

RESTRUCTURING AND CRISIS OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

**EDITED BY
EUGENE N. NWEKE
&
EMEKA OBI**

Table of Contents

<i>Dedication</i>	v
<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Biographic Information on Contributors</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Keynote Address</i>	7
Chapter One: Federalism: Theory and Practice in Nigeria	
<i>Emeka Anthony Obi</i>	18
Chapter Two: Federal Character Principle and Challenges of National Development in Nigeria	
<i>Emmanuel N. Iheanacho</i>	52
Chapter Three: Nigerian Morbid Federalism and Demand for Political Restructuring	
<i>Ifeanyichukwu Michael Abada, Nneka Ifeoma Okafor & Paul Hezekiah Omeh</i>	63
Chapter Four: The Practice of Federalism and its Implication on National Integration in Nigeria	
<i>Philip Terzungwe Vande</i>	88
Chapter Five: Federalism and Agitations for Restructuring in Nigeria: Interrogating the Debate	
<i>John Tor Tsuwa</i>	111
Chapter Six: Politics of the Federal Character Principle: Implication for Nigerian National Development	
<i>Collins Friday Obialor</i>	129
Chapter Seven: Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria: Implication of Cultural Globalisation	
<i>Onyemaechi A. Eke</i>	139
Chapter Eight: Political Restructuring and Challenges of Economic Stability in Nigeria	
<i>Nneka Ifeoma Okafor, Ifeanyichukwu Michael Abada & Stanislaus C. Umezulike</i>	161
Chapter Nine: Fiscal Restructuring in Nigeria: Challenges and Policy Options	
<i>Onyemaechi C. Ugwuibe, Charles N. Olise & Paulinus Ikechukwu Attam</i>	181
Chapter Ten: Restructuring the Nigerian Political System: A Necessity for National Development	
<i>Uzoma D. Nosiri</i>	196
Chapter Eleven: Regional Agitations and the Problem of National Integration: The Need for State Restructuring in Nigeria	
<i>Uzodinma Chukwuemeka Okafor</i>	219
Chapter Twelve: Ethnic Nationalism in Nigerian Nascent Democracy: Can Restructuring Address It?	
<i>Charles Arinze Obiora, Onwunyi Ugochukwu Mmaduabuchi, Peter Nwachukwu Igboaka</i>	240

CHAPTER FIVE

FEDERALISM AND AGITATIONS FOR RESTRUCTURING IN NIGERIA: INTERROGATING THE DEBATE

John Tor Tsuwa

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria gained flagship independence which was commemorated on the 1st October 1960 and since then, the country at different times passed through several processes of reorganisation especially with regards to its system of government and structural arrangement. The country at independence was made up of three regions; Northern Region, Eastern Region and Western Region, with one; the Midwestern region later added in 1963. According to Adetoye (2016) this process, which he called reorganisation, is a process “whereby new geo-political units/constituents known as “states” in most federations are created out of existing or old ones. The outcome of this process is usually an increase in the number of states constituting the Nigerian federation”. Gboyega (2003) notes that from a federal structure of four units in 1960 (federal and three regions), Nigeria now has a staggering number of 36 units, a Federal Capital Territory and 774 local governments. Even with this number that Gboyega referred to as 'staggering', there are still clamors for the creation of six (6) new states - one each from the six geopolitical zones of the country and a change in the system of government. Ojo and Adebayo (2008) explain that the clamour for state creation is not altogether a recent phenomenon. According to them, calls for the creation of constituent units started six years before the independence of Nigeria. They explained that the call for the creation of autonomous divisions by minorities in Nigeria began in 1954 when the colonial government was bombarded with demands for the creation of more states and since then, the agitations for additional states have become commonplace.

Historical documentation has shown that, over the years, scholars, political analysts, historians and politicians have been

divided on the issue of the type of government that best suits Nigeria (unitary, confederal or federal), whether more states should be created or states disbanded and coalesced into regions. Thus, while some Nigerians support the restructuring of the country, others are against it. Another area of division is the agreed rationale/consideration for the creation of states. To Obafemi Awolowo; Premier of the old Western Region, states should be created on the basis of ethnicity. According to the late elder statesman quoted in Ojo and Adebayo (2008), "ethnicity is the major factor to be considered as a criterion in creating any state in a federation so that minority groups in the midst of majority groups who differ in language, culture and historical background will not feel inferior". Whilst many will agree with this stance (and many states in the country have been created along this argument), others oppose this rationale because if ethnic consideration becomes the main ideology behind state creation, the country would have to create at least 214 new states to the already 36 since there are about 250 ethnic groups in the country.

This phenomenon of agitations for restructuring of Nigeria has in recent times become a daily recitation by some acclaimed political leaders especially those that claim of being marginalized by the President Buhari administration. As expected, there are different conflicting perspectives on the nature of restructuring by those who are calling for restructuring. Those in support and those against and different political actors giving different perspectives on what restructuring means or should be. Unsurprisingly, many of those who support restructuring and are usually on television and radio stations promoting it are mostly from the southern part of the country such as Edwin Clark, Emeka Anyaoku, Olu Falae, Yinka Odumakin, Ayo Adebajo, etc. while Northerners have divergent views; some in support and others against restructuring. Northerners such as Atiku Abubakar, Balarabe Musa, Paul Unongo and Gen. Yakubu Gowon supports restructuring while others like Dr Junaid Mohammed, Tanko Yakassai and Bashir Dalhatu; the leader of the Northern Delegates Forum, are against restructuring. From all these groups, no one has given a definite answer to the restructuring question. The

pertinent questions are therefore; what exactly is restructuring? Does it mean the creation of more states or breaking and coalescing states to form six regions? Does it mean reorganization of the federal system or completely changing the system into unitary or confederal? Does it mean devolution of more powers to the states? Does it mean allowing states to have absolute control of the resources' in their domains?. With these questions in mind, this paper is a narrative on Nigeria's federal system, state creation and restructuring to find out the kind of restructuring the country needs viz-a-viz the arguments for and against restructuring.

THINKING RESTRUCTURING

There are different interpretations of what the concept of restructuring means. Within the political class, it is important to clarify that the way a person defines the term is influenced by whether that person occupies political office or not. This is because while those currently holding political offices will theoretically define restructuring in ways that ensures *status quo* maintenance, those outside the corridors of political power will define restructuring from the perspective of change which will give them the opportunity of acquire political offices as against those currently occupying such offices. These differences notwithstanding, the concept of restructuring is originally a corporate management term that describes the act of reorganising the legal, ownership, operational, or other structures of a business for the purpose of making it more profitable, or better organised to meet its present needs. Along this line and as deployed in this paper, restructuring means reorganising the legal, operational, ownership and physical structure of a country so that it can become more viable.

We can, therefore, argue that restructuring is cumulative and not unidirectional especially when it concerns a nation with multifaceted issues of contestation such as Nigeria. Apart from economic and political restructuring that has dominated the consciousness of Nigerian elites, other types/dimensions of restructuring can be projected within the areas of social, educational, geographic, administrative and security restructuring amongst others. We can,

therefore, conclude that the concept of restructuring is complex with multitudinous dimensions and it is adopted and used by a group of people depending on their interest and goals. This paper therefore takes a look at the various arguments or debates surrounding the politics of restructuring in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUALISING FEDERALISM

There are diverse definitions of federalism or the federal system of government as there are different conceptions and models. To this end, different scholars define the term based on their own peculiar values, environment and perceptions. Thus, the meaning of federalism is surrounded by uncertainties and vagueness but one agreeable fact is that federalism is derived from the Latin word "foedus" which means covenant. Early writers such as Bodin and Olto as cited by Tsuwa (2017) viewed federalism as a voluntary form of political union of previously independent authorities. In his contribution to finding the meaning of federalism, Wheare (1946) outlined five (5) basic components of a federal state. They are:

- (i) there must be at least two levels of government and there must be constitutional division of powers among the levels of government;
- (ii) each levels of government must be coordinate and independent;
- (iii) each level of government must be financially independent. Here, Wheare argued that financial independence will afford each level of government the opportunity of performing their functions without depending or appealing to others for assistance;
- (iv) there must be a Supreme Court of an independent judiciary; and
- (v) in terms of the amendment of the constitution, no level of government should have undue power over the amendment process.

Wheare emphasised that once a country meets all of these conditions, that country can be described as a federal state. He used the United States of America as an ideal example of a federal State.

According to Riker (1994), the authority of one tier of government to make decisions in its own sphere of jurisdictional powers independent of the other tiers of government is what makes a system, federal. Riker's definition of federalism dwells on the autonomy of power and of the responsibilities of the different tiers of the governments of the federating states. A renowned sociologist, William Livingstone (1952) views federalism as a principle that attempts to provide a framework for the management of diversity of plural societies (cited in Burgess, 2006). Livingstone's conception of federalism sees it as a system for the promotion of unity among a diversity of nationalities to form a single stronger nation. The essence of federalism, Burgess (2006) argues, lies not in the institutional or constitutional structure but in the society itself. That is, the type of society determines if the federal system of government can be operated. According to Burgess, federalism works best in heterogeneous societies than in homogeneous ones. Babalawe in Majekodunmi (2015) explained federalism thus:

...a federal state is one which there is an explicit and constitutional demarcation of powers and functions among national and sub-national units. Moreover, the powers and responsibilities are distributed in such a manner as to protect the existence of authority of both levels of polity each of which is independent within its own sphere...federalism refers to the doctrine which advocates and promotes the form of organisation of a state in which power is dispersed or decentralised by contract as a means of safeguarding local identities and individual liberties.

Deriving from the above conceptualisations, we can conclusively say that federalism is a system of government where administrative power is constitutionally divided between a central governing authority and constituent political units (often referred to as states or provinces). This means that, in federal systems, the power to govern is shared between national and state (or provincial) governments. This type of government involves the decentralisation of governmental powers between a center and constituent units where autonomy and independence from control by any tier is emphasised. Most ethnically (and religiously) diverse societies, such as the United States of America, Canada, India, Switzerland, Australia, and Nigeria

amongst others have found the federal system suitable to resolve the contestations over the issues of marginalisation and inequality.

EVOLUTION OF FEDERALISM AND THE POLITICS OF STATE CREATION IN NIGERIA

The history of present-day Nigeria dates back to more than two thousand years ago but before the country was born, the area was occupied by different indigenous kingdoms who already had very organised indigenous systems of government and were involved in trade with each other and with other kingdoms across the Sahara in their areas of comparative advantage. These kingdoms were independent of each other until the arrival of the British colonial conquerors. Historically, the roots of federalism as a system of government to be practiced by the present day Nigeria was planted in 1914 when Lord Lugard, changed the status of the already colonised territories and amalgamated the Southern and Northern Protectorates. Although this paper is not dwelling on the politics of amalgamation, it is apt to state here that it was not determined and considered by Nigerians and for their interest but it was purely a British colonial desire to facilitate and lubricate the wheels of economic exploitation and to lay the divisive foundation of the amalgamated group along regional and ethnic lines with the sole aim of keeping the various groups divided for continuous exploitation.

In 1946, following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Governor Arthur Richard divided the country into three lopsided regions; the East, the North and the West under the 1946 Richards Constitution. Governor Richard's idea in dividing the country into three regions was to reconcile and disperse ethnic and religious tensions from those areas by accommodating the interests of the three (3) major ethnic groups in the country; the Igbo in the East, the Yoruba in the West and the Hausa-Fulani in the North. This move was in line with Obafemi Awolowo's agitation when he opined that "ethnicity is the major factor to be considered as a criterion in creating any state in a federation so that minority groups in the midst of majority groups who differ in language, culture and historical background will not feel inferior" (Terzungwe, 2012). This statement may have been true.

at that time but as empirical evidences have demonstrated creating states to pacify minority ethnic groups only increase the agitations for more new states in a very plural society like Nigeria. The Macpherson Constitution added another block on the federal system structure when Lieutenant Governors were appointed to head the three regions and granted legislative power to the legislative councils, first established in 1922 by Governor Lugard. The unique geographical lopsidedness of Nigeria's federalism is that it was at this time that the Northern region was made bigger than the rest of the country combined. This lopsidedness continue to constitute a problem in Nigeria till today.

The next year, in 1954, regional leaders from the three (3) biggest ethnic groups began making demands and mounting pressure on the colonial government for Nigeria to become self-governing and autonomous. These agitations led to the sharing of administrative powers between the central government and the three regional governments and the establishment of a Supreme Court to handle any conflict that may arise between them (in consonance with K. C. Wheare's description of federal states). If the root of federalism was planted in 1914, it started bearing fruits in 1954. The induction of Nigeria into the federal system at this period was not a complete surprise as federalism, in the post-Cold War period, was the leading ideology. Watt (cited in Majekodunmi, 2015) explained the trend when he noted that:

...the creators of the new states approaching independence found themselves faced with simultaneous conflicting demands for territorial integration and balkanisation. They had to reconcile the need, on the one hand, for relatively large economic and political units... with the desire, on the other hand, to retain authority of the smaller political units with traditional allegiances representing racial, linguistic, ethnic and religious communities. In such situations, where the forces for integration and separation were at odds with each other, political leaders of nationalist independence movements and colonial administrators alike found in the "federal solution" a popular formula, providing a common ground for centralisers and provincialists (p. 110).

Following more and more pressure from regionalists such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmadu Bello, the Eastern

and Western regions became self-governing in 1957 while the Northern region became self-governing in 1959. It is important to mention that at this time, the different regions could have successfully gone their separate ways and become three sovereign independent members of the international system. For example, Rhodesia and Nyasaland were, like Nigeria, creations of British rule but the constituent units elected to go their separate ways when they had the opportunity and the result was the emergence of three independent nations; Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. According to Terzungwe (2012), "the adoption of federalism as a form of government in Nigeria was the result of social forces at work within the country".

According to Majekodunmi (2015), the struggle among the three major ethnic groups in the country over fear of domination nearly delayed the country's independence. However, with the flagship independence of Nigeria, political power at the center was transferred from British officials to Nigeria-born citizens; Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and Chief Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as Prime Minister and Governor-General respectively, whose parties went into a coalition to form the government at the center. In 1963, Nigeria became a republic and the office of the Governor-General was replaced with the office of the President. Thus at 1963, Balewa continued as Prime Minister and Azikiwe as the President. A national parliament, bicameral in nature, with representatives from all parts of Nigeria was established and for the first time, the first Constitution after independence, the 1963 Constitution of Nigeria, recognised Nigeria as a federal state. In 1966, after the 1964-65 Western region crisis, a Mid-Western region was created. This formally took the regions in Nigeria from three (3) to four (4).

After the first military coup by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and the short-lived unitary government of General Aguiyi Ironso under Decree 34, Nigeria was reorganised again into a federal system after General Yakubu Gowon became the Head of State following a counter-coup. On May 5 1967, Gowon kick-started the politics of the creation of states in Nigeria when he divided the regions into twelve states: North-Western state, North-Eastern state,

Kano state, North-Central state, Benue-Plateau state, Kwara state, Western state, Lagos state, Mid-Western state, Rivers state, South-Eastern state and East-Central state. It is believed in many quarters that this move was carried out in order to check the influence of Odumegwu Ojukwu's government in the East. One of the controversial aspects of Gowon's state creation was how he annexed Port Harcourt, which led to the flight of many Igbo back to their villages in Eastern Nigeria where they felt safer. However, the property they left behind were claimed by the Ikwerres and Ijaws who dominate the areas around Port Harcourt. Twenty five days after this announcement by Gowon, precisely on 30th May 1967, Ojukwu declared the formal secession of the Eastern region, which was to be known as the Republic of Biafra. This triggered a 30 month civil war between the federal government of Nigeria and Biafra. Many minority ethnic groups in the Eastern region did not support the secession of Biafra because it would mean they would then live in an Igbo-dominated nation while others aided the federal government by enlisting in the Nigerian army and passing on intelligence about the activities of the Biafran military. However, some non-Igbos such as Lt. Col. Philip Effiong, Graham Douglas and N. U. Akpan, actively supported Biafra's secession. In the aftermath of the war, which the federal government won, a lot of resources were spent on implementing the 3R's of Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.

In 1976, a year after General Murtala Mohammed overthrew the government of Yakubu Gowon, he set up a panel headed by Justice Ayo Irikefe with the mandate to look into the creation of more states. As the panel began sitting, it received about 32 demands for new states but government created only nineteen (19) states on 3rd February of the same year. The nineteen states created were Lagos, Kaduna, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Rivers, Bendel, Cross-River, Anambra, Kwara, Benue, Plateau, Borno, Niger, Imo, Gongola, Sokoto, Bauchi and Kano states. Terzungwe (2012) notes that a key feature of the 1976 state creation exercise was the transformation of the motive of creation of states along ethnic lines to one which favors the sharing of the benefits from the oil boom of the period. Thus, the

politics of state creation in Nigeria became a strategy for sharing the federal largesse from the oil industry. Unsurprisingly, this gave rise to the agitations for more states as various ethnic groups who feel marginalised in the sharing formula sought to have direct control of the largesse as they reckon that it can only happen when they have a state of their own. The Igbo were particularly aggrieved with the 1976 exercise because while the two other big ethnic groups, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, had five states each, they had only two; Anambra and Imo. This feeling of marginalisation was not peculiar to the Igbo ethnic group as other minority ethnic groups, especially in the North-central, started agitations for the creation of new states.

In 1979 after the departure of General Olusegun Obasanjo as the military head of state, the country was again back to civilian rule under a first executive President; Alhaji Shehu Shagari. The nation was governed under the 1979 Constitution handed over to the civilian government by the departed military government of Obasanjo. During this time, the legislative arm, non-existent during the military years, became functional again with a bicameral legislature having a Senate and a House of Representatives at the federal level and Houses of Assembly in the nineteen states. The judicial arm also became vibrant both at the national level and in the states. During the long years of military governments (1966-1979), the judiciary was puppets of the different military juntas and judges and lawyers were coerced to do the bidding of the Heads of State and Governors. This is not a surprise since military governments rule by decrees and edicts in total disregard of the constitution. During Shagari's administration, the calls for the creation of new states continued but none was created because of the stiff provisions of the constitution, economic uncertainties, partisan acrimonies and unfettered sectional recrimination and suspicion (Terzungwe, 2012).

In 1987, two more states were created by the General Ibrahim Babangida's regime after he set up a Political Bureau headed by Dr. S. J. Cookey to look into the demands by the people for more states. The Bureau recommended the creation of six new states: Akwa-Ibom, Delta, Katsina, Kogi, Saruana and Wawa states. However, the government created only two states; Akwa-Ibom and Katsina states,

an addition that took the number of states in Nigeria to twenty-one (21). The Igbos were particularly miffed with this decision because they still had only two states while the former Northern region now had six states, with the addition of Katsina to the previous five. Due to mounting pressures from sections of the country, the regime, in August 1991, created nine new states which brought the number of states to thirty (30). The new nine states were Delta, Kebbi, Enugu, Abia, Jigawa, Osun, Taraba, Yobe and Kogi states. Although the regime explained that more states were created to balance the federation and bring government closer to the people, the exercise was seen as a way of gaining the support of minority ethnic groups, the Igbos and to compensate close allies (Osaghae, 2011, p.228).

Next came the General Sani Abacha military regime. Terzungwe (2012) noted that the agitation for the creation of more states doubled under the Abacha government, with the Arthur Mbanefo Committee receiving a total of 85 requests for new states. After receiving the recommendations of the committee, the government, on 1 October 1996, announced the creation of six (6) new states. The new states were created evenly across the six geo-political zones in order to pacify every zone of the country. The six new states were Zamfara in the North-West, Nassarawa in the North-Central, Gombe in the North-East, Ebonyi in the South-East, Bayelsa in the South-South and Ekiti in the South-West. These additions took the number of states in Nigeria to thirty-six (36) with 774 local government areas and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in Abuja.

With the return to democracy in May 29, 1999, the country has maintained the federal system of government, its thirty-six state structure and the FCT. However, there have been numerous calls for the creation of more states but none has been created since after the Abacha regime. It is also important to note that all of the states created since Gowon were created during military regimes. Recently, there has been calls in some quarters, notably by Emeka Anyaoku, former Secretary General of the Commonwealth, for the country to return to regions since there have been unending calls for more states and the motive of bringing government closer to the people have not been achieved. Former Vice President Alex Ekwueme (cited in

Terzungwe, 2012) observes that, “the increase in the number of states has tended to reduce the states to a level where they have virtually ceased to function as component, autonomous and cognate units in a federal polity”. Terzungwe (2012) explained that if Nigeria were a federating unit in the United States of America, Nigeria would be the 25th biggest state in the US 50 state structure in terms of GDP after the state of Louisiana whose GDP is \$213,000 while that of Nigeria, a country, is \$193,669. Nigeria's GDP is less than 5% of the US national GDP.

ANALYSING THE RESTRUCTURING DEBATE

As earlier stated, restructuring as espoused by many socio-political analysts and elites in Nigeria meant different things to different people and sections of the country. For instance, an assessment of the debate shows that, for the Yoruba's of the South-West, restructuring meant the return to regionalism as practiced during the colonial era. They are clamouring for regional system of government where the regions practice separate laws, police system, education and economic independence away from the central government. To the South-South comprising all the oil producing states, all they need is resource control; that whatever natural resource that is found in any region should be owned by the people of that region. In other words, there should be nothing like the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) or sale of crude oil by the federal government and shared as federal revenue to other states. To them, the 13% derivation formula to oil producing states is an injustice and that 100% ownership and control was thereby right. To the Igbo of Eastern states, Biafra is the catch word. They simply don't want to be part of Nigeria but a separate country called Biafra. Ironically the Northern states feel that the whole restructuring debate has been targeted at them that is the Hausa/Fulani. Unfortunately, the Northern Region comprises of other ethnic nationalities who are not considered in the calculation of the federating principles by those agitating for restructuring.

Another argument is that, those calling for restructuring are agents of corrupt politicians trying to destabilise the war on

corruption. Some political watchers have observed that restructuring campaign is the height of corruption fighting back. It is said to be an attempt at diverting the attention of President Muhammadu Buhari from his firm anti-corruption war. Those in line with this argument argue that, the clamour for restructuring started with allegations of selective investigation and prosecution, abuse of human rights of culprits of those corrupt officials. Then also came the issues of alleged marginalisation in appointments by President Buhari, then the Niger Delta militant's campaign against the new regime and the agitation for the separation of Biafra which was docile during President Goodluck Jonathan only to resurface with vigour in the current regime of president Buhari.

The above arguments show clearly the regional and ethnic colouration of the Nigerian federal system where everything is interpreted along ethnic and regional lines instead of the collective called Nigeria. However, some stakeholders in the Nigerian project have rejected the above debate and have argued that the Nigerian project needs restructuring to enable it overcome its challenges of cohesion and underdevelopment. Insisting on the real issues for the call for the restructuring of the Nigerian federal system, Nwabueze (2017) argues that, the call is beyond ethnic or regional lines but the clamour for Re-structuring must be seen as a clamour for the setting up of appropriate platforms or fora to renegotiate suitable governmental structures for the pursuit and realisation of our common needs for development, good governance and national transformation. According to him, the clamour for re-structuring is more than a clamour for the reform of our governmental structures. This is only its primary focus. In its wider, more fundamental focus, it is a call for Nigeria to “make a new beginning” under a new constitution approved and adopted by the people at a referendum, a new politico-legal order that will cleanse the country of the rottenness that pervades it and enable it to “chart a road map for its destiny or what has been referred to as re-structuring of the mind.”

On his own part, a former Vice-President of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar, argued that restructuring is key to reinvigorating the steam of the Nigerian project. According Atiku (2017), the areas in need of

restructuring in Nigeria are: devolution of power to states, reduction in federal government exclusive list in favour of concurrent list, developing our own model of fiscal federalism, reduction in number of federating units, administrative restructuring, leaner bureaucracy, local government autonomy (state control) and federal ownership of interstate roads. He insists that the federal or central government has too much power that need to be reduced and handed to the states for close monitoring of the issues affecting people at that level.

Deducing from the above arguments, this paper takes a position on the nature of restructuring that should be canvassed for by Nigerians. According to Tsuwa (2017), the Nigerian project needs economic and institutional restructuring. According to him, the problem with Nigeria is not about the tilted nature of appointments or the size of a particular region but it is squarely the problem of economic mismanagement/underdevelopment and the problem of failed institutions which needs to be reorganised for optimal performance. The truth is that corruption and its impact do not recognise tribe, region, religion or ethnicity. All the people that conspired to loot Nigeria's wealth come from across all ethnic, religious and regional lines. This simply means that reorganising the way the country is managed/administered, especially its economy. For instance as we have currently, the center - the federal government in Abuja - is too powerful while the constituent units - the states - are too weak and every month, they receive financial allocations from Abuja a condition some analysts have described as 'feeding bottle unitary system'. This culture of dependency by states in the country has made many states to become unproductive and economically lazy without finding strategies of generating internal revenues. In situations where internal revenues are generated such revenues as considered as the governors (okra) and are to be spent without recourse to due process. Secondly, it has created a window for mismanagement of funds by states. Thirdly, the state joint accounts created by states to share local governments allocation from the federal government has made local governments vulnerable as not all the allocation due to them from the federal is given to them by state governments. This lack of autonomy by the local governments has

made it difficult for local governments to pay salaries and carry out any economic developmental activity.

It is wont to point out here that due to economic mismanagement, about twenty-seven (27) states in Nigeria cannot pay civil servants their salaries and the federal government had to intervene by sending 'bail-out' funds and Paris Club refunds to these states. Though state governments have been largely unproductive and financially dependent on Abuja, states are not to be entirely blamed for this because the present structure supports this culture. For example, the current revenue allocation system does not help the states. It gives the federal government 48.5%, state governments 24%; local governments 20% and special funds, administered by the federal governments, 7.5%. Thus, effectively, the federal government administers 56% of the federal account even when it does not own lands or economic resources.

In a true federal system, the constituent units (regions/states/provinces) are allowed to own and manage resources in their domains and only pay taxes to the federal government whose main responsibility should be protecting the state from external aggression by maintaining a military, formulating foreign policy and managing the monetary system. In Nigeria, the federal government does not own any land or economic resource because lands and resources are situated in states so state governments, instead of the federal government, should be responsible for developing, managing and generating revenues from these resources. As robust as this argument for federalism is, the actions of state governors in Nigeria and other regionally controlled agencies such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), and the Ministry of Niger Delta among others have shown that without critical check from the federal government, these offices will only be dens of corruption as despite the large sums of monies allocated to them over the years, nothing has come out of their activities. Thus, economic restructuring should be centered on transparency and reduction in the cost of governance.

Institutionally, Nigeria is in deficit and lack capacity to carry out functions as designed in the law. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and other by-laws has empowered various

institutions to carry out functions that will help achieve development and ensure peace and security for the country. Over the years, however, these institutions have failed as personalities and in some cases group's decisions become more powerful than the decision(s) of the institutions. For instance, in the area of corruption, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Corruption (ICPC), Code of Conduct tribunal amongst others were set up to investigate and prosecute any person found to have stolen Nigeria Money. Based on the mandate of these institutions, the fight against corrupt officials is to be total without any sacred cows. Despite the fact that the revelations of stolen money have not ceased to make headlines in the media as billions of Naira and Dollars are being recovered from private homes, farms, sewages, tanks and in extreme cases cemeteries, it has also become clear that some individuals have proved to be above the law and the capacity of these agencies.

It is, therefore, clear in Nigeria that there is great lack of confidence in social and official institutions of government as the citizens do not believe that the institutions will produce justice and equality. To this end, citizens prefer to get justice by attaching with and to their ethnic/local sentiments and affiliations which they obey more than the national law. This has widened the level of cohesion in the country hence the calls for restructuring. Apart from the bureaucratic bottle necks that characterise the Nigerian institutions, the menace of bribery has become the major base on the workability of Nigerian institutions. Taking and giving bribe has become normal in governance process in Nigeria. With this attitude, nothing works in Nigeria except the marginalisation of those outside the corridors of power.

Accepting with the views of Hoffmann and Patel (2017), that Nigerians actions are also influenced by moralistic values, this paper holds that Nigerians value system needs to be restructured. Hoffmann and Patel had argued that, Nigerians have created a moralistic social belief about, and expectations of people in government and they must comply with it. To them, there is a moralistic value that once you are in a political office (in Nigeria), you are expected to be richer, people

expect you to steal, and you are a fool if you don't. You are not sharp if you don't. What we can deduce from their arguments here is that, access to power or political office in Nigeria is considered a harvest period for the ethnic group or the clan that the office holder comes from and all actions of the office holder are to be in line with accumulating on behalf of his/her people. Failure to do this means that the person involved is not a "true" representative of the ethnic group or the clan. This paper therefore holds that this is a critical aspect that Nigeria and Nigerians need to restructure. Ethnic groups and clans need to start rejecting those that embezzle resources on their behalf. They are to reject them and hand them over to the authorities for immediate prosecution. This will bring caution to the officer holder who will think of distributive justice in terms of resources rather than personalisation of resources.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We can, therefore, conclude by saying that, Nigeria needs restructuring but this restructuring in Nigeria should be situated within the arguments of economic and institutional parameters were the economy will be revived and the basic needs of the people in the areas of good roads, hospitals, shelter, education and other needs of the people will be met through good governance and accountability. When the ease of doing business in Nigeria is guaranteed and business is done without unnecessary bottle necks, investors will be sure of investing and jobs will be created and total provision of infrastructure achieved. Institutionally, the institutions in Nigeria should be strengthened to be more powerful than individuals in such a way that the outcome and decisions of these institutions are not determined by and individual or a group of individuals.

REFERENCE

- Onyeoziri, F. (2002), *Alternative Policy Options for Managing the National Question in Nigeria*, John Archers Publishers Ltd in Collaboration with Programme on Ethnic and Federal Studies (PEFS), Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 2002, pp. 13-16.
- Adetoye, D. (2016). "Nigeria's Federalism and State Reorganisation and Restructuring: Attempts at National Integration Through Fragmentation". *International Journal of Research and Reflection*. Vol. 4, No. 2. ISSN 2309-0405.
- Gboyega, A. (2003), *Democracy and Development: The Imperative of Local Good Governance*, being an Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University of Ibadan, on Thursday, October 2, Vantage Publishers Ltd., Ibadan.
- Atiku Abubarka (2017) "Nigeria needs Restructuring now than ever" *Daily Assets*. 4 September
- Amuwo, K., (1995), "General Babangida Civil Society and the Military in Nigeria: Anatomy of a Personal Rulership Project". *Travaux Documents*, No. 48.
- Akinyele, R. T. 1996. "States Creation in Nigeria: the Willink Report in Retrospect." *African Studies Review* 39, September 1996, No.2.
- Ojo, E.O and Adebayo, P.F. (2008). "The Politics of States', Local Governments' Creation and Nigeria's Search for Geo-Political Balancing". *African Research Review: An International Multidisciplinary Journal*, Ethiopia. Vol. 2, No. 3. August.
- Hoffmann L.K and Patel R.N (2017) "Collective Action on Corruption in Nigeria: A Social Norms Approach to Connecting Society and Institutions. Chatham House Report.
- Majekodunmi, A. (2015): "Federalism in Nigeria: The Past, Current Perils and Future Hopes". *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*. Vol. 9, No. 2. February Edition
- Osaghae, E. (2011): *Crippled Giant: Nigeria since Independence*. Ibadan: John Archers
- Terzungwe, P.V. (2012): "Ethnicity and the Politics of State Creation in Nigeria". *European Scientific Journal*. Vol. 8, No. 16. July Edition
- Nwabueze B.(2017). *Why Nigeria must Restructure*, open letter to Nigerians, September 29, 2017
- Tsuwa, J. T (2017) "Restructuring the Dis-structured: The Dilemma of Nigeria in the 21st Century". A lead paper delivered at the First Faculty of Management and Social Science Conference, Federal University, Wukari.