

National Security Architecture and the Question of Nigerian Federalism: The Phenomenon of State Police and its Feasibility

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Abstract

Nigeria is one of the countries that operates a federal system of government. Likewise, Nigeria has been a federal state with several security challenges for many decades, despite a strong and unified security architecture controlled by the government at its centre. The matters of national security are vested with the central government in the Exclusive List of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution. Despite the huge budget that the Federal Government has allocated towards security operations and operations for many years, there is dissatisfaction and outcries from several segments of the country regarding the current security situation. This study examined the various discourses on redesigning the Nigerian security architecture, including the calls for state police in a fashion that will appease the comprising federating units. The problem is the reservation and the resentment that some stakeholders are expressing towards the decentralisation of the national security architecture. The theory of decentralisation and devolution of powers was adopted in the study. The study utilised documented sources of data, including books, journal articles, newspapers, reports, and internet sources, for data collection. The data obtained were analysed using content analysis, where themes were designed and discussed concerning the adopted theoretical framework. The study discovered that the agitations for state police were perceived by the Federal Government, some state governments, and stakeholders as a political move to weaken the might of the FG and to muster extra powers by some state governors against the public, the opposition, and the FG. The study recommends, among others, that the calls for the decentralisation of national security architecture should not be jettisoned totally as political, but there is a need for caution in establishing them to avoid further security crises in the future because practically, it is not feasible now.

Keywords: Feasibility, Federalism, National Security Architecture, Nigeria, Police, State Police

Abstrak

Nigeria merupakan salah satu negara yang menjalankan sistem pemerintahan federal. Demikian pula, Nigeria telah menjadi negara federal dengan beberapa tantangan keamanan selama beberapa dekade, meskipun arsitektur keamanannya kuat dan terpadu dan dikendalikan oleh pemerintah sebagai pusatnya. Masalah keamanan nasional berada di tangan pemerintah pusat dalam Daftar Eksklusif Konstitusi Nigeria tahun 1999. Meskipun Pemerintah Federal telah mengalokasikan anggaran besar untuk operasi dan operasi keamanan selama bertahun-tahun, terdapat ketidakpuasan dan protes dari beberapa lapisan negara mengenai situasi keamanan saat ini. Studi ini mengkaji berbagai wacana mengenai perancangan ulang arsitektur keamanan Nigeria, termasuk seruan untuk membentuk polisi negara dengan cara yang dapat menenangkan unit-unit federasi yang ada. Permasalahannya adalah keraguan dan kebencian yang diungkapkan oleh beberapa pemangku kepentingan terhadap desentralisasi arsitektur keamanan nasional. Teori desentralisasi dan devolusi kekuasaan diadopsi dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan sumber data terdokumentasi, termasuk buku, artikel jurnal, surat kabar, laporan, dan sumber internet, untuk pengumpulan data. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis isi, dimana tema dirancang dan dibahas mengenai kerangka teori yang dianut. Studi ini menemukan bahwa agitasi terhadap polisi negara bagian dianggap oleh Pemerintah Federal, beberapa pemerintah negara bagian, dan pemangku kepentingan sebagai langkah politik untuk melemahkan kekuatan FG dan untuk mengerahkan kekuatan ekstra oleh beberapa gubernur negara bagian untuk melawan masyarakat, oposisi, dan pemerintah FG. Studi ini merekomendasikan, antara lain, bahwa seruan untuk desentralisasi arsitektur keamanan nasional tidak boleh dianggap hanya bersifat politis, namun perlu adanya kehati-

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hatian dalam menetapkannya untuk menghindari krisis keamanan lebih lanjut di masa depan karena secara praktis, hal ini tidak mungkin dilakukan. Sekarang.

Kata Kunci: Kelayakan, Federalisme, Arsitektur Keamanan Nasional, Nigeria, Polisi, Polisi Negara

INTRODUCTION

National security is the threshold of national integrity and prosperity because it is through an effective, secured environment that nation-states prosper. National security is a matter of highly strategic policy and decision-making by the stakeholders in the security sector and other relevant key actors (Wolfers, 1964). National security involves the process of securing national territory both internally and externally from all forms of undesired aggression, illicit armed groups' activities, and insurrections that can threaten national sovereignty or undermine national tranquilly (Leffler, 1990). National security has core values that are fundamental to the clear operation of the security process. Military and non-military threats are considered the major goals of a national security exercise. All nation-states are competing today in the protection of their national borders through various processes, including the manufacturing and procuring of modern firearms, intelligence and intelligence gathering, the provision of an enabling environment for the welfare of the citizenry, and the promotion of good governance and the liberty of individuals (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

National security architecture is the complex interdependent processes and institutions that are active in the business of undertaking the course of securing national territory (Haider, 2016). In the effort towards establishing structures, institutions, and processes for ensuring the reliable security of lives, properties, and the integrity of national territory, some agencies, organisations, individuals, and activities are initiated by states to achieve the goals (Buzan, 1983). Various countries have successfully designed their own independent national security architecture based on the constitutional mandate and the peculiarities that they have (Walker III, 2009). In Nigeria, for example, the national security architecture consists of the military-industrial complex, police force, national defence headquarters, top decision-making bodies of the executive and legislature, and other relevant stakeholders who meet regularly to review and redesign the nature and pattern of security activities. Nigeria is a federal state with multi-level national security architectures, and it is understood that a federal system has its own unique way of governmental operation (Yacubu, 2012).

Federalism is a form of government that has the provision for the sharing of powers among the component units that constitute the federation (Wheare, 1978). Federalism is operated worldwide by many countries, especially those with contiguous geographical territory and a large population that is decimated by the diversities and complexities of ethnic, religious, and regional differences (Sodaro, 2015). The United States of America, Brazil, Nigeria, Canada, India, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, Ethiopia, South Africa, and several other major world countries operate federalism in different structures and patterns (Dobratz et al. 2012). For instance, in the United States, there is a three-level government, including the federal, state, and county governments, which is exactly obtainable in Nigeria in the form of the federal, state, and local governments (Hague et al. 2016). In Nigerian federalism, there is a clear constitutional devolution of powers among the three components of governments under the Exclusive, Concurrent, and Residual powers in the Constitution. The Nigerian federalism journey started in 1944 during the British colonial administration when Governor Richard introduced regionalism, which laid the foundation for future federalism in Nigeria (Afigbo, 1991).

One of the contentious flashpoints in contemporary Nigerian federalism is the phenomenon of state police. The debates and agitations for and against the establishment of state police dominated the

headlines and public gatherings in the country (This Day Newspaper Editorial, 2021). Currently, the Nigerian Constitution bestows issues of defence and security solely as an exclusive mandate of the Federal Government. However, owing to the challenges of insecurity that permeated all parts of the country, ranging from Niger-Delta militants, farmers-herders clashes, Boko Haram insurgency, Northwest banditry, IPOB secessionist agitations, Oduduwa separatist movements, and other forms of crimes that ambushed the country, intensified calls for state policing surfaced with many states, particularly the Southern states, calling for the formation of state police while the Northern states opposed the calls (Ogidan, 2018). This study, therefore, is an effort at dissecting the various arguments for and against the calls for the establishment of the state police in Nigeria. The study proposes some practical policy implications as permanent panaceas to resolve the issue through a win-win approach. In doing so, the chapter explored or is structured into the following: introduction, a framework of analysis in which decentralisation and devolution of powers are adopted, examination of the issues in national security, the nature and concept of federalism, national security architecture, Nigerian federalism, the agitations for state police in Nigeria, the feasibility of state police in Nigeria, and the obstacles to state police in Nigeria, as well as the conclusion. The study utilised the qualitative descriptive strategy of data collection and analysis. Documented resources were consulted for gathering data, while a thematic analytical interpretation was used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Framework of Analysis: Decentralisation and Devolution of Powers

The term decentralisation is a concept that is usually associated with federal states and denotes a framework of a political structure of government where power is relaxed from top to bottom. Decentralisation is an alternative means of power sharing and a constitutional division of responsibility among the component governments in a state that has adopted it (Saito, 2008). It is believed that diversities and complexities can be better managed by making power flexible to enable a sense of belonging (Robinson & White, 1998). Decentralisation is regarded as the best means of achieving the above proposal of carrying all societal members alone in power sharing. This is often tagged 'The Principles of Subsidiarity' (Oates, 1999). Decentralisation is operated in different federal states in various structures and arrangements. For example, most states today prefer to increase the powers and participation of local governments as the major drivers of economic development to reach out to the populace in a larger proportion (Saito, 2008). In Nigeria, decentralisation is arranged in the form of the constitutional creation of three tiers of government: federal, state, and local governments with executive legislative and judicial powers, but some aspects such as currency, mining, and security are still centralised and left as the prerogative of the Federal Government alone (Sambo & Sule, 2020).

Devolution of powers, on the other hand, is to increase the powers of delegation to lower governance. Although sometimes used as synonymous with decentralisation by some scholars, this study established that they are far more distinct than being the same. While decentralisation is the division of powers among the constitutionally agreed-upon tiers of government with specific roles and functions, devolution emphasises the transfer of power from one tier of government to another without necessarily being compulsory except for a gentlemanly agreement (Hobbs, 2019). As such, devolution simply implies an increased delegation of authorities and tasks to the lower level of governance by the central authority willingly. The willingness to relinquish some powers by the central government or higher authorities to

the lower ones is anchored on the pretext of avoiding bureaucratic bottlenecks and administrative cumbersome decision-making. In essence, devolution is a substantial transfer of power and autonomy resulting from a significant change in the relationship between central and local government. In essence, devolution is a process, while decentralisation is an event or a policy (Copus, Roberts, & Wall, 2017).

The above two major concepts can clearly explain the subject matter of the study. Nigeria is operating a federal structure of government with numerous federal institutions and a clear-cut demarcation of responsibilities among the components units of the federation, which are the federal, state, and local governments. There are also several areas in which power is decentralised, such as education, the health sector, water supply, electricity, job generation, and others. This is constitutional decentralization. However, there are areas in which only the federal government has full constitutional backing to exercise jurisdiction, such as mining, currency, foreign relations, and security. In such cases, sometimes the FG devolve some powers willingly, as in the case of mining, through a concession or partnership with either the state or local governments. This is not mandatory constitutionally, but they do it to reduce administrative hiccups. Just recently, the FG introduced social investment programmes such as n-Power and homegrown feeding, and it willingly delegates the state and local governments to actively execute the policies on its behalf. The argument in this study is that security and matters of national security are exclusive to the FG constitutionally, even though sometimes it delegated to the states to present them in security matters, and there is evidence of collaboration and cooperation in handling local security matters. However, the calls for state police mean more than devolution but decentralization, which requires a constitutional question. Nigerian federalism is undergoing a sharp censure because of how the FG dominates power and how the governmental structure is practically turned into unitarism while professing federalism. The failure of the police to secure the nation in the face of security challenges is raising dust on the centrality of the police force. Thus, the calls are not for devolution, as it was already doing so, but rather a call for full constitutional decentralisation, which requires a constitutional amendment before the arrangement is allowed.

National Security

National security matters involve all stakeholders, such as policymakers, security agencies, and international organisations (Morgenthau, 1987). The changing dimension of security takes the global limelight with a new preoccupation from the traditional perspective of security or military threats in the inter-war years (1914–1918 and 1934–1944) to the advancement of the Cold War (1945–1989) in the 1960s and 1970s (Wolfers, 1964). National security comprises policies, structures, and actions that are designed purposefully as a necessary measure to protect domestic interests from external threats (Devetak et al. 2017). National security presents an entirely comprehensive framework for maintaining national integrity and for the protection and fostering of the foreign policy goals of a country (Leffler, 1990).

The national security of any state takes the pivotal position of recognising the core national values that are never compromised in whatever situation if the state is to retain its sovereignty (Walker III, 2009). The hitherto hypothesised traditional assumptions of security have been upgraded from the past notion that only state actors are considered major key players in national and international politics. It has gone far beyond that approach (Buzan, 1983). The current discourse on security presumes that national and international security are matters too important to be confined to the traditional domain (Gutner, 2017). The security concept has successfully transformed into a more complex and integrated dynamism in the

post-Cold War era because of the active involvement of non-state actors as formidable partners in both domestic and international politics (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

The initially anticipated coordinated relationship failed to foster security, nor did the overemphasised balance of power guarantee collective security in the international system (Johari, 1997). In this regard, more theories promising in their potential for practicability were advanced, like the deterrence theory as proposed by Henry Kissinger (Taylor, 2012). The national security of any nation-state should successfully trace any impending domestic threats and suppress them accordingly before a state should acquire a hall of fame in international relations (De Keersmaeker, 2017). Some states may get involved in prolonged warfare owing to the pursuit of national interest, which is arrested through the use of armed forces (Chomsky & Herman, 1979). However, national security issues currently surpass military threats alone. Other potential threats are as threatening as military ones, including climate change leading to environmental hazards, economic settings, political structure, social conditions, and other patterns of co-existence (Kaufmann, 2013). Nigeria is one such country that is currently facing the threats of non-military threats, including militant uprisings, Boko Haram insurgency, rural banditry, farmers-herders conflict, climate change, IPOB secessionist, Oduduwa separatist agitation, poverty, hunger, corruption, disease and pandemic, cyber fraudsters, illiteracy, low level of infrastructure, inequality and injustice, and other culminated crimes that overshadowed the role of police in security maintenance, leading to agitations for the restructuring of the Force towards a more devolution and decentralisation by enabling the states to develop their policing system.

The Concept of Federalism

Federalism is generally perceived as a political structure that arranges for diverse entities to live together in autonomy and cooperation. In any federal state, there exist two or more components of government, including the central government and other entities such as states, provinces, counties, regions, and local governments (Wheare, 1978). Federalism pursues the common goal of all member entities through the identification and unification of conflicting divergent interests among the constituted groups and, at the same time, offers a platform of autonomy for local self-governance. One of the main features of federalism is that all governmental structures are instituted constitutionally in terms of revenue generation, power sharing, the responsibilities of government, and other sensitive matters (Hague et al. 2016). Federalism is made possible through the willing acceptance of multi-ethnic, religious, geographical, and political backgrounds to form a government at the centre. In this arrangement, all diversities are managed through equal and equitable representation, both politically and economically. Such factors as proximity, security purpose, geographical advantage, mutual economic benefit, and comparative cost advantage motivate the formation of a federal state (Dobratz et al. 2012).

Different states operate various kinds of federalism across the world. For instance, asymmetrical federalism operates when all the component states have different levels of power, as in the case of Germany. Symmetrical federalism is the structure of a federation where states have equal power-sharing arrangements, as in Australia. Centralised Federalism is a form of federal arrangement where heavy powers are concentrated in the government at the centre of policy and decision-making, which is mainly obtainable in Nigeria and the USA. Competitive Federalism is a flexible structure of a federation where the various component units are allowed to compete freely for economic advantage and developmental purposes based on the capability of each unit that is operated in Malaysia. Cooperative federalism is one in which there is cooperation and coordination among the federating units as equal partners, such as in

India. Creative Federalism allows for the central government to possess the powers to determine the allocation of resources and developmental projects to the regional or local government, as applied in the cases of Nigeria and the USA. Fiscal Federalism revolves around the constitutional arrangement of resource allocation based on the inputs of the regions that formed the federation in a state (Sodaro, 2015). All the federating states globally have their own unique structure of fiscal federalism. In Nigeria, for instance, the revenue sharing formula is 52.68% for the central government, 26.72% for the 36 states, and 20.60% for the 774 local governments (Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparent Initiative, 2016). Judicial Federalism is the separation of judicial powers or courts between the federal and state governments and, in some instances, with local governments, which is applicable in all the federal states in the world in varying degrees and systems. Permissive Federalism is how the central government delegates the states or provinces with some of its powers at the grassroots level (Sodaro, 2015).

Federalism is a contemporary practice in many notable and famous countries of the world, especially those with diversities, large geographical territories, and proximity, as observed above. Out of the 195 countries in the world, 30 are operating federalism of different varieties, and the federating states constitute about 40% of the total population of the world owing to their large size and population strength. Countries such as the USA, Germany, India, Brazil, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malaysia, Mexico, Japan, Belgium, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Nepal, Ethiopia, and many others today are operating under federalism. In most cases, the federal states practice two tiers of government: the central and local governments, as in the cases of Australia, Canada, Germany, and Malaysia, while some have a three-tier arrangement, such as Nigeria and the USA, with the federal, state, and local governments all constitutionally recognised (Suberu, 1991). Some countries, such as the USA, Brazil, Germany, India, Mexico, and Nigeria, have adopted federalism for their large territories. A diverse population is another area for the emergence of federalism in some countries, including Malaysia, Nepal, and Tanzania, which decided to co-exist in unity while retaining their original identity. In other cases, ethnic, religious, and linguistic factors compelled a federal structure, as in the case of Belgium, Switzerland, and Mexico (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2020).

Federalism as a political structure is not unique worldwide since the countries that adopt a federal system have diverse cultures, histories, peculiarities, and needs. It is on record that no federal structure is exactly alike the other, not even the Nigeria-USA pattern, which is generally regarded as synonymous. Decentralisation and devolution of powers differ from one federal state to another. For example, in Nigeria, environmental protection policy is bestowed on states, while in Malaysia, it resides with the federal government. In some federations, some powers do not belong exclusively to either of the constituent units of the federation, as in the case of India, where both the Indian Parliament and state lawmakers can pass a law on criminal, justice, and socioeconomic matters. One benefit of federalism is its provision of an opportunity for representation by all groups in a decision-making process. In some federal states, the nature of representation is equal irrespective of the population and size of the regions, as is obtainable in Australia and Argentina for senate membership (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2020). In Nigeria and the USA, representation is based on the population of the states and their constituencies in the House of Representatives, while in the upper chamber, the Senate, each state has equal representation of three (3) senators, irrespective of their population. In some federal states, national lawmakers are elected directly in a popular election, specifically in Nigeria and the USA, but in countries like Malaysia and India, some members of the upper house are chosen by the members of the state legislatures. In Canada, power sharing is based on cooperation between the federal government and the provinces, as in Australia, while in Nigeria and the USA, the powers of the federal, state, and local governments are specified in the

constitution as exclusive, concurrent, and residual (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2020). One of the ways of maintaining constitutional supremacy in a federal system despite official power allocation to various components is the clause for amendment of the constitution and law-making. In some federal states like Nigeria, India, and the USA, a constitutional amendment requires not only the two-thirds of the national assembly or central lawmakers but also a two-thirds majority of the state lawmakers. Additionally, the constitution of a federal system protects the federation from dissolution. The constitution usually provides that the component units of the federation are indispensable and indissoluble (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2020).

National Security Architecture in Nigeria

National security architecture denotes an organisation, management, policy, decision-making and oversight structures and institutions, as well as security strategies, mapping, and planning for the maintenance of both internal and external security. The management of national security involves many institutions and agencies, which makes coordination of decision-making an important aspect of security. The executive, for example, can design policies, programmes, and plans for national security; the legislature can approve the budget and provide input in addition to oversight functions; and other institutions can coordinate or even execute, such as law enforcement agencies. In this regard, national security architecture takes into cognizance the short-term and long-term security plans, recognising the security needs of the citizens and the state, and identifying the potential threats to be followed by the constitution of the institutions and agencies that will be tasked with the responsibilities. The national security architecture is strengthened with legal backing through constitutional provisions, acts, and other bye-laws (Haider, 2016).

The Nigerian national security architecture involves the formation of institutions, structures, and policies, as well as programmes for protection and internal and external defence. The institutions involved all the ministries of defence and security, comprising various security personnel and agencies. The structures are constitutionally designed into the powers of security decision-making, where the President of the country is the Commander-in-Chief and the Chief Security Officer of the country is assisted by his cabinet of ministers, the National Security Adviser (NSA), and other advisers. The service chiefs consist of the Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Air Force, and Commander of Land Troops. The Inspector General of Police and other paramilitary personnel such as the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Department of State Security (DSS), National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Nigerian Customs Services (NCS), National Immigration Services (NIS), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (NDLEA), and several others were responsible for a coordinated operation towards the maintenance of internal and external security (Yacubu, 2012). It is constitutionally provided that all matters of defence and security, including their structures, are exclusively the responsibilities of the Federal Government. Many scholars and analysts argued that in a genuine federation, this situation should not exist. Security should be decentralised because most of the security matters are sometimes local, which can be handled better by local security outfits (Sule et al. 2019).

Nigeria is currently battling with many security challenges at all levels. Internally, the oscillating political environment and vulnerable social settings emanating from multi-religious, multiethnic, and regional politics all contributed to security dilemmas or challenges for Nigeria, in addition to a mammoth geographical territory, porous borders, and economic fluctuation. The dilemma of the Anglophone and Francophone dichotomy is another security concern where the country is in a neighbourhood of the four

major countries in West Africa that were all colonised by France, thereby creating a wide gap in communication, external allegiance, and cooperation (Yakubu, 2012). Nigeria established a chain of Security Councils that designed security policies for the country internally and externally (Yakubu, 2012). Nigeria faces new security threats through terrorists with the emergence of the Boko Haram terrorists, who shielded themselves under the umbrella of religion to commit heinous crimes against mankind in the northern part of the country, particularly the northeastern enclave, where they remain dominant in their insurgency activities (Sule et al. 2019).

The Nigerian Federalism

The foundation of Nigerian Federalism was rooted in 1914, after the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of the British Colony by Governor General Lord Lugard (Afigbo, 1991). However, Nigerian independence in 1960 and the declaration of the Republic in 1963 marked the new era of Nigerian Federalism (Elaigwu, 2002). Earlier, in 1902, the Nigerian territory was overpowered forcefully by the British colonial exploiters, which signalled the successful subjugation of the Northern Territory after a fierce resistance (Elaigwu, 1996). The southern part was initially captured in 1890, when all the intensified resistance was suppressed by the British colonisers (Elaigwu & Olorunsola, 1983). The British exploiters administered the South and North territories separately through the introduction of indirect rule in the North, which recorded tremendous success owing to the centralised political system that was established in the North before the coming of the colonisers (Nwabueze, 1983). The South, however, was managed in a mixture of indirect rule and direct rule owing to the failure of indirect rule in the region because there was no centralised political system in all parts of the South like the North (Adamolekun, 1991). The major reason for deciding to amalgamate the Northern and Southern Protectorates was economic and political (Peel, 2011). The existing political, social, and economic structures that the British colonisers tumbled across in the Nigerian territory were altered and bundled into a Native Authority System (Mundt & Aborishade, 2005). It should be noted that the Native Authorities, or local government, were thus the first political entity to emerge on the ladder of Nigerian federalism historically, even though, later in modern times, they are the most emasculated segment in the three tiers of government in the federation (Hill, 2011).

After the events of 1914 in Nigeria, the British engaged in restructuring various aspects of the political and socioeconomic institutions of Nigeria. This is purposely to ease the process of their colonisation owing to the complexities and diversities that they forced into the undesired marriage (Mackintosh, 1962). The commencement of nationalist activities intensified pressure on British colonisers to initiate the process of an all-inclusive government, especially one that will take into recognition the fears of the minority who felt overwhelmed by the three dominant regional ethnic groups of Hausa/Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba (Elaigwu, 2007). The British colonial administrators started yielding to pressure and accommodated the presence of the indigenous lawmakers in the 1922 Clifford Constitution. However, there was no provision for federalism in the provisions of that Constitution. The elites quickly re-strategized and secured electoral offices in the legislature, but that provision still fell short of satisfying the nationalists, neither their struggles nor agitations (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

The continued aspirations for a more inclusive and flexible political structure resulted in the introduction of regionalism in 1944 by Governor Richard. This has been seen by many (Coleman, 1960; Dudley, 1976; Crowder, 1978; and Adejumbi, 2010) as the foundation for Nigerian Federalism in theory and practice. In the provision of the Richard Constitution of 1944, regionalism was introduced, making the Nigerian colony comprised of the North, South, West, and Lagos. The later Constitutions of Macpherson in

1951 and Lytton in 1954 all further consolidated the structures of federal governance in Nigeria (Le Van, 2015). However, the seed of discord was sown by the British colonisers in the establishment of Nigerian federalism because of the regional imbalance. Politically, the North possessed around 80% of the total Nigerian territory, and it had the majority population, which made decision-making in the parliament in those days always skewed in favour of the North. The economy, too, was structured in such a way that the nature of fiscal federalism in Nigeria was provided for the convenience of the British colonisers. A large chunk of the realised revenue was retained at the centre. This arrangement was later to be enshrined in the 1999 Constitution, which was also to become the major bone of contention in the agitations and the politics of the call for a restructuring (Usuanlele & Ibhawoh, 2017).

Thus, by the time Nigeria was declared an independent state in 1960, it had successfully joined the community of global federal states. A political tussle among the competing elites in the West led to the creation of the Mid-Western Region in 1963, the year that Nigeria became a republic. This development has now expanded the regions into the North, South, West, Mid-West, and Lagos (Smith, 2007). The continued imbalance and insatiable agitations by the regional elites culminated in the first orchestrated bloody coup that targeted only the Northern leaders, and the repercussions of the coup were tantamount to the 3-year Civil War (1967–1971). This development caused a setback in the progress and practice of Nigerian Federalism because the military rulers abandoned federal structures and united all government institutions. However, this setback to federalism in Nigeria was temporary, as the counter-coup of July 1966 not only restored federalism in Nigeria but extended the federal structures through the creation of states after the end of the Civil War in 1970. The Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon created nine states and later added three, making them twelve, to give local autonomy to the ethnic and religious composition of the federation (Adesoji, 2017). This process is a tranquilizer for the further entrenchment of the federal institutions in the country.

In the post-Civil War, many political restructurings were made, which all further aggravated the structures of federalism in Nigeria. The 1979 Constitution recognised the local governments as the third tier of government, making the component units of the federation now 3 (Dawood, 2015). The various military regimes that ruled Nigeria from the 1970s to 1996 created additional states and local governments so that by 1996, the Nigerian Federation had a federal government, 36 states, and 774 local governments (Suberu, 2009). Oil became the mainstay of the Nigerian economy in the 1970s, leading to the constitutional overhaul of the revenue-sharing formula among the three tiers of government (Ogundiya, 2012). In essence, the Nigerian post-colonial state handed itself an unconsciously imbalanced federalism where the fiscal arrangement and political powers are asymmetrical. The establishment of a 13% derivation formula for the oil-producing states was a major step towards actualizing true federalism, but the process could not satisfy the yearnings and aspirations of the agitators who insist on full state autonomy and resource control. On the other hand, the North continues to dominate power owing to its demographic mightiness in a democratic setting. In essence, most of the agitations for power and resource control are perceived by many studies as politically motivated by the nation's elites in their scramble for access to power, as shall be discussed in the following section.

Many views (Inegbedion & Omoregie, 2006; Suberu, 2010; and Okpevra, 2021) argue that there is everything wrong with the operation of Nigerian Federalism. Although it was earlier noted in this study that all federal states operate their own unique structures and no federal structure is exactly similar to the other, not even the Nigerian copy-and-paste American system looks alike in all aspects, they still believed that the much-sought autonomy, economic advantage, and other benefits were not accruable in the case of Nigerian Federalism. For instance, despite the daunting and seemingly insurmountable challenges of

security in the country, the police are centralised and fully controlled by the federal government. This is in spite of the insecurity that several states are facing. All the agitations for the creation of state police to cater for local insecurity are ignored. However, it should be noted that the states that are agitating for state police are not saints in this regard. Given the opportunity, they have emasculated the local government by usurping their financial and political powers directly. The takeover of local governments by state governments is associated with the recent outburst in local insecurity such as insurgency, banditry, farmer-herder clashes, and kidnapping. The states failed to look inward at these issues and proffer solutions but kept on insisting on state police, which is linked to a political motive.

The Agitations for State Police in Nigeria: Feasibility and Challenges

In the wake of pervasive and increasing insecurity in Nigeria at all levels, many sections of the country voiced their desire to control the security apparatus at their local or regional level. The calls for the creation of state police intensified. The agitations are mainly attacking the federal structure in Nigeria. For instance, while federal states like Germany, Australia, India, and Malaysia are identified with the provision of state police, the Nigerian case is the opposite (Adekaiyaoja, 2020). Nigerian Federalism agreed on decentralisation of powers and, in some cases, even devolution, but Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution provides that there can only be one police, and that is the federal affair, with the Inspector General of Police (IGP) as the Chief of Police, seven Assistant Inspector Generals (AIG), seven Deputy Inspector Generals (DIG) for all the six geopolitical zones in the country, and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja (Abuja) being formed, and a Commissioner of Police (CP) for each state and FCT Abuja. All districts, wards, and other areas are designated with police officers such as the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and others. The state is not fully excluded from the affairs of the police since they are required to collaborate with the host communities for security control (Tangban & Audu, 2020).

One of the arguments in favour of the creation of state police in Nigeria is that the number of police that are protecting the citizens' lives and properties is scanty and cannot guarantee any meaningful security, which is why insecurity permeated all parts of the country. For instance, Nigeria is currently estimated to have a population of over 200 million inhabitants, but it has only approximately 377,000 police officers. This means a ratio of 550 per police officer (Innocent & Andrew, 2014). Thus, the federal government failed to expand the police force, which is making internal security in Nigeria impracticable. Besides, about 1/3 of this police force is concentrated on protecting top government functionaries and other influential people, leaving the majority of the public exposed to the vulnerabilities of insecurity. If this configuration is considered, it may not be wrong to say that each police force is now protecting 1,000 Nigerians (Ogidan, 2018).

Another argument presented in support of the establishment or feasibility of state police is that the current arrangement negates the principles of autonomy and decentralisation in the federal structure as obtainable in many countries (Aleyomi, 2013). Although it has been observed that all federal systems have their uniqueness and peculiarities, it is still believed that the creation of state police can consolidate security and improve the provision of national security against the challenges faced by many states (This Day Newspaper Editorial, 2021). It also presumes that states have their own unique cases of insecurity that require a different approach and actors. For instance, the Niger Delta militants can be tackled better by those who know the terrain and are accustomed to the creek lifestyle. The Boko Haram insurgency can be handled by those who are the inhabitants of the Northeast, with knowledge of the geographical terrain of Sambisa Forest and other enclaves of their hiding. The Northwest banditry can be addressed in the same manner by those who are familiar with the environment of the hideouts of the bandits and kidnappers,

and the same applies to the separatist members of the Oduduwa and the secessionist Biafran agitators in the Southwest and Southeast and other crimes (Innocent & Andrew, 2014; Ogidan, 2018; and This Day Newspaper Editorial, 2021).

Furthermore, others (Innocent & Andrew, 2014; Oluwafemi, 2018) perceived that the state police was necessary because the Nigerian Police failed to secure the citizens owing to the myriads of insecurity across all facets of the country. They believed that the police force is understaffed, underfunded, underequipped, and demoralised (Tangban & Audu, 2020). This condition will not enable their good services, which require an alternative. They believed that the creation of state police would allow for a more secure environment in Nigeria and that the burden on the federal government would be minimised, which would encourage a reshaping of the federal police to be more professional with better and improved motivation and equipment for services. This will lead to harmony and cooperation between the state and federal police in tackling security challenges.

In addition to the above, another point that supports the creation of state police is the constitutional abuse sometimes committed by the federal government. Aleyomi (2013) argues that the FG, in many cases, like elections and other matters, used its police in determining the preferred candidate. This is against the principles of federalism, which provide in the Nigerian Constitution that the federal, state, and local governments have executives, legislatures, and judiciaries with their own separate courts and other independent powers. Then why should the police, which is an auxiliary in the execution of laws and orders, be restricted only to the federal government?

However, those who do not see the need for the creation of state police have their own explanation. Ogidan (2018) argued that many pundits despised the state police due to the difficulty of constitutional amendment. It is much more difficult for the bill to sail through, particularly because most of the Northern Governors, who have majority members in the National Assembly and who influenced them, are against the phenomenon. It is practically impossible to have the 2/3 requirement in the National Assembly and the 2/3 majority of the 36 state houses of assemblies to enable the amendment of Section 214 for the creation of state police. If the proposal is to create a new section and enshrine the powers for the state to establish their state police, it will still have to undergo the same procedure, and it will be countered and buried by those against it who seem to have the majority voice. In this regard, the creation of the state police requires more than a debate or even a constitutional review.

Aleyomi (2013) and Innocent & Andrew (2014) argue that state governors can abuse them. The creation of state police will hand over extreme and unlimited power to the state governors. Already, there are allegations that the police are being manipulated and abused by the governors, especially during an election where they were seen aiding in perpetrating rigging and manipulation. They also intimidate and harass the opposition, and in other cases, suppress the voice of civil society and criticisms, even the constructive ones, all using the police. As such, if the states are allowed to form their own police, they will abuse them and use them for their political ambitions only (Ogidan, 2018).

There are views (Aleyomi, 2013, Innocent & Andrew, 2014, and This Day Newspaper Editorial, 2021) that it is feared that the state governors may use the state police if created for secession. The volatile political environment in the country, which in most cases is fueled and escalated by the elites deliberately to secure power at all costs, is threatening the national unity of Nigeria. In recent times, the calls for secession, separation, and an increase in decentralisation and devolution of powers through full state resource control have instilled fear in the minds of well-meaning Nigerians that they are political and may lead to the dangerous stage of division that will break the country apart. Some sections, especially the

North, are feeling that the Southern Governors are pressuring state police to use them as an impending force of separation when the need arises.

In another submission, Oluwafemi (2018) argued that the creation of state police will encourage ethnicity and religious division. The current police force is presumed to have been recruited based on merit and capability and not any primordial sentiment of ethnic, religious, or regional belonging. But once the police are decentralised and states are empowered to create their own, recruitment will now focus on the ethnic, religious, and regional affiliations of the state governors, even within the state. Security matters will now be politicised, and only those in the same social category as the police will feel secure. Nigerians will not have the confidence to feel secure outside their states of origin. This is not to assume that there are no such mishaps in the recruitment of police, even at the federal level. Such allegations and petitions always accompany police recruitment whenever they are made by some sections of religion, ethnic groups, or regions (Adekaiyaoja, 2020). However, it is still agreed (Ogidan, 2018) that the FG is putting more effort into reflecting the federal character during the recruitment process, but the states may not make such efforts when given the opportunity considering what is obtainable in power distribution in some Nigerian states.

CONCLUSION

It is understood that the increasing calls for state police today in Nigeria are correlated with the way security challenges are escalating in all parts of the country. The various forms of armed group conflicts, such as the Niger-Delta militants, Boko Haram insurgency, rural banditry and kidnapping for ransom, farmers-herders clashes, IPOB secessionists, Oduduwa separatists, and other forms of crimes, all became more pronounced, which threw doubt in the minds of many Nigerians on whether the current Nigerian Police Force can secure the country. This prompted agitations to decentralise the Nigerian police by allowing the states to establish their own. It is concluded that in most of the federal states globally, the police is decentralised, enabling the states to form their own based on their unique security challenges. In Nigeria, the constitutional provision on police and national security architecture, in general, is vested only with the Federal Government. Any attempt at the creation of state police must undergo a full constitutional review in the National Assembly, which proved to be difficult. Many agitators argued that it is ripe for Nigeria to forge a genuine federal structure with full decentralisation through resource control and state police. They advanced their reasons for the failure of the police to protect lives and properties, the peculiarities of the security challenges faced by various states, and other reasons. However, this study concluded that it will be practically impossible for now to establish state police because the cumbersome process of constitutional review and amendment does not favour the agitations and also for the fear of the bastardization of the police by the state governors.

In view of the above, Nigeria as a federal state requires a willing and satisfactory arrangement that will safeguard unity and allow the diversities to be contained amicably. This study suggests that since it is practically impossible for the state police to be established for now, other measures should be exploited. One of them is the dialogue among the contradicting governors in the country to convince each other of the need or lack of the creation of state police and to extend this position to the populace. Another alternative is to utilise the local vigilantes and hunters for beekeeping security in their respective states. Additionally, the state governors should avoid politics and trace the authentic roots of the problem by allowing the local governments to exercise their autonomy and constitutional powers. Finally, the National Assembly and state houses of assemblies need to seek the majority opinions of Nigerians and build on

them in the constitutional amendment to determine whether the governed need state police or not to act in the overall interest of the country.

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