

Examination of Social Injustice in Nigeria and the Necessity for a Welfare System: A Rawlsian Approach

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Abstract

As a nation, Nigeria is plagued by a series of ethnic and political crises. This is due to the amalgamation of different ethnic groups by the British in 1914. This has divided the country along ethnic lines and created inequalities between people. These inequalities create crises due to the unequal distribution of national resources. As a result, ethnic relations are also exacerbated due to the large ethnic groups in Nigeria. On the other hand, overlapping consensus, as described by Rawls, can be translated to a national consensus in a welfare society where there is constitutional protection for marginalized? ethnic groups through mutual understanding as well as a willingness to adjust positions to suit the needs of others. A just and fair welfare society must provide interethnic collaboration, peaceful coexistence, and healthy relationships in a multiethnic state like Nigeria, where there is division, animosity, unhealthy rivalry, and pronounced inequities between the ethnic groups.

Key Words: John Rawls, Social Injustice, Welfare, Overlapping Consensus, Nigeria

1. Introduction

The interactions between ethnic groups are one of the problems that Africa is facing. Inequalities between the numerous ethnic groups occur in Nigeria as a result of a protracted period of colonial governance up to the current political era. Nigeria's ethnic relations are marked by discord, unhealthy rivalries, and stark differences between the many ethnic groups. The British intentionally sowed a compound ethnic crisis (Amaku, 2014:11). According to Osuji, the leadership concept is centered on racial interests and individual wealth, which has led to the well-known absence of a shared national objective (Osuji, 2018, 148).

Since the country's founding, Nigeria's government structure has faced numerous difficulties, the majority of which are the result of ethnic politics and attitudes. The Nigerian leadership refused to let the nation's values, which include an opposition to corruption and ethnocentrism as well as integrity and respect for the rule of law, affect their way of thinking or their behavior (Emordi, 2008:47). Finding a consensus on how social justice should be interpreted raises the issue of maintaining societal cohesion and political stability. Nigerian ethnicity is determined by genetic affinity. It comes naturally; it is a phenomenon of nature. It is consequently beneficial in and of itself, but it can also be used profitably to further human welfare. A group that claims to be ethnically diverse professes to have shared heritage or blood. The group could be big or small in terms of size or location. All ethnic groups share the following traits in common: claim of descent from a common ancestor that had to span several generations (Osuji.2018:151).

The psychological emotion that accompanies this sense of shared origin fosters a sense of community and solidarity among the populace. Estheticism poses a threat because it fosters and maintains division. Numerous measures, such as the federal employment character, the national youth service corps scheme (NYSC), and the Unity school systems, have been implemented to curb the detrimental effects of racial prejudice. But it has evolved into a part of the country's development. In order to address the worsening ethnic tensions and the

justification for introducing social justice (equity and fairness) into Nigerian politics, this article evaluate the applicability of John Rawls' overlapping consensus. Rawls attempts to create a practical formula for a fair, equitable distribution of rights and liberties and the way to distribute socioeconomic benefits that will encompass money, health, education, and other political rights in order to deal with the concept of an overlapping consensus.

Nigeria's ethnic problems and crises between the many ethnic groups over the country's resources continue to be points of contention and threats to the nation's peace, unity, and political stability. Studying Nigeria's ethnic crises reveals a history of political instability and shifting coping mechanisms within the nation's constitution, which includes a range of ethnic groups. In Nigeria today, there is fierce competition between the many ethnic groups over matters like the distribution of power and resources. The solutions to the issues described above have been sought after by numerous governments, all in vain. This study uses an analytical approach. It employs critical analysis to examine Nigeria's political unrest and ethnic relations crises.

This work will critically investigate the difficulties in ethnic relations in order to have an in-depth conversation about them. Additionally, it will reveal the significance of John Rawls' theory of social justice through his overlapping consensus. It will also expose the meaning of John Rawls's overlapping consensus. Here, Rawls overlapping consensus is used as a model for resolving the crises of social Injustice and help to develop a new social-political welfare structure in Nigeria

2. The Nigerian State and Her Crises of Social Injustice: An Overview

Nigeria has been plagued by a number of ethnic, political, and economic crises. There are many different points of view about this. Some people attribute this issue to the British government's colonial rule over the country, while others attribute it to poor leadership (Olugbemi & Osuji, 2021:28).

As a result, the country has been split along ethnic lines, which has led to inequalities among the populace. Due to injustices in the distribution of the country's resources, these inequities have sparked rivalries. Additionally, tensions exist as a result of one ethnic group being marginalized at the expense of another, particularly the minor ethnic groups. The ascendancy of a particular ethnic group in relation to governance and leadership is dispiriting and challenging. And this has brought distrust and ill-will among the people. Accordingly, the problem of ethnic relations is also exacerbated by the large number of ethnic groups in Nigeria. This brought dubitation, abomination, injustice, imbalance, and dogmatism among the people.

3. John Rawls Two Principles of Justice

Rawls argues that the people in the hypothetical original position will agree on two principles of justice. Rawls clearly explains:

The first statement of the two principles reads as follows: First, each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Second, social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all (Rawls, 1971:60).

With regard to Rawls, the first rule is to give the second priority. All members of society must have their personal rights respected for society to be just. It might be claimed that everyone in society is more or less equal because personal liberties have been respected. The second tenet

primarily addresses the social and economic disparities that exist in every society. Rawls further states that "as a general comment, these principles concern mainly, as I said, the basic structure of society" (Rawls, 1971:61). Rawls claims that "two principles of justice, such as justice, are sufficient to create a just society. There are several reasons for this. The first is that people in a hypothetical initial position choose these principles on the basis of a contract. These two principles define what Rawls means by justice (Rawls, 1971:61-62). As with the original position, all individuals behind the veil of ignorance are equal because they do not know the details. Rawls is aware that in no society are people completely unaware of their social status and economic wealth. According to Rawls, not all people need to enjoy the same social and economic advantages. If there is disparity, it must not further harm those who are less fortunate. Inequality in the social system must also benefit everyone. The second principle, according to Rawls, "applies, roughly, to the distribution of income and wealth and to the design of organizations that use differences in authority and responsibility, or chains of command" (Rawls, 1971:61). Rawls emphasizes that:

These principles are to be arranged in serial order, with the first principle preceding the second. This ordering means that a departure from the institutions of equal liberty required by the first principle cannot be justified by, or compensated for, by greater social and economic advantages. The distribution of wealth and income and the hierarchies of authority must be consistent with both the liberties of equal citizenship and equal opportunity (Rawls, 1971:62).

The arrangement of the principles is intended to prevent fundamental liberties and rights from being infringed upon in the name of social and economic distributions. Economic disparities are only acceptable if they do not further marginalize those who are least fortunate. Furthermore, the fundamental freedoms and rights of any group of citizens cannot be compromised by an unequal distribution of income. This interpretation of the philosophy of justice as fairness implies that a society can only be both just and fair if it can be proven that any inequities are to everyone's advantage. The essential rights and liberties must be safeguarded, and resources must be allocated in line with the two principles of justice and fairness is all that is required for a society to be deemed fair. In these fictitious structures, everyone will be on an equal footing. The things that all people will want first are fundamental liberty and goods. Because of this, even when resources are allocated unevenly, essential liberties are still guaranteed. In order to illustrate this distribution, Rawls says:

Imagine, then, a hypothetical initial arrangement in which all the social primary goods are equally distributed: everyone has similar rights and duties, and income and wealth are evenly shared. This state of affairs provides a benchmark for judging improvements. If certain inequalities of wealth and organizational powers will make everyone better off than in this hypothetical starting situation, then they accord with the general conception (Rawls, 1971:62).

From the perspective of Rawls, a hypothetical model can be used to determine whether a society is just or not. A society is said to be just if it upholds the two ideals of justice and fairness in a comparable way to the society in which it originated. The two principles can be used by society to make the necessary adjustments if it turns out that it is not constructed in line with the two principles. To Rawls, the essential approach to guaranteeing that a society is just is to defend rights and freedoms above societal gains. Inequalities in economic and social status can be more or less justified if individual rights and liberties are the primary concern of institutions. For Rawls, the equality of individual rights and liberties in society is all that is necessary for a society to be seen as just.

4. John Rawls Original Position

The original position is the introduction of a framework or strategy that's reasonable for the development of principles of justice, so that at the end of consultations, the principles of justice agreed on will be fair and, in this way, carry the kind of drive that confers participation and expected legitimization, submission, and acknowledgment (Rawls, 1993:256).

The categorical imperative and Kant's concept of autonomy serve as the foundation for the original position. According to Rawls (1993:251), the original viewpoint is a "procedural interpretation" in which the character of people as free, equal, and rational is articulated. According to Rawls, "there can be no general moral idea of justice. A democratic state has options that allow for a variety of doctrines and a plurality of contradictory conceptions of the good, thanks to the emergence of constitutional governments and the institutions of major industrial market economies" (Rawls, 2003:188).

Fairness therefore becomes cut off from moral formation and denies members' ties to a particular group. As suggested by Rawls, "we ought not to shape the ways they live by starting with the good as it is independently defined. The rules that we will accept to guide the circumstances in which these goals are to be developed and the method by which they are to be achieved are what fundamentally show our nature, not our goals. Because the self comes first, it comes before the goals that it upholds" (Rawls, 1971:560). No one knows any specifics about oneself or herself, anyone else, or about his or her historical and social predicament while the people are hidden behind the curtain of ignorance. According to Freeman, "The parties' decision is to be based solely on their knowledge of general facts that they share with each other, which includes general knowledge of psychology, economics, and other relevant social, biological, and physical sciences (Freeman, 2007:155). As stated by Rawls, "the people in the initial position are reasonable. Because they are logical, it is assumed that they possess a sense of fairness (Rawls, 1971:145). Since certain actions are obviously just while others are manifestly unjust, Rawls' rationality implies an innate understanding of right and wrong. Each person will attempt to further their own interests when deciding between different justice principles, which will be advantageous to all parties (Rawls, 1971:142). This suggests that they do not view a particular good as an end and are not affected by religion or other considerations. According to Rawls, "the choices of the parties in the original position will be restricted by natural laws, and those deciding will have certain inclinations to choose among them" (Rawls, 1971:159).

These 'assumptions' must be accurate and sufficiently broad, though. "There may be good reasons for enshrining convictions of justice more directly into first principles," writes Rawls in his conclusion (Rawls, 1971:160). The convictions will be made widely known in this manner. As a result, society and institutions play a crucial role in shaping people's perceptions of justice. Rawls emphasizes the importance of the family in fostering moral development and a sense of justice in people. A nation's politics and constitution must be just, equal, and fair in order to govern a "well-ordered" society, the organizations and institutions that make up society, and the family.

5. John Rawls Idea and Application of the Veil of Ignorance

To apply and elucidate his theories of justice, Rawls mainly relies on a metaphysical scenario in which everyone is placed in an initial position behind his veil of ignorance. The only way to guarantee justice and fairness when a society is being built, in Rawls' view, is to lift this veil of ignorance. The veil of ignorance prevents all future members of the new society from knowing certain facts about their unique situations. This suggests that no one will be able to predict with certainty in the interim what they will change into in the new society. No member of the projected society will be aware of his obligations or duties prior to the selection of the

guiding principles for the society because everyone's knowledge of his situational role, position, or profession will only be revealed if a workable thesis of governance has been widely accepted.

In Rawls outlook each member of society should select one or more of these guiding principles. Men and women from a variety of occupations, including "lawyers, medical doctors, teachers, farmers, clerks, carpenters, drivers, mechanics, the rich and the poor, the lazy and the intelligent, the diligent, the leaders, and politicians, among others," are members of this society. People would be prone to bias or favor a specific career, role, or position if they knew in advance what its function or career would be. So, according to Rawls, everyone must be in the dark before deciding on the principles. The maintenance of equality and fairness in society is, in Rawls' view, the purpose of agreement or selection.

In the first paragraph of *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls asserts that justice is the first and most significant virtue of social organizations. This is due to the fact that no matter how efficient or well-organized a social organization is, it must be reformed or removed if it is unfair. Society must be viewed as a cooperative venture with shared advantages. In order to deliver fundamental social benefits, society's members should be seen as engaging on an equal footing with individuals. Income, money, opportunity, rights, freedoms, and power are some examples of these social goods. The topic of distributive justice is brought up because individuals are concerned with how the benefits of their collaboration will be shared when no party to the arrangement benefits (Rawls, 1971:10). According to Rawls, "because all are equally placed and no one may create principles to favor his unique circumstance, "a just agreement or bargain results in the principles of justice" (Rawls, 1971:12).

The resultant vision of justice must be assured to attain a reflective equilibrium. Our moral principles and our innate sense of justice align in this situation. The parties to the initial stance would also agree. The first principle, often known as the liberty principle, comes before the second principle, also referred to as the difference principle. Unless doing so will benefit society's most vulnerable members, social benefits should be distributed equally. Given this, justice, according to Rawls, consists of "simply inequalities that are not to the benefit of all" (Rawls, 1971:62). Depending on the social class they are born into, people have different physical and mental characteristics. The distribution of social benefits and rewards should equalize these societal and natural occurrences.

6. John Rawls Overlapping Consensus and its Relevance

In Rawls view, a well-ordered society must start with an overlapping agreement because only then can one expect to achieve the kind of political stability needed to create and sustain a well-ordered society. The 'reality of reasonable pluralism'-the unavoidable and unavoidable presence of a plurality of opposing and incommensurable reasonable comprehensive doctrines-provokes the necessity for an overlapping consensus (Rawls, 1993:36).

The diversity of opposing and incommensurable "reasonable comprehensive philosophical and moral doctrines found in modern democratic societies are not a mere historical condition that may soon pass away; it is a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy," and as such, it will develop and persist in all democratic societies, according to Rawls (Rawls, 1996:36).

Therefore, any idea of justice that seeks to provide the foundation for a society with order must be able to properly confront this reality. According to Rawls, only an overlapping agreement is able to establish the foundation for a well-ordered society by accommodating the reality of reasonable plurality. According to Rawls, the public notion of justice must provide the "right" form of stability, i.e., it must promote "stability for the right reasons," if we are to attain the kind of political stability required to construct and maintain a just and stable democratic government (Rawls, 1996:42).

According to Rawls, this implies that for citizens to endorse the idea of justice, they must be

driven by a desire to behave morally. Acting justly in today's pluralistic cultures necessitates acceptance of and willingness to comply with acceptable pluralism's requirements. According to Rawls, residing in a just fundamental structure fosters the desire and readiness to behave in this way. They will understand that the stability required establishing and maintaining a well-ordered society can only be attained by ensuring that the public conception of justice satisfies two criteria: 1) "It must be willingly and freely supported by at least a substantial number of people." The political idea of justice may engage "each citizen's reason" from within the context of his or her own comprehensive doctrine, but the overlapping consensus only addresses this conception (Rawls, 1996:143). People are able to accept the overlapping consensus' demands as ethically consistent in some way with their individual philosophies. As stated by John Rawls, the existence of this shared moral affirmation guarantees that support for the overlapping consensus will remain stable regardless of changes in people's personal circumstances or "shifts in the distribution of political power" to the extent that this is humanly possible (Rawls, 1996:148).

For Rawls, people who support the various political conceptions will continue to do so even if their ideas gain more relative weight and eventually come to dominate society (Rawls, 1996:148). A political idea of justice is valuable because it can serve as the foundation for an overlapping consensus that can guarantee the "greater" level of stability required creating and upholding a well-ordered society. In fact, Rawls claims that the development of a political idea of justice is a necessary condition for the creation of an overlapping consensus. For Rawls, the overlapping consensus's special qualities allow it to garner the necessary level of moral support to fulfill its goals.

7. A Welfare State: Conceptual Clarification

A system known as a "welfare state" is one in which the government has primary responsibility for providing its residents with social and economic security in the form of pensions, social security payments, health care, education, and other benefits (Concise Oxford, 2009:453).

The idea first surfaced in Britain in the 1942 Beveridge Report, and it was later made a reality by several British administrations in the 1940s. The welfare state has evolved significantly since its inception and has been embraced by many industrialized countries. It may be said to have broken down into three separate categories: the market-driven "liberal" model, which is found in Australia and the USA; the stratified and corporatist "conservative" form, which is found in Germany; and the Universalist "social democratic" type. Furthermore, there has been a noticeable departure from the social democratic tradition that developed in Britain in the 1940s (Esping-Anderson, 2000:162-163).

Despite variations in the scope of the welfare offered, the core beliefs of all three versions are that society has a duty to ensure that each member has a sufficient standard of living and that a government should be able to account for disparities in life chances (Lehning, 2009:213).

As a result, the government must guarantee every citizen's political right to minimal standards of living, nutrition, health, housing, and education (Lehning, 2009:213).

All of these social advancements that ensured citizens were cared for "from the cradle to the grave" were based on an acceptance of the need to mitigate the worst effects of a market economy; at the core of all of this was a new understanding of the relationship between the state and the market, or more specifically, the individual within a market-based society. This comprehension was followed by an additional acknowledgment that these issues were, at least in part, systemic rather than the result of individual error or failure (Concise Oxford, 2009:385).

8. The Welfare State and Rawls Theory of Social Justice

Rawls' "theory of justice" provides a very strong explanation of many of the key values and goals we see in the contemporary welfare state since it is concerned with balancing morally arbitrary inequities while doing so in a way that preserves fundamental human rights (Birnbbaum, 2010:496). Rawls defined this fundamental idea as "justice as fairness" in his landmark 1971 book, *A Theory of Justice*. He insisted that his participants be sensible, have a solid grasp of human society, behavior, and political and economic systems, be free from compulsion, and have an equal voice (Holt, 2011:395).

According to Rawls, persons in the original situation would all adopt one of two fundamental principles of justice- one for distributing civil and political rights and the other for distributing economic and social goods- operating from behind this curtain of ignorance. Each individual is to have an equal right to the most comprehensive overall system of fundamental liberties consistent with a corresponding system of liberty for all, according to Rawls' first principle (Rawls, 1971:250). Then, this concept embraces fundamental liberties like freedom of expression, of religion, of political association, and so forth, all well-known elements of a liberal democratic state. The distribution of economic and social goods should be based on his second principle, which reads as follows: "Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest benefit of the least privileged and (b) attached to the offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality and opportunity" (Rawls, 1971:83).

The "difference principle" of Rawls is condition (a), and its dual nature is another important factor in the "original position's" perception of the welfare state's legitimacy.

This calls for a welfare state, which is essential to having a decent standard of free education for all of the people it serves. However, based on the same theory, it also permits those same well-paid members of society to pay more taxes than others, as long as the extra revenue is subsequently transferred to the less fortunate members of society (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2013).

A redistributionist taxation system is also required, which is yet another essential element of a welfare state. 'Negative income tax,' a guaranteed minimum income for all people living below a specific income threshold, is even mentioned by Rawls. (Birnbbaum, 2010:498).

Since there can be neither complete socialism nor pure capitalism, the welfare state appears to be the most sensible and widely accepted middle ground between the two opposing philosophies.

The welfare state in Nigeria may be understood as being justified by Rawls' theory of justice in two distinct ways. The first is that the welfare state that Rawls argues we would establish under the idealized conditions of the "original position" actually has many similarities to the current one. No matter where we ended up in Rawls' hypothetical Nigerian society, we would share the same fundamental rights as everyone else, and the government would provide for our material necessities, such as health care, education, and social security payments, just as it does in a real welfare state.

9. Rawl's Theory of Social Justice and the Necessity for a Welfare System of Government in Nigeria

The urgent need to rebuild Nigerian society's institutions in order to resolve ethnic crises highlights the core principles of Rawls' theory of social justice, which prioritizes freedom and places a strong emphasis on equality and the well-being of the underprivileged. In relation to Nigeria, the two principles, which will only apply to the fundamental structure of Nigerian society, would regulate some of the contentious issues such as the distribution of rights, duties, privileges, etc. This emphasis on Rawls' first principle can be understood as a reflection of his strong and unbreakable connection with the liberal school.

The freedoms required for effective societal governance span moral, intellectual, and political realms (the right to vote and occupy public office), and they support principles like freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, liberty of conscience, and freedom of thinking. According to the first principle, all citizens should have equal access to these liberties (Rawls, 2001:53).

The two guiding principles, which in the Nigerian context are translated as Liberty, Equality, and Welfare, would also guarantee that, regardless of the economic, social, and political circumstances of the participants in the national dialogue, the ideal of liberty represents a viable alternative when deciding on the type of social-political structure for the nation, particularly when they are unsure of the course of future events. Therefore, it makes sense that the nation's ethnic groups would support the second principle, which requires equality of opportunity.

It is of great importance that the second principle ensures that Nigerians with comparable abilities and resources experience comparable circumstances, with social disparity serving the interests and welfare of the least advantaged. The second principle, which discusses concerns with disparities, is where the difference principle comes from. Although it is lower on the lexical hierarchy, this principle is an essential and fundamental component of Rawls' broader goal, which partially mandates the welfare of the socially least advantaged. According to Rawls (1999:64), this principle "requires that existing inequalities must contribute effectively to the benefit of the least advantaged; otherwise, the inequalities are not permissible," regardless of how motivated people are to labor to earn their bigger shares of output. But how significant is the notion of liberty in modern society? Rawls ranks the first of the two principles higher than the second, indicating that in terms of lexical importance, liberty is more significant than equality. Is he acting appropriately? Without a doubt, freedom, liberty, and the right to privacy are fundamental human rights that cannot be compromised. In elevating and emphasizing the primacy of liberty, like Rawls in his first principle, argued that no government official or member of society should be allowed to restrict the freedom of any individual because people are free to enjoy what is legally theirs as long as it is their private property (Mill, 1987:128).

Does this indicate that people are free to act however they like if society has no right to intervene with them in any way about topics that affect them? An individual's freedom cannot be at the expense of another person's freedom. Freedom comes with obligations, and having unrestricted rights and liberties could work against you. Can the State still become involved at this point?

The State must also uphold the obligations that improve the enjoyment of these freedoms. Outside of this, members of society are completely free to act in whatever way they see fit, both legally and socially, and to pay the price for their choices. No member of society is therefore granted absolute freedom from responsibility, but there are instances in which members of society take actions that, contrary to what Mill would have us believe, may not harm other members but may harm them personally. In these situations, is it not appropriate for the State or other members to step in and intervene? For John Stuart Mill, the notion of liberty requires that any intervention be initiated by the individual, who must also act as the last arbiter.

Neither one person nor any number of persons is warranted in saying to another human creature of ripe years that he shall not do with his life for his own benefit what he chooses to do with it. He is the person most interested in his own well-being; the interest that any other person except in cases of strong personal attachment can have in it is trifling compared with that which he himself has; the interest that society has in him individually is (except as to his conduct to others) fractional and altogether indirect; while with respect to his own feelings and circumstances, the most ordinary man or woman has means of knowledge immeasurably surpassing those that can be possessed by anyone else (Mill, 1987:133).

In line with Rawls, it is up to the fundamental institutions of society to regulate society, and as

part of that process, wealth will be redistributed to benefit the socially disadvantaged. To this, Mill responds that while general standards should be established that explain what people should expect, an individual should be given his or her freedom when it comes to particular affairs.

The only way society can influence a person's life is through advice or suggestions. However, the individual is the only one who has the right to decide what is best for him, so any negative effects of rejecting advice or other people's ideas cannot be compared and are actually greatly outweighed by the negative effects of letting other people dictate what is right for them.

10. Conclusion

One of the contentious concerns in the distribution of national resources and posts in the public division is inequality, which is a problem that continues to echo across all national dialogue in Nigeria. The goal of Rawls theory of social justice is to provide guidance for modifying the standards that this system employs to operate as well as the rights and incentives it offers. This theory is applicable to, for instance, fiscal and economic policy as well as income and taxation. It does not relate to specific transactional conditions and situations but rather to the context in which those transactions take place. Rawls theory of social justice's main practical goal is to ensure that no member of society is ever left behind. Since all individuals' interests are taken into consideration equally and there would no longer be a need to protect particular ethnic groups, this is probably acceptable. The absence of a shared sense of justice is one of the elements that negatively impacts society's ability to achieve justice. It is for this reason that Rawls promoted the idea of a well-ordered society.

This refers to a welfare society that is governed by a shared public conception of justice, which calls for the presence of a notion of justice that the people at a particular point in their history knew and accepted. Thus, it is clear that the lack of this consensus in the polity contributes to the issues of political instability, unity, and ethnic relations crises among the many ethnic groups, such as in Nigeria. At the time of the Amalgamation and the creation of Nigeria in 1914, there was clearly a lack of a shared public sense of justice. At the time of independence in 1960, there was also a clear absence of any theory, paradigm, or principles for the creation of the fundamental structure of Nigerian society. The reality is that these fundamental shortcomings were the root cause of the social injustice issue in Nigerian society from the very beginning. It is for this reason that the liberal worldview is here to stay; therefore, Nigeria must embrace it for these and other reasons. It is one that places a focus on liberty, individual freedom, rights, and the necessity of constitutional democracy, free and fair elections, welfare, equality, or unrestricted access to societal institutions.

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