

# Federalism and Restructuring in Nigeria Democratic System: Perspectives, Challenges and Prospect

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## Abstract

Federalism as a political structure is designed to accommodate people of diverse culture and values while providing opportunity for harmonious coexistence and competitive development, this is why most plural societies prefers the arrangement, Nigeria inclusive. However, federal systems always have some internal challenges which are inevitable but are often been addressed within the system through certain mechanisms which are not also static but changing, the degree to which federal systems are capable of addressing the inherent changes which often than non-arises in the operations and functioning of the system, to a large extend determine the continued existence and survival of federal systems. Nations most therefore learn how to continuously mange the ever surfacing and dynamic nature of the system for the system to remain as the better way of governmental administration. This paper employs content analysis as its methodology, using documentary materials in books, journals, periodical and internet materials as sources of data collection. It is the belief of this paper that federal systems the world over has its inherent contradictions and challenges, therefore, the continued survival and existence of federal systems to a large extend depend on how best these problems can be jointly addressed by the federating units. Nigerian and Nigeria government should address her lingering challenges and problems for continuous harmonious existence rather than calling for restructuring.

**Keywords:** Federalism; Restructuring; Challenges; Prospects

## Introduction

The idea of how society and nations should be organized and managed has been one of the greatest concerns of political philosophers and thinkers from Socrates to date, the drive for justice, equality, fairness, enduring polity and political stability run through the ages. Similarly, different societies have over the years fashion ways to structure their polity in such a way that they think is most conducive for the administration and management of public affairs (government) one of such is federalism. A political structure or system in which government power that exist in a nation are shared among the central government and component regions or state. It is a viable mechanism for managing plural society with diverse culture, linguistic and social diversity. It is the success in bringing these diverse elements into unity that is the determinant of success in other sphere of the relationship of the system [1].

Federalism as a political structure has existed for centuries, but in modern time the origin is trace to the America scholar K.C. Whares and the American constitution of 1891 in which he views federalism as a political system formed by independent nations/

state who come together in union and where levels of government exist with constitutionally defined sphere, with each level of government (federal/central or state/regional) having its own area of jurisdiction that is not subject to unnecessary interference by another level but rather coordinated and not subordinate to each other, and both levels of government acting directly on the life of the citizens.

This system is what this paper attempt to re-examine in relation to Nigeria state and it nexus with democratic system of political administration and management, the challenges therein which brought about the call and agitation for restructuring of the country by groups and section of the state as well as the way forward [2-4].

## Background to the study

The origin of the federalism in Nigeria is traceable to Author Richard constitution of 1946 and Macpherson and Lyttleton constitutions of 1951 and 1954 respectively. The creation of regions (North, West and East and later the Mid-Western region

with a central control in Lagos could be considered as the starting point where regions have representatives in the central legislative under the leadership of the colonial governor; some scholars view it as unitary system or unitary decentralized system, whenever we view it federalism was introduced in Nigeria by the British either for administration consideration or to cater for the different diverse elements which made up the community or as some scholars will argue, Federalism was imposed on Nigeria by the British colonial masters in order for them to maintain control on the country during and after colonization.

The Nigeria post-colonial government consolidated federalism as the regional government set up by colonial masters were retained and relied upon as units within the system with their autonomy maintained while the center remains as control organs. However, the 1966 coup d'état which brought in Col. Aguiyi Ironsi as the military head of state turned the system to a unitary centralized system with decree 31 of 1966 (unification decree) reaffirming it, this however, did not last as a return coup d'état was staged six months later in July 1966 which brought in Col. Yakubu Gowon as the military head of state, the two coup d'états soon led to civil war between 1967-1970, the aftermath was the creation of 12 states in 1967, 19 states in 1976, 21 states in 1987 and 36 states in 1991 by former military heads of states does consolidating the federal system in Nigeria [5-6].

Nigeria today is a federal state made up of 36 states with the federal capital Abuja and 774 local government areas with a constitution which creates the federal structure, power distribution inter-governmental relations and areas of concurrent legislation among others, the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria provided for a presidential system of government anchored on democratic principles in the administration, management and leadership criterion of selection.

Democracy in operational terms is a system in which people choose their leaders through universal adult franchise, free and fair elections held at regular and reasonable intervals without undue interference or the use of money and mass media and without violent intervention of the police, security services and the military (Zinn 2004). Dixon (2017) posits that democracy is a political system committed to human equality, individual liberty and humanism and is built on the formation of non-violence and rationality that give rise to pluralism, tolerance and empathy. It strives on the availability of a free press, an independent judiciary and in political administration terms, the constitutional structure of a democratic system is supported by two pillars; the pillar of fundamental freedom and the rule of law and in constitutional terms democracy is the government of the people (popular sovereignty) for the people, government responsible to the people and by the people (a republican government).

Conversely, the above definitions and views are what federalism is and what democracy stands for, it is pertinent to view the nexus between the two in terms of structure and operation and in

terms of their compatibility or otherwise and what factors or reasons led to the call or agitation for restructuring, but before examining their nexus it is imperative to take a look at what restructuring is all about.

Restructuring: is a term used to connote effort geared towards rearranging, reconstructing, re-orienting, reshuffling or revamping, reconstituting, re-establishment, overhauling of institutions, organizations and systems. It therefore suffices to say that there must be issues or problems in a system or organization which may warrant a call for restructuring, revamping or overhauling [7-10].

Thus, it is pertinent to view the federal systems in Nigeria, the democratic system and the call or agitation for restructuring so as to know the issues and bottlenecks there in and how best to fix them or suggest ways forward.

### Statement of the problem

There is no doubt that Nigeria's federal system is a creation of British colonial masters from 1914 amalgamation to 1954 Lyttleton constitution. The union brought about by the British colonial master soon graduated into coup and counter coup after independence in 1960 and subsequently the civil war 1967-1970 with agitations for secession by the different regions North, West and East, this is viewed as a result of the imposed federal system the British which to many does not take into cognizance the differences and diverseness of the people in the different regions of the country.

This imposition has led to outcry of marginalization, pressure from minorities for further sub-division of the country as canvassed by different ethnic and tribal groups; thus the Nigeria state is a nation with many nations, with varied groups agitating for succession or breakaway, a nation characterized with lack of cooperation, mistrust, sabotage and organized violent conflicts aimed at destabilizing the polity and moving towards disintegration. This division and agitation from groups and organizations could lead to a total disintegration of the country if the inherent contradictions within the system are not adequately and promptly addressed; however, the question remains "is restructuring the solution to the Nigeria problem"?

### Review of Literature

Francis Adigwe (1974) elucidates on the advent of British administration in Nigeria, he gave a vivid biography and sequencing of British occupation and establishment of a federal system in Nigeria beginning from the annexation of Lagos in 1861, the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in (1914) the different constitutional developments from 1922 to 1954 up to the independent constitution of 1960 this position is also elucidated upon by Ali Mazrui (2007) in the book *Brain Gain for the Africa Renaissance* (issues in government (Mega-Nigeria from Lugard to Gowon between exceptionalism and typicality), he gave a thorough view of Nigeria from World War I to Biafran war and the events there in which brought about the union of the different regions (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) into a federal state

and the turbulence there in, he particularly acknowledge the role perseverance and doggedness of Col Yakubu Gowon the Nigeria military head of state (1966-1974) in his effort at maintaining Nigeria as a single indivisible country [11-15].

According to him Nigeria federation become consolidated at independent and since then it has been operating in both political and fiscal context, although not in full consonance with the basic principles of federal practice, historically he contended that Nigeria federal system has oscillated between excessive regionalism as it were in the first republic (1960-1966) and excessive centralization in the military era (1966-1979 and 1983-1993 respectively, he furthered his argument by said Nigeria. Nigeria federal system has overtime undergone structural changes from the it initial three region to four regions in 1964 to 12 states in 1967 19 states 21 state to its current 36 states. Scholars such as Akali and Salihu have viewed Nigeria federalism and its formation in three stages. The period of informal federation 1900- 1946, the first stages formal federation 1946-1967 and the second stage of its formation of federation 1967-todate whichever way we may view it, the federation has no significant administrative structure right from colonial period to date in fact it can be argued that the federation was mere centralization of few department such as military, the railways, the post and telegraphs the judiciary legal, survey department and the treasury Takaga B.J (1996) P3.

Political theorist considers federalism as an ideal constitutional approach to the problem of diversity and political integration, in fact federal system the world over is seen as political arrangement that provide opportunity for the myriad of diversity within a political system and to find legitimate expression.

The introduction of federal system in Nigeria was aimed at fostering peaceful co-existence among the diverse people in term region, culture beliefs and values, this has however not been fully achieved as different section continue to complain of marginalization and poor representation in political positions of authority.

### **Nexus between federalism and democracy**

In trying to view the nexus between federalism and democracy, it is pertinent to first and foremost conceptualize the two term with the intent of juxtaposing their features and attributes or what scholar call tenets.

Federalism is a kind of political structure or form of government agreed upon by group of people or communities (states) to come together to cope with the twin problem of maintaining unity of governance while preserving diversity of governance and mutual co-existence, it is usually an arrangement for mutual co-existence for peace and progress among the federating units while given part of their power up to the central higher coordinating authority and still retaining for themselves certain power and authority at lower or regional level of government at their separate and distinct communities.

In this region the two level of government federal and state or central and regional acts directly on the life of citizens within the constitutionally defined shared power, which are often coordinate but not subordinate, thereby giving room for competitive development with laid down rules and procedure for mutual co-operation and resolution of conflict [16-20].

On the other hand, democracy is a system of government (method of political administration) in which rulers are held accountable for their action in the public realm by citizens acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of elected representative (Schmitter and Kam, 1970).

Federalism which is a technique for managing conflicts among heterogenous groups in a state through a system of constitutional division of powers which provides for shared rules while also allowing for self-rule at the subnational level.

This structural system is characterized by certain features which are also pertinent to its continued existence and survival: This includes among others adequate representation of the views of all members of the sub-national groups in the policy-making institutions of the center (Federal government). Elaborate structures, institution and processes put in place to promote intergovernmental cooperation. Existence of a democratic system of government that respect the rule of law and uphold the principles of separation of powers. A supportive federal political culture that includes capacity to resolve federal conflicts through negotiation and accountability and transparency in decision-making process. Existence of more than one level/tier of government. Distribution of power and responsibilities as well as resources among tiers of government. A written constitution. and Independent and impartial judiciary to interpret the constitution and decide on jurisdictional disputes between the two or more levels of government.

Democracy is a system of government (political administration) in which leaders are chosen by the citizens (people) through periodic competitive, free and fair election in to political offices for a fixed period of time and leaders are held accountable for their actions (accountability) while guarantying human right (freedom) and the ultimate power in the state lies in the hand of citizens (power to recall leaders). Democracy is as a political system is premised on certain fundamental tenet which are: Periodic election held at agreed time interval, Freedom of choice of candidates, Independent electoral body to conduct elections, Independent of judiciary to resolve issues in election processes. Non-interference in election processes,

Conversely federalism has to do with the structural arrangement of a political society anchored on level of government (federal, state and local) and constitutionally assigned shared power and function with some level of coordination and supervision of the lower levels of government by the higher level while ensuring local variation and authority for the diverse interest in the collective interest of the whole.

While democracy centers on method of political administration anchored on the principle of collective decision making, freedom of choice and expression, equal access to political office holding through periodic and competitive election respect for fundamental human right and above all political sovereignty.

It therefore surface to say that certain features are common in federal structure and democracy as a political system this can be seen in term of constitutionalism, division of power among the levels and organs of government fundamental human right, recognition of divergent views and options (majority rights and minority interest) rules of law among others.

It can therefore be argue that ideally federalism is supposed to be intendant (compatible) with democracy; that is to say federalism on a good notion provides the enabling structure and necessary condition for democratic governance little wonder therefore that most democracy state are anchored on federalism structure such as United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Canada, South Africa Ghana and France to mention a little.

According to Alkali (2003) the impact of federal structure on democratic government could be positive or negative depending on the extent to which the structure promotion or hinders democratic principles such as rule of law, accountability, transparency development-oriented leadership, freedom of expression and association, responsiveness, responsibility, representative efficiency and effectiveness.

It therefore follows that under a democratic rule, citizen are treated equally before the law leaders are accountable to the citizen, leaders must act within the limit of the law and the interest of all citizen (majority and minority) rights must be taking into consideration in the realm of government such that no one is seen as been excluded or marginalized within the polity.

It is expected that that federal structure will enhance equitable representation during election in to political position of authority under democracy which will in turn bring about sense of belonging and fair play.

This paper examines restructuring of the federal system in Nigeria on the back ground of its democratic system as political administration in view of the renewed agitation by groups and sections of the society for restructuring despite different integration policies and program that have been employed in enhancing unity among the people of Nigeria, what then could be dong to retain the unity of Nigeria or should the restructuring be geared forward its disintegration in to nation states.

## Methodology

The method used in this paper is content analysis, it is principally a careful review of scholars views and positions on federalism, restructuring and democracy in Nigeria and elsewhere, in this prelude Journals articles, textbooks documentary materials and internet documents has been used in gathering the required data and information

## Theoretical framework of analysis

The frame of analysis employed in this paper is structural functionalism and instructional theory. Gabriel Almm structural functionalism as an approach to social science analysis view the social system as being made up of structures that performs different functions (roles) for the continuous existence of the social system, while some perform allocation further, some perform distributive functions others stabilization function while others performs maintenance function while others performs specific function within the system which are very essential for the continuous and harmonious existence of the whole. Thus the role of the different structure in the federal system in maintaining the continued survival and existence of the system become imperative.

On the other hand institutional theory is premised on the fact that in every society there are the existence certain fundamental body (institutional) which is pre-request for the operation and effective function of the whole system (society) and that these institutions must not just exist but are functional, effective and capable of carrying out their roles and responsibilities within the system. Institutional theory is also linked to system theory and structural functionalism theory.

The basic assumption here is that in every system or society there exist, institutions which performs specific responsibility and which must be effectively performed for the whole system much function as it ought to function and for the continuous survival of the system.

## Findings of the research

Finding reveals that inNigeria the federal structure and democracy has not been able to address this seemingly challenging problems and has over the years led to situation and issues threatening the survival of the cooperate existence of Nigeria as a country,these issues includes:

- a. State creation and the minority question
- b. Federalism and resource allocation among the federating units
- c. Oil and minority agitation for succeeding
- d. Military interest in the body polity
- e. Ethnic-region conflicts
- f. Federal character dilemma
- g. Quota system
- h. Insurgency and terrorism
- i. Corruption and leadership crisis
- j. Cry marginalization by groups
- k. Nigeria civil war 1967 -1970
- l. Poor state of the economy of the country.
- m. Poor and lopsided representation among others.
- n. Constitution and constitutionalism.

**a. State creation:** one of the major problems of federal systems world wide revolve around general socio-economic development particularly in developing countries where the quest for rapid development is often anchored on issue of closeness to government through state creation, this is often the reason for state creation to correct the structural and administrative imbalances of the country and to prevent further political friction, this has however, no solve the problem as more ethnic groups cry for state creation, the creation of states has its own flaws.

**b. Federalism and resource allocation among the federating units:** Federal system of government often come with a concept of power sharing with a concept known as fiscal federalism which refers to the management techniques put in place to regulate money transfer between the different levels of government from federal to the states and local government(Enyi 2005). It also concern the power to generate revenue and to spend same and the perceived equity in all transactions However, this has not been entrenched in Nigeria constitution right from colonial era till date this has often sparked off controversies and sometimes violent classes around the issue of revenue generation and sharing of the collected revenue among the levels and units of government. This issue has always led to popular demand for resource control especially in the oil producing areas of the country.

**c. Oil and Minority Agitation:** Apart from the recent Boko Haram insurgency in the North-Eastern part of the country which has led to the killings of thousands, displacement of millions and destruction of property worth billions of naira, threatening to turn the country apart. Agitation by ethnic minority groups particularly in the Niger delta over allocation and control of revenue emanating from oil and compensation for environmental degradation arising from oil exploration and political marginalization appears to be the greatest challenge to national unity stability. Maintaining Nigeria mono cultural economy has been a source of persistent discontent and conflicts over the years.

**d. Military interest in the body polity of Nigeria:** There is no doubt in that the Nigeria military has over the years shown interest in ruling and controlling Nigeria polity haven tasted power in 1966 to 1979 and 1983- 1999 or there about the Nigeria military has therefore not only got involved in politics but had also got entangled with the dynamics of Nigeria politics and resource control, this is why the military have always intervene in in politics through coup de'tat and try to remain in power by all means and at all cost.

**e. Ethno-religious conflicts:** Although federalism has always been widely acclaimed to be appropriate mechanism and governmental principles for societies with vast ethnic religious and cultural diversity. The Nigeria federal system has been more disposed to conflicts and rampant clashes among the varying groups, this clashes often lead to killings destruction of lives and property thereby deterring growth and development, many public infrastructures and facilities has been destroyed, many turn

orphan and homeless with many in abject poverty, high level of unemployment and falling standard of living.

**f. Federal character dilemma:** This was introduced to bring to the barest minimal incidences of one group dominating another in the scheme of things particularly as it concerns the federal institutions and organizations. It is aimed at promoting, monitoring, and enforcing compliance with the principle of proportional sharing of all bureaucratic, economic, media and political posts at all levels of government including the armed forces, security agencies government owned companies and parastatals.

**g. Quota system:** This is one of the principles introduced in order to bring to the barest minimal cry of marginalization by groups or individuals in any national institution or organization owned by government such as appointment, admission and participation. It is intendant with the theory of equal opportunity for all without discrimination on the group of ethnicity, tribe, religion or political affiliation.

**h. Insurgence and Terrorism:** Over the past decades according to Abdulkarim, Abeebe Mohammed, & Idriss (2018), Boko-Haram insurgency and terrorist group operations have been on for over a decade beginning from 2009- up-to-date. Their cruel activities have been so devastating; they kill people in mass and indiscriminately too. They also kidnap people too, especially women, youths and children. A notorious example of this was the brazen kidnaping of the Chibok Girls on 14th April 2014 (Olojo, 2015) and the Dapchi Girls (2018). These two incidents which attracted both national and international outrage demonstrate not only the brutal nature of the insurgency but also the complexity of the crises. The group was reported to have taken over some villages and local government areas in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states and proclaimed Gwoza, a village in the suburb of Borno state as the seat of their caliphate. The frequent ransacking of villages and the attendant displacements, loss of lives and property has made life nasty and brutish in the North-Eastern part of the country and there appears no end in sight for the hellish situation. The 2014 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) report that 82 per cent of people killed in terrorist attacks across the world were just in five countries namely, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria.

**i. Corruption, Leadership crises and Mismanagement:** Corruption in Nigeria has become a dynamic problem threatening the country's economic and political development the level of fraud, unethical practices in public institutions and industries over the years as reported by Transparency International ranked Nigeria as one of the country high level of corrupt practices, The United nations development program (UNDP) declared that Nigeria has maintained seventy percent rise in poverty level in spite of our increasing income over the last two decades, leaders have continue to loot the treasury and siphoning the banks through external transfers to other banks in the developed worlds.

**j. Cry of Marginalization by groups:** Over the years there has been cry of marginalization of group by certain group, this is a

typical feature of federal system. However, there are always inbuilt mechanism to address issues of marginalization in most federal systems such as quota system, federal character, zoning system and fair equitable representation in position of political authority, it is a known fact that this and many other policies do exist in Nigeria, what is unknown is the extent to which this principles and policies are implemented.

**k. Nigeria civil war 1967-1970:** The Nigeria civil war which lasted for over thirty months leading to the killings of thousands and millions of people and destruction of property worth billions of naira and untold hardship and trauma in the brain and mind of people still leave much to be forgotten so easily. The union brought about by the British colonial master soon graduated into coups and counter coups soon after independence in January 1966, and June, 1966 respectively. (Adegbite, Oduniyi, & Farinde, 2019). The Nigeria civil (war between 1967-1970, ethno-tribal wars, social and religious conflicts (Egunjobi, 2015) as well as insurgency and terrorist activities (Ani & Ajaegbo, 2015). Are issues demanding the attention of government which to many are un addresses issues.

**l. Poor state of economy in the country:** The poor state of the economy has always been the cause of the sharp division between the rich and the poor, using the latter to rise against the government. It is common to find elite clash on the internal economic upheavals in the country. There are, for instance, the dreaded Odua People's Congress, Area Boys in the South-West, Arewa Consultative Forum and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOB) and Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) Boys among others. In the South-East, these groups cause crises in the political stability of the country. Indeed, the crises caused by the groups in the South do not only lead to loss of lives and properties but usually also threaten the unity of the much-talked-about resource control in the Niger Delta area. Backed by subterranean political forces, the various in the oil producing areas of the South-East hinge their militant activities on their desire to control the resources of their region (Ushie, 2013).

**m. Poor and lopsided representation in positions of Political authority:** A fundamental problem in federal system and in fact in democratic systems is how to ensure equitable representation among the varied sections (ethnic, tribal) groups that makes up the state or country more so that states in modern times are cosmopolitan in nature and character yet, there is still the need to ensure equitable distribution or allocation of political positions among the different sections so as to limit the cry of marginalization of a group by the other. In Nigeria this has remain a great issue as it often the bases of agitation by groups

**n. Constitution and constitutionalism:** A very important and fundamental guide in the administration of any political system is the constitution (rules and regulations) guiding the conduct of affairs in a given political society. Some Nigerian have attributed the varied problems facing Nigeria to be rooted in her constitution which is believed to be imposed on her by the military without

recourse to the will of the people. Therefore, the constitution in itself it full of myriads lapses including the principles of federal character and quota system which are all designed and imposed by the military.

**Conversely:** these issues have brought about the call and agitation for restructuring of the country by different groups especially the minority group or those who felt they have not been accorded rightful positions of authority within the polity or have not been given fair share of what is considering as national cake. It appears Nigerian government has over the years refuse to review its mechanisms for sustaining federal system either deliberately or unknowingly.

### What then is restructuring? And does Nigeria really requires restructuring?

Restructuring can be view as rearrangement, reconstitution and reestablishment or over having of a system in order words to reconstruct, reorient, reshuffle or revamp a system or organization.

By implication restricting a federal system is a call for its reconstitution and rearrangement it noteworthy to say that federal system is ideally made up of federating units with diverse values and all true which are brought together for the purpose of promoting unity and progress among the federating units. It is the recognition of this diverseness that make the system federal in the first instance, the degree to which this diverseness can be integrated for the mutual benefit of all has been a bowl of contention in all federal systems, including the old federal systems such as United states of America (USA) and Canada.

Restructuring or organization is feature of all systems either economic, social or political, what is important is the nature and dimension to which such reorganization (restructuring) should or ought to take and what are the aims and objective of such restructuring.

The question which arises; are we restructuring to address the lapses inherent or identified in the system so as to correct and fine tune the system for better performance or are we restructuring to disintegrate or collapse the existing structure for a new one such as confederal system or quest-federal system.

The fundamental question which comes to mind and which needed to be address is what does the group of people calling for restructuring actual have in mind? what is their aim and objectives? These questions are apartment if we must talk of restructuring of Nigerian federal system.

This is because the history of agitation, autonomy or self-rule by the different regions in Nigeria pre-dates the present call for restructuring in fact beginning from 1970 after the Nigeria civil war, the major region in Nigeria the Yoruba in the South-West, the Igbos in the South-East and the Hausa in the North had long clamor for seceding from the federation while Yoruba were clamoring for Oduduwa state, the Igbo were vested on the republic of Biafra as

their own separatist country while the Hausa were bent on the Bayajida caliphate as their dream state base on Islamic law the shariah system.

It took Nigeria government effortful years to fight the civil war to retain the unity of the country and to prevent succession by the Eastern region.

The Nigerian federal system has been under threat of breaking up over decades. Different regions within the federating system have been clamoring and agitating for succession (breaking) this has no doubt threatening the unity and co-operate existence of the country as a nation: it has also led to the emergence of militant groups across the geo-political setting of the unity whom now resulted to violent conflicts, terrorism and insurgency as possible means of attaining their goals, thus restructuring of the federal system become the bowl of contention among the people, the question remains what will be nature of the restricting will restricting solve the problem and maintain the co-operate existence of the country as a united indivisible action or will it lead to total disintegration of the country.

Nigerian federal system as earlier explained has its root in the 1914 amalgamation of Southern and Northern protectorate by sir Frederic Lord Lugard and subsequent consolidation with the merger of the regions by colonial administrators such as sir Author Richard 1946, Sir Macpherson of 1951 and Sir Lyttleton of 1954 respectively. At independence, Nigeria's regional political classes negotiated with themselves on one hand and between them and the departing British colonial masters on the other hand, to continue with the established federal system of government for the country.

This arrangement continue up till 1966 when the military stage a coup deta't in January and a counter-coup in July that year, the accompanied crisis resulted in to civil war which last for 30 months 1967-1970; the crisis between the government of the federal republic of Nigeria and Republic of Biafra, during this period the government of Nigeria created twelve (12) state out of the existing four region in attempt to consolidate the federal system and reduce regional autonomy which has facilitated attempt to succeed by certain region. Since then the Nigerian government has continue to expand the frontier of Nigeria federal system through the creation of more states such as nineteen (19) states under late General Murtala Muhammed, Twenty-one (21) states, twenty-seven (27) states and thirty-six (36) states respectively.

Similarly, the Nigeria government has over the years introduced national integration policies and programs such as national orientation, the mass mobilization for social justice and self-reliance (maser) latter named national orientation agency. Federal character principle aimed at given fair and equitable representation to all regions and people of the diverse regions of the country, quota system, right of residence and ownership of property anywhere in the country, freedom of association, the national youth service corps among others all aimed at integrating the divers entities of Nigeria.

Despite all this there has been outcry of marginalization and unfair representation, neglection and lack of development in some areas and region of the country, thereby leading to the call for restructuring of the country.

It is important to know that this outcry has been on far sometimes now especially under democratic system, which give room of right of expression and criticizing of government policies and program through the mass media or people's representatives in the parliament (Senate, House of Rept. and State House of Assembly) this has led government to constitute bodies such as the Constitutional Conference in 2014 under President Goodluck Jonathan which compressed of people from diverse sections of Nigeria society (politician, academician, traditional leaders, business organization and private sector) to discuss the general issues and problems of the Nigeria federal system which often threaten if co-operate existence and unity.

Other bodies individual includes the national council of state (comprising of all previous Nigeria heads of state and government) intergovernmental agencies, inter-regions advisory committees among others aimed at reviewing issues and problems affecting the co-operate existence of Nigeria as well as suggesting and recommended way forward. There is no doubt that these committees and bodies have over the years deliberated on these issues and made suggesting and recommendation some of which have been implemented but some remains on while paper with little or no hope of their implementation.

It is this issues and problem that have often resurface and concerned groups always agitating for their implementation. As time goes one group and people whose demands and agitation are un answered or not met soon result to violent conflicts as a way of achieving their goals and of recent some group have taken to fierce struggle through terrorism and insurgency to drive home their point. It is in the light of the above that recent calls for restructuring of the federal system in Nigeria demands through over view.

Thus it mean the creation of states and local government as well as expanding the political land space of the country through successive government cannot be considered as restructuring or does it not in actual sense address the issues and problems confronting the system or are the groups and people calling for a relapse into regional government as it were in it earlier stage before the 1946 and 1951 Richard and Macpherson constitution which merged and consolidated the federal arrangement or are the people calling for con-federal system or quash-federal system where the regions will be stronger while the Centre will be weak.

## Conclusion

The call for restructuring demand a through and in-depth understanding and analysis of what and how the restructuring should be done and to what extend should the restructuring be done so as to maintain the purpose and objective of federal system without necessarily undermining the benefits and purpose as envisaged by it founding fathers and proponents.

The ideal and notion that Nigeria should be restructure has continued to gain wide spread momentum over the years for example Akinrinade (2016) one of Nigeria ex-military officer openly expresses his flee of the need to restructure the federal system in Nigeria or else the country is most likely to break up in the very near future.

What is most important is addressing the ever-evolving challenges and problems of a federal system such as fair representation in position of political authority, fair and wide spread development (federal government presence) infrastructural development, security of the property. Provision of infrastructures such as road water, and electricity provision of employment opportunity and above all good governance, through the protection of fundamental human rights, equally before the law and maintenance of law and order for peace and tranquility to rein for development to take place and justice to prevail.

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