
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PAN NIGER DELTA FORUM (PANDEF): ARGUMENTS FOR RESTRUCTURING THE NIGERIAN FEDERATION

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Abstract

Federalism is a political system by which two or additional governments have mutual power over the same geographical territory have been in practice around the world for years. Good numbers of democratic states in the globe are governed by a federal system and these countries include: Germany, Brazil, the U.S., Canada, Australia, India and Argentina. Still the EU has a federal structure, in spite of the fact that one of the very few instances where the members of the “upper chambers” in the federal system are not chosen or elected, but are delegates of the particular governments. Federalism in Nigeria since existence is structured alongside with the nation constitution but copied from the US pattern of federation. The study looked at the role played by Pan Niger Delta Forum towards a restructured Nigeria for even development. Because restructuring is the process of having independent, self-sustaining units in a federation which helps to provide development at all levels of government. The paper frames it argument from the structural-functionalism theory. The study adopted the secondary means of data collection while the descriptive analysis was utilized and the purposive technique was adopted for effective and efficient research findings. Findings shows that restructuring Nigeria’s political system has not been fully acknowledged and followed up by the current government for its implementation and it has continue to creates the long agitation of marginalization of some parts of the country. Also, it has shown perceived hatred between the south-south region and Nigerian government in many fora. The study revealed that a restructured Nigeria will give autonomy to each region and this will help to survive and bring sustainable development. The study recommends the following measures for a restructured Nigeria political system: there should be immediate implementation of the 2014 national conference and the APC committee on restructuring and the true federalism reports; federal government should urgently consider the key points recommended by the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) on the South-South position on the restructuring of Nigeria.

Keywords: Federation; Restructuring; Pan Niger Delta Forum; Structural-Functionalism; Political System.

Introduction

Federalism is a political system where two or other governments have common control over the same geographical terrain have been in practice around the globe for many years. Good numbers of democratic nations in the world are governed by a

federal system and these states include: Germany, Brazil, the U.S., Canada, Australia, India and Argentina. Still the European Union (EU) has a federal structure, in spite of the fact that one of the very few situations where the members of the “upper chambers” in the federal system are not selected or elected, but are delegates of the specific governments. Federalism in Nigeria since existence has been structured alongside with the country current 1999 constitution as amended but tailored from the US pattern of federalism (Ibru, 2022).

More so, Nigeria practices federalism and the federal system of government was adopted in 1951 following the introduction of Mcpherson constitution. At this stage, it was portrayed as a quasi- federalism (Nwankwo, 2002). In 1954, the entity called Nigeria was constitutionally elevated to the full status of a federal system, with a clear-cut division of powers between the central and regional governments. During this time, the three regions that constituted the federation were able to meet the development needs of their people, at their own pace, until the issues that engineered the civil war raised its ugly face and affected the country system of governance.(as cited in Osegbue, Madubueze & Nwokike, 2016).

However, a very remarkable feature of every federal state is the existence of diversities. This diversity which manifest in terms of religion, ethnicity and various forms of identity oftentimes determine the internal configuration and the share of revenue allocated to each units. Federalism is usually adopted as a device for managing plural societies in order to engender equity within the political system and eliminate unnecessary bickering among the component units and this does not in any way suggest that all the component units must be equal in size and population before a federation is constituted, but, rather; there should be relative equality of the constitutive elements of the federal state (Agbo, 2013, p.59).

Accordingly, Edem (2019) it was on the call for a better Nigeria, Pan Niger Delta Forum joined the clamour for restructuring of Nigeria for all round development. The Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) has called for the restructuring of Nigeria. According to the group, revolution is gradually taking place in the Niger Delta region of the country, thus, making Nigeria not standing well. PANDEF regretted that the non restructuring of the country up till date. The body said Nigeria must be restructured so that the Niger Delta can have a say in Nigeria as the nation was not standing well because the southern people cannot be first class citizen living in a second class economy. All citizens must have equal opportunities, what is obtainable in other climes must be applied as people are revolting over old ways of doing things.

This position was clearly associated by Abubakar (2018) when he posited that:

“We therefore need to decentralized and devolve more powers to the federating states. Devolution and decentralization will help us to develop rapidly and make government more accountable. It would

force us to look to non-oil sources of revenue, especially taxation, which will also encourage us to facilitate investment, job and wealth creation. Without the latter there would be little to tax. Devolution will allow states to focus on their peculiar priorities and plan their expenditures, such as wages, according to their earning capacities and cost of living. Too much uniformity in wages kills productivity, competitiveness and drive for innovation" (p.6).

According to Amuwo and Herault (2004, p.6) with a view of restructuring for a better Nigeria and to all appearance, political restructuring in a federal polity is intended to achieve certain specific objectives. One, restructuring is meant to serve as a steering mechanism to properly give focus and locus to attempts at collective identity and distributive politics. The aim is to correct perceived structural defects and institutional deformities. To tinker with political structures is perhaps suggestive that whilst democratic practice may not yet have firm roots, the democratic idea has some form of expression. The importance of the latter ideal in a federal system can hardly be over-emphasised, particularly where there are not only actually existing irredentist movements but also nationalities being driven to agitate for separatist identities.

Two, political restructuring is intended to lay an institutional foundation for a more just and a more equitable sharing of the political space by multinational groups cohabiting in a federal polity. The strategic objective seems to be the solidifying or perhaps merely engendering of a sense of national community. Within this context, political restructuring is an indication that some spirit of political bargaining, however circumscribed, does exist, notwithstanding whether or not the decision to restructure the polity by the ruling class or clique was voluntary or otherwise.

Furthermore, part of the reason of political restructuring is a better appreciation of the need for tolerance and respect for civil and civic rights of both aggrieved ethnic majorities and marginalised ethnic minorities. In underdeveloped and poor federal politics where, as in Nigeria, the federal structure is perceived as a device for the elite to take advantage of state largesse (Graf, 1988, p.15).

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria fully adopted a federal system of government in 1956 by the Lyttleton Constitution, where each level of government is independent and co-ordinate with the others in the exercise of their power and functions. But this system appears not to favour some parts of the country. Observation shows that the current Nigerian system of government is highly centralized reason being that the current constitution of Nigeria gives too much power to the centre (federal) to exercise which makes the federal government virtually controls all the major affairs of the country and the political system of the country has been agitated by several state governments and

some individual actors in the past. The federal system of government as practice in Nigeria has prevented other coordinate governments such as states and local governments from functioning effectively and efficiently in service delivery (Kenneth, 2022). More so, the states and local governments cannot independently operate at their levels without frequent intervention from the centre. This unnecessary instruction has hampered the progress of these other stages of government in making them rely so much on the federal government for their survival.

In the same vein, the Nigerian citizens had formed several groups that will help to reposition the country for good governance via the instrumentality of a true federal arrangement. These groups include: Odua Peoples' Congress, Arewa Consultative Forum, Ohaneze Ndigbo, Independent People of Biafra, the Middle Belt Forum, Ijaw National Congress, Ijaw Youth Council and the present Pan Niger Delta Forum which represents the interest of the South-south restructuring Nigerian state. It is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to investigate the Pan Niger Delta Forum role on restructuring and its challenges for a restructured Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were adopted to analyze the study

1. What are the issues of restructuring in a federation?
2. What are the impacts of restructuring the Nigerian political System?
3. What role does PANDEF plays on restructuring and its challenges?

Objectives of the Study

The major thrust of this paper is to assess the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) arguments on a restructured Nigeria federation. The specific objectives are to:

1. Assess the issues of restructuring in a federation
2. Discuss the impact of restructuring the Nigerian Political system
3. Analyze the role of PANDEF on restructuring and its challenges for a restructured Nigeria.

Conceptual Review and Methodology

The concept of Restructuring

Accordingly, Okonkwo (2018) to restructure is to change an existing status quo in order to make it more functional. Deductive from his assertion is that restructuring is a purpose-driven activity that hinges on replacement of an existing nature of a system with a new one that will be suitable to achieve the purpose of the system. In view of this, restructuring is operationally seen as a significant alteration, re-organization, reformation and re-arrangement of an existing structuring, form or status quo in a revolutionary or evolutionary manner, with the aim of making it more improved,

effective, efficient and functionally competent. According to Ahmed, Norafidah & Knocks (2017) it entails both political re-configuration of the country and devolution of powers to the constituent units as it is practiced in other climes. To Najakku (2016) it is the re-organization and re-arrangement of the nature of resource control by the various governments and regions to foster unity and development. Be it as it may, political restructuring in the context of this paper entails the systemic reform and re-organization of the existing political structure in the nature of practice and in the way it relates to the social and economic dimensions of the polity be it in governance and resource control or otherwise (cited in Nwafor-Orizu, Okolo & Tochukwu, 2018)..

Again, restructuring is a necessary condition for the commencement of the proper management of the ethnic and religious conflict in the country. This assertion was clearly supported by Atiku (2018) that for the avoidance of doubt, re-structuring is not about the re-drawing of state or regional boundaries. The restructured Nigeria that a large number of Nigerians talk about is a Nigeria that not only provides opportunities for everyone to work but even more specifically challenges every layer of governance to demonstrate capacity to create wealth and jobs for the citizens. Restructuring is not just about the devolution of powers to the states, it is about transforming the respective roles of the federal, state and local governments to perform more efficiently in matters of territorial as well as economic governance. Above all, when we talk about restructuring, we are not talking about just constitutional tweaks; we are talking about a cultural revolution. It is not about re-shuffling a few responsibilities or resources, but about disrupting the authoritarian politics our democracy has inherited from its military and colonial rulers of past. Osuntokun (2017) opined that restructuring is simply a call for the restoration of federalism-the foundational constitution structure to which all Nigerians subscribed as encapsulated in the independence constitution of 1960. For the purpose of this research the concept restructuring entails the process of designing the country for peace, unity and prosperity through a deliberate approach.

Restructuring the Nigeria's Political System

In support of the impact of restructuring in Nigeria, Atiku (2018) asserted that a restructured Nigeria is good for the North and the South and he identified the following as the benefits: First, restructuring is a southern project designed to put the North at an economic and political disadvantage. The fact is different segments of this country have clamoured for restructuring at different times in our history. Besides, even if the current clamour originated in the south it does not diminish the importance of restructuring for the survival and development of our country and the mutual coexistence of our people. Second misconception is that the North is opposed to restructuring because it threatens its access to oil money from the south. The fact is the North, like any other group is rightly concerned about its future place in the federation, especially because of the rhetoric of some advocates of restructuring ,who present it as designed to punish the North. And that, the share of revenue from

the federation account is not going to be reduced as a result of restructuring. Third, one of the ways to reduce corruption is actually to change the structure of the relationship between the Centre and the federating units, including greater decentralization and the reduction in the size of the federal government. Restructuring will bring government closer to the people and make accountability easier.

Odumakin (2017) opines that the following account for the impact of Nigeria to be structurally reconfigured for economic progress, social equity and sustainable development: A Nigeria earnestly restructured, is a Nigeria positively restored: a country restored to a previously-travelled path of developmental progress, rapid educational advancement, robust and committed public service, which genuinely and competently served the Nigerian public – both at Federal and regional levels. Restructuring will bring back the condition for a return to that golden era of public service and effective governance, regionally and at the Centre.

A Nigeria restructured is a Nigeria with enhanced leadership-building culture, where a truly-federal system allows each region to locally identify leadership for public governance, nurture and closely monitor such leaders for hard work and spirit of public service, focussed on the development of each region, at a pace and a rate that reflect the quantum of each region's effort and efficient use of local resources; indeed, the rivalry-for-regional-success resulting from a truly-federating Nigeria, will boost sustainable development across all zones of the country. And this means that , a Nigeria restructured is a Nigeria where the central government, along with its lower-level federating constituents, will, and must, be strong. Also, a Nigeria restructured is a Nigeria enhanced by the removal of the current perverse – incentives system, where many people seek elected and appointive government positions, not to develop the God-given resources of their local areas and local lands, or add to the wealth of their communities, but instead to feed on, and loot the un-earned monthly allocations from the centre; a restructured Nigeria will reduce the current mentality and room-for-maneuvre by elected and appointed leaders to treat the Abuja monthly allocations, as part of Nigeria's current 'Awoof-Economy of un-earned monthly allocations'

In addition, a Nigeria restructured is a Nigeria where every area, region or zone of the country will be able to devote more thinking time, conceptualisation, research, exploration and analysis to its mineral and agricultural resources, with a view to developing an economic value-chain from them, which is the first serious step towards the development of a manufacturing capacity across the country. That is to say that, a restructured Nigeria is a Nigeria where we would no longer practise the current system of forced equalization of 'ever-downwards' educational opportunities across the country, just to ensure federal character; a restructured governance structure will force or ensure investment of extra efforts and programmes to bring low-performing students in the Northern parts of Nigeria, up to the level of better-performing students

elsewhere in the country. Importantly, in a truly-restructured Nigeria, the negative effects of lowering academic and examination standards will very quickly become obvious and untenable among the people in the states and regions practising this immorality, which offends the best of Islamic, Christian and indigenous ethics of justice, equality of opportunity and fairness. Restructuring will therefore bring educational liberation to the millions of poor children in the North – and everywhere

According to Pan Niger Delta Forum (2018) the benefit of restructuring is:

“When you restructure, you have domestic police, your state will make laws for the good governance of your state and any herds man coming here will only come in the condition of the state government, in the same way our people going to any other part of Nigeria will go on the terms of the government of that state, that promotes a more peaceful society.

Similarly, Adedeye (2017) identified the following reasons for the impact of restructuring in Nigeria: a restructured Nigerian nation, each autonomous region is most likely to face the uphill task of generating its own revenue to survive and for a sustainable development and growth. The Nigerian nation will certainly profit from power devolution from the centre and of course regional autonomy in so many ways: Each region would be forced to manage its resources more prudently and judiciously giving little or no room for wasteful spending. This will tame or cripple the endemic monster called corruption. Regional autonomy will certainly discover hidden goldmines, hitherto untapped resources and talents as each region will concentrate on its area of comparative advantage. There will be rapid and massive improvement in infrastructure development. Government will be closer to people at the grassroots.

Analysis of Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) Role on Restructuring and its Challenges

In the wake of the ceaseless and ruinous attacks on national oil and gas assets by the numerous Niger Delta armed groups. Arising from that, the various Niger Delta groups decided to consolidate into one platform that represents all shades of opinion and sit at the table with one voice to negotiate for a better life with the federal government. Hence, they formed the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) in 2015 under the coordination of the former federal commissioner for Information and the South-South leader Edwin Clark, for this purpose and they drew up a 16-point agenda which they want the federal government to implement. But as they present their positions to the federal government. More so, PANDEF at present has expanded and embraces the Ndigbo, Ohaneze, Pan Yoruba group, Afenifere, Middle Belt Forum respectively in other to clamour for a just, peaceful and a prosperous Nigeria.

PANDEF has severally clamoured for the reposition of the country federal system and in doing that, the country political, economic, social system will be productive. In the pursuit of restructuring the Nigerian system, PANDEF had played so many roles on a

balance federal system and also presented the following position on the restructuring of Nigeria:

Model of Government: The South-South position is that the presidential model or system of governance be retained in the Federal Republic of Nigeria but with clear prescriptions to curtail high cost of running government. A bi-cameral Legislature is recommended at the federal tier while the federating units (the states) should maintain a unicameral legislature as it exists at present. While on the **Federating Units:** the South-South propose that federating units should be called states. However, we demand that the number of such units to be arrived at finally in the country should be open to negotiations and collective bargaining in view of contestations / claims and /or case(s) being made by various ethnic nationalities. And it is recommended that state character principle should be entrenched at the level of the federating units. And on the issue of **Devolution of Powers :** PANDEF agrees that most items contained as part of the 68 exclusive legislative items in Nigeria be devolved to be federating units without prejudice to onshore / offshore mineral resources exploitation, exploration and management. Also, on the aspect of the **Place of Geopolitical Zones:** The existence of geo-political zones be retained to drive further intra-national and sub-national interactions as well as socio-economic development and cultural cross –fertilization. On the issue of **Federal Character Principle:** PANDEF supports the retention of the federal character principle in the constitution of the federation. Similarly, PANDEF recommended that state character principle be entrenched at the level of the federating units. On **State Creation :** Another role opined by PANDEF in the course of their struggle for a restructured Nigeria in line with recommendations of the 2014 National Conference, the creation of additional four states in the South-South Zone; namely, Toru-Ebe State, Oil Rivers state, Anioma State, and Ogoja State. While on the issue of **Rotation of Political Offices :** PANDEF argued that there should be a constitutional guarantee for rotation of key political offices such as President of the Federal Republic and Vice President on the one hand and Governors of the states and the Deputy Governors on the other hand.

On the other hand, PANDEF argument on **State of Origin and Indigeneship:** That Nigerians should continue to identify with extant constitutional provisions which require where either of the parents or grandfather is born and is indigenous to the particular federating units. While on **Fiscal Federalism and Resource Control:** The position of the South-South on fiscal federalism is full resource control of all-natural resources located onshore and onshore of the federating states, for reasons exhaustively elaborated under part E, particularly sections 8 to 8.5 and 9 to 9.4 , of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, as this principle of resource control is keeping with global best practice of democracies and federations in other nations such as United States of America, Canada, India , and Australia. Whereas on the issue of **Secular Status of Nigeria and the Constitution:**

The position of South-South is that Nigeria should guarantee freedom of worship and be strictly a secular state where no mention is made of religion in the federal constitution. Also, on **Derivation, Fiscal Federalism and Revenue Allocation**: The best practice internationally is for federating units to be allowed to retain royalties, revenues and profits from the proceeds from resources and assets within their territory and territorial waters and pay needed taxes to the federal government . **The Question of Offshore Resources** : The conclusion of the United Nations Law of the Sea(UNCLOS) in 1982 has put to rest all contentious issues at the level of international law and provides a best global practice for State –practices. Nigeria was both a key party in all negotiations leading to the conclusion of that landmark international treaty which reaffirmed and codified, very clearly, the customary right of littoral states to their contiguous Zone EEZ, (12 nautical miles), Littoral Sea (12 nautical miles), Exclusive Economic Zone (200 nautical miles) and Continental Shelf, and to which UNCLOS Nigeria is a signatory.

Finally, PANDEF argument on **Environmental Pollution Issues**: Due to the age-old oil-induced environmental degradation in the region as a result of exploration and exploitation activities, the Zone strongly recommends the creation of special funds for the development of special infrastructure in special areas, particularly where mineral resources are explored and exploited, as remediation measures. While on the **Special Development Areas Status for Niger Delta**: The South-South demands that this time-honoured prayers of our pioneer leaders, which was not objected to buy the founding fathers of this country at the dawn of independence, following the outcome of the report of the willinks Commission in 1958 all intents and purposes, that conforms with best global practice as it pertains to delta and coastal areas. On the aspect of **Legislative Issues**: PANDEF submitted that all relevant Bills and Acts of parliament on oil and gas exploration and exploitation as well as revenue allocation be abrogated to reflect their position . More so, on the area of **The Legislature**: National Assembly as constituted at present operates a heavy and cumbersome cost structure. This should be properly addressed in any major restructuring effort and constitutional processes put in place to correct this anomaly since the centre will now be less encountered with responsibilities. While on the **Judiciary** : PANDEF upholds, the recent recommendations' of establishing state judicial Councils and State Courts of Appeal as well as consider and welcome developments which will make for better administration of justice.

Challenges Facing PANDEF Arguments on restructuring Nigeria's System

James (2018) posited that PANDEF has presented many demands and a reasonable number of issues rose for restructuring and a better Nigeria cannot be addressed properly by the current administration and considered for effective and efficient implementation of government's socio-economic policies and programmes through strict adherence to the constitution. Another challenge facing PANDEF in their role towards a restructured Nigeria is the issue of personal interest and also the issuing of

meaningless ultimatums as regards to federal government neglect on their issues. Blame game also has affected their struggle towards a restructured Nigeria.

Leader (2018) asserted that the existence of PANDEF has repositioned the South-South and members of the South-East, Middle belt And the Yoruba groups as a formidable force in the struggle for peace, justice. But the clamouring of PANDEF on a restructured Nigeria had been entangled with some challenges and these are; neglect of the federal government to juxtapose their demands towards a better federal system, the issue of funding in running its secretariat and this has greatly affected its existence, Failure to submit and implement the APC reports on restructuring, the tagging of PANDEF as a political organisation which fight for their personal course. For Osahon(2018), PANDEF in the struggle for a restructured Nigeria has been faced with the challenges of the issue of membership ideological differences, party influence on their activities, and mistrust among members on their role, fear of domination of some part of the country as result of having dominant control of their resources and the problem of support base from some state governors.

On this note, Amechi and Eme (2018) came up in a study on the challenges facing restructured Nigerian and asserted that some people believe that there is no guarantee that such an exercise will succeed in moving the nation forward, and that it may even be counter-productive or lead to unexpected consequences; Secondly, prior to 2015, the people who were calling for restructuring never gave a clear definition of what they meant by re-structuring, neither were they specific about the scope, modalities or even the timing of such an exercise; Thirdly, up till 2015, most of the calls for restructuring had been from individuals and groups from the southern part of Nigeria. However, in recent times or since 2016, prominent Northerners are beginning to join their southern counterparts in asking for restructuring. Atiku Abubakar and Yakubu Dogara suggested constitutional amendment that will deliver the local governments from the hand of governors; this is actually a form of agitation for restructuring. Also, agitators are beginning to give more details. These include devolution of power to the states, reduction in federal government exclusive list(87) in favour of concurrent list(15), developing our own model of fiscal federalism, reduction in number of federating units, administrative restructuring, leaner bureaucracy, local government autonomy (state control), federal ownership of interstate roads and resource sharing. Others have also raised issues such as resource control, state police, and federal character principle. All these issues have not properly addressed.

Methodology

The research relied secondary means of data collection in its analysis. While the research design used was descriptive and on content analysis and the purposive sampling technique was employed to ascertain the study. The population of the study comprises South-South Ndigbo, Ohaneze, Pan Yoruba group, Afenefere, Middle Belt Forum respectively. On the other hand, the target population adopted was on

PANDEF.

Theoretical Framework

The research employed structural –functionalism paradigm as its framework of analysis. Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton were associated as the major contributors to this perspective and these scholars see society totally as a system that is complex whose parts at any point in time work together with the intention to effectively promote solidarity and stability within an organisation. According to a study by Johari (2005, as cited in Okoye, 2012, p.86) posited that the basic assumptions and postulations of the structural-functional framework are: It takes the society as a single, inter-connected system, each element of which performs a specific function. The basic feature of such a system is the interaction of its components for the maintenance of its equilibrium. Also, that if society is a system as a whole, it has parts that are interrelated. A social system has a dominant tendency towards stability that is maintained by virtue of built-in-mechanism. If there are deviations or tensions, they are resolved. Thus, change in a social system is not sudden or revolutionary, but a gradual process. And underlying the whole social structure are broad aims and principles that are observed by the members of the society. He defined political system as system of interactions to be found in all independent societies which performs the role of integration and adaptation by means of the employment, or threat of employment, of more or less legitimate physical coercion. The political system is the legitimate lodge maintaining or transforming system in the society. He suggested that the political systems may be compared in the terms of the probabilities of the performance of the specified functions by the specified structure (Almond & James, 1960, p. 143).

juxtapose the use of this theory to the study, the federal republic of Nigeria is an anatomical structure which can be defined as the number of sub-systems or functional components that combine together to make up a building complex organization and the regulation that govern the inter-relationship between them to ensure they all employment together seamlessly to achieve a common purpose or a given output. A system is actually greater than the summation of its component parts. Hence a province is a simple system or a first edict system with a simple structure of Department of State in it. However, there are super-complex body parts, which are brand up of two or more sub system, each of which can actually exist or produce an output independently. Nigeria or any commonwealth at all can be described as a superstructure consisting of many sub units, each of which can actually exist independently (as cited in Zakari, Umar & Ibrahim, 2018, p. 103). This framework made us to understand that, for a country to be restructured, every part must work as a whole and they will all fulfil their respective functions in other to provide a functional mechanism for it service delivery. Again, in this sense, decentralization can strengthen the survival of political system by enchanting political stability and national unity and providing opportunities for diverse groups in different parts of the country to

participate more directly in developing decision-making, thereby increasing their “stake” and commitment to the unity of the country (as cited Amechi & Eme ,2018).

Discussion of Major Findings

Basically, arising from the research, findings showed that Nigeria's federal system has been considered to be restructured by different parts of the country, reason be that the current federal system has not been favourable to the people. It was observed that a restructured Nigeria's nation will help the people to profit from the issue of power devolution through the central government and the regional autonomy in so many forms. In this process, each region would be forced to manage its resources in a more prudent and judicious way and by giving little or no room for wasteful spending through a guided constitution and these processes will foster in sustainable development.

The study also observed that restructuring Nigeria's political system would help to stop the long agitation of marginalization of some parts of the country and it will enable leaders to formulate appropriate measures that would help to balance the nation by effective devolution of powers to the federating units, that the current government has not shown much concern for a restructured Nigeria.

From the reviewed literature, it was showed that PANDEF was formed to project a course for the clamour of a better federal system, because of the current poor federal arrangement which does not favour the main parts that provide for the country's economy. It was also highlighted that restructuring the country will help to the survival and development of the country and bring a mutual coexistence of the entire people. That restructuring will help to reduce the problem of corruption among our leaders in the country. It will help regions to find alternative ways to survive by curbing over dependence of oil.

Importantly, it was showed in the study that the unbalanced structure of Nigerian federal system has to a large extent impacted negatively on resource allocation among the component units and this processes brought about the wide spread complain, outcry of people in the country which brought about the perceived issues of suspicion, neglect and marginalization, agitations and maltreatments by some sections within the country and this had been identified to be a very serious threat to Nigeria's federal structure. All these issues of the poor arrangement of a federal system brought about the formation of different groups and as well as the formidable PANDEF in the struggle for a restructured Nigeria. However, it was revealed also in the study that PANDEF in the struggle for a restructured Nigeria has been facing some challenges among these are: funding, neglect of their demands and activities by the federal government, and the problem of full support from some state governors as regards to their positions.

Conclusion

This research assessed restructuring on Nigeria's political system from the perspective of PANDEF. The paper observed that Nigeria operates federalism which means a system of government where each level is independent, but coordinates with the other in the exercise of its power and functions and this system has been widely criticized by some parts of the country. As a result of the widespread criticism by some parts of the country in the current federal arrangement PANDEF emerged for the clamour of a restructured Nigeria. In addition, the centrality to the governance of the plural societies calls for restructuring of the federal system towards sustainable development.

Again, with the evidence of non-performance by the government towards the general public, Nigerians openly clamoured for the immediate restructuring of the political, economy and other areas towards an advanced diversified structure. To make this a reality, the country will move in unity to come up with a sustained model of governance which would help to foster and nurture a spirit of participation and consensus on key national issues and accommodate all the diverse segments of the society for better country. Therefore, it was observed that the implementation of the restructuring reports of the 2014 Conference and the APC committee reports on restructuring will help to control the contentious issues affecting the country from sustainable development.

Recommendations

Consequent upon this research, the following recommendations were offered:

There should be immediate implementation of the 2014 national conference and the APC committee on restructuring and the true federalism reports. Also, the federal government should urgently consider the key points recommended by the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) on the South-South position on the restructuring of Nigeria.

State governors should be encouraged to join the clamour for restructuring in order to reposition the country for effective and efficient service delivery system. The PANDEF should establish offices across the states in order to properly enlighten the masses on the need for a restructured Nigeria and the present administration should take some critical steps to study the PANDEF documents on restructuring. Another important area where the PANDEF arguments should be looked at is the interest and support of international organisations to support their arguments.

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