

State Failure, Poor Governance and Restructuring: Interrogating the Trilogy in the Nigerian State.

By

Jacob AUDU, Ph.D

Department of Political Science and International Studies,

Faculty of Social Sciences,

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

GSM: 08035650371, 08057271178

EMAIL: jacobaudu@abu.edu.ng and ojigod@gmail.com

Abstract

Contemporary Nigerian state is confronted with the clamour for restructuring borne out of perceived, imagined or real crises of marginalization, deprivations, insecurity and the inability of the Nigerian state to provide welfare for her citizenry. This paper attempts a discourse on the relationships among the trilogy of state failure, poor governance and restructuring. It is the contention of this paper that state failure as a result of poor governance is the major trigger for the agitation for restructuring. The objectives of the paper include to conceptualize and extrapolate the relationships among the trio of state failure, poor governance and restructuring; to question what are we really restructuring; and to establish how good governance in terms of poor service delivery would stem the tide of agitation for restructuring to the barest minimum. The paper is anchored on the prism of state failure theory. It relied on the data generated from both primary and secondary sources. The paper concludes that at the root of agitation for restructuring is the prevalence of real or perceived crises of marginalization real or imagined, deprivation, poverty and backwardness. It recommends that good governance, building and strengthening of state governance institutions as the panacea to the agitation for restructuring.

Key words: State, Governance, Restructuring, Federalism and Trilogy

Introduction

Federalism, decentralization of powers and fiscal federalism have emerged as major important policy issues in many developed and developing countries and even in international institutions. Available literature has shown enormous analyses on the functioning of fiscal federalism in some developed and developing economies as well as on the related topic of decentralization of powers in a broad sense, including delegation of rights, powers and responsibilities from one level or tiers of government to another; decentralization and devolution of powers and the problem of governance in the public and private (corporate) sectors, which subsumes corruption, has drawn the attention of multilateral financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Contemporary Nigerian state is at the moment what Fasan (2020) called the coalface of the crisis of federalism. The subject of inter group relations and the relationship between the various religious, regional, national and ethnic groups that constitute the political and geographical landscape known as Nigeria today has remained one of the major factors in the socioeconomic and political processes of our contemporary realities thereby leading to the agitations and call for restructuring. Regrettably, most of these agitators are not driven by patriotism and sincerity of purpose but by selfish interest borne out of denial or deprivation from elective and appointive positions in the present administration.

The issue of restructuring Nigeria has on the one hand plunged all irrespective of your religious inclination, geographical locations and ethno-religious background into a dilemma. This is because as Othman, Mohammed and Osman (2019) have noted, there has never been any format, consensus, harmony and or common ground on what, whose, when and by whom to

restructure Nigeria. The current calls for restructuring have largely been coming from those who are in the opposition or must have lost out in the political merchandise or disadvantaged and marginalized in political power and resource sharing and control; and the elites who seek their selfish class interests; while the others, including state authorities resist and turn away from the calls and agitations except where and when pushed to the wall. Many of the agitators are also partly dominated by few elites who are concerned with popularity, politics of accommodation and interested in acquisition, control and consolidation of the state political and economic powers and resources. For the common man, whether from the North, South, East and Western part of Nigeria; whether Christians or Muslim, their situation has remained largely the same with the various regimes and administrations with little improvement on their socioeconomic well-being.

The point of departure of this paper is an attempt to go beyond conventional analysis and rhetoric to examine the relationships among state failure, poor governance and restructuring in Nigeria which is a major national question in contemporary Nigerian state.

Theoretical framework- Failed State theory

This paper is anchored on the failed state theory with focus on the state failure as a variant of the theory. Failed states are those states whose power grids have experienced frequent, sustained and massive breakdown, such that state authorities are no longer able to project real powers on a consistent basis, if at all- in other words, they cannot amplify or exert powers. Some of the most influential works on state failure include William Zaman's *Collapsed States* (1995), which is concerned primarily with Africa but Robert Rothberg (2003) provides a detailed and graphic description of state failure and its consequences. Rothberg (2003) described a failed state as a polity that is no longer able to or willing to perform the fundamental tasks of a nation state in the modern world. His notion that state failure is a fluid halting place with movement back to weakness and forward into collapse formed the thrust of our discourse. A failed state therefore, is a political body that has disintegrated to a point where basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government no longer function properly. It is sometimes described as fragile state, state collapse and state failure.

Trilogy of State Failure. Restructuring and Poor Governance in Nigeria State Failure

State failure essentially has to do with loss of control by political authority in space and functions. State failure was first seen as a post-cold war phenomenon Charles Call (2003) subdivided the concept of state failure into security, legitimacy and capacity gaps. State failure and security development challenges have been commonly linked since the creation of the concept in the 1990s. State failure, according to Rotberg (2003) revolves around two central aspects. On the one hand, states are considered failed when they are consumed by internal violence and ceased to deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants. For Rotberg (2003), the primary public good is the provision of security within a territory. Once this good is provided, a number of other goods such as dispute settlement, rule of law, political participation, education and health care will evolve. Consequently, violence is idiosyncratic for failed states. Other indications would be a predatory government, loss of control over territory, criminal violence and the rise of warlords, lack of medical and educational services and a declining Gross Domestic Product per capita. The benchmark on which a state is measured by the western nations based on three core functions such as representation, security and a concern for welfare of its population. This has been acknowledged in Nigeria's 1999 Constitution which arrogates the responsibility of providing security and welfare for the citizens on the state. But in terms of dispensing these responsibilities, the state is far behind.

It is perceived as a state core duty to provide political goods linked to development. In its traditional role as a guard of security, a state is responsible for the protection of its national territory and state institutions.

Failed state, is a state that is unable to perform the sure fundamental functions of a sovereign nation-state in the modern world system. A state that cannot project authority over its territory and peoples, and it cannot protect its national boundaries. The security situation in Nigeria today is a clear demonstration of the inability of the Nigerian state to confront the dual challenges of security and development.

The governing capacity of a failed state is attenuated such that it is unable to fulfill the administrative and organizational task required to control people and resources and can provide minimal public services. Its citizens no longer believe that their government is legitimate. It is composed of feeble and flawed institutions with only executives barely functioning and others such as legislature, judiciary, bureaucracy and armed forces have lost their capacity and professional independence and hence, have become appendages of the state.

A failed state suffers from crumbling infrastructures, faltering utility supplies and educational and health facilities and deteriorating human right development indicators. It creates an environment of flourishing corruption and negative growth rises. It comes in degrees and is often a function of both the collapse of state institutions and societal collapse. Despite the claim by successive regimes and administration of the Nigeria state, available evidence has shown that corruption is flourishing at every sphere and levels of governance.

A failed state is a state that cannot maintain a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence and minimal internal conflict. It cannot provide representation and political empowerment of its citizens or protect civil liberties and fundamental human rights. It manifests itself when a state can no longer deliver physical security, a productive economic environment and a stable political system for its people.

It will be appropriate to regard Nigeria as a failed state because the released index by Fund For Peace (FFP) annual Failed State Index (FSI) ranked Nigeria as the 14th most failed state in the world. According to Obi (2004) if by the term failed state we mean a system that lacks major attributes of sovereignty and cohesion, then Nigeria can be categorized as one. Nigeria status was upgraded from an amber warning of the previous years to a red critical in the year 2014, only a step away from the deep crimson alert which is exclusive domain of truly collapsed state. Today, the situation has deteriorated beyond comprehension. The twin goals of development or socioeconomic progress and nation building of the people in Nigeria has been managed and sometimes mismanaged. The failure of the Nigerian state to address numerous contradictions confronting Nigeria which is often referred to as the national question has continued to provoke the various sectional interests and groups to continuously call for restructuring. However, the major issues that should dominate our national question should be good governance (in terms of how to administer the national resources of the country in a more prudent, equitable, accountable and transparent manner) and national integration which must be pursued and realized. According to Kofi Annan (2000), at the national level we must govern better; and at the international level we must govern better together

Restructuring

National question, according to according to Fedoseyev (1977) is first and foremost a question of solving vital problems of social development, abolishing national oppression and inequality, eliminating obstacles to the formation of nations and assuring freedom for the development of peoples including achievement of factual equality and Internationalism. The contemporary Nigerian state has been manipulated in terms of determining administrative units, distribution and allocation of social and economic amenities and the sharing of both elective and appointive political power. Ikime (1986) argues that the politics of Nigeria since

independence has been conceived of largely as a tradeoff between the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Ibo. The other nationalities, whose contributions to the national economy, to sports and to the provision of skilled manpower can in no way be described marginal, tended to be treated as mere pawns in the game of national politics (Ikime, 1986).

The current agitation for restructuring comes on the heels of a rising perception of total neglect of the southern region-especially among the south east in the distribution of political appointment and the sudden rise of the Independent People Of Biafra (IPOB). Increasingly, calls for restructuring became widespread and accepted by the different ethno-regional groupings, with their own individual and often confusing interpretations of what the term actually means. This produced a multiplicity of definitions and ideas about how to achieve a long desire.

Perspectives on the Agitation for Restructuring Political Restructuring

Many ethnic minorities are complaining of economic and political marginalization as well as social inequalities. Angaiye cited in Osakwe and Habib (2014) argues that accusation and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry are common. It is difficult to know who is marginalizing who in Nigeria because all ethnic groups from the big three Hausa, Yoruba and Igbos to the relatively smaller groups such as the Ogonis, Ikwerres, Southern Kaduna, Epira, Igala, etc. are all complaining of marginalization. The inauguration of the Willink's Commission in 1957 in the build up to independence by the colonial authorities was to essentially provide solution to the problem of domination of minorities by majority groups but surprisingly, the commission did not recommend creation of state as the solution but instead, opted for a political solution. It is the contention of some agitators of restructuring that the only solution to the crisis of marginalization (whether real or imagined), insecurity, backwardness and poor welfare of Nigerians is restructuring, yet they have been so vague and naïve in their conceptualization of the concept of restructuring.

To some, restructuring is reduced to confederation. Here, the states that constitute the present federation would be made stronger than the centre and certain percentage of derived revenue would be paid to the federal government. This will ultimately make the centre less attractive. To a large extent, this position hold water considering the high premium placed on political power at the centre where winners takes all in terms of allocation of resources and both appointive positions, there rendering the states as subordinates and appendages contrary to the spirit of federalism.

Political restructuring borders essentially on the system of government. By system of government here, we mean the institution that has been entrusted with the responsibility of making rules and regulations and enforcing them; providing security and welfare; and managing the day to day affairs of a country on behalf of the state. It is instructive to note that every country operates one system of government or the other with each responding to its own peculiarities which are often addressed by institutional forms of government such as federalism or unitarism. For instance, federalism provides an important political grid for the United States' presidentialism as it also provides for Indian and Australian parliamentary. Similarly, Britain is Unitary and parliamentary as is Pakistan. The bottom line is that each system or forms is designed to address the peculiarities of each system. It is therefore imperative to note that there is no true or false federalism but federalism designed and practiced in such a way that the peculiar needs of such a nation are addressed.

However, a critical look at the Nigeria's political trajectories since independence and most especially after six decades of political independence reveals a state still in a political jungle and in a desperate search for another system or forms of government that is not only

suitable but best at addressing our numerous political, social and economic ailments in the 21st century. It is against this background that the agitation for restructuring can be situated. But there are certain questions still begging for answer in Nigeria; one of which is: Is Nigeria's political system today as it has always been since 1960 one of appropriate system of government or that of the political actors not playing according to the rules of the games? Our concern since 1959 through independence to date has been the contestation and competition on who controls or takes over political power at the centre. Alhaji Tafewa Balewa cited in Elaigwu and Galadima, (1994, p. 307) cautioned that:

In the past few years we have seen quite a number of countries gain their independence and set off under constitution based on the parliamentary system. We have been very sorry to see in a number of cases that after a few years of parliamentary democracy there has been a complete breakdown of government, and power has been seized by one section of the community. Now it is quite clear that there has been a fault somewhere. It is easy enough to say that the countries affected were not really ripe for independence, but I think that is a poor argument. The truth lies elsewhere, and it seems to me that **in those unhappy countries it is the political leaders who have failed the peoples...** Our fear is not that we shall fail; no, our fear is that we might disappoint the millions of our fellow countrymen who have confided to us the task of managing the affairs.

In summary, the operation of Parliamentary and Presidential systems of government in Nigeria since independence was characterized by rigging of elections in most blatant fashion; manipulation of census figures, violence, corruption, arson, and brigandage were employed in the mad desire to win or retain power both in the region and at the centre (Elaigwu and Galadima, 1994). For many of the operators of the system, politics is not a game but a battle that must be won at all cost and political parties are merely convenient weapons of offence and defense. The implication is that both systems seems to have produced the same result. Nothing has really changed except individuals that manages the affairs of the state since 1960. It is not the federal system that has failed us but the operators of the federal systems at all levels. It is not the system but the human element of the system that has failed. In fact, it is no longer over statement to state that in Nigeria, constitutional provisions or established rules guiding institutional processes such as intergovernmental relations are more honoured in their violations than observance.

There is a school of thought that is of the view that the present federal arrangement has not been able to determine the political, social, economic and resource allocation relationships acceptable to the majority of the people and communities that constitute what is today known and called Nigeria. Available evidence and the contemporary realities have shown that the responsibility of ensuring the successful practice of federalism and democracy in Nigeria rests, to a large extent on the Nigerian people. This is because, some of the problems which have continued to stand in the way of democratic possibilities and the smooth practice of federalism in Nigeria are deeply rooted in the negative behavioural tendencies and attitudinal dispositions among many of our people. To that extent, institutional and constitutional failures in the past are failures occasioned by the pervasive anti-democratic attitudes and negative behavioural tendencies which have over the years of misgovernment, become inherently manifest among Nigerian elites (Oyegun, 1994).

The adoption of federalism in Nigeria was both a political expression and expediency as well as a response to the socio-political imperatives inherently rooted in the country's socio-political evolution and the historical necessity to strike a lasting balance between the dilemmas of unity in diversity and development. Therefore, one of the fundamental questions that must

be re-examined in the light of contemporary realities of the Nigerian state is equitable access to national political power and resources.

In addition to a concern for power sharing between levels of government, we need to accord deserved emphasis to policing the frontiers of the relationship between governmental power and human rights as well as how best to ensure equal or equitable access to power and resources of the country by all levels of government and all regional and cultural sections of Nigeria.

The people have been made to believe that only when someone from their ethnic group or nationality hold an elective or appointive positions or offices that their lot can be better or improved. Regrettably, individuals in government have acted and exercised power in a manner that does not give credence to this assertion. This is because, a critical examination of the activities of those in political power and authority has shown that in general, the benefits that accrue to ethnic groups and nationalities from having their members in elective or appointive positions are limited only to a tiny minority from a particular family or families and classes usually contractors and people working in government institutions. The benefits never get down to the masses of the ruling ethnic groups or nationalities. The implication of this is that the masses of the ruling ethnic groups or nationalities are in no way better off than the others in terms of benefits from holding elective or appointive offices. The Nigerian experience has shown that ethnicity is used by both the dominant and the subjugated groups of the society particularly the political elites as a means of domination and tool for political power or appointive power negotiations as well as means of resistance and defense of ethnic group by the masses.

Social Restructuring

It is interesting to state that existing practices, attitudes and actions of most Nigerians, both elite and non-elite, leaders and followers, security agents and non-security agents, military and civilians, operating in the various sectors of the Nigerian state are antithetical to the cherished values and principles of democracy, federalism and development. President Buhari, painting the picture of the state of the Nigerian state in 1994 as cited by (Audu, 2014) had observed that: in the last few years, we have witnessed a general and rapid deterioration in the condition of Nigerians, due partly to the global economic downturn but more particularly to the wanton corruption in government on a scale unimaginable. The gross corruption of the few meant that the basic human needs of the rest could not be met. The picture painted over two decades ago are as real and not different from what is obtained today under the leadership of President Buhari, where Nigeria has become the world capital of absolute poverty.

A general look at the conduct of most Nigerians in positions of authority and power will show you the extent of degradation and misconduct. Since this is the responsibility of Nigerians to operate her constitution and institutions, unless the right attitude is cultivated and nurtured towards the use of power, authority and resources at their disposal, there is need for attitudinal change. As Oyegun (1994) argues, so long as people continue to maintain orientations which tend to personalize, privatize or sectionalize public office at the expense of the public trust and normal responsibility implied by that position, democratic possibilities, nation building, democratic stability and development would remain elusive. It is Nigerians acting either as individuals or groups, or for whatever reasons, who have through their actions and inactions, compromised or undermined the basis for and prospects of unity, stability, lasting democracy and federalism in our country and the same Nigerians are calling for restructuring. Failures of the formal structures and institutions of government and politics in Nigeria such as the legislature, the military, the failure of politics, our national economy and federalism are, therefore, deeply rooted in the attitudinal arrangement set up before and after Nigeria became independence, democracy has continued to fail in Nigeria (Oyegun, 1994).

Nigeria, yesterday and today especially since the return to democratic rule in 1999 is characterized by pervasive antidemocratic culture. This has been argued, manifest particularly in the inability of most Nigerians to fulfill the moral responsibility implied by power, especially political power (Oyegun, 1994). Those who wield political power are hardly able to constantly remind themselves that they are accountable to the people, whose interest, needs and welfare they must seek at all times to protect and enhance.

We have been corrupted and traumatized beyond measures. We have also been misled to an incredible degree and brutalized to a stage that only in Nigeria and Nigerians can endure. In fact, we are a nation that has been held captive by a thoughtless and utterly selfish and Machiavellian ruling elites which has wielded power without concern for the people or for our destiny as a nation, but more for the benefits of self and friends. We can therefore contend that the problem with the Nigerian state has not strictly been one of ethnicity or North/South or Hausa/Fulani vs Yoruba or Igbo, etc. Rather the Nigerian state has been held captive by a rather small group of power elites cutting across the length and breadth of this country who are permanently congregated under conservative banners, be it military or civilian or political and whose virtually uninterrupted access to power has brought the nation to its needs (Oyegun, 1994). It suffices to state that because of our ethnic and religious sentiments, there is no deep emotional commitment and attachment to the contemporary Nigerian nation by a sufficiently large number of the Nigerian citizens.

Restructuring the National Economy

Since the discovery of oil in commercial quantity in Nigeria in 1956, the Nigerian national economy has remained a petro dollar economy depending largely and solely on the oil sector for most of her activities. Oil is probably the most efficient national resource for rapid economic growth and development. As Jibrin (1994) has argued, to attract enough capital, a developing country like Nigeria must have a product which the rest of the world will want at all times in the foreseeable future and willing to pay a premium price for it. Nigeria is blessed with such a product in petroleum. It is the only commodity which, in commercial quantities and properly utilized, will attract capital investment, bring sustained revenue earnings, import other downstream projects and provide employment opportunities, diversify linkages with agriculture and other types of industries and also promote the acquisition of science and technology (Jibrin, 1994). Even though it has been stated that every country developed in one way or another, on petroleum, it is important to state that petroleum cannot and can never replace agriculture, as the most important industry, but it can develop it fast. Oil is not only our major source of energy but it is the lifeline of both our national economy and life.

Tragically, the fact that the whole of Africa has only about 2% of the world's grand total oil reserves while Saudi Arabia alone has 24.5% and countries like Iraq, Kuwait, Iran and the United Arab Emirates have about 8-10% each is enough reason for us to restructure our national economy as we seem not to have any future relying only on oil whose value and demand is subject to the vagaries of the international market defined and determined by the super powers.

The revenue arising from oil in the form of petroleum profit tax, royalties and fees are assigned to the Federation Account, and go into the distributable pool, which is disbursed to the various tiers of government as provided for by the current revenue allocation formula (Lukman, 1994). This provoke basis for agitations and calls for restructuring especially by those from the oil producing region who feel that they are not getting a fair deal; they have been marginalized and subjected to long term neglect. While some are calling for resource utilization especially in the face of the recent financial mess, misappropriation and looting in the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) others from the oil producing region are calling for total resource control.

So long as the public sector is overwhelmingly dominant and is financed by oil revenues, and the exercise of power is seen mainly in terms of distribution of the national cake without contemplating baking more cake which has consequently resulted in making the position of the Presidency (headship of the country) enormously attractive. Hence, everything will be done to capture it. The control of the presidency and the Federal Government and to a lesser extent the subsidiary state and local governments is seen as the surest route to affluence, and the prize must be captured by any means available. The political situation arising from this is inherently unstable and not conducive for democratic development and internal peace and cohesion. The implications for civilized norms of democratic competition for power, and for inter-regional struggle for this supreme office are very dire (Asiodu,1994).

The relative neglect of agriculture began long before oil became important, increasing oil revenues have enabled us to mask the consequences of such neglect by recourse to importation thereby reducing us to a consumer nation instead of being a producer nation. All these put together calls for the restructuring of the entire Nigerian economy.

Oil, its revenues and its effects will only be the good of a serious people who are well governed (Jibrin, 1994). When the national economy is restructured, the oil sector's contribution to GDP would decrease while industry, agriculture and service sectors controlled essentially by the private sectors grows proportionately much faster so that the creation and disposition of national wealth is largely in the hands of the diversified private interests and ultimately, a conducive atmosphere for politics would be created.

It is the contention of this paper that a major platform through which Nigeria can achieve her economic potential is through agriculture. Nigeria has the potential to be major exporter of key agricultural produce to the world with 84 million of hectares' arable land. According to Forbes as cited in Adelaja (2017), agriculture is the future of Nigeria. Agriculture is a major means by which Nigeria can become the greatest country in the world. It is instructive to note that between 1962-1968, export crops were the country's main foreign exchange earner. The country was number one globally in palm oil exports, well ahead of Malaysia and Indonesia, and exported 47 percent of all groundnuts, putting it ahead of the U.S. and Argentina. While Nigeria that once produced 18 percent of the global production of cocoa, second in the world in the 1960s, that figure is now down to 8percent. While the country produces 65percent of tomatoes in West Africa, it is now the largest importer of tomato paste. According to Adesina, the President, African Development Bank, the change needed to transform the agricultural sector requires a shift in mindset. He further added that we were not looking at agriculture through the right lens. We were looking at agriculture as a developmental activity, like a social sector in which you manage poor people in rural areas. But agriculture is not a social sector. Agriculture is a business. Seed is a business, fertilizer is a business, storage, value added, logistics and transport-it is all about business as cited in (Adelaja, 2017, p.220). We need agriculture that is modernized, that is productive, that is competitive. We must be a global player. It is time to restructure the agricultural sector to making it an agriculturally industrialized economy like Brazil.

Governance

Africa today can be said to be facing an ethical crisis to the extent that Rasheed (1995), for instance noted that the lack of accountability, unethical behaviour and corrupt practices have become so pervasive, and even institutionalized norms of behaviour in Africa to the extent that one may conveniently speak of a crisis of ethics in African public service. The unethical decay in public service has rekindled a kind of resurgence of interest in ethics in governance particularly in countries where lack of accountability, unethical behaviour and corrupt practices have become pervasive. It is within this context that Faboyede (2009) has noted that we are in the era in which the economic progress and the fortune of any nation are inextricably bound to

the degree of adherence to universally accepted ethical values. The enforcement of ethical values therefore is the starting point for good governance; as unethical practices and behaviours are powerful enemy of good governance with gross negative impact and implication on democratic governance.

The concept of governance is not new but as old as human civilization. Simply put, it means the process of decision – making and the process by which these decisions are implemented. Governance, conceptually is the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage the affairs of a particular state at all levels. It comprises the mechanism, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, asserts their rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.

Governance is defined as the ability of the making and implementing of collectively binding rules and the provision of collective goods. The United Nations Commission for Africa (UNECA, 1999) defines governance as a process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in a political community.

The World Bank in a recent study cited in Ezekwesili (2011) in line with this definition sees governance as the manner in which public officials and public institutions acquire and exercise the authority to provide public goods and services, including delivery of basic services, infrastructure, and a sound investment climate. The UNDP (1997) views governance as the totality of the exercise of authority in the management of the country's affairs comprising of the complex mechanism, processes institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences. Governance presupposes the process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in a political community. Muazu (2005) has conceived governance as the act of governing (to rule, direct, guide, control, decides or determine the affairs of the state) and exposing political authority in directing people in the affairs of the state. Fundamental to the notion of governance is the ability of the state to establish functioning institutions for governance to take place. As such, governance fundamentally defines the partnership and relationship between the rulers and the ruled aimed at the efficiency of the state's structure. The absence of which has the capacity to gravitate towards failed state which ultimately triggers agitation for restructuring as we are experiencing in Nigeria today.

Conclusion

Any honest observer, who has seen how Nigeria has steadily and systematically degenerated from being a country of great promise to a country of great problems; anyone who knows that you have to look back to the past, instead of looking forward, to see this country's best years of national and regional progress, its years of great public and missionary schools and great education, of proud infrastructural achievements and the best life experiences can easily list reasons why Nigeria and Nigerians needs restructuring to stop the drift towards the development abyss.

A Nigerian earnestly restructured, is a Nigeria positively restored: a country restored to a previously travelled paths of developmental progress, rapid educational advancement, robust and committed public service, which genuinely and competently served Nigeria's public both at the federal and regional levels. It is against the forgoing that this paper concludes that contrary to some perceptions, it is not the system in this case federalism but the process of governance that has run into trouble in Nigeria since independence. It is not the system but the operators of the system that are the problem of the Nigerian state. This gives credence to Alexander Pope who once said as cited in Elaigwu and Galadima, (1994, p.306) that "for forms of government, let fools contest, what is best administered is best". The alternative therefore is good governance. The perennial clamour or agitations for restructuring are more political than developmental, they are largely elitist and not mass based.

What will make restructuring meaningful to the people may necessarily be good governance but not as defined by the UN; instead, and specifically as conceived by the Mo Ibrahim Index for African Governance which promotes the provision of the political, social and economic goods that a citizen has the right to expect from his or her state, and that a state has the responsibility to deliver to the citizens. The paper also reiterates that building and strengthening institutions, accompanied with constitutional reforms are fundamental if state failure, bad governance and ultimately if agitation for restructuring is to be avoided. Finally, in addition to the above, the paper recommends an extra constitutional political arrangement for power sharing and rotation of the supreme office of the state (Presidency) among the three major ethnic groups on some equitable basis for a transitional period of eight years so as to allay the fear of perceived, real or imagined marginalization by certain element of the Nigeria's federating units.

References

- Adelaja, S. (2017). *How to Make Nigeria the Greatest Country in the World*. Lagos: Life Spring Global Resources.
- Annan, K. (2000). "We the People": the role of the United Nations in the 21st Century. New York: NY. United Nations Department of Public Information.
- Asiodu, P. (1994). Petroleum Resources and National Development. In Mahadi, A., Kwanashie, G.A., Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*. Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Audu, J. (2014). Sovereign National Conference (SNC) and the contending National Questions: Rethinking the Nomenclature. In Egwemi, V. Wuam, T., and Chris, S.O. (eds). *Federalism, Politics and Minorities in Nigeria. An Essay in Honour of Professor G.N. Hembe*, by the Department of Political Science and History, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Bahiti and Dalila, pp592-605.
- Audu, J. (2013). Assessment of the Performance of the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Code of Conduct Tribunal in promoting Public Ethics in Nigeria's Democratic Governance (1999-2007). Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
- Babalola, D. & Onapajo, H. (2019). New Clamour for Restructuring in Nigeria: Elite Politics Contradictions and Good Governance. *African Studies Quarterly*, volume 18, Issue 4, October,
- Bukar, U. (2017). Issues and Challenges of Restructuring Nigeria. M.guardian.ng/opinion/issues. Lite Politics
- Charles, C. (2003). Assessing State Failure: Implications for Theory and Policy. *Third World Quarterly*, volume 24, number3, pp407-427.
- Elaiwu, J. and Galadima, H. (1994). Systems of Government. In Mahadi, A., Kwanashie, G.A., and Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*. Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Fasan, O. (2020). Gambari's Strange Idea of Federalism with more Centralization of Power. In *The State of the Nation. The Vanguard*, September, 4
- Fedoseyev, P.N. (1977). *Leninism, and the National Question*. Moscow publishers

- Fabojede, O.J. (2008), "Ethics and Accountability in Governance Forensic Accounting as a way forward". In Edoh, *et al.*, (ed). *Democracy, Leadership and Accountability in Post-Colonial Africa*. Makurdi, Aboki Publishers.
- Gros, Jean-Gerain (2014) Failed States in Theoretical, Historical, and Policy Perspective. www.umsl.edu
- Ikime, O. (1986). Towards Understanding the National Question. In the National Seminar on the National Question in Nigeria: Its Historical origins and Contemporary Dimensions. Abuja.
- Jibrin, A. (1994). Oil and the National Debate. In Mahadi, A., Kwanashie, G.A., Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*. Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Lukman, R. (1994). Petroleum Resources: Boom or Doom? In Mahadi, A. , Kwanashie, G.A., Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*. Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Mahadi, A. , Kwanashie, G.A., Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). (1994). Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward. *Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February*. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Moritz, J. (2013). The concept of state failure and contemporary Security development challenges. www.e-jr.info. October.
- Odumakin, Y. (2017). 10 Reasons to Restructure Nigeria. *Vanguard*, September, 19. www.vanguardngr.com
- Oyegun, J.O. (1994). What Type of Conference? In Mahadi, A. , Kwanashie, G.A., Mahmoud, M.A. (eds). *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*. Proceedings of the National Workshop Organised by Arewa House, Kaduna, Centre for Historical Documentation and Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2-3 February. Arewa House, Kaduna.
- Rasheed, S. (1995). "Ethics and Accountability in African Civil Service" DPMN Bulletin 3 (1) pages 12-14.
- Robert, B. (2008). When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late Century Africa. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- Rotberg, R., (ed). (2004) When States Fail: Causes and Consequences. Princeton; Princeton University Press