Can Federalism Achieve the 'Purpose of Government'?
Ethnic Crisis and Protection of Life and Property in Nigeria

Sunday Tunde Akindele and Rotimi Adeforiti

Abstract

The study resulted from the writers' observation on raising cases of inter-ethnic crisis, insecurity, and the multiplier effects of loss incurred by residents in Nigeria. Loss of lives and properties possibly complicates an uncertainty in inter-ethnic relationships and insecurity in the country. Thus, while studies have examined the internally displaced persons (IDPs), and insecurity in the country, there is no study that has bridged the gap between the resettlement of residents on the one hand, and sustainable inter-ethnic residents' crisis management in Nigeria on the other. The study highlights the approaches of government for the resettlement of residents in residence in post-conflict situations, and identifies the reasons why the approaches of government on conflict prevention and management have failed to ensure residential rights in Nigeria. A descriptive research design was adopted, and qualitative data was sourced from secondary materials including newspaper articles, textbooks, and published and unpublished research studies. Cases of inter-ethnic clashes were purposively selected and analysed across the six geo-political zones in the country. Data were analysed using the desktop review method. The study revealed that there are no clear-cut policies for the resettlement of displaced residents thus far in Nigeria. The measures of government on conflict prevention and management remain failed either due to lack of capacity for prevention or management of attacks.

Keywords

Ethnic crisis, Ethnicity, Federalism, Indigene, Insecurity, Settler

About the authors

Dr. Sunday Tunde Akindele is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria His area of specialisation includes Public Administration/ Local Government Studies; Research Methodology/Political Administrative Theory; Political Economy/Public Finance & Policy Analysis. For more information: https://pol.oauife.edu.ng/Lecturers/tunde-akindele/

Rotimi Adeforiti is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, and an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Kings University, Odeomu, Nigeria. He holds a B. Sc. and M. Sc. Degree in Political Science from Obafemi Awolowo University. His main research interests include Public Administration, Ethnic Studies, and Security.

1. Introduction

Ethnic violence and violations of human rights are the expected outcomes of ethnic relations in Nigeria – all under the mask of 'alien' ethnic member vacation orders, for instance from a 'host' ethnic group's territory. Each case of ethnic crisis breeds new victims in a state, something that sustains conflict. The occurrence of crisis with ethnic attributes propels separatist agitation and enhances the quest for opting out of the federation by aggrieved ethnic group members. Thus, the adequacy of federalism in ensuring security of life and property through the sustenance of the common law, government, and security, remains in doubt – leading to arguments pertaining to the restructuring or disintegration of the country (Babalola, 2019). This conundrum is the focus of this study.

By virtue of its 1999 constitution, Nigeria is a federation of thirty-six states, a Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and 774 Local Government Areas, (LGAs) (FGN, 1999). The possible reasons for the practice of federalism in Nigeria are several, and have, for instance, been presented as British imposition targeted at a post-colonial relationship, or as a preference of the British colonial administration for divide and rule, or as a separate negotiation outcome of different regions leading to an agreed solution to the problem of governance in the country at independence, or finally, as a preference for federalism over a unitary system by nationalists (Olowu, 1991; Majekodunmi, 2015; Olu-Adeyemi, 2017; Umoh & Adeyi, 2019). In addition, the practice of federalism in Nigeria today has been linked to the plurality of nations that the British colonial government amassed and had to administer under colonial rule, and for that purpose using indirect rule (Majekodunmi, 2015). In this way it becomes a tool for the integration of aggregated nations during colonial rule (Olu-Adeyemi, 2017) and a strategy for reaching consensus on issues of generality in the country (Umoh & Adeyi, 2019). In the end, the sustenance quest of inherited nations may have necessitated the adoption and practice of federalism in the country.

The plethora of nations on the continent of Africa (including Nigeria) can be identified with different circumstances and situations. The foundation of government among the Yoruba, one of the major nations in Nigeria, is presumed to be based on migrants who relocated from the savannah into the forest where they settled (Lloyd, 1960). Afterward they developed a common identity based on factors such as geographical territory, language, and a monarchical government (Lloyd, 1960; Adeboye, 2016). This is also the reality of the contemporary ethnic nationalities, and it can be argued from the above that settled migrants are the ones that are claiming land ownership in the contemporary federal arrangement.

The line of difference between the settlers and the indigenes remains thin given that those who claim to be indigene also were migrants at some point (Adesoji & Alao, 2009). From a slightly different angle, we can note that the origin of nations on the African continent has been classified into pre-colonial and colonial eras, respectively (Kasfir cited in Isumonah,

2004). Nations including for instance the Ashanti, Alur, Buganda and Bunyoro were then noted to have evolved prior to colonial rule. Colonialism was then considered as the factor creating ethnic groups such as the Igbo, Yoruba, Kru, and Mongo (Kasfir in Isumonah, 2004). It is useful to submit such different conditions which have stimulated the rise, fall, and adaption of nations overtime (Thompson, 2010:9).

Diversity of nations on the African continent equals plural identities. There are different forms of identities on the continent of Africa, and these have been identified to consist of ethnic, religious, and tribal identities (Alemika, 2004; Hyden, 2006). The most pronounced identity is ethnicity, and this is because everyone is expected to have a specific ethnic origin (Hyden, 2006:184). Thus, while every identity remains neutral and silent, diversity is part of the foundation of the Nigerian state. Prior to and after independence, attempts were made to harmonise this platform, a process that is still confronted with challenges in safeguarding life and property.

The contemporary crisis confronting the unity of the Nigerian state may have resulted from the failure of the British colonial power to weld the created state together. The direct manifestation of this is the continuous fight for political privileges in the new state in the aftermath of colonial rule (Ademoyega, 1981). Ethnic identity continues to be mobilised by individuals/groups in relation to issues of generality. After all, we may look upon ethnic identity as a coping mechanism for ethnic/racial discrimination (Mossakowski, 2003). Invoking ethnic identity is in this context done with the intention of securing certain objectives or goals.

Ethnic identity, citizenship, and the settlers/indigenes dichotomy are interrelated concepts and realities in the Nigerian context. Citizenship, for instance, is said to be realized in the country at the ethnic level and not at the national level; a citizen is firstly a member of an ethnic group, and remains tied to the group and enjoys rights in the state based on the identity as an ethnic group member (Ifidon, 1996). It has been submitted that the clash of ethnic identity and citizenship in the country has produced 'Nigerians that are not citizens but indigene of their ethno-geographical territory' (Awolowo, 1945).

Each ethnic group seeks to control their land of origin, while dwellers from other ethnic groups are considered alien and treated as such with respect to political, economic, residential, and educational rights – regardless of the number of years spent, property owned or provision of the constitution. The perceived dominance from aliens results in resistance in the form of an intra and inter-ethnic crisis in the country. This act cumulates in insecurity, as violence often ensues, resulting in the denial of residential rights, killing, and destruction of property, all of which are forms of violations of constitutional privileges.

The "purpose of government" used in the title of this study is here analysed through the "social contract trio", Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau, and

includes the security of life and property, as well as the protection and enhancement of natural rights.

The Nigerian 1999 constitution is based on consensus, and it is believed to be a product of agreement of free individuals. The preamble of the constitution captures this agreement. In accomplishing peace in the country, and like in many other multi-ethnic states, federalism is believed to be the appropriate governance system of preference given its institutionalised conflict management strategy (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:1). However, crisis continues to ravage the country: inter-ethnic crisis is the most pronounced type of conflict in the Nigerian federal system.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Studies including Ikelegbe (2005), Ojie (2006), John, *et al.* (2007), Gilbert (2013), and Osabiya (2015) have identified the inter-ethnic crises as related to the prevalence of ethnic militia groups, and they have also noted that injustice and poverty are factors responsible for militancy in the country. Equally, low involvement of citizens in the provision of security assistance is believed to be a propelling factor for inter-ethnic crisis in the country (Aleyomi & Nwagwu, 2020).

The crises also consist of violations of human rights, losses of lives, and the destruction of property, leading to internal displacement of residents as captured by the concept of internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, there is no study available that bridges the gap on the resettlement of residents to their residence and sustainable interethnic resident crisis management in Nigeria, hence this study.

The two research questions that guided the study are:

    a. What are the strategies of government for the resettlement of residents in post-conflict situation in Nigeria?

    b. Why have the approaches of government on conflict prevention and management failed to ensure residential rights in Nigeria?

The study highlighted the approaches of government for the resettlement of residents in post-conflict locations in Nigeria, and identified the reasons why the approaches of government on conflict prevention and management have failed to ensure residential rights of residents in Nigeria. In particular, the study focuses on reported cases of herders' attacks and consequent security challenges to selected communities in Nigeria since 2016.

1.2 Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The term federalism has been variously defined in literature, and the usage of the term has continuously affected the connotation of the term. Etymologically, "federalism" is an English word that originates from the French words *foedus* and *fides*, which imply agreement. This may be taken to imply an arrangement based on consent. To echo Robert Michel's 'iron law of oligarchy' dictum that government will necessarily evolve in human arrangements, federalism is an arrangement based on consent of the constituent units in which the government is constituted to reflect the ethnic composition of the country. There may, however, be more than two or three ethnic groups in a state wishing to operate as a federal state, and the government must be based on the consent of the federating groups. The modern understanding and description of the term implies a political system where a constitution allows for the existence of (at least) two levels of government, and which runs both as a nation and as an agglomeration of autonomous units (Hicks, 1978).

Thom-Otuya (2013) analysed the term as the sharing of sovereignty between the levels of government, with a provision for autonomy among its units. Thus, the government is organised to recognise diversity and allows for inclusion of the diversity in governance. Tella, Doho, and Bapeto (2014) explained the term as a political philosophy based on a representation in government which binds the people together. This definition views federalism as based on a common representative government of the constituting ethnic groups. The concept has also been described as a political arrangement that allows for territorial needs for agreement between different entitlements and goals (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:4). Amah (2017) described the term as one in which more than two autonomous states/ethnic groups/nations have consented to the organisation of common government with preservation of their specific sovereignty. Thus, federalism is working because of the need for alliance with other ethnic groups and for the preservation of certain cultural practices by the federating units.

In the literature it has been noted that federalism may result from the circumstances of 'coming-together' and 'hold-up' (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:3). The 'hold-up' involves autonomous nations/ethnic groups agreeing to form a federation for a certain purpose, including economic aspects, as well as for defence reasons (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:3). The 'hold-up' arrangement becomes necessary for the rearrangement, or restructure, that follows the urge (which continues to manifest in the form of suspicion) to sustain the political entity (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:3). The operation of federalism is the recognition of ethnic diversity and the need to sustain a certain level of relationships among the federating ethnic nationalities. Thus, each ethnic group has territory, members, distinguished languages, and a customary government. This implies that in a federal state there are different objectives put forth by the federating units, and the essence of the arrangement is to ensure balance

between demands and provisions. The term 'federal success' was coined to describe the absence of secessionist agitation, and war, in the state (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015:4). The term federalism is conceived in this study as a political entity based on agreement and laws, and operated between the willing ethnic groups with opportunities for benefits and conflict management.

In the theory of federalism that was adopted for the study, it was considered adequate – because of the multi-ethnic composition and the constitutional declaration of Nigeria – to employ a federalist school where there are four major groups legalism, sociology, bargaining and development.

The legal group championed by K.C. Wheare, defined federalism as an arrangement based on constitutional division of power between the centre and the federating units. The federating units are significant levels of government (Ogunnoiki, 2017). The "ethnic group" was not identified as a compositing unit, rather, the levels of government.

The sociological group is led by William Livingstone, who identified the reasons for federalism with sociological factors such as cultural, economic, political, and social factors. Thus, federalism may be adopted and operated based on factors other than legal issues. Unequal distribution of natural resources including mineral resources and land for agriculture, and social issues including the need to attack common enemies, may propel a federal arrangement. Thus, ethnic diversity is a major factor for a federal arrangement.

The bargaining/development group views a federal arrangement as a relationship between the federating leaders to keep the territory as one (Ogunnoiki, 2017). Hence, the purpose of the arrangement was, according to this perspective, to annex the territory.

We can conclude that federalism is a dynamic process in which the levels of government have been arranged in order to be able to solve problems. Thus, the system operates for the workability of the levels of government.

2. The Security Situation in the Nigerian Federal System

Security, which is here considered as a function of protection of life and property, is a fundamental reason for the existence of government in any state. To realise effective governance systems in the geo-ethno-religious expanse of the Nigerian state, federalism has been adopted and practiced in the country since the Richard constitution (of 1946). A federal arrangement is believed to involve a minimum of two levels of government, so constituted that each is autonomous in its sphere.

Despite the organisation and re-organisation of the federal attribute of the country from time to time, insecurity has been pointed out to remain a constant challenge and addressing the issue has informed different responses. The origin of ethnic militia in

the country, for instance, was believed to have been conjured by anger, bitterness and injustices (Ikelegbe, 2005). Militias function as a platform for the mobilization of ethnic identity, and their activities make up the obvious cases of confidence loss in the state and in the ability of the state to resolve inter-ethnic crisis among the ethnic groups (Ikelegbe, 2005). Ethnicity as created by the British has been utilised by the political class in the country, and the implication of its usage has encouraged extrajudicial killings in the Nigerian democracy (Ojie, 2006). Also, social, economic, and ethno-religious conflict, security response to crime, and economic disparity has been identified as fuelling factors propelling proliferation of small and light weapons (John *et al.*, 2007).

Ethnic militancy remains the reality in Nigeria since the return to power of civilian administration, with a subsequent increase of the level of insecurity in the country (Gilbert, 2013). According to Milligan (2013), the fundamental cause of conflict in Nigeria is how to arrange the power sharing among the ethnic groups. Insecurity can be explained by the level of continuous marginalisation and injustice suffered by a majority of Nigerians, something which propels injustice leading to the formation of ethnic militia (Gilbert, 2013). This is dependent on the indigene/settler dichotomy, which even if it does not necessarily result in conflict, nevertheless fuels the creation of ethnic groups and sustains them (Milligan, 2013). This implies that ethnic groups mobilise for the 'national cake' through their conflict, and sometimes through terror-like approaches. This situation, taken generally, is supported by the negative socio-economic development of the state (Nwagboso, 2018). Investment, human and capital resources, and many other critical development factors are at risk and routinely jeopardised.

In addition to these structural components mentioned above, frequent clashes have been recorded between farmers and herders. Such conflicts contribute to insecurity and the violation of rights of Nigerians. The exponential growth rate of the population in the country is another factor that could be said to have contributed to the increasing level of conflict between farmers and herders (Nwakanma & Boroh, 2019).

A possible solution, though, to the challenges of the division between herders and farmers may be found in the function ranches, established in the affected areas (Mawoli & Adamu, 2020). However, the establishment of ranches is considered a strategy to gain demographic strength for political purpose by the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. This is because the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group are identified with the business of herding in Nigeria.

Securing life and property in the country constitutes, as we have seen, one of the areas challenging any government in the state. One critical factor in this is the function of the police. Police performance has arguably been influenced by the poor condition of service, poverty, and recruitment plans, and this has sometimes informed police abuse of power on the citizens, and poor discharge of duties (Nte, 2011). The security apparatus of the state

abuses the privileges of its citizens. Arguments for and against the state police system of Nigeria have been widely reviewed in literature (Aleyomi, 2013; Eme & Ogbochie, 2014; Tangban & Audu, 2020).

As a result of the poor performance by the central policing system in Nigeria, there is a (renewed) request for a decentralisation of the police system in the country (Adefi & Achor, 2013; Moliki, Nkwede & Dauda, 2020). The enactment of the state police, set up in order to constitute a security outlet at the second level of government, is intended to attend to the ravaging and multi-dimensional insecurity at that level of government in Nigeria (Adefi & Achor, 2013; Moliki, *et al.*, 2020).

The basic arguments in the police debate are the proposition that the second level policy system will improve safety of life and property, while the opposing view is that the approval of the measure will further constitute insecurity (Aleyomi, 2013; Eme & Ogbochie, 2014; Tangban & Audu, 2020), implying that the state police will be used against political opponents by the incumbent governors to achieve electoral success (Aleyomi, 2013; Eme & Ogbochie, 2014; Tangban & Audu, 2020).

Insecurity has often been identified with ethnic militia activities, and the reason for their formation includes perceived ethnic injustice and quest for (cultural, political, economic, social, and religious) power. However, the government has equally adopted non-security-based approaches to contain the problem of insecurity in the state. One such measure is amnesty, which has been employed and targeted at the agitating groups. An amnesty programme that was developed by the federal government in the Niger-Delta area has been requested to be extended to youths generally without limiting it to militants. The reason for this is the belief that such a move would prevent violation of human rights and insecurity in any area where it is employed (Wapmuk, 2012). This was believed to be a sustainable measure to consolidate the programme and to achieve adequate security while striving after peace building in the Eastern region. The comparative analyses of the amnesty offer for the Niger-Delta militants, including the Boko Haram, has, however, generated tension in the country, and there is another call for understanding of the complexity of the issues prompting particular agitation before adopting such a general approach (Nwankpa, 2014). The use of this "one-size-fits-all" approach is believed by some to worsen the security situation in the country. It has been noted that the amnesty policy in the Niger-Delta region as a way of containment of insecurity remains inadequate – the government has still to fulfil pledges to the people as promised, after six years of the programme (Imongan & Ikelegbe, 2016).

2.1 The Dynamics of Ethnic Relationships in Nigeria

The ethnic composition of Nigeria is not completely mapped, there is uncertainty for instance on the number of ethnic groups in the country. Ethnic groups have traditional geographical location, government, culture, languages, etc., which qualifies them to be a nation – these dimensions are what distinguish them from others.

An analysis of the relationship between the Hausa and Yoruba in the Sabo area of Ogbomosho (Tijani, 2008) offers an interesting example of inter-ethnic relations. It has been revealed that the creation of the Hausa community was done in Ogbomosho (a typical Yoruba nation) by Hausa settlers without any violent response from the host community. The absence of violence was believed to have resulted from the extant interethnic relationship prior to the creation of Sabo in Ogbomosho (Tijani, 2008). The issue of indigene-settler relationships, which is the attribute of this example, has been examined by Olakunle & Segun, 2016, with the submission that despite the non-discriminatory stand of the constitution there are limitations to the rights enjoyed by non-indigenes, something which continues to question the essence of federalism in the country. As stated by another author, ethnicity can be a neutral reality in the sense that it has a possibility to be used positively, facilitating development as much as misuse or wrong mobilisation (Adetiba, 2013).

The Tiv/Jukun relationship, another case in the Nigerian federal system, demonstrates a relationship characterised by conflict. While the relationship between the two ethnic groups has become aggressive in recent times (Akombo, 2005), the communities had political, economic and cultural relations prior to colonial rule. The advent of colonial rule was identified as a factor that redefined their relationship. Nevertheless, they showed throughout a readiness to coexist peacefully (Akombo, 2005). Recent cases of armed conflict between these two communities have resulted in the destruction of life and property, something that has been repeated and has assumed a constant practice. Resolving the lingering crisis through Western approaches such as peace meetings and related initiatives has so far proved to be ineffective (Agbu, Zhema, &Useini, 2019).

2.2 Internally Displaced Persons Management

Internal displacement remains one of the attributes of armed conflict in the country today. To contain this outcome of armed conflicts, government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) set up camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in attempts to reduce their vulnerability and meet their basic needs including food, shelter, and clothing. The continuous neglect of the IDPs by the government has, however, led to a call for the amendment of such practices (Adewale, 2016). It has been noted that when IDP camps

are neglected, this may propel its inhabitants into crime in an effort to provide for their basic needs (Adewale, 2016). Vulnerable persons cut across all ages, and the problems confronting the IDPs include unemployment, problems of accommodation, engagement of school age children in labour amounting to child labour, early marriage, and increase in school dropout rate (Itumo & Nwobashi, 2016). The IDPs usually occupy two forms of settlements, which are formal and informal by nature (Olanrewaju *et al*., 2019). IDPs in informal settlements are at high risk of not accessing quality education, accommodation, food, health care, and potable water because their settlement is usually informal. This makes them even more vulnerable. It is obvious from the above that there is a need for government intervention, not only to identify victims, but equally to put measures in place to meet the basic needs of the victims.

2.3 Local Government as a Tool for Effective Governance in Nigeria

The need to bring local government closer to the people in order to ensure effective service delivery have prompted the 1976 local government reform in Nigeria. Prior to the reform, the state usually created Local Government Areas (LGAs) based on needs and developmental purposes (Asaju, 2010). The fallout of the 1976 local government reform was, however, a unified multi-task structure of government. Through the reform, a multi-local government system was harmonised to a single third tier of government with a fully constitutionally based function and obligation to the people in the local government's area. The contemporary local government system that evolved in the aftermath of 1976 has, however, been described in critical terms (Ibietan & Ndukwe, 2014). Arguing from the perspective of financial autonomy, the performance of local government in the service delivery sector remains poor in the country precisely because of lack of financial autonomy on the relevant level of government. In addition, there was interference in the activities and operations on the local level from other tiers of government. Finally, a certain degree of corruption, among other factors, meddles into the performance of the local governments (Osakede, Ijimakinwa, & Adesanya, 2016).

Local governments in the country are underperforming their constitutional role (Oluwaleye & Ifeyinwa, 2019), and the reasons for the poor or inadequate performance of expected functions are identified with the absence of a democratically elected chairperson to govern the area (Alao, Osakede, & Owolabi, 2015; Oluwaleye & Ifeyinwa, 2019). The creation of State Local Government Account, SLGA, has been identified as one of the hindrances to the discharge of the expected constitutional duties of local government in their respective sphere (Koni, 2016), and the need for a democratically elected chairperson to head and direct the activities of government in the area. In view of the underperformance

identified with local government in the country, it has been suggested that there should be a degree of dissociation in the relationship between the levels of government in the country in order to allow for effective discharge of obligations (Ikeanyibe, Chukwu, & Ibietan, 2019).

3. The Case of Conflicts between Herders and Indigene

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study, and qualitative data were sourced from secondary materials such as newspaper articles and journal articles, in addition to both published and unpublished studies. Six states were purposively selected across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria, such that a state is selected from each geopolitical zone based on the focus described above on reported herdsmen attacks since 2016 as indicators. A community where a herdsmen attack was reported was thus selected.

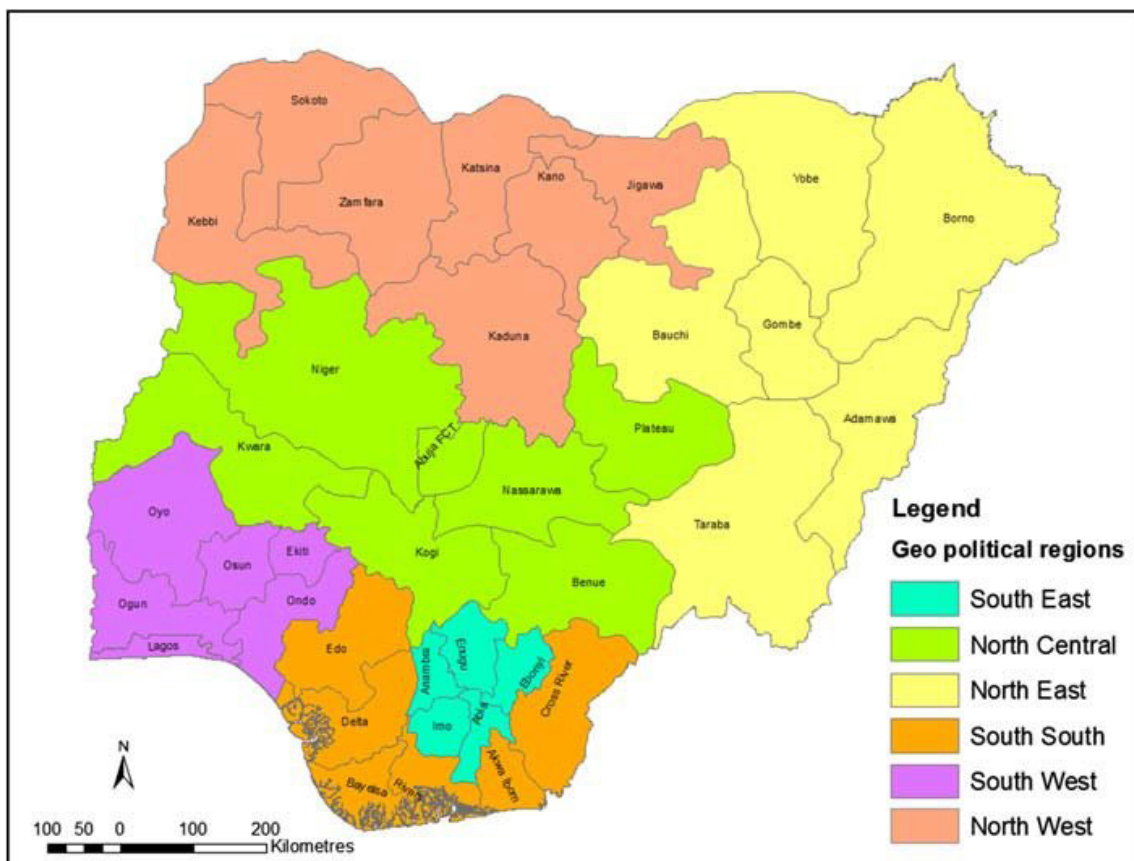Map 1: Map of Nigeria showing the six geo-political zones

Table 1: Selection of Locations of Herder Attacks in Nigeria

Geo-Political Zone	State selected	Local Government Area	City/Community selected
North-Central	Benue	Guma Local Council	Yelwata communities
North-East	Adamawa	Lamurde LGA	Bang community
North-West	Kaduna	Zango-Kataf LGA	Atyap communities
South-East	Ebonyi	Ishielu LGA	Obeagu community
South-South	Delta	Ughelli North Local Government Area	Uwheru kingdom: Avwon, Agadama and Ohoror communities.
South-West	Ondo	Ose LGA	Arimogija community

Source: Author's Compilation

Study Area

The study area of the research is Nigeria. The country gained independence in 1960 and has been operating federalism prior to independence through the Lyttleton constitution of 1954. Nigeria is known to have diverse ethnic nationalities, which have been estimated at different numbers (usually over 200 ethnic groups) by different scholars (Mbabuike, 1997; Ojo, 2009; Lenshie & Abel, 2012). Based on the population density of ethnic groups, Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, and the Igbo are considered major ethnic groups, while nations with relatively small populations are categorised as minor ethnic groups (Alapiki, 2005). The major ethnic groups have the largest geographical territory, such that the Yoruba controls the West, Igbo dominates the East, and the Hausa remains the major ethnic group in the North. The structure has been sustained by a regionalisation of the country since the Richard constitution of 1946, and the subsequent 1960 independence constitution.

The quest for political power in the country, and the fear of domination, has prompted each ethnic group to the creation of ethnic militia. The militias now serve as an army in the protection of territorial integrity of their inhabited area (Isumonah, 2004; Lenshie & Abel, 2012; Ojo, 2009). Also, new ethnic groups emerge in the country based on different conditions, for instance, Isumonah (2004) discussed the creation of a new ethnic group known as Ogoni. More so, the country has fought a civil war between 1967 and 1970 (Bray & Cooper, 1979; Mbabuike, 1997; Okonta & Meagher, 2009; Ukiwo, 2009), and recorded many national tensions such as those following the 1991 general elections.

3.1 Resettlement as Governance in Post-Conflict Situations in Nigeria

Herdsmen attacks continue to be recorded across Nigerian communities. Six examples are given below.

Mr. John Adamu[1] (reported by Sani, 2020) stated that herdsmen had attacked his community approximately five times between 2018 and 2020. Following the attacks, he explained that the rebuilding of the community had commenced when herdsmen confronted the community again. The reason for the latest attack was due to the discovery of the rebuilding exercise given that they (herdsmen) had vowed not to allow any form of development in the community (Sani, 2020). Further, a majority of the residents had fled in the wake of the attack, leaving behind aged persons that could not escape.

Duru (2018) reported that herdsmen attacked the Tse-Iyortyer area of Yelwata in Guma LGA of Benue, killing six persons and injuring many more. The attackers of Yelwata were identified to have originated from Giza in Keana LGA of Nasarawa, and by identity they were all Fulani herdsmen. Mr Tarka[2] reported that attacks on the Yelwata area had triggered tension and resulted in more internally displaced persons. The identified reason for the attack in the description of Lawrence Onoja (Godwin, 2018) was due to the enactment of the anti-open grazing law.

Mr Samuel T. Achie[3] reviewed an attack of the Atyap people of Zango Kataf. He claims that the attacks were attempts to wipe out the Atyap people, and to seize and occupy their lands. Further, he established that all schools were closed, thereby denying the children access to school. Dominic Yahaya[4] noted that, following constant attacks in the area, about 15,000 residents have been displaced from their homes and are in the IDP camps. Also, indigenes - who are predominantly farmers – have been forced out of their farms, since most people have deserted their farms due to insecurity.

Oji Osondu, describing herders' attacks on the Obeagu community, stated the reason to be a demand for the evacuation of the herders (Nnachi & Ede, 2021). Furthermore, Amuche Uga reported that the attackers identified themselves as the Fulani militias, and equally asked them to tell Nnamdi Kanu[5] that they can enter any community in Igboland, attack, and nothing will happen (Nnachi & Ede, 2021).

---

1   Mr. John Adamu, a resident of Bang, Lamurde Local Government Area of Adamawa State. Retrieved from https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/02/20/suspected-herdsmen-attack-adamawa-community-kill-village-head-destroy-houses/

2   Mr Tarka, A resident of Yelwata community in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State. Retrieved from https://dailypost.ng/2021/09/19/tension-as-suspected-herdsmen-attack-benue-community-kill-2-abduct-one/

3   President of Atyap Community Development Association. Retrieved from https://tribuneonlineng.com/zango-kataf-crisis-we-are-not-in-war-atyap-people-declare/

4   The paramount ruler of Atyap chiefdom. Retrieved from https://www.channelstv.com/2021/09/20/kaduna-security-50-killed-254-houses-razed-in-atyap-in-one-month-monarch/ on 23rd Sept, 2021

5   Nnamdi Kanu is the leader of the Independent People of Biafra. The sect has been agitating for the secession of the Biafra from the Nigerian federal arrangement.

In the case of the Uewheru Kingdom[6] in Ughelli North LGA of the Delta State,the news of herders presence in the environment resulted in displacement of the residents. The same incidence was recorded in Arimogija community in Ose LGAin Ondo state[7]. As these examples show, residents continue to be displaced across communities in Nigeria, especially from the reported cases of herdsmen attacks. It is equally obvious that the herders' attacks occur in two different ways, they can be provocative or non-provocative.

The question of resettlement of residents, who are victims of the crisis, remains, however, unanswered from the study cases given above.

3.2 Government Measures on Conflict Prevention and Residential Rights in Nigeria

The provisions of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in sections 15 (3B) and 41 (1), grant residential rights to all citizens to dwell in their area of choice (FGN, 1999). Thus, a citizen has in principle any area of the country as a legally potential area of residence. Ifidon (1996) has, however, argued that citizenship is realized at the ethnic level and not at the national level in Nigeria; a citizen is a member of an ethnic group, remains tied to the group, and enjoys rights in the federal unit/state based on ethnic identity.

The herder attack on the Bang community, analysed by Adamu (Sani, 2020), was due to rebuilding of the community that the herders had vowed not to allow. It was obvious that the rebuilding of the community was the reason for the attack on the community. It was also learnt that the attack on Yelwata community in Benue resulted from the enactment of the anti-open grazing laws in the state. The attack on the Atyap community of Kaduna state was noted to have been triggered by 'unknown reasons' by the affected people.

Osondu (Nnachi & Ede, 2021) identified the attack on the Obeagu community with the request for vacation of herders from the community. It is a known fact in the country that indigenes regard settlers as foreigners (and vice-versa) and may be evicted when so desired or the need arises. The settlers can equally attack the indigenes for ulterior motives, since they similarly believe that the indigenes are foreigners. The Uewheru kingdom and Arimogija community in Ose LGAin Ondo state attack, for example, was noted to have been carried out for non-provocative reasons. Such attacks remain possible also today, since the police, which is the main security organisation of government for internal conflict management, either does not have the capacity to contain an on-going crisis or to prevent it from happening. In this way, we can confirm the findings of Nte (2011) that poor

---

6   https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/02/again-herdsmen-attack-delta-community-kill-eight-injure-several-others/

7   https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/04/tension-in-ondo-community-over-alleged-supply-of-weapons-to-herdsmen/

conditions of service, poverty, and recruitment policy of government and police may have hindered effective security measures.

The finding of Gilbert (2013) that marginalisation and injustice suffered by a majority of resident indigenes in their area has propels ethnic militia, something which Osabiya (2015) has also noted, has been formed due to the quest for the 'betterment of their own lot'.

4. Conclusions

From the examples of cases put into the framework of the federal structure of the Nigerian constitution and the nature and diversity of the Nigerian society, we have found that the federal structure of the country is not capable to deal with fundamental challenges to human rights, including threats to life and property.

As per the examples of this study, and the research problem, there is no clear-cut policy for the resettlement of displaced residents in the studied area. The reasons for this are due to ongoing attacks and the displacement of residents. This study further established that the measure of government for the prevention and management of crisis remains inadequate to enforce residential rights of occupants. It is difficult not to conclude that this is a critical reason for recurrent crises in the country when it comes to relations between herders, indigene, and the broader Nigerian society.

References

Adefi, O. M., & Achor, A. J. A. (2013). Re-Awakening the State Police Controversy in Nigeria: Need for rethink. International Journal of Asian Social Science. 3 (11). Pp. 2307–2314.

Ademoyega, A. (1981). Why we struck; The story of the first Nigerian coup. Ibadan: Evans Brother (Nigeria Publishers) Limited.

Adesoji, A. O., & Alao, A. (2009). Indigeneship and Citizenship in Nigeria: Myth and Reality. The Journal of Pan African Studies. 2 (9). Pp. 151–165.

Adetiba, T. C. (2013). Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria: A Challenge to inclusive Social and Political Development. A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Management and Commerce: School of Public Management and Development, University of Fort Hare, South Africa for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.) in Social Sciences (Development Studies), Unpublished.

Adewale, S. (2016). Internally Displaced Persons and the challenges of survival in Abuja. African Security Review. 25 (2). Pp. 176–192.

Agbu, A. D., Zhema, S., & Useini, B. (2019). Jukun-Tiv Relations in the Benue Valley Region: The 2019 Scuffles in Southern Taraba State, Nigeria. International Journal of African Society, Cultures and Traditions. 8(1). Pp. 1–20.

Akombo, E. I. (2005). Jukun-Tiv Relations Since 1850: A Case Study of Inter-Group Relations in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State. A thesis Submitted to the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Jos, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D). Unpublished.

Alao, D. O., Osakede, K. O., & Owolabi, T. Y. (2016). Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Lessons from Comparative Analysis. International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability. 3 (4). Pp. 61–79.

Alemika, E. E. O. (2004). Ethnicity and Ethnic conflict in Nigeria. In D. A., Guobadia and A. O. Adekunle (Eds.), Ethnicity and National integration in Nigeria (Recurrent Theme). Lagos: Nigerian institute of Advanced legal studies.

Alapiki, H. E. (2005). State Creation in Nigeria: Failed Approaches to National Integration and Local Autonomy. African Studies Review. 48 (3). Pp. 49–65.

Aleyomi, M. B. (2013). Is State Police a Panacea to Security Threat in Nigeria? Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences. 4 (4). Pp. 1–21.

Aleyomi, M. B., & Nwagwu, R. C. (2020). Strategic model for Nigeria's security and socioeconomic development. African Identities. socioeconomic development, African Identities, DOI:10.1080/14725843.2020.1828041.

Asaju, K. (2010). Local Government Autonomy in Nigeria: Politics and challenges of the 1999 Constitution. International Journal of Advanced Legal Studies and Governance. 1 (1). Pp. 98–113.

Babalola, D. (2019). Nigeria: A Federation in Search of 'True Federalism' Pp. 133–151. In D. Babalola (Ed.), The Political Economy of Federalism in Nigeria, Federalism and Internal Conflicts. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05493-9_6

Bray, T. M., & Cooper, G. R. (1979). Education and Nation Building in Nigeria since the Civil War. Comparative Education. 15 (1). Pp. 33–41.

Duru, P. (2018, May 2). Herdsmen attack Yelwata in Guma LGA kill six, injure scores. Vanguard. https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/05/herdsmen-attack-yelwata-guma-lga-kill-six-injure-scores/

Eme, O. I., & Ogbochie, A. N. (2014). Limitations of State Police in Nigeria. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. 5 (15). Pp. 130–140.

FGN. (1999). The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lagos: Government Printing Press.

Gilbert, L. D. (2013). Ethnic Militancy in Nigeria: A comparative re-appraisal of three major ethnic militias in Southern Nigeria. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOSR-JHSS). 17 (6). Pp. 1–9.

Godwin, A. C. (2018). Herdsmen killings: Benue Government Releases Timeline of Attacks. DailyPost. https://dailypost.ng/2018/02/06/herdsmen-killings-benue-govt-releases-timeline-attacks/

Hyden, G. (2006). African Politics in Comparative Perspective. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hicks, K. U. (1978). Federalism Failure & Success: A Comparative Study. London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press LTD.

Hueglin, T. O., & Fenna, A. (2015). Comparative Federalism: A Systematic Inquiry (2nd Edition). Ontario: University of Toronto Press.

Ibietan, J., & Ndukwe, P. (2014). Local Government Administration in Nigeria and Community Development: The Efficiency Services Interrogation. International Journal of Management Sciences. 3 (10). Pp. 751–764.

Ikelegbe, A. (2005). State, Ethnic Militias, and Conflict in Nigeria. Canadian Journal of African Studies. 39 (3). Pp. 490–516.

Imongan, E. O., & Ikelegbe, A. (2016). Amnesty Programme in Nigeria: The Impact and Challenges in Post Conflict Niger Delta, Region. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). 21 (4). Pp. 62–65.

Isumonah, V. A. (2004). The Making of the Ogoni Ethnic Group. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute. 74 (3). Pp.433–453.

Itumo, A., & Nwobashi, H. N. (2016). Nigerian State and Responses to Plights of Persons Internally Displaced by Boko Haram Insurgents: Implications for Socio-Economic and Political Development. Research on Humanities and Social Sciences. 6 (15). Pp. 24–38.

John, I. A., Mohammed, A. Z., Pinto, A. D., & Nkanta, C. A. (2007). Gun Violence in Nigeria: A Focus on Ethno-Religious Conflict in Kano. Journal of Public Health Policy. 28 (4). Pp.420–431.

Koni, I. J. (2016). The Search for Local Government Autonomy in Nigeria: Legal and Institutional Pathways to its Realization. Afe Babalola University: J. of Sust. Dev. Law & Policy. Vol. 7 (2). Pp. 171–187.

Lenshie, N. E., & Abel, J. (2012). Ethnicity and citizenship crisis in Nigeria: Interrogating inter-ethnic relations in Sardauna Local Government Area, Taraba State. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations. 6 (3). Pp. 48–61.

Lloyd, P. C. (1960). Sacred Kingship and Government among the Yoruba. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute. 30 (3). Pp. 221–237.

Majekodunmi, A. (2015). Federalism in Nigeria: The Past, Current peril and Future hopes. Journal of Policy and Development Studies. 9 (2). Pp. 107–120.

Mawoli, M. A., & Adamu, A. (2020). Solutions to Herders-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria: The Academic Perspectives and Business Implications. International Journal of Business and Technopreneuership. 10 (1). Pp. 101–112.

Mbabuike, C. M. (1997). Introduction. Dialectic Anthropology. 22 (3/4). Pp. 225–233.

Milligan, M. (2013). Fighting for the right to exist: Institutions, identity, and Conflict in Jos, Nigeria. Comparative Politics. 45 (3). Pp. 313–334.

Moliki, A. O., Nkwede, J. O., & Dauda, K. O. (2020). Federalism, National Security and State Policing System in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Islamic University Multidisciplinary Journal. 7 (2). Pp. 95–104.

Mossakowski, K. N. (2003). Coping with Perceived Discrimination: Does Ethnic Identity Protect Mental Health? Journal of Health and Social Behaviour. 44. Pp. 318–331.

Nte, N. D. (2011). Police corruption and the national security challenge in Nigeria: a study of Rivers State Police Command. International Journal of Human Sciences. 8 (1). Pp. 545–575.

Nwakanma, E., & Boroh, S. E. (2019). Demography of Conflict and Herders-Farmers Crisis in Nigeria. The Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology. 17 (2). Pp. 28–40.

Nwankpa, M. (2014). The Politics of Amnesty in Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis of the

Boko Haram and Niger Delta Insurgencies. Journal of Terrorism Research. 5 (1). Pp. 67–77.

Ogunnoiki, A. O. (2017). Federalism as a Political Ideology and System of Government: The Theoretical Perspectives. International Journal of Advanced Academic Research Sciences, Technology & Engineering. 3 (9). Pp. 52–80.

Ojie, A. E. (2006). Democracy, Ethnicity, and the problem of extrajudicial killing in Nigeria. Journal of Black Studies. 36 (4). Pp. 546–569.

Ojo, E. O. (2009). Federalism and the search for national integration in Nigeria. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations. 3 (9). Pp. 384–395.

Okonta, I., & Meagher, K. (2009). Legacies of Biafra: Violence, Identity and Citizenship in Nigeria: Introduction. Africa Development. 344 (1). Pp. 1–7.

Olakunle, O., Joseph, I., & Segun, O. (2016). Indigene-Settler Relationship in Nigeria: Case study of the Igbo community in Lagos. Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences. VII (III). Pp. 1–15.

Olanrewaju, F. O., Olanrewaju, A., Omotoso, F., Alabi, J. O., Amoo, E., Loromeke, E., & Ajayi, L. A. (2019). Insurgency and the invisible Displaced Population in Nigeria: A situational Analysis. Sage Open. April–June. Pp. 1–12.

Olowu, D. (1991). Federalism in Nigeria: Toward Federal Democracy. Publius. 21 (4). Pp. 155–171.

Olu-Adeyemi, L. (2017). Federalism in Nigeria – Problems, Prospects and the Imperative of Restructuring. International Journal Advances in Social Science and Humanities. 5 (8). Pp. 40–52.

Oluwaleye, J. M. (2019). Democracy, Local Government and Development in Nigeria: Case of Ekiti State. Case Studies Journal. 8 (1). Pp. 1–9.

Osabiya, B. J. (2015). Ethnic militancy and Internal Terrorism on Nigeria's National Security. International Journal of Development and Conflict. 5. Pp. 59–75.

Osakede, K. O., Ijimakinwa, S. O., & Adesanya, T. O. (2016). Local Government Financial Autonomy in Nigeria: An Empirical Analysis. Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review. 5 (11). Pp. 24–37.

Osakwe, O. M. (2017). Case Study On the Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria. An Independent Study Submitted for the award of Degree of Master of Arts in Peace Studies and Diplomacy to Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Sani, D. (2020, February 20). Suspected Herdsmen Attack Adamawa Community, Kill Village Head, Destroy Houses. Thisday. https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/02/20/suspected-herdsmen-attack-adamawa-community-kill-village-head-destroy-houses/

Sunday, O. (2021, September 19). Tension as suspected herdsmen attack Benue community, kill 2, abduct one. DailyPost. https://dailypost.ng/2021/09/19/tension-as-suspected-herdsmen-attack-benue-community-kill-2-abduct-one/

Tangban, O. E., & Audu, B. J. (2020). The Controversy over the Creation of State Police in Nigeria. SARJANA. 35 (2). Pp. 40–51.

Thompson, A. (2010). An Introduction to African Politics. New York, NY, Routledge.

Tijani, A. (2008). Ethnic Relations: A Study of Hausa Community in Ogbomoso, Nigeria – (1924–1967). J. Soc. Sci. 17 (3). Pp. 253–260.

Ukiwo, U. (2009). Violence, Identity Mobilisation and the reimaging of Biafra. Africa

Development. 34 (1). Pp. 9–30.

Umoh, N., & Adeyi, E. M. (2019). Social Integration: A Nation-Building Strategy for Nigeria's Federalism. Review of Public Administration and Management. 6 (3). Pp. 1–7.

Wapmuk, S. (2012). The Amnesty Programme and the Challenges of Ending Youth Militancy in Nigeria's Niger Delta. Insight on Africa. 4 (2). Pp. 153–168.