

Restructuring, Security Challenges and Development in Nigeria

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Abstract: Nigeria undoubtedly is one of the hotbeds of insecurity in the world today, apart from the intractable Boko-Haram insurgency which has claimed thousands of lives, destruction of multi-billions properties and condemned several others to Internal Displaced Person Camps scattered throughout the country; the Southern Kaduna conflict; violent clashes between the Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers all over the country, renewed surge in kidnapping in major cities and villages, agitations in the Niger Delta as well as calls for secession in the former Biafra Republic, and most recently, the violent attacks on security agencies and as well as some other key democratic institutions such as courts, Independent National Electoral Commission offices and mindless killing of law enforcement agencies among others. Critical stakeholders, scholars and opinion leaders unanimously holds that the principal reasons behind the insecurity across the four walls of the Nigerian state is the injustices and oppression on the federating units, abuse of the laws and constitutional provisions, negative attitude of those entrusted with the responsibility of governance among others; hence, the call for restructuring. The study adopted the frustration aggression theory and used the secondary data as a source. The study concluded that the agitations for fair treatment, equal representation, and effective governance are basic and necessary ingredients of restructuring that could help to guarantee a peaceful co-existence devoid of rancor and acrimony. Consequently, the study recommended thus; that there should be a devolution/decentralization of power and resources, government should reel out policies that promotes inclusive framework for ethnic, religious and regional accommodation, create one more state for the southeast region among others.

Keywords: Restructuring, Development, Insecurity, Pseudo-Federalism, Fiscal Economy, Autonomy.

I. Introduction

Nigeria undoubtedly is one of the hotbeds of insecurity in the world today, apart from the intractable Boko-Haram insurgency which has claimed thousands of lives, destruction of multi-billions properties and condemned several others to Internal Displaced Person Camps scattered throughout the country; the Southern Kaduna conflict; violent clashes between the Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers all over the country, renewed surge in kidnapping in major cities and villages, agitations in the Niger Delta as well as calls for secession in the former Biafra Republic, and most recently, the violent attacks on security agencies and as well as some other key democratic institutions such as courts, Independent National Electoral Commission offices and mindless killing of law enforcement agencies among others are orchestrated by marginalization in the politics of revenue allocation, sharing of national cake as well as in development planning which has population principle as its yardstick (Oyadiran & Toyin, 2015; Baba & Aeyinghe, 2017:42, Mohammed & Aisha, 2018; Adagbabiri & Okolie, 2018; Ademola, 2019; Efeurhobo & Fredrick 2020; Nanlong, 2021).

These dramatic increase in violence, terrorism and the like, in Nigeria today are propelled by a lot of injustices and oppression on the federating units, abuse of the laws and constitutional provisions, negative attitude of those entrusted with the responsibility of governance among others; hence, the call for restructuring (Udoh, 2015; Atiku, 2017; Momoh & Adejumbi, 2017; Epelle & Nweke, 2019; Efeurhobo & Fredrick 2020). The state of insecurity in Nigerian state in recent time, accentuate economic decline because of investors are leaving the country in droves, there is growing loss of farm agriculture as farmers now avoid farmlands because of fear of being lynched (Nanlong, 2021), large and small farms, their crops and farm produce have been serial destroyed by the notorious herdsmen, terrorists and bandits; and absence of safety in most parts of the country reduced economic investments and even foreign direct investment (Imhonopi & Urim, 2012). The Nigerian

society has been so polarized that the degree of patriotism and loyalty has become a mockery and the desire to safeguard the national sovereignty that is expected of a nation is almost non existence, leading to the decimation of human capital accumulation for economic and social development (Efeurhobo& Fredrick 2020).The central plank here is that there is something fundamentally wrong with a federating unit such as ours where the national government vis-a-vis some highly politicized states may be doing comparatively better than others because of obvious ethnic and religious factors just to mention a few; It is on this position that the agitators of restructuring and those that clamor for a better political arrangement where some of these injustices can be effectively addressed, so that problem of insecurity and poor development which has become the aftermath effect of this over glaring political lopsidedness can be corrected is welcomed(Anugwom, 2005; Dickson and Asua, 2016; Ideobodo et al, 2018;Efeurhobo& Fredrick, 2020).

In the same vein, the multifarious agitations against marginalization and injustices manifest and affects the geopolitical zones differently; in the south – south region of Nigeria, has constantly wailed that the resources found within her territorial environment have always been exploited the government tend to exploit them and use the revenue gotten from their land to enrich and develop other areas of the federation while they languish in abject poverty, poor infrastructures and lack of good water supply; since their water bodies have been polluted through the extraction of their mineral resources (oil); the south east region have through their mouthpiece spoken of their being marginalized in the allocation of government seats, inequality in state creation, application of 97% versus 5% mentality in the sitting of projects and programmes by the central government. While in the south west region, the agitating for Oduduwa Republic wherein equal opportunities and sense of belonging will be guaranteed to all citizens of the zone (Ogefere, 2017; Babatola, 2020;Adams, 2021;Kazeem, 2021).

It suffice to state here, that this lack of fair representation in governance anchored on religious bias, ethnic consciousness and poor governance that has polarized the national unity; consequently harvesting myriads of insecurity of lives and invaluable properties and poor development as almost everyone appears to be in a hurry to collect what belongs to all by whatever means possible (Efeurhobo& Fredrick, 2020). In this light, this study is set to explicate how restructuring will substantially curb the height of insecurity in Nigeria, help to promote national cohesion and good governance which will spur massive development.

II. Conceptual Underpinnings

Restructuring: The word restructuring is a very nebulous and illusive concept that has continued to attract intellectual discourses among the intelligentsia and practitioners. Despite the profundity and efflorescence of writings on the subject, it appears that the concept has remained too elastic for comprehension. While it means different things to different people, social science researchers have defined it in divergent perspectives. Efeurhobo& Fredrick (2020) defines restructuring as the reorientation of the people, structure of governance geared towards a peaceful and egalitarian society-devoid of injustice, hatred and total dislike for one another. In the words of Ibok, et al (2018), restructuring implies damages and change connotes a departure from the old order to a new one. They maintained that restructuring can therefore mean fundamental change in the building block of a nation's educational system; change in the social, economic infrastructural and political landscape of a nation.

Similarly, Atiku (2017) perceived restructuring as the devolution of more powers to the federating units with the accompanying resources, and it would involve greater control by the federating units of the resources in their areas. It would mean, by implication, the reduction of the powers and roles of the federal government so that it focuses only on those matters best handled by the centre, such as defense, immigration, customs and excise, foreign policy, aviation, as well as setting and enforcing national standards on such matters as education, health and safety. He further explained that restructuring will accelerate the calls to devolve more powers to the federating units and transferring more resources to them will help to decongest the centre and enhance greater manageability, efficiency and accountability. That there will be more clarity in the division of powers

and responsibilities between the centre and the federating units, and there will be a reduction in the attention paid to the centre. According to Bello (2017), restructuring, simply put, is the process of increasing or decreasing the number of component parts that makes up a system and re-defining the inter-relationship between them in such a way that the entire system perform more efficiently. Bello further adduced the types of restructuring to include political, economic or fiscal, educational, social, accounting, administrative restructuring.

Security Challenges: A Security challenge implies the development where citizens' lives and properties are threatened by people with guns, cutlasses, explosives, among others (Efeuhobo& Fredrick, 2020). According to Momoh, (2010) security challenges are a situation that prevails when human and material properties are threatened by a combination of man-made forces to disrupt, truncate or completely mar the realization of set objectives.

Development: Todaro (1992) perceived development as a multi-dimensional process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of entire economic and social systems. He maintained that development must represent the entire gamut of changes by which an entire social system, tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory and towards a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better. However, Tadora's analysis glossed over the vital role played by human factors and the processes through which development is actualized and sustained. To overcome this intellectual limitation, Seers argued as follows:

The questions to ask about a country's development are three: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all these three have declined from high levels then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned (Seers. 1969:3).

III. Theoretical Framework

The theory used for the explanation of this study is the frustration aggression theory. The proponents of this are, John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears in 1939 (Johannes&Malte, 2017). This theory holds that individual or group of persons could resort to violence settling disputes when they are being persistently frustrated in their seeming efforts to achieve their goals. That is to say, if the socio-economic and political expectations of a people are being frustrated repeatedly, it may give cause to aggression, which consequently may be expressed violently through gangsters, insurgency, invasion, killing, maiming, raping and other terrible means. These deprivations could be advanced to mean the evolution of indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB), Niger Delta Militia groups, movement for the actualization of the sovereign state of Biafra (MASSOB) among others (Efeuhobo& Fredrick, 2020).

It is these agitations by the aforementioned groups which consequently have made the polity very ungovernable that have galvanized the call for restructuring. According to Akporor (2012) that once expectation does not meet attainment, there is tendency for people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions. Unfortunately, this is the situation with the Nigeria political system where some persons have been consistently and obviously denied their share of the "national cake". Consequently, the only available means to seek for what is theirs is to result to violent struggle by whatever means possible (Efeuhobo& Fredrick, 2020). So, this theory seek to address situation where people are consistently and repeatedly being denied what is their share of what belongs to all. The aftermath effect of such unjust and unreasonable action is frustration, bottled up anger and inevitable display of violence as it is the case in many parts of Nigeria.

IV. Analysis of Nigerian Political Structure –Federalism or Pseudo-Federalism

This examination however, will hinge on the manner of Nigerian practice of the core principles of federalism:

Written constitution: The 1999 Nigerian constitution is the fundamental law through which the Nigerian state is governed is by nature a written constitution (FG,1999), It is one that clearly specifies the structure and system of government operational in the country and as well showcases the manner in which power and responsibility is decentralized among the levels of government viz-a-viz the federal, state and local government (Ideobodo, et al 2018). However, it is pertinent to note here that the 1999 constitution is unitarily inclined even as it was imposed on the citizens without proper consultation, referendum or involvement of the citizens in its enactment process (Nwodo, 2021) Obasi et al (2009) argued that a historical analysis of the entire Nigerian constitutions will leave every analyst with three dominant factors which are the influence of colonialism, national political elites and the military. By this, there is an absolute justification for the constitution's unitary nature, having been made by the military and hastily imposed on the citizens to facilitate the transition into a new regime that marked democracy in 1998/1999. Since the constitution was imposed and do not reflect citizenry involvement in its making, it then follows that the making of the constitution is neither cognizance of the ethno-regional heterogeneity of the country nor did it bring these groups to a negotiation table to have a perpetual agreement of union and that of the structure that would best suit the administrative operation of their entities. This little mal-federalist practice out rightly makes the Nigerian federalism a false one as one of the core attributes of federalism is not adhered to. Similarly, some scholars have argued that true federalism requires the ethno-regional governments have their own various constitutions citing instances in the case of USA, Australia and Canada. They argue that a federation run by one single federal constitution without constitutions in the constituent units is one that is unitary in disguise. Lord Haldene in support of this argument held that a federation should relate to the federal authority on equal plane. No region or state should have more or less power in their relationship or interactions with the central or federal government. Any negation of this is a digression from true federalism as the regional governments can no longer relate among themselves as equal.

Equality in ethno-regional representation: One of the major reasons of adopting federalism is the existence of ethno-tribal heterogeneity. This is because federalism permits the equal representation of all tribes, ethnic groups, and regions in governance so as to ensure that no tribe ethno-regional nationality is marginalized or is left to lag behind developmentally and otherwise. This makes equal representation of ethnic and regional groups a integral characteristic of true federalism.

Fiscal Autonomy: In the view of Nworji (2004) the local government in Nigeria is entitled to fiscal autonomy being a level of government within a country that practices federalism. What this means is that all levels of government within a federation is fiscally autonomous. Abah&Nwokwu (2017) argued that financial subordination marks an end of federalism no matter how carefully the legal forms may be preserved. True federalism does not permit over concentration of power and resources in the hands of either the central government or the component units as to make it more powerful to lord its will over the other especially as regards to fiscal relationship.

Autonomy of each government: Federalism is a political system that emphasizes relative independence of each level of government. In the words of Wheare (1953), federal system must be fashioned in a manner that each level of government should be coordinate to another and that no tier should be seen to be subservient in relationship with others in the federation. The implicit of this is that any government which in practice contradicts the foregoing principle is unfit to be called a federation. This principle is necessary as it ensures that the federal government acts within the ambit of its constitutionally assigned powers while the state and local governments carry out their own affairs without intimidation or frustration. Little wonder, Hon. Justice Kayode opined that the autonomy of the constituent units of a federation is a bedrock, a foundation and a defining principle of true federalism.

Division of powers and responsibilities: Federalism as a political system is one that is marked with clear-cut power division and decentralization. The constitution of all federation usually possesses a formula for dividing power among the levels of government. This formula is seen in the legislative list – exclusive list, concurrent list and residual list. The exclusive list is set aside for only the federal government to legislate on and have basically matters of national importance such as foreign policy, currency and minting, defense, extradition, migration etc. The concurrent list is jointly legislated upon by the levels of government present in a country while the residual legislative list is reserved exclusively for the constituent units of government to legislate on. The rationale behind this

constitutional division of powers and responsibilities in a federation is to eliminate intergovernmental conflict between and among the federating units.

V. Restructuring and the Challenges of Insecurity

The nation is adrift to the extent that Nigerian policemen are so afraid to wear their uniform in public to avoid being killed by unknown gunmen; soldiers are being slaughtered by Boko Haram on daily basis and judges abducted right in their court room in Kastina state (Okokri, 2021). What then would have necessitated these unbridled and unpalatable situations that have launched the state into this quagmire and hullabaloo? This study is therefore set to x-ray the following reasons; *Religious fanaticism*: simply put, religious fanaticism implies a violent and unreasoning religious enthusiasm, or wild and excessive behavior about matters related to one's belief (Kufor, 2012;Nwagboso 2012) . However, Religion that supposed to be a unifying factor among several ethnic groups in Nigeria has turned out to be one of the catalysts that are causing insecurity, destruction of lives and property due to narrow- mindedness, misunderstanding, fundamentalism and fanaticism of religious adherents, religious supremacy attitude especially Christians and Muslims see their religions as the only authentic religion (Onu and Darambah, 2001; Ottuh, 2013; Afolabi, 2016; Ede, 2020;Efeurhobo& Fredrick, 2020). Because of constant clash between the Christian and Muslim adherents in Southern Kaduna, the areas become the threshold of insecurity orchestrated by violent and massive killings (Agbalajobi, 2019; Campbell, 2021;Nwankwo, 2021).The Muslim/Christian divide has exacerbated socio-cultural differences between the dominant and minority groups. These differences were intensified by uneven development, economic disparity, and the political marginalization of the minority population. For example, the Hausa-Fulani group has foisted its leaders on the various communities in the state, right from the governorship of the state to the local government (Uroko, 2018; Agbalajobi, 2019).

Ethnic altercations:

The Need for Political Restructuring in Nigerian State: An Analytical Discourse

Many questions have been asked and people tend to seek justification for which the political structure of the country should be restructured; others claim that those who clamor for political restructuring do so for the benefit of their own self interest. Hence, the latter address the former as the suboptimalists of the current political structure - federalism. However the case may be, one thing sacrosanct is that Nigerian federalism is observably on paper, as in practice what the country has at best is pseudo federalism since there exist ill-federalist practices within the federalism operational (**Ideobodo, et al, 2018**). To this end, **Ewetan (2014)** referred to the Nigerian political structure as the feeding bottle federalism. He further explains that some of these ill-federalist practices are outlined below in question format as a catalyze-able justification for restructuring the political structure of the country so as to move it from being the so called "feeding bottle federalism" to a more advanced, better and improved political structure that would be able to accommodate the varying interests of all the ethno regional groups and levels of government, getting them satisfied and bonded together in unity without any form of marginalization or agitation for secession. These questions amongst others include:

- Why is it that the states of the Nigerian federation cannot develop at their own pace using the resources which nature has endowed on them?
- Why are certain necessarily important realities like police, issuing of drivers license, birth registration etc dependent on federal government?
- Why is it that communities where mineral resources are being extracted from are still being denied the right to participate in the mining?
- Why does the current constitution of Nigeria bear "we the people of Nigeria do solemnly swear and agree..." even when it is obvious that it was imposed on Nigerians? Who agreed? Who was consulted? Was there any referendum?
- Why are there discriminatory unity schools and tertiary institution admission policies in the name of quota system and federal character as against meritocracy?

- Why would the federal government still want to be building roads even when these can be efficiently done by the state government? Is this not the reason that the so called federal roads are worse than death traps?
- Why is it that the politicians in Nigeria earns much more than thrice of what the civil servants who are the administrative engine of the political structure earn?
- Why does the federal and state government have three arms of government (legislatures, executive and judiciary) respectively while the local government has two (legislature and executive)?
- Why is it that regions in the geopolitical zones of Nigeria have unequal states and local governments and yet number of states and local governments is a criterion for sharing national cake?
- Why is that the current operational constitution does not reflect a democratic constitution, rather a military imposed constitution with little or no appropriately laid down principle of federalism rather Unitarianism?
- Why is it that local government receives their statutory allocation from the federal government in a joint account that is controlled by the state government?
- Why is it that state government till date cannot build and maintain their own railways and neither can they repair or maintain the so called federal roads which are nothing less than death traps?
- Why is the local government still subjected to the whims, caprices and control of the state government even after being constitutionally created as a functional third tier of government in Nigeria?
- Why does the federal government have to decide the amount that the state governments should pay their workers as minimum wage whereas the state governments lack the resources to do so?
- Why is it that the local government is still present as a third tier of government even when it is functional incapacitated and incompetent? Do local governments in Nigeria carry out their constitutionally assigned duties?
- Why is the federal government involved in the creation of local government even when it's the constitutional function of the state government?

Abah & Nwokwu (2017) observed that the above age long rape on the federalist principles coupled with apparent abuse of federal character principle enshrined in the Nigerian constitution by the current president Buhari led administration in areas of appointment into key positions and alleged marginalization and neglect of some sections of the country may have awakened the consciousness of Nigerians on the need for urgent political restructuring of the Nigerian federation. In the light of the foregoing, **Ideobodo, et al, (2018)** brought to the fore reasons to restructure the Nigerian political system. These reasons are well buttressed under the following headings and they include:

Origin, formation and consolidation of the Nigerian state: A prominent secessionist and restructuring agitating group known as Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in one of their broadcasts on January 1, 2015 on Radio Biafra said that the country Nigeria as an entity has expired on December 31st of the previous year (2014); the year that the country marked the centenary of its amalgamation. They vehemently alleged that the charter of agreement that merged the northern and southern protectorate into one single legitimate entity called Nigeria provided that after a hundred years (100years), if the two sides merged together see themselves as incompatible with each other, they have utmost right to secede. However, the authenticity of their claim is what I cannot establish as no record of the involvement of Nigerians in the agreement to merge the northern and the southern protectorates as one in 1914 has surfaced till date. Okonkwo (2018) also noted that the significant thing about the 1914 exercise was that no member of the diverse ethnic groups that make up the protectorates was brought to a negotiation table to agree on the merger. As at the time of the merger, most of the Nigerian nationalists were still tender and little children. For instance, Nnamdi Azikiwe was 10years old as at then, Obafemi Awolowo 5years old, Ahmadu Bello 4years old, Tafawa Balewa 2years old, and Anthony Enahoro has not even been conceived since he was born in 1923. The big question then becomes, who/which Nigerian signed the amalgamation treaty? This simply shows that the entity Nigeria was not amalgamated but rather balkanized. It is but an imposed state; and this imposition affects the country today and the functionality of its political structure whose foundation was laid during the colonial period. This is because, the ethnic-regional groups that make up Nigeria

today were as at that time not consulted before the protectorates were merged and neither did they come into any formal agreement. Hence, they have continued to disagree till date as a result of their non-consultation prior to the merger of 1914. Little wonder, Achebe (2012) asserted that the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates in 1914 extricable complicated Nigeria's destiny. Thus, if agreement and harmony should be brought between and among the various ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigeria, there is need to go back to the drawing and negotiation table where the diverse ethnic groups of about 371 in number will be fully represented, to negotiate in agreement or disagreement of the unification of all ethnic groups in Nigeria under one single political structure. This in all ramification is a need to politically restructure the country otherwise, Nigeria would continue to be what Chief Obafemi Awolowo called it "A mere geographical expression", because the trending problem of Nigerian political structure as expressed by Ojukwu (1989) is rooted in our fear of unity.

Democracy and true federalism: Lots of political actors and scholars in Nigeria and beyond has over the years stood their ground to say that Nigeria neither practices democracy nor federalism; rather, what we have at best is disguised Unitarianism and dictatorship, of which we've termed *Pseudo-federalism*. For instance, according to Atiku (2016) the present structure of Nigeria is a pointer to the tension at the heart of the nation... agitations by many right thinking Nigerians calls for a restructuring and a renewal of our federation and democratic system to make it less centralized, less suffocating and less dictatorial in the affairs of our country's constituent units and localities". The implicit of his expression is that the federalism operational in Nigeria is one that has grown into a maze; hence it is dysfunctional and breeds conflict. The current federalist political structure operational in Nigeria is one which centralized most powers at the federal government, thus bringing about federal abuse power at the detriment of the state and local government. Observable within Nigeria polity is the practical expression of Lord Acton's words "that power corrupts and absolute power corrupt absolutely", as the federal government having been allocated with much power tends to be corrupted. Little wonder, the current President Muhammadu Buhari does not give credence to verdicts of the court thus negating the rule of law. In an interview granted to *Daily Sun*, Professor A. B. C. Nwosu (a one-time Political Adviser to President Obasanjo), starts by defining restructuring as: ...let us change the structure. What is the structure? There is too much power at the centre. The Federal government has too much power, too much responsibility, too much money, much to waste.... I thought change was if it is not good for the country, we would do it. Is there anybody who has not seen that the federal government has too much power, and too much responsibility? Is there anybody who does not see that the over 60 to 70 per cent spent on recurrent expenditure is wrong? Is there anybody who does not see that the federal government has over 800 parastatals and that it is wrong? Is there anybody who does not see that having over 42 ministries is wrong? When asked why people are asking for restructuring, he answers by asserting that: The structure that we have is anti-development. The structure we have is unjust and unfair. I belong to the school of thought that regards restructuring more of devolution of power than regionalization of Nigeria. With this picture painted of the current Nigerian federalist political structure, a picture of federalism in the nature of Unitarianism, a picture of federalism where the rule of law is trampled upon, a picture of federalism that is anti-developmental, unjust and unfair; would a sane person not argue that the current Nigerian federalist political structure be restructured? He would definitely; as it is no news that the rudimentary functional characteristic of federalism is decentralization of power and a rule of law-guided-democracy (Wheare, 1953). Adele Jinadu being cognizant of the lapses in the current federalist political structure and democracy of Nigeria stated in his article published in June 7, 2017 in *The Guardian Newspaper* that "the country must not fall victim to the fetishism or magic of legal constitutional design. It must also begin to find ways of re-strengthening and deepening the spirit, the political culture of democracy and federalism, as mechanisms for managing diversity and pursuing the public interest in a plural society; otherwise the design effort will be in vain".

Ethno-regional satisfaction and unity: The call for political restructuring nudges at the heart of millions of Nigerians who is outraged by the present structure of the federation which has increasingly become a recipe for uncertainty, insecurity and instability. This is basically done by ethno-regional

bodies such as the Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group of the western Nigeria, the Afenifere of the west, the Pan-Igbo umbrella body of the east, the OhanezeNdi Igbo of the east, the Arewa Youth Movement of the north, the MOSOP of the south-south, the Niger-delta militants and Niger-delta avengers etc. The reason for their outcry for political restructuring of Nigeria is one worthy of consideration if peace and unity should thrive in the country. These reasons cut across ethno-regional dimensions.

Regionally, questions have been asked on why the south – east region has only five (5) states, the north– west have seven (7) and all other regions have six (6) each; implying that in a representative sense of democracy, south – east have 15 senators, north – west 21 senators, and other regions 18 senators each; does this reflect the meaning of equity and balance? Similarly, amidst the 774 constitutionally approved local government areas in Nigeria, south east has 95, north – west 186, north – east 113, south – south 125, south – west 137 and north – central 112; why do this kind of political structure exist? Does it reflect equity and balance? The implicit of this political structure is that the south east becomes marginalized in the politics of revenue allocation and that of sharing of national cake as well as in development planning which has population principle as its yardstick. Little wonder, there have been multifarious agitations against marginalization from the south-east region which has often times resulted to conflicts, taking up of arms and consequently bloodshed. Similarly, there have been numerous cases of conflict on resource control in the south – south region of Nigeria who has constantly wailed that the resources found within their territorial environment have always been exploited by the government without involving them in the exploitation of such resources. An Amazon from the region Annkio Briggs stated that the political restructuring of Nigeria remained the only solution to numerous protests and deep-rooted anger that have constantly fuelled tension and inhibited Nigeria from moving forward (Ogefere, 2017).

Ethnically, the Niger – delatans consisting of a conglomeration of ethnic groups ranging from Ogoni, Kalabari, Ikwere, Etchie, Ijaw, Itshekiri and others, have cried out severally against marginalization and federalist ignorance even when they harbor the source of the country’s economic power. Their struggle and outcry for political restructuring did not start today but dates back to the resource control struggle of 1966 botched by the Isaac AdakaBoro – led attempt to create Niger – delta republic which till date have culminated into oil – related restiveness in the region even after the death of AdakaBoro (Ako, 2011). The Niger – delatans have in recent past took arms to defend their God – given resources since despite their ownership of the resources, the government tend to exploit them and use the revenue gotten from their land to enrich and develop other areas of the federation while they languish in abject poverty, poor infrastructures and lack of good water supply; since their water bodies have been polluted through the extraction of their mineral resources (oil). The consequences of their taking arm is the bombing of oil pipelines, kidnap of oil extractors and stopping of oil extraction process which had caused Nigeria fortunes in the international market. The other ethnic group (Igbos) represented by the “Ohaneze Ndigbo” have on their own called for political restructuring of the Nigerian state; this is ascertainable in the words of Chief Enwo Igariwey of Ohaneze Ndigbo who stated that they (Ndigbo) have been calling for political restructuring because they believe it is in the best interest of the country and that the Igbos will only vote a presidential candidate who have restructuring agenda in his manifesto come 2019”. The Igbos which are another ethnic group have through their various mouthpiece spoken of their being marginalized in the allocation of government seats. Little wonder, many rebel nationalist groups have risen from this ethnic group either calling for restructuring or for secession. Typical examples are Indigenous People Of Biafra (IPOB), Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State Of Biafra (MASSOB), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM) etc. The stance of the Igbos on the Nigerian political structure as deducible from the speech of the Deputy Senate President, Senator Ike Ekweremadu at the World Igbo conference (WIC) held in Enugu holds that “the minimum Ndigbo demand of Nigeria is a restructure of the federation so that every component part of it can substantially harness its resources, cut it coat according to its cloth and develop at its own speed... Igbos should peacefully struggle for a better deal within the Nigerian common wealth and this struggle must be sustained by Nigeria” (The Sun Newsonline, April 17, 2018).

The issue of these incessant agitations and struggles over resource control and restructuring often breeding conflicts by the different ethno-regional bodies is a sufficient reason to restructure the federalist political structure of Nigeria, so that each region and ethnic group will have their interest

met and satisfied and their restiveness and agitations curbed. Restructuring the federalist political structure of Nigeria in an ethno regionally agreed way will in all ramifications satisfy the diverse interests of the various ethno-regional entities in Nigeria and bring about unity in ethno-regional diversity within the country.

Necessary and important realities: Many questions have been raised on the high concentration of authority and responsibilities on the federal government. Whereas most people said that this concentration makes the Nigerian political structure a unitary federalism, others have similarly said that it is the reason behind the inefficiency of federal government in discharging of their functions; whereas another set of people are of the opinion that it is the reason behind the high rate of corruption at the central government level. Judging from all direction, the indications of the postulations of the above groups of people points towards negativity. Therefore, there is need to decongest, to decentralize and to deconcentrate the authorities and responsibilities accrued to the federal government to the state and local government in order to make it functionally efficient. Obiora Okonkwo in an inaugural lecture delivered in the University of Nigeria Nsukka earlier this year, argued that it is a matter of un-necessity for the federal government of Nigeria to be the sole handler of some necessary and important realities like the police, issuing of drivers licenses, construction of the so-called federal roads and bridges, and provision of secondary education. Similarly, former military president of Nigeria Gen. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in his 2017 Eid-el-fitr message to Nigerians said that “restructuring has become a national appeal as we speak, whose time has come. I will strongly advocate devolution of powers to the extent that more responsibilities are given to the states while the federal government is vested with the responsibility to oversee our foreign policy, defense and economy. Even the idea of having federal roads in towns and cities has become outdated and urgently needs revisiting. That means we need to tinker with our constitution to accommodate new thoughts that will strengthen our nationality”. There is no gainsaying to the fact that they are unequivocally right, these are duties that the state and local governments can efficiently carry out; why is it that the state and local governments are absolutely dependent on the federal government for these? These consequences of this could be seen in the case of Anambra state Governor Willie Obiano during the last gubernatorial election of the state of which he was not only a sitting governor but an electoral candidate re-contesting; he was left with no police officer to offer him security and he had to hire the services of his hometown vigilante security service. This justifies the reason that many scholars and elites have been agitating for state government policing; but this could not be easily done since the current federalist political structure of the country has concentrated such powers as to regulate policing and other necessary and important realities on the federal government. Similarly, most of the federal roads are worse than death traps, a typical example being the Onitsha – Enugu express road that has forced motorists to seek another route between Amansea Awka through Awkuzu to Umunnya where the situation of the road is nothing to write home about. Had the state government been in charge of constructing or maintaining the federal roads, the situation of this road would not be the same since other state roads in the state are in very good shape. Therefore, to make federal government more efficient, there is need to restructure the current federalist political structure in such a way that more authorities and responsibilities will be devolved to the state government while the federal government concentrates on issues such as foreign policy, economy, defense (military), migration (immigration and emigration), international relations and aviation, and any other function which is of classical importance that it will not be efficiently handled by the state and local government.

Rapid and competitive development: The state of development within the Nigerian territory is appalling when compared with the country’s enormous human and natural resources. It only stands to suggest the proof of the resource curse hypothesis. Many have argued that the reason that Nigeria is still underdeveloped rests on the corruption on the central government which exploits the country’s resource without putting the proceeds developmentally in use. Others have argued that the reason that most states of the Nigerian federation are not developing at speedy pace is because they lack the necessary power needed to harness what is at their disposal in terms of resources, in order to make development a reality. Obi(2006) noted that currently, Nigeria is a federation with 36 states’ structure and 774 local government areas which totally rely on the distributive pool account (federation account) to perform their assigned constitutional responsibilities within their respective domains.

Okonkwo (2018) argued that the system of government that brings 36 states to the centre at the end of every month to share money is not sustainable; there is need to restructure the federation in such a way that all persons and partners in the federation be it states or regions have the capacity to develop their internal resources with which they can develop at their own pace. Hence, restructuring the current federalist political structure in such a way that states and local government have more revenue sources and powers to control the resources at their areas of occupancy will boost their development functionality and will breed rapid and competitive development across regions in the country which is a giant step towards the development of the country in general. In addendum, it will be a milestone towards job creation. Giving a practical example, it has been said that the north – central zone of Nigeria has abundance of natural resources buried under their soil, imagine if Nigeria is politically restructured in such a way that each state is giving authority to mine, harness and control the resources endowed on it by nature and then pay royalties to the central/federal government; then the north – central region will become a new bride for solid mineral exploitation and development; thus an industrial hub creating millions of employment opportunities to all Nigerians. Now taking cognizance of the fact that virtually all states of the federation are in possession of these resources either in terms of solid and liquid natural resource or agricultural resource, then obviously all Nigerians will be under one employment or the other and each state will be striving to develop more than the other. This is a sufficient need to restructure the political structure of the country in order to actualize the development of the country and its citizens.

Functional competence and intergovernmental harmony: The political structure of the Nigerian state – federalism, has been defined as a system of government in which there is constitutional division of power between two or more coordinate levels of government existing and interacting within a country. The Nigerian federalism is one that has three constitutionally created levels of government – federal, state and local government; but practically two levels of government – federal and state as the local government is submerged into the state government. Hence, visibly sprouted is the issue of constitutional in balance within the constitutional framework of the federal political structure of Nigeria. Whereas the constitution created the local governments the independent third tier of government in section 7(1) of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria, it handed over the creation, management and control of the local government to the state government in section 7(2). This has been reason for the functional incompetence of local government which has resulted to the motion to abrogate the local government as a tier of government at the national political conference (CONFAB) organized by Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's led regime in 2014. This proves that the local government is dependent and un-autonomous.

Similarly, the state government which has been attributed with practical independence and autonomy has also been seen as being functionally incompetent; the reason is that the federal government most times ceases statutory allocation of the state government as could be seen in the case of the Lagos state government Vs. federal government during President Olusegun Obasanjo's regime; they are similarly, subject to the dictates of the federal government as to the determination of the amount to pay for the minimum wage. From the above, are the levels of government in Nigeria really co-ordinate? This practice has right from the time of its practice tends to make the local, state and federal government inefficient. It also serves as a befitting reason to restructure the Nigerian federalist political structure as it will quench the fire of intergovernmental conflict ignited by the above problems of Nigerian federalism and facilitate functional competence and intergovernmental harmony between and among the levels of government in existence in Nigeria.

VI. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

In this study, it was established that injustices orchestrated by the violation or noncompliance with the federal character provisions of the constitution in the appointment of public officers and lack of fair representation in governance anchored on religious bias, ethnic consciousness and poor governance polarized the national unity, sprouts violent separatist agitations across the Nigerian state. The height of ethnic consciousness, religious intolerance, arms proliferations, terrorism and other negative vices is very alarming and has very recently made the system ungovernable and unworkable. Therefore, the inevitable and compelling alternative is restructuring as it will decimate myriads of insecurity of lives and invaluable properties and poor development as almost everyone appears to be

in a hurry to collect what belongs to all by whatever means possible. According to Ekekwe (2009), if Nigeria is to move away from the disorganized economy and crude politics that oppress its citizens, it would be very necessary to carryout extensive political reforms that will help the majority of the people to choose their leaders and relate meaningfully to state institutions. It suffices to assert that the leading cause for tension and rising agitations for restructuring is the denial of opportunity for political participation and governance suffered especially by the youths, women and the less privileged in society.

The following recommendations are drawn from the study. The first relates to deepening Nigeria's federalism by promoting greater autonomy for states and local governments in the forms of devolution/decentralization of power and resources. Also essential is a review of the existing revenue allocation/sharing formula, both vertical and horizontal and strengthening institutions and mechanisms for periodic review of the formula. Similarly, devolution of powers should be pursued through Constitutional amendment as a means of ensuring effective transfer of certain powers currently exercised by the Federal government to the States.

In distributing powers and resources amongst the tiers of government, Nigeria can draw important lessons from other federal countries (USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, India, Ethiopia and South Africa), particularly on how to effectively organize the federation based on recognized principles of subsidiary, proportionality and solidarity. The subsidiary principles help to determine the often challenging question of which tier should exercise what powers for the purpose of ensuring effective and efficient delivery of public goods and services. The principle of proportionality is useful in factoring in all contending interests in the process of distribution of powers. The solidarity principle, on its part, is an indispensable mechanism for accommodating the generality of the populace in whatever fiscal federal arrangement instituted in the country.

In designing the Exclusive and Concurrent Lists, the principles of subsidiary and proportionality should be adopted. For example, in keeping with the principle of subsidiary, matters such as basic education, primary health care and intra-city roads which can be better handled by states and local governments rather than the federal government? Also, consistent with the proportionality principle, interstate commerce issues such as high way policing, inter-state crime, collection of taxes across states, construction of highways and environmental spill-over's (pollution) should be handled through cooperative federalism with leadership by the federal government. These principles should also be used to determine which matters should be consigned to the Residual Legislative List. Finally, in keeping with the principle of solidarity, the federal government has a responsibility to guarantee a minimum level of living standards to all Nigerians irrespective of their state of origin or residence. This implies that the federal government can allocate resources for equalization, bridging gaps and addressing fiscal imbalance in the allocation of resources

Specifically, it is recommended as follows; granting financial autonomy to states, who are to contribute an agreed proportion to the central government for its effectiveness; the creation of one more state in the South-East Zone to ensure parity; power rotation between the geo-political zones engender political inclusion; lessening the appeal of power at the national level by pursuing power devolution and other measures; and promoting inclusive framework for ethnic, religious and regional accommodation. Furthermore, it is important to promote good governance and ensure that public resources are effectively utilized to generate public goods and services.

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