

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 54953

**Title:** POLITICAL POPULISM IN AFRICA: A CHALLENGE OF NATION BUILDING ; A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF NIGERIA AND GHANA,

**Recommendation:**

Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		(✓)		
Techn. Quality		(✓)		
Clarity	(✓)			
Significance	(✓)			

Reviewer Name: Dr Abdul Haseeb Mir

### *Detailed Reviewer's Report*

This article provides a timely and critically important analysis of the complex relationship between political populism, ethnicity, and nation-building in the African context, with a focused comparative study of Nigeria and Ghana. The topic is highly relevant given the global resurgence of populist movements and their particular implications for multi-ethnic democracies. The manuscript successfully establishes the central argument that ethnically driven populism presents a significant challenge to consolidating national identity and stable governance, while also acknowledging populism's potential, as noted by Nugent, to amplify the voices of the marginalized.

A significant strength of the paper is its robust theoretical framework, which effectively integrates Social Constructivist and Instrumentalist theories to provide a nuanced lens for analyzing how ethnic identities are both constructed and weaponized for political gain. The comparative approach is well-executed, offering insightful parallels and contrasts between Nigeria and Ghana, notably highlighting how Ghana's more consistent democratic processes have helped moderate populist tendencies compared to Nigeria. The inclusion of primary data from field interviews enriches the analysis, providing ground-level perspectives that bolster the scholarly discussion. Furthermore, the conceptual innovation of classifying ethnicity into liberal, conservative, radical, and hybrid types is a valuable contribution that adds depth to the understanding of ethnic dynamics. The detailed comparative table of populist events is an excellent resource that visually encapsulates the historical trajectory of populism in both nations.

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The paper's structure is generally logical, moving from a global and conceptual overview to a specific application in the two case studies. The policy recommendations, particularly the emphasis on "ethnic equity" over a one-size-fits-all "equality," are thoughtful and practical, pointing towards context-sensitive solutions for managing diversity.

However, the manuscript would benefit from minor revisions to enhance its clarity, coherence, and overall impact. The abstract and several sections throughout the paper contain grammatical errors, awkward phrasing, and typographical issues (e.g., "bulkanisation," "adumbrated above," inconsistent formatting in the reference list) that require careful proofreading. While the conclusion powerfully advocates for ethnic equity, it introduces a somewhat unexpectedly positive view of populism as a democratic corrective, which feels slightly disconnected from the critical analysis of its dangers presented in the bulk of the paper. This tension should be reconciled to present a more cohesive argument. The concept of "ethnic equity," while promising, needs a more precise and elaborated definition, perhaps with a brief example, to distinguish it clearly from equality and to operationalize it for policymakers. Finally, the flow between some sections could be improved with stronger transitional sentences, and the reference list requires standardization to ensure all entries are complete and consistently formatted.

Notwithstanding these points, the research is substantive, the comparative analysis is insightful, and the focus on the intersection of ethnicity and populism fills an important gap in the literature. The article provides a valuable perspective on how democratic societies in Africa can navigate the challenges of populism without undermining the nation-building project.

Therefore, the article is recommended for publication, pending **minor revisions** to address the points mentioned above.