Federation are hired, so ensuring that the merit principle is respected. As a result, the following method must be utilised in order to fill all vacant positions, particularly those at the entry level, at all establishments across the nation that are part of the public service:
- (iv) Job openings should be announced in at least two publications that are published on a national scale, and potential applicants should be given at least six weeks to submit their applications. This is done to make it possible for the information to be widely disseminated, with the end goal of luring the best possible materials from around the nation (Bagudu, 2003).
- (v) In cases where job openings are posted on the internet, this should not, at least for the time being, prevent the placement of identical ads in the two newspapers mentioned above, and the application period should still be extended to six weeks. Given that the great majority of people do not have reliable access to the internet, it is imperative that this prerequisite be met (Emmanuel, 2014).
- (vi) It is the responsibility of employers of labour to ensure that they have a complete job description for each position that is open, as well as extensive academic and relevant experience requirements, in order to fill such vacancies.
- (vii) The applicants who have been shortlisted for an interview or another type of selection procedure shall only include those who have satisfied the fundamental minimum requirements for each post. Under no circumstances may a candidate who lacks the necessary qualifications be given further consideration ostensibly on the basis of their federal character. However, once a candidate has fulfilled the basic minimum standards, he should not be penalised in favour of another or other applicants who could hold greater qualifications but should qualify to compete for posts that are reserved for his State. This is because the candidate who met the basic minimum requirements should be given priority (Emmanuel, 2014).

- (viii) Qualified and competent applicants are to be shortlisted for interview or other selection mode on a state-by-state basis, and drawn as much as feasible, in equal number from each State of the Federation, indicating also, their Local Government Area. This is to be done before moving on to the next step in the selection process. The number of candidates representing the Federal Capital Territory will make up one-fourth of the total number of candidates from each state. A shortlist of applicants to compete for posts reserved for their respective states will be compiled from the most qualified people living in each state of the Federation and in the Federal Capital Territory. This list will be compiled based on the best candidates (Emmanuel, 2014).
- (ix) In the event that an aptitude test or any other kind of written or oral exam is necessary as part of the selection process, the compilation of results should be done on a State by State basis. This will allow for the most qualified candidates from each State and the Federal Capital Territory to be hired.
- (x) The Commission will receive both the list of candidates who have been selected for further consideration and the final list of candidates who have been offered employment.
- (xi) In order to guarantee that the aforementioned hiring procedure is followed to the letter, the Commission has requested that an observer be present during each and every recruiting interview for potential new workers.
- (xii) As a result, it will be informed of the recruiting activity at least two weeks in advance and will be extended an invitation to participate. It is the duty of all Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives of Ministries, Extra-Ministerial Departments, Parastatals, Agencies, and other Establishments of the Federal Government to ensure compliance with the procedure outlined above (Emmanuel, 2014).

#### **The Obstacles in the Implementation of the Federal Character Principle**

In order to ensure that the policy is followed correctly and effectively, the Federal Character Commission mandates that job openings be advertised in at least two national newspapers. Nevertheless, there are some graduates of high quality who would rather look for work in the areas that are geographically close to where they live. Significantly, the vast majority of tertiary institutions, in particular universities, opt for temporary recruitment that is subsequently regularised by their governing councils. This is due to the urgent need to fill vacancies resulting from transfers, secondments, study leave, sabbatical, study fellowships/exchanges, leave of absence, resignations, deaths, dismissals, and allied personnel exit factors. These time-sensitive issues in recruiting present obstacles to the proper application of federal character guidelines (Emmanuel, 2014).



There are also situations in which the prevalence of candidates from a single state leads to the cessation of recruiting efforts directed towards applicants from that state in order to adequately account for the geographical dispersion that is brought about by the implementation of the federal character principle. Regrettably, some candidates for jobs in the Nigerian federal civil service do not present true information regarding the state from which they hail in order to take advantage of the state catchment advantage in the recruiting process. Others choose to alternate the reference to their state of origin with that of their spouses in order to take advantage of the state's catchment privileges in the recruiting process. These issues make it more difficult to impose consequences on those who violate the federal character policy and reduce the likelihood that people will comply with the policy (Emmanuel, 2014).

Gboyega (1989) expressed the opinion that the federal character concept is nothing more than a stratagem for the elite that would not, in any meaningful sense, better the situation of the ordinary man for whom it is created. He issued a warning that the implementation of the concept would most certainly result in the emergence of numerous serious new issues, on par with those that it was designed to address. The author went on to say that even promotion is tied to ethnic consideration, and that this affects the esprit de corps of the service. As an illustration, southerners who already have a high level of education may feel as if the policy was intending to deprive them of jobs for the benefit of northerners since merit is not the only yardstick. He further opined that this negatively impacts the spirit of the service (Gboyega, 1989).

In Nigeria's multi-ethnic character, the federal character concept is described as "unsophisticated every day usage" by Afigbo (1986). Reflecting Nigeria's federal nature simply means making certain that "Nigerian affairs are not dominated by persons" hailing from a certain number of states or ethnic groups. In theory, the federal character should be fundamentally constructed to meet up with ethnic-balancing, but a closer look at how it operates would disclose that it deviates from this aims in practise (Afigbo, 1986). Aside from this, ever since it was implemented, it has not been able to solve the issue of under-representation or over-representation, since there have been very few examples of it functioning well within the scope of the federal character formula. To add to this is the fact that the federal character of the country might only be successful in lowering the level of dominance that certain states or ethnic groups have over the workings of the government, but there are a number of factors, such as the disparity in educational opportunities and the economic power of certain states or ethnic groups, that would cause them to remain in control of the steering wheel of the country's affairs (Afigbo, 1986).

### **Recruitment**

For Oyadiran (2010), the common understanding of the term "recruitment" refers to the process of selecting candidates to fill open positions in an organisation. In addition to making appointments, recruitment entails choosing individuals who are qualified

and appropriate for certain positions. Fatiregun (1992) posited that recruitment is the process of evaluating a job, making an announcement about the vacancy, generating interest, and encouraging individuals to apply for the position. In a perfect world, the choice to bring in new members of staff would be determined by an organization's correct personnel strategy, which would be derived from the goals and plans of the institution. This will be the factor that decides the responsibilities, scope, and degree of each particular position.

Budhwar and Debrah (2004) observed that both public and private organisations in Nigeria confront various difficulties in the recruiting and selection procedures they use. huge companies spend a lot of time and money reviewing a huge number of job applications in response to advertisements that are placed in the media, but smaller companies sometimes decide to fill open positions at their company with friends and family members. Briggs, (2007) identified some of the problems that affect recruitment and selection in the Nigerian federal civil service. These problems include factors such as the increasing pressure for employment, the utilisation of informal sources of recruitment, the federal character principle, the delegation of recruitment function, and the long military period of government.

For Briggs (2007), these issues have arisen as a consequence of an insufficient application of job descriptions and conventional personnel requirements throughout the recruiting process. As a result of the declining educational quality in Nigeria, firms have been fine-tuning and, in some cases, overhauling their recruiting and selection methods. These procedures now include the administration of a number of aptitude and psychometric tests throughout the selection process. Budhwar and Debrah (2004) also contributed to this trend.

Budwar and Debrah (2004) observed that in Nigeria, power and authority at the organisational level are significantly shaped by cultural respect for elderly persons. This is because the elderly person is perceived to be more experienced than the younger person, and is preferred to be the boss. As a result, it becomes challenging in decision making for leadership in organisations if better qualified and highly motivated young people are promoted to higher levels of responsibility despite having fewer years of experience.

Palmer (1997) argues that the government, after establishing the necessary framework for the management of strategic organisations, then violates the same rule it has made to regulate social relations at work, sometimes through irregular employment, and also through political interference from political office holders. As a result, the quota system as an instrument of employment is questionable because it can sometimes serve as a cynosure for the recruitment of unqualified individuals from certain parts of the country. Because of the ineptitude of these specific individuals, Strategic Organisations have been unable to successfully complete the task that they set out to accomplish.

For Obadere (2010), certain states have discriminatory employment practises in which non-indigene corps members are not incorporated into the workforce once they have completed their term in their state of service. This is a problem in states where there is a large non-indigene population. Legge (1995) posited that the integration of human resource systems and the maintenance of internal consistency are two factors that play a considerable role in the success of an organisation. Therefore, according to him, the procedures of selection and recruiting are the major component in the process of locating and identifying promising individuals. No matter how well an organisation manages its staff or how much it invests in its employees' professional growth, the potential for that organization's performance will be severely constrained if it is successful in recruiting qualified and suitable workers.

Heneman and Judge (2006) indicated that while costs do need to be addressed in evaluating assessment techniques, more weight should be given to the fact that valid selection measures pay off and will return many times their cost. This is because good selection measures pay off and will return many times their cost. For Batt (2002), businesses that are less selective in their recruiting practises or hire people with lower levels of expertise are likely to see substantial effects on productivity. On the other hand, employing employees who are not a good fit for the company might result in poor performance and greater rates of employee turnover.

The process of recruiting and selection may also have an effect on the chance that a candidate will accept a job offer and on their subsequent commitment to continuing to work for the organisation once they have accepted the position. Appointment choices are the most significant ones that a manager is required to make because they impact the manager's capacity to meet goals, the quality of the services or goods that are provided to the client, and the wellbeing of the entire team.

### **Promotion**

Any organization's promotion system is a crucial process that requires additional focus and consideration. A large number of modern people specialists have devised programmes and processes that make it possible for workers to advance their careers in a way that is both planned and methodical. For Oyadiran (2010), a promotion may be described as the progression of an employee to a better job; better in terms of larger responsibility, more prestige or status, higher skill, and particularly increased rate of compensation or salary in addition to additional advantages corresponding with the position. It entails moving on from one job to another, preferably one with a higher position as well as more significant duties.

The act of charging a man with more obligations and responsibilities is what is meant by the phrase promotion. It is a transition of sorts in regard to one's obligations and responsibilities. White (1955), the definition of promotion is the appointment of an individual from a particular job to a position of higher grade. This appointment involves a shift in tasks to a more challenging sort of work and greater responsibility,

as well as a change in title and, typically, a rise in compensation. Promotions can occur at any time during an individual's career.

A promotion serves a variety of functions and gives advantages to organisations by allowing them to make the most of their employees' abilities to the maximum degree feasible. An efficient system of promotion enables an organisation to satisfy both its ongoing demand for knowledgeable individuals and the employees' aspiration to use the abilities they have gained in order to advance in their careers. It has the potential to inspire exceptional performance. When an employee believes that good performance will lead to promotion, they may be motivated to perform at exceptionally high levels. Oyadiran (2010) posited that promotion can lead to increased work satisfaction, as well as higher levels of organisational efficiency and high levels of staff morale.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The application of system theory was essential to this investigation. Major advocates of this idea include, amongst others, David Easton (1965), Katz and Kahn (1966), Robert Ghin (1969), Koontz et al (1980), Talcott Parsons (1951), and Berta Lanffy (1950). David Easton's work was published in 1965.

A collection of interconnected components that come together to form a single entity is what Cole (1993) refers to as a system theory. It is considered as an organised framework which is functionally and traceable through connected elements or sub-systems. System theory describes a phenomena, whether it be physical, biological, or social. The boundaries of a system theory can be clearly distinguished from those of the supra-system (the environment) in which the theory is placed. Therefore, a system is positioned inside a broader context and environment with which it interacts, which entails the process of inputs and outputs being carried out.

As we continue to talk about the system theory, one thing that has become clear is that it places a significant amount of stress on the pluralistic nature of public service. It interprets and explains the largest facts and practises in public service, which is where rules and procedures are employed in judging whether or not they are applicable to a certain circumstance. As a tool for analysis, it is quite useful. It would appear that the right analytical framework would be to understand public organisations as systems that are impacted by both their internal and external environments. This would be necessary in order to demonstrate that this theory is applicable to UATH in the areas of staff recruitment and promotion. A system theory, by its very nature of interconnectedness, links the input process and the process of conversion to the end stage, which is known as the output of the total system. Both personnel and management staff at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital are held to a variety of behavioural standards; nevertheless, these standards are inherently distinct from one another. The individuals who are in a position to hire and promote staff members are not necessarily going to be consistent or in accordance with the processes and

techniques that are used in the process of employing candidates and promoting in official positions. This is the case the majority of the time. When it comes to the issue of employee recruitment and advancement, unethical practises such as favouritism, cognitive syndrome, political influences, and other forms of improper influence have become an absolute need. It is inconceivable that a clerk working in the office would address his senior officer only on the basis of the type of recruiting and promotion activities he participated in.

In the meanwhile, the researcher suggests that the implementation of system theory into the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital in the areas that are the focus of this work would create a framework in which procedural principles in staff recruitment and promotion pattern are utilised. The purpose of this study project's use of system theory is to attempt to combine the processes that take place before the final offer of appointment, such as recruiting (written application), and promotion, into a single cohesive whole. When this is done, the prospective employees who form the input will act in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, due process will be restored in the Nigerian public service, and mediocrity in recruitment and promotion will be eliminated, thereby positioning public servants in their particular characteristics.

### **Methodology**

The research strategy that was selected was the survey research design, which entails doing an in-depth analysis of a subject or scenario with the goal of discovering what and how things are now the case. For Charles (2013) and (Obasi, 1999), survey design may be used to evaluate a huge number of people's opinions, attitudes, accomplishments, emotions, views, and perceptions concerning objects or phenomenon at a certain point in time. The researcher made use of primary and secondary data as its sources of information. The primary data was gathered by administering questionnaire that were distributed to staff of UATH. The copies of the questionnaire were written in language that was easy to understand and uncomplicated. Both part A and section B were present in the questionnaire. The biographical information of the respondents is requested in Section A. In Section B, we concentrated on pertinent research questions that were in keeping with both the study's purpose and its assumptions. The usage of textbooks, journals, periodicals, newspapers, and other types of published information fall under the category of secondary sources of data collecting. The whole workforce at the University teaching hospital (UATH) is included in this research as the study's population. UATH has a total staff strength of two thousand, seven hundred and forty-two (2,742) personnel, according to the UATH Registry (2022), and they have all been depicted corresponding to the departments that they work in below.

The sampling strategy that was used for this investigation was the straightforward random approach. By using this approach, each individual member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the final group. Due to its capacity to assure

inclusivity and a sufficient depiction of the nature of the population, the simple random procedure has been selected as the method to utilise. It was essential that each individual who was included in the research population be given an equal opportunity to be a part of the sample.

The sample size is derived from the population using Taro Yarmane formula. The formula is given below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N	=	The population of study
n	=	Sample Size (which is unknown, to be computed)
1	=	Constant
e	=	Margin of Error (level of doubt)
∴	N	= 2742
	n	= ?
	1	= Constant
	e	= 9% level of error from the population.
n	=	$\frac{2,742}{1 + 2,742(0.09)^2}$
	=	119.

The sample size for this research is 119.

The study adopted both primary and secondary sources of data. The questionnaire which is a primary source of data, were drafted and submitted to the project supervisor for vetting. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to employees of the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital to fill and returned at a stipulated date. The secondary source of data constitutes information from Internet, journals, textbooks, official documents etc.

The data collected from the respondents were presented in tables and analyzed using cumulative frequency score, simple percentage and mean scores. The tables showed respondents views based on the questionnaire administered to them on the implementation of federal character principle on recruitment and promotion exercises in UATH.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1: Administration of Questionnaire**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Valid	89	74.8	74.8	74.8
	Invalid	30	25.2	25.2	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source:Field Survey (2023).

Table 1 showed that a total number of 119 copies of questionnaire were administered to staffers of University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Abuja in order to elicit relevant information on the impact of federal character on recruitment and promotion exercises. Eighty nine (89) copies which represented 74.8% were properly filled and returned to the researcher while thirty (30) copies representing 25.2% were either not properly filled or returned to the researcher. Therefore the analysis for this study was based on the valid copies of questionnaire which were eighty nine (89). The study chose 89 because of criterion of time frame allocated to the completion of the study. Jacobs (2015) and Anikweze (2013) posit that a good research must have a sample size which is convenient for the researcher and easy to analyse within a specific time frame.

**Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	57	62.6	62.6	64.8
Female	32	35.2	35.2	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The table 2 above shows the gender distribution of respondents. 57 respondents representing 62.6% are male while 32 respondents representing 35.2% are female. This shows that majority of the respondents are male.

**Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	28	30.8	30.8	33.0
Married	61	67.0	67.0	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 3 above shows the marital status of respondents. 28 respondents representing 30.8% are single while 61 respondents representing 67% are married. This implies that majority of the respondents are married.

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 4 above shows the educational qualification of respondents. 8 respondents representing 8.8% are SSCE holders, 12 respondents representing 13.2% are Dipl/OND/NCE/HND holders, 31 respondents representing 34.1% are B.Sc/B.A/B.Engr/B.Ed holders while 38 respondents representing 41.7% are Masters/Ph.D holders. This indicates that majority of the respondents fall are Masters/PhD holders.

**Table 5: Years of Service of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-5 years	10	11.0	11.0	13.2
6-10 years	13	14.3	14.3	27.5
11-15 years	29	31.9	31.9	59.3
16 years and above	37	40.7	40.7	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 5 above shows years of service of respondents. 10 respondents representing 11% fall between 1-5 years, 13 respondents representing 14.3% fall between 6-10 years, 29 respondents representing 31% fall between 11-15 years while 37 respondents representing 40.7% fall between 16 years and above. This means that majority of the respondents are between the working experience of 16 years and above.

**Table 6: Category of Staff**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Junior staff	37	40.7	40.7	42.9
Senior staff	52	57.1	57.1	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 6 above shows category of staff distribution. 37 respondents representing 40.7% are junior staff while 52 respondents representing 57.1% are senior staff. This shows that majority of the respondents are senior staff.

**Table 7: Respondents' Department**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Clinical	48	52.7	52.7	54.9
Non-clinical	41	45.1	45.1	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 7 above shows department of respondents. 48 respondents representing 52.7% are under clinical while 41 respondents representing 45.1% are under non-clinical departments. This shows that majority of the respondents are under clinical departments in the hospital.



**Table 8: The UATH strictly adheres to Federal Character Principle on recruitment process**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	21	23.1	23.6	23.6
	Disagree	12	13.2	13.5	37.1
	Undecided	5	5.5	5.6	42.7
	Agree	20	22.0	22.5	65.2
	Strongly Agree	31	34.1	34.8	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.3 (Undecided)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.3 (Undecided) on table 8 shows that there is no consensus from the respondents whether the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH) strictly adheres to Federal Character Principle on recruitment process.

**Table 9: Political patronage syndrome has remained a major factor in recruitment in UATH**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	4.4	4.5	4.5
	Disagree	10	11.0	11.2	15.7
	Undecided	3	3.3	3.4	19.1
	Agree	32	35.2	36.0	55.1
	Strongly Agree	40	44.0	44.9	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 4.0 (Agree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 4.0 (Agree) from the above table 9 shows that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that political patronage syndrome has remained a major factor in recruitment in UATH.

**Table 10: Some people belonging to different ethnic groups were recruited alongside with you**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	6.6	6.7	6.7
	Disagree	9	9.9	10.1	16.9
	Undecided	2	2.2	2.2	19.1
	Agree	43	47.3	48.3	67.4
	Strongly Agree	29	31.9	32.6	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.8 (Fairly Agree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

(Fairly Agree) in the table 10 above shows that a some tangible amount of respondents are of the opinion that some people belong to different ethnic groups the same time they were recruited.

**Table 11: The application of Federal Character Principle in recruitment process improved the utilization of manpower in UATH**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	34	37.4	38.2	38.2
	Disagree	35	38.5	39.3	77.5
	Undecided	3	3.3	3.4	80.9
	Agree	5	5.5	5.6	86.5
	Strongly Agree	12	13.2	13.5	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 2.1 (Disagree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The means score of 2.1 (Disagree) on table 11 above shows that application of Federal Character principle in recruitment process has not improved the utilization of manpower in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital

**Table 12: There were complaints of bias or discrimination during and after recruitment exercises**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	11.0	11.2	11.2
	Disagree	9	9.9	10.1	21.3
	Undecided	9	9.9	10.1	31.5
	Agree	26	28.6	29.2	60.7
	Strongly Agree	35	38.5	39.3	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.7 (Fairly Agree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.7 (Fairly Agree) on table 12 above, shows that some reasonable of the respondents agree that there were complaints of bias or discrimination during and after recruitment exercises. .

**Table 13: The Federal Character Principle solved the problem of marginalization in recruitment process in UATH**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	9.9	10.1	10.1
	Disagree	29	31.9	32.6	42.7
	Undecided	2	2.2	2.2	44.9
	Agree	26	28.6	29.2	74.2
	Strongly Agree	23	25.3	25.8	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.2 (Undecided)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.2 (Undecided) on table 13 above indicates that there is a divided opinion of the respondents on whether Federal Character principle has solved the problem of marginalization in recruitment process in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.

**Table 14: Promotion is carried out based on ethnic affiliation in UATH**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	26	28.6	29.2	29.2
	Disagree	23	25.3	25.8	55.1
	Undecided	6	6.6	6.7	61.8
	Agree	19	20.9	21.3	83.1
	Strongly Agree	15	16.5	16.9	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 2.7 (Disagree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 2.7 (Disagree) in table 14 shows that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that promotion is not carried out on ethnic affiliation in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH).

**Table 15: Promotion in UATH is strictly based on workers' experience and performance**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	14.3	14.6	14.6
	Disagree	20	22.0	22.5	37.1
	Undecided	2	2.2	2.2	39.3
	Agree	25	27.5	28.1	67.4
	Strongly Agree	29	31.9	32.6	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.4 (Undecided)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.4 (Undecided) in table 15 indicates that there is no consensus on whether promotion in UATH is strictly based on workers experience and performance.

**Table 16: There were complaints of bias during and after promotion exercise**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	7.7	7.9	7.9
	Disagree	20	22.0	22.5	30.3
	Undecided	3	3.3	3.4	33.7
	Agree	28	30.8	31.5	65.2
	Strongly Agree	31	34.1	34.8	100.0
Total		89	100.0		

Mean = 3.6 (Fairly Agree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.6 (Fairly Agree) on table 16 shows that there is divided opinion on whether there were complaints of bias during and after promotion exercise.

**Table 17: The total number of staff promoted cut across the different ethnic groups**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	19	20.9	21.3	21.3
	Disagree	30	33.0	33.7	55.1
	Undecided	5	5.5	5.6	60.7
	Agree	16	17.6	18.0	78.7
	Strongly Agree	19	20.9	21.3	100.0
Total		89	100.0		
Mean = 2.8 (Disagree)					

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 2.8 (Disagree) on table 17 above indicates that the majority of the respondents are of the opinion that total number of staff promoted do not represents the entire ethnic groups.

**Table 18: I need to know the top management before I can be considered for promotion**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	22	24.2	24.7	24.7
	Disagree	26	28.6	29.2	53.9
	Undecided	2	2.2	2.2	56.2
	Agree	15	16.5	16.9	73.0
	Strongly Agree	24	26.4	27.0	100.0
Total		89	100.0		
Mean = 2.9 (Disagree)					

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 2.9 (Disagree) on table 18 indicates that respondents are of the opinion that they do not need to know top management members before they can be considered for promotion.

**•Table 19: Suggestions to enhance implementation of Federal Character principle in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	7.8	7.9	7.9
	Disagree	8	8.9	9.0	16.9
	Undecided	3	3.3	3.4	20.2
	Agree	28	31.1	31.5	51.7
	Strongly Agree	43	47.8	48.3	100.0
Total		89	100.0		
Mean = 4.0 (Agree)					

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 4.0 (Agree) on table 19 above indicates that majority of the respondents suggest meritocracy to the management of UATH as regards the implementation of Federal Character in recruitment and promotion exercises.

**Table 20 Discourage political patronage**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	4	4.4	4.5	4.5
Disagree	12	13.3	13.5	18.0
Undecided	2	2.2	2.2	20.2
Agree	26	28.9	29.2	49.4
Strongly Agree	45	50.0	50.6	100.0
Total	90	100.0		
Mean = 4.0 (Agree)				

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The means score of 4.0 (Agree) on table 20 above shows that one of the ways to enhance Federal Character implementation in UATH is for management to discourage political patronage or favouritism during promotion and recruitment exercises.

**Table 21 Adequate skills/experience for staff conducting recruitment and promotion**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	6	6.7	6.7	6.7
Disagree	4	4.4	4.5	11.2
Undecided	1	1.1	1.1	12.4
Agree	38	42.2	42.7	55.1
Strongly Agree	40	44.4	44.9	100.0
Total	89	100.0		
Mean = 4.1 (Agree)				

The mean score of 4.1 (Agree) on table 21 shows that majority of the respondents agree that staff conducting the recruitment and promotion exercises have adequate skills and experience.

**Table 22: Publish openly names of appointees and those promoted**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	7	7.8	7.9	7.9
Disagree	4	4.4	4.5	12.4
Undecided	3	3.3	3.4	15.7
Agree	38	42.2	42.7	58.4
Strongly Agree	37	41.1	41.6	100.0
Total	89	98.9	100.0	
Total	89	100.0		
Mean = 4.0 (Agree)				

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 4.0 (Agree) on table 22 indicates that majority of the respondents are of the view that one of the ways to enhance implementation of Federal Character principle in Nigeria is to publish openly the names of recruits, appointees and promoted staff.

**Table 23 Adequate feedback mechanism**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	8.9	9.0	9.0
	Disagree	3	3.3	3.4	12.4
	Undecided	6	6.7	6.7	19.1
	Agree	43	47.8	48.3	67.4
	Strongly Agree	29	32.2	32.6	100.0
Total	89	98.9	100.0		
Total	89	100.0			

Mean = 3.9 (Agree)

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The mean score of 3.9 (Agree) on the table 23 above shows that majority of the respondents suggested that management of UATH should adopt adequate feedback mechanism when people complain about the recruitment and promotion exercises.

### Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One:

**Table 24: The UATH strictly adheres to Federal Character Principle on recruitment \* Political patronage syndrome has remained a major factor in recruitment in UATH**  
Cross tabulation

		Political patronage syndrome has remained a major factor in recruitment in UATH			
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree
The UATH strictly adheres to Federal Character Principle on recruitment	Strongly Disagree	4	10	3	4
	Disagree	0	0	0	12
	Undecided	0	0	0	5
	Agree	0	0	0	11
	Strongly Agree	0	0	0	0
Total		4	10	3	32

**Table 25: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	127.261 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	137.755	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	62.328	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	89		

a. 18 cells (72.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .17.

From the computation above, the chi-square calculated ( $X^2c$ ) is 127.261 while the chi-square tabulated ( $X^2t$ ) is 137.755. Thus, the chi-square calculated is less than chi-square tabulated. On this basis, we therefore accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and conclude that there is weak implementation of the federal character principle in recruitment and promotion exercises in UATH.

**Hypothesis Two:**

**Table 26: Some people belonging to different ethnic groups were recruited alongside with you \* Promotion is carried out based on ethnic affiliation in UATH**  
Cross tabulation

		Promotion is carried out based on ethnic affiliation in UATH					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Some people belonging to different ethnic groups were recruited alongside with you	Strongly Disagree	6	0	0	0	0	6
	Disagree	9	0	0	0	0	9
	Undecided	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Agree	9	23	6	5	0	43
	Strongly Agree	0	0	0	14	15	29
Total		26	23	6	19	15	89

Source: IBM SPSS Version 23.

**Table 27: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	116.080 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	128.439	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	50.880	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	89		

a. 18 cells (72.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.

From the computation above, the chi-square calculated ( $X^2c$ ) is 116.080 while the chi-square tabulated ( $X^2t$ ) is 128.439. Thus, the chi-square calculated is less than chi-square tabulated. On this basis, we therefore accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the opinion of workers from different geo-political zone on whether there is weak implementation of the federal character principle in the recruitment and promotion exercises at the UATH.

**Discussion of Findings**

In view of the research questions and the subsequent testing of the two stated hypotheses, the study revealed that there is weak implementation of the federal character principle in recruitment and promotion exercises in UATH. The study revealed that the hospital does not totally adhere to the Federal Character Principle

on recruitment process. The major problem associated with this principle as the study findings showed is that the principle sacrifices merit in favour of quota. Briggs (2007) posits that recruitment of incompetent applicants is one of the major reasons responsible for the low productivity and poor service delivery in the Nigerian public service. In the viewpoints Igbokwe-Ibeto et al (2015), managers will always recruit people that look like them. For instance, political patronage syndrome has been a major setback in the recruitment and promotion exercises in the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.

The finding indicates that there are still issues regarding complaints of bias or discrimination during and after recruitment process.

The findings show that the issue of marginalization in recruitment process in UATH has not really been solved by the implementation of Federal Character Principle. There have been cases where some sections of the country have dominated appointments. Furthermore, the findings of the study show that the implementation of Federal Character Principle can be enhanced when management adopts the following – merit during recruitment and promotion exercises. Individuals' expertise, skills, experience or wealth of experience should not be traded for quota system. The performance of every organization majorly lies in the hands of competent human resource. Proper feedback mechanism is another findings revealed by the study that would enhance the implementation of Federal Character Principle in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH).

### **Conclusion**

The study examined the implementation of federal character principle in Nigerian public service with focus on recruitment and promotion exercises in the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital. The objectives of the study were to evaluate the extent to which the principles of federal character have been adhered to in the recruitment and promotion exercises in the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital. Despite the fact that University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH) adopts federal character principle in its recruitment and selection exercises, the impact has been relatively weak because sometimes UATH's management does not adhere strictly to federal character principle on recruitment and promotion exercises. Its implementation has led to marginalization of some ethnic groups and merit has been sacrificed in favour of quota system and political patronage.

### **Recommendations**

The following are recommendations made based on the findings of the study:

- a. The management of University of Abuja Teaching Hospital (UATH) should always base recruitment and promotion on merit.
- b. The management of UATH should discourage political patronage or favouritism during promotion and recruitment exercises.



- c. Management staff conducting recruitment and promotion exercises in University of Abuja Teaching Hospital should enhance their skills by taking up professional training.
- d. Open publishing of recruits, appointees or promoted staff should be adopted by the UATH management so has to discourage negative perception of employees towards federal character principle.
- e. Management of UATH should adopt adequate feedback mechanism so as to know when people complain about the recruitment and promotion exercises.

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