

Nigerian federalism and the politics of resource control: The south-south case

Ifeanyi Kingsley Egbuna *

Department of Political Science and International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Abuja, Nigeria.

World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2025, 27(01), 797-817

Publication history: Received on 23 May 2025; revised on 03 July 2025; accepted on 05 July 2025

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2025.27.1.2527>

Abstract

The research is an analysis of Nigeria's federalism with specific mention of the implications of resource control in the South-South geopolitical zone. Drawing from an extensive literature review, the research shows that resource control politics has contributed to the region's socioeconomic under-development, environmental degradation, and lowered well-being of citizens. The research shows that the objectives of resource control as currently pursued are contradictory to overall development dynamics of the Nigerian state. The paper argues that it is an illusion to believe that state-led resource control will necessarily lead to sustainable and fair national development. Rather, such beliefs can be contrary to integrated national development as well as compound structural imbalances within the federal system.

Keywords: Federalism in Nigeria; Resource Control; South-South Region; Revenue Allocation; Political Restructuring

1. Introduction

Nigeria gained her independence on the 1st of October, 1960 and adopted a parliamentary system of government based on a federal structure. There were three regions at the beginning; North, South-East, and South- West. In 1964, Midwest was carved out of the South-west. During this period the various regions specialized in the production of cash crops such as cocoa, groundnut, rubber, palm-kernel and timber. The regions managed the revenues from these commodities, however, with the advent of petroleum, the federal government took control of the mineral resources from such regions. The South-South is Nigeria's main oil and gas producing region. It has no control of these mineral resources, unlike the cash crops. The exploitation of Petroleum and Gas had meant environmental and ecological devastation of the region. The struggle for resource control, therefore, is not merely one for increased revenue from the proceeds of one's resources but more importantly, it is a move by the people of the South-South to take their destiny into their own hands. This creates ample opportunity for environmental protection and restoration of the South-South territory for productive living by insisting on environmentally friendly and best oil field practices in the Oil and Gas extraction process. The federal government's neglect of the area coupled with the unemployment of the youth has radicalized the people of this region which has increased the demand for "Resource Control" and a restructuring of the federal system.

1.1. Nigeria federalism

The colonial masters were the architect of minority organizations in Africa. According to (Banjo; 1981); the British saw Nigeria in three major groups; the Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the West, and the Igbo in the East thereby leaving more than two hundred and fifty (250) smaller people ignored (Banjo; 1981). The well-being of the people being governed was not the key consideration but rather the use of Tax revenue (import and export duties) from the south for the British administration of the country. The intervention of the military brought chaos and confusion into the Nigerian system of government in 1966. Though, as the first Nigeria's coup headed by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu were to check the excesses of the civilian rules, unfortunately for them, they were checkmated and the

* Corresponding author: Ifeanyi Kingsley Egbuna.

government was handed over to Aguiyi Ironsi who happened to be the most senior in the hierarchy though he was not prepared. This unpreparedness made him form a unitary system of government and place people of his tribe in key positions, which brought about his exit from office six months later. Successive military governments borrowed a leaf from his unitary system of government. General Yakubu Gowon during the civil war created twelve states out of the four (4) regions in order to curtail the political influence of the regions. Nigerians are generally an emotional bunch when it comes to matters that affect their collective psyche. It should come as no surprise to the federal government on the intense reaction on one hand and the euphoria on the other with which the legal action instituted by the minister of justice, Chief Bola Ige against the seventeen southern states calling for resource control.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The activities of Resource control have given reason for scholars to access their impact on the Nigerian state. Our resources are being politicked for the sole aim of accumulating capital by the Oligarchy. Thus, it is within this context that the research work would evaluate the influence of government on the socio-political and economic environment of Nigeria. The government has by and large manipulated the management of energy resources in Nigeria; ranging from the Oil sector with multinational giants like Shell, Chevron, Mobil, to building and construction, consumer goods. The interplay of 'Politics and Economy' has given rise to such questions as:

- What role has the Nigerian government played in the effective allocation of resource control? specifically at the South-South.
- Have the increased activities of the National government been inimical to Nigeria's development strides?

Therefore, the problem that necessitated this research expedition lies in an in- depth analysis of activities of the Nigerian government and identifying linkages between the National government, the development paradox, and the underdevelopment reality of Nigeria such as the South-South.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The general goal of the study is to examine the Politics of Resource control in Nigeria, focusing on the Southern states of the Federation. Other specific aims of this research work include:

- To determine if there's any relationship between the South-South present underdevelopment and activities of the National government.
- To examine the spillover influence of the National government on the democratic stability of Nigeria.
- To promote the rapid development of the Oil producing areas including human development.
- To identify structural constraints in the resource control of Nigeria.
- To examine if the states (South-South) get a fair share of the National revenue.
- To express the fact that the Nigerian government is capital exploiters in their own country.
- To examine the agitation of resource control.

2. Research methodology

The method of gathering information will be through a SECONDARY source of data inquiry and the following sources are:

- Newspapers
- Published works
- Credible comments
- The Internet
- Magazines/Monographs

African Network for Environmental and Economic Center, Social and Economic Rights Centre Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA) and other relevant materials that are based on the Nigerian state. This method of data collection is very imperative to the development of this research because it serves as a developmental road plan in scientific research analysis. As students of developmental studies, the strength of this source of data collection is invaluable in the light of scrutinizing reputable information by scholars, authorities, news agencies. This paper not only reviews the subject but also adds to our bulk of knowledge and widening our horizon.

2.1. Research hypothesis

- True federalism is enhanced by adequate autonomy of component units.
- If true federalism is thoroughly practiced, there might not have been agitation for resource control
- Whether profound constitutional amendment, National conference, or new revenue sharing formula can bring peace and harmony.

2.2. Significance of the study

The study on its completion would be highly significant because:

- It is a contribution to the bulk of existing knowledge and literature on the aspect of the development of nations as it would help in informing development-minded governments on the structural constraints related to their resource control.
- The research is inextricably significant to the researcher as it is a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science honors degree at the Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Abuja.
- This research would equip and inform Nigeria policy decision-makers on the need to check the extreme effect of National instability and economic liberalization using concrete data evidence of the adverse effects of undemocratized governance and neglect of the Oil producing regions in Nigeria.
- This research is also significant to the researcher as it provides the opportunity to satisfy his intellectual curiosity towards evaluating the driving force, underlying motives of the federal government in taking over the affairs of resource control in Nigeria.
- The study would also be useful to students of development studies at the Master's Degree programme level since concrete issue relating to the course would be espoused.
- The work is an addendum to the overall existing human knowledge intrinsically dedicated to the development of mankind and the realization of the ultimate human potential.

2.3. Scope and limitations of the study

This research essentially centers on the affairs and governance of the federal government concerning the functions of the economy of nations. This is however limited to the Nigerian economic terrain laying particular emphasis on the role of the Nigerian government in the management of her resources, the effect of this management on Nigeria, her populace, and her political stability. The study would also encapsulate the relevance of the National government, exposing the underdevelopment dynamics of these regions on the Nigerian socio-political and economic environment. Furthermore, it is necessary notwithstanding, to discuss the limitations of this research study. Many researchers tend to interpret limitations primarily to mean money or time constraints in particular. Although these factors are generally implied, the major issues on study limitations should center on those factors that could primarily enhance or defect the essence of the project findings or general applicability of the research results. This research work would however suffer difficulties in having access to materials and references within the time frame required for the completion of the study. Insufficient funds, poor and inaccurate documentation of the activities of resource control and allocation by government agencies posed a great threat towards the actualization of the research objectives. Although there are other factors that directly and indirectly influence Nigerian federal status, the specific emphasis of this research effort is to examine the Nation's federal state and the management of her resources about the southern regions. However, these threats are within the manageable range of the researcher.

2.4. Organization of the study

The study is structured into five chapters, beginning with a general Introduction with the following sub-sections; Background to the study, Statement of the problem, Research methodology, Objectives of the study, Research hypothesis, Scope and Limitations and Significance of the study, ending with Organization of the study. Chapter two will intensively focus on Literature review and Theoretical framework. Chapter three will deal with the historical analysis of Nigeria's federalism, its status till the present constitution, problems, and a comparative study of Nigeria's federalism with other federal systems in the world. Chapter four will dwell specifically on the case study of the research work as it serves as a centerpiece for the politics of South-South resource control; these include the South-South geographical exposition, political, economic and cultural diversity, ethnic nationalities, and quest for resource control by the southern regions. Also, there will be illumination on the agitation of resources and the political manipulations behind it. Chapter five is the final section of the research which focuses on findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

2.5. Definition of key terms

2.5.1. *Federalism*

A constitutional arrangement, mid-way between the unitary system and confederacies, distributing powers more or less between the two major levels of government the Centre and the regions, with clearly Exclusive, Concurrent and Residual lists, jurisdictions, and powers. Federalism arises through the coerced authority of a foreign power, hence "Institutive Federalism" or through the constituent units, hence "Constitutive Federalism". A federation is the most practical example of a compromise between the need of constituent units for self-determination and the necessity for a secure, stable, and united effort and cooperation in the solution of the tasks of development. Hence federalism is the 'Structural basis for the doctrine of unity in diversity'.

2.5.2. *Resource control*

The use of natural resources to create development that is sustainable in terms of the environment, society and economy. The management of natural resources, including land, soil, plants, and animals, is also included in this, with an emphasis on how management impacts the standard of living for both current and future generations. This is equivalent to "environmental management" since it focuses on a scientific and technological understanding of ecology, resources, and the ability of these resources to support life. As it focuses on local knowledge, practices, and institutions, community-based natural resource management is "fast becoming a blueprint" for development programs, according to Hughes (Development and Change), who describes the Communal Areas Management of Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) program in Zimbabwe in collaboration with state or non-governmental organizations.

2.5.3. *Revenue allocation*

It is imperative to first know the meaning of Revenue. Internal revenue in Nigeria is government income derived from taxes, rental of governmental properties within a country. Concerning revenue allocation, these governmental incomes are the taxes levied on companies, businesses, corporations. This actualization provides for Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for the country's socio-economic and political development. Revenue allocation is synonymous with Internal Revenue Allotment only that the latter is specific to the Nation's domestic sharing. Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) is a local/state government's share of revenues from the National government which is largely based on geographical natural resources, land area, and population. This sharing of National income is observed practically in the Nigerian state as individual states receive monetary grants for their internal growth and development.

2.5.4. *Revenue Allocation Formula*

This is the allotment of various budgets and monetary grants to various states or component units of a federation based strictly on a principle. There are numerous formulas for revenue allocation across the globe; this research streamlines our focus on Nigeria as a country. One of the formulas that affect revenue allocation in Nigeria is the 'Principle of Derivation'.

3. Literature review

3.1. **Federalism: What constitutes 'true federalism'?**

Federalism is useful in its capacity to meet two important demands in the contemporary system. First, it helps to construct an efficient, dynamic and modern state in diversity. Also, there is no ideal federal model for Nations to adopt rather any federal arrangement adopted must be designed to suit its own realities of the social, economic, cultural, and political system. Federalism is a concept that has no fixed meaning; however, many scholars have devoted time to its study. Among them are the following political thinkers: Etzio's (1962) writing, on the question of political unification, provides a useful source to the overall conceptualization of federalism. He finds integrative forms as coercive (military), utilitarian (economic sanctions), and normative (propaganda) suggestive of the type of social variables one should look for in explaining the federal form of government (Etzioni 1962). A critical statement of Etzioni's perspective shows that he is concerned first with power, arguing that Politics is nothing short of the exercise of effective power by identification of central authority. Besides he stresses the relevance of the attitudes of leaders, decision-makers, and the politically aware public to the process of integration for unification. His focus on power reminds us that power is a factor to be considered in any process of integration. Federalism is an attempt to cope with the problem of power between two federating units or groups. It is an attempt to prevent a single group defined in financial, class, or linguistic terms from dominating the others and monopolizing the consumption of public goods. According to Ramphel (1980) "federalism did not begin as a concept of social and political organization involved by relative philosophers or postulated by didactic political scientists. It did not sprout from a process of a prior reason; it is not a political ideology. His most profound

theoretical exposition is perhaps, that contained in the 85 essays of 'THE FEDERALIST'. In addition, he noted that it emerged as a particular kind of functional arrangement between states and more accurately between communities for living and working together nationally while preserving a measure of separate identity; it is a methodology of limited unity (Rampel 1980). Wheare (1963) posited that we fall victim to a sort of "History" whereby what he interpreted as socio-political facts about the US federal experience are elevated to the status of defining characteristics, even though they are not of the federal government, because he over-relied on what he believes to be the fundamental elements of US federalism when developing his federal principles. Federalism was described by Wheare (1963) as the official separation of governmental levels. "The Federal principle refers to the division of powers in such a way that the general and regional governments are each within a sphere, co-ordinate and independent," he stated. According to him, the federal principle comprises the allocation of authority between governmental levels. Written constitution showing this division co-ordinate levels of government with regards to their respective functions (Wheare 1963). However, the main defect of Wheare's formulation of federalism is the constitutional delimitation of powers, bicameral legislature, the independent electoral system for both levels of government, multiparty but preferably a two-party system, a supreme court as if they are defining characteristics of federalism or perhaps logically built into the meaning of federalism. According to Livingstone (1956), he prefers an alternative formulation that takes account of societal processes and structures. According to him, the fundamental characteristics of federalism should be sought not in the concept itself nor in the application of legal and constitutional technology, but rather in the economic, social, political, and cultural forces that have rendered the external manifestations of federalism essential in society rather than in the institutional or constitutional framework. A society's federal characteristics are expressed and safeguarded by the federal government. According to Livingstone (1956), the legal and constitutional framework simply represents a sociocultural structure that is inevitably made up of both centrifugal and centripetal forces at work in society. He made a distinction between a Federal constitution; a legal document and a Federal society which consists of societal cleavages and divergence, which necessitates a federal constitution. A society's federal characteristics are expressed and safeguarded by the federal government. A multiplicity of ethnic groups with varying historical, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds that each belong to a unique and identifiable geographic territory are said to make up a federal society. According to Livingstone (1956), federalism thus turns into a tool for "comprising unity in diversity." Frederick (1965) sees federalism as a 'process' rather than a 'design' of continually involving political reality. The process by which a previously unitary political community becomes differentiated into a number of distinct and separate communities, now discrete and on their own, those problems: they no longer have in common (Frederick 1965). It is a process by which a number of separate political organizations by the state or any kind of association enter into joint arrangements for working out solutions, adopting joint policies, and making decisions on similar problems. Other writers such as Adele Jinadu (1976), viewed Federalism as a system of governance and institutional organization that political "architects" purposefully created to address the challenging dual challenges of upholding units and conserving variety (Jinadu 1976). Even Elaigwu (1996) also pointed out that "Federalism is a system of government where there are at least two levels of government, one of which is the Central authority and the other, Subnational unit(s)". The central authority represents the general or common interests such as defense, foreign affairs, overseas trade, and lots more. On the other hand, the sub-national unit(s) exercises powers of legislation on matters of local or particular interest within the sphere allotted to them by the constitution (Elaigwu 1996:6). From the foregoing analysis, for 'true federalism' to be the constitutional structure within a Federation, the following factors should be present. These are:

3.1.1. *Division of power*

This is the vertical division of power between levels of government such as the Federal, State, and Local government as the levels varies within each Nation-state. This often occurs in a similar vein with "Separation of Powers" but both concepts are different though exist within the same office, in the sense that Separation of Powers is power divided among the three branches or arms of government; Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary. Both concepts are interrelated, interconnected, interchanged and most times, misused. For the scientific analysis of this research, "Division of Power" encompasses the formal division among the 'tiers' of government. This division takes the form of function lists, these are Exclusive, Concurrent, and Residual lists which represent the responsibilities to be performed by the Federal, State, and Local governments respectively.

3.1.2. *Freewill*

A criterion that must be entrenched in our society if true federalism is to be realized. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia defined Freewill as the apparent ability of agents to make choices free from certain kinds of constraints. It is also defined as a voluntary choice or decision, or as freedom of humans to make choices that are not determined by prior causes or by Divine intervention. This unconstrained liberty in the contemporary era comes as a result of Metaphysics (i.e. enlightenment and reformation) investigation. Freewill is a fundamental principle of "real democracy" which is a basic feature of federalism. Individuals, groups, and societies at large should have full autonomy to make secular choices in accordance with National growth and development.

3.1.3. Maintenance of Unity

This is of utmost imperative if true federalism is to be attained and sustained. This particular criterion encompasses the sustenance of law and order among various sectors within a defined territorial boundary and beyond. How a nation-state stabilizes her socio-economic, political, and cultural sectors occurring domestically and also externally. Some nations consolidate to form a Confederation partly due to a lack of peace and harmony. A federation cannot exist without peace and harmony. The sustenance of federal harmony is imperative in relation to a federal state's foreign policy i.e. interaction in the international system. Unity in the international system is essential because tensions, cold war, centrifugation in global politics could invariably threaten the federal status of nation-states as it affects her national security. Unity in a federation does not only involve the levels of government, but it also accommodates the society as a whole between individuals, groups, and the national representatives. The sustenance of this oneness in a federation is invaluable in the sense that it serves as a driving force for the achievement of a 'true federal status'. This implies that various sectors/units of a nation such as the local and state units, defense sector, finance sector, must consolidate in the advancement of a political cause – FEDERALISM, irrespective of being privatized or commercialized. The sustainance of this oneness in a Federation is invaluable in the light that it serves as a driving force for the achievement of a "true-federal status". Preservation of diversity - One reputable credit in the development of a nation-state is her capability to maintain 'unity in diversity'. The preservation of diversity is slightly different from 'maintenance of unity' in the sense that the latter involves maintaining and sustaining the tradition, history, and integrity of various sectors/facets of a nation. This phenomenon is practicable and evident in heterogeneous states like Nigeria. Nigeria is a nation-state with seven hundred and seventy-four (774) local governments, over two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups, thirty states. Her ability to sustain and preserve the integral status of each unit in a federal setting and their active involvement in the nation's domestic affairs considers her a 'true federation'. From the foregoing factors, a federal structure does not imply 'true federalism'. There is a vivid dichotomy between a state under a federal structure and a state practicing true federalism. It is now our responsibility as students of developmental studies to determine which part Nigeria belongs. Nwabueze (2002) has identified the conditions to be met if 'true federalism' is to be thought of and these are; there must be a power-sharing arrangement such that preponderance of power should not rest in the hands of either the national or regional government to be so powerful that it can bend the will of others on its own. Federalism supposes that the national or regional government should stand to each other to meaningful independence resting upon a balanced division of power and resources. Each must have powers and resources sufficient to support the structure of a functioning government, able to stand on its own against the other. Adedeji (2001) on the other hand listed certain factors closely related to Nwabueze's but seen from a different perspective. This involves the people in the constitution-making process, fashioning an appropriate structure that can keep centrifugal forces by resisting the basic federal principle of dividing powers so that the federal and state or regional/zonal governments are each coordinated and independent within their respective spheres, operating and controlling human and natural resources within their respective area, putting in place proactive policies and measures to protect the interest of all ethnic groups so that minority groups are assured that comparative advantage is heavily in favor of centripetal forces and against centrifugal forces, upholding the principles of Fiscal federalism which deal with general normative framework for sharing fiscal instrument to provide adequate resources for understanding assigned functions and developing co-operative, competitive and innovative federalism which respect the universal norms in intergovernmental relations, transparency, accountability, mutual confidence and trust (Adedeji 2001:17). If all these aforementioned factors are implemented, then federalism will be seen on the inter-group level, what association is on the inter-personal level.

3.2. The component units: states and local government

The creation of states in Nigeria was for political expediency and to curtail the hegemonic power of the region, hence Gen. Gowon as the head of state then created twelve states out of four regions. In 1976, Gen. Muritala Mohammed created nineteen states, and Abuja was recognized as the federal capital territory. Gen. Babangida in 1989 created twenty states and in 1991, he increased it to thirty states. In 1996, Gen. Abacha increased it to thirty-six with 774 local governments which still hold at present.

3.3. Fiscal federalism

There is arguably no universal system of the fiscal federation, rather a great variety of national systems of fiscal federalism existing with each system involving incrementally in an autonomous manner in response to the unique historical circumstance of each federation. Nevertheless, there are some consensus in the literature about certain comparative best practices to fiscal federalism including the advantages and imperatives of centralizing the jurisdiction for mobile elastic or regional unevenly distributed tax bases, decentralizing the authority to raise relatively stable, immobile or evenly distributed taxes like land and property taxes and perhaps personal income taxes delighting expenditure authority to the most local level possible in order to tailor the provision of public services to the diversity of citizen and communal preferences and needs in a federation implementing inter-governmental transfer to current

vertical of balance in the distribution of revenues and designing system of fiscal federalism that promote not only distributional equality but also economic efficiency by encouraging all governmental units to optimally generate and expand their own resources and opportunities, thereby contributing to sustainable overall national development (Terminissian 1997, Aiybokhan 1999). In a nutshell, Fiscal federalism deals with the general normative framework for sharing fiscal instrument to provide adequate resources for undertaking assigned functions and developing co-operative, competitive and innovative federalism which respect the universal norms in inter- governmental relations, transparency, accountability, confidence and trust (Adedeji, 2001:17).

3.4. Resources and nature of the Nigerian state

According to Ademola (2001:3), he explicates the term "resources" as 'gifts of nature and what man can make of them'. It is the resources of the wealth of an individual society or country that can be further classified into three groups namely; Natural and Manmade resources (Ademola 2001:3). Nigeria is vastly endowed with all types but having a serious problem in the area of application, administration, and governing. Resources are very useful to man particularly with a specified cultural setting where specific values are attached to specific items, resources are also an economic phenomenon in the sense that they meet human needs within the constitution of their limitation in quality and spatial distribution (Onyeme/Ukwe et al, 1983; 3). Between 1960 and 1970, Nigeria was ranked the third worldwide in the production and exportation of groundnuts mainly from the northern region and cotton also from this region; in the eastern region, palm oil, coal, and forestry were their mainstay; the mid-western region was endowed with timber, while the west was blessed with cocoa and forestry. All the coastlands from the west down to the east were blessed with natural waters. In addition, the nation is blessed with invaluable numbers of resources some of which have been tapped and the majority yet untapped, scattered all over the nation. These include tin, limestone, kaolin, gold, silver, lead/zinc, clay, iron, solid rock, nickel bauxite marble, graphite (Aderibigbe; 2001:30).

3.5. Contemporary issues in politics and resources

"The debates as to who owns academic as the constitution is very definite as to who owns oil," contends Omoniyi (2001). The minerals were declared "the property of the federal government on Nigeria" by colonial statutes and later indigenous government legislation. We are aware that every constitution is the political ideology, expressed in legalese, of the governing class. It is documented that during the process of drafting the 1999 constitution, the military elite ensured that the opinions of minorities on oil were not taken into consideration and that the desires of those who had been plotting since 1960 to turn the minerals into federal property were represented (Omoniyi, 2001:3). According to Feyide (1986), former Nigerian Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) secretary. In his lecture in 1986 on OIL IN WORLD POLITICS given at the faculty of law, The University of Lagos that "All over the world the lives of people are affected and the destiny of nations is probably determined by the rate of oil industry operation". Oil keeps the factories of industrialized countries working and provides revenue which enables oil expenditure to execute ambitious and economic plans. The march of progress would be retarded and life could become unbearable if the world was deprived of Oil. This is why oil has become the concern of governments. A vital ingredient of their policies and crucial factors in the political and diplomatic strategy inspired by sensational disclosures and revolution of the alleged machinations in the corridors and inner chambers of Oil empires, Oil has been given the image of big business ruled by naked politics and dominated by ruthless men who are sensitive to nothing except their profit (Feyide 2001:17). Furthermore, he stated that "politics about Oil includes all the relationships, policies and strategies, national and international, which have a direct bearing, influence or effect in the production and utilization of Oil in the international scene". For most 20th century, Oil was the largest and most important resource in the world. It was peaceful and was once exercised by a few major international Oil companies. It was generally believed and many still do believe that the Oil industry could do almost anything, transform any range of products. It is a concern of all governmental levels in all political and economic systems, and it has been assimilated into the political ideology of many nations and forms an essential component of the ensuing economic arrangement. This is why the government of all political and economic systems intervenes in the business (Feyide 2001:19). According to Obi (1995), the rising profile of Oil in the official Nigerian circle was closely related to the class of the Nigerian state in which the emergent domestic ruling class made their position in-state institutions to capture economic resources as well as the dependent nature of Nigeria economy. Oil became strategically important in the calculations of the domestic ruling class as the "new" basis of accumulation over which control must be sought and established (Obi; 1995:7). However, this development was a significant federal stability in the first republic within the content of the ethnic center and regionalized factions of Nigerian ruling class, which coincided with three ethnic majorities against one another; the Igbo led the Eastern region against the Oil producing Eastern minorities who had historically resented Igbo domination. The issues of a 'Control' generated ripples that directly threatened the stability of the Nigerian federation (Obi 1995:7). It is pertinent to note that for Nigerian federalism to deliver effective governance to the people, there is a need for some of the functions of the central government to be devolved to the states and local governments.

3.6. Theoretical framework

In analyzing this research work, SYSTEM ANALYSIS will be used. The 'System approach' to the study of a political system is aimed at debunking the major assumption of the "group theorists" who emphasized tensions and pressures in the governmental processes. For the system analyst, therefore, pre-occupation should be on how to achieve equilibrium, interdependence and stability, input-output, and so on. David Easton put forward the SYSTEM APPROACH based on his perception of politics as an essential allocation of values and resources in a political system that must be viewed historically but with interdependent parts which must function as a whole for there to be stability. He came up with what is called the "Eastonian model". This theory borrows from the pure sciences such as Biology, Physics, Chemistry, etc. David Easton is usually credited with pioneering the application of the Systems approach to the analysis of the political process. He defines the Political System as 'the system of interactions in any society through which binding or authoritative decisions are made and implemented. He considers the political system as existing within the environment of other systems- physical, biological, social, psychological, which affect it and are in turn affected by the political system through continuous transactions and exchanges. According to Easton, the political system functions by getting 'inputs' from its environment which evoke a response from it. The inputs could be 'demands' that values be allocated in a particular way or they could be 'supports', that is, expressions of approval for particular decisions. The inputs from the environment undergo a 'Conversion process' within the political system and come out as outputs, which are usually authoritative decisions such as government policies, judicial decisions, acts of parliament, promulgated by the authorities. These authoritative outputs usually affect the environment as 'outcomes' and in turn excite some form of 'feedback', that is, changes in the intensity and volume of demands and support from the environment. His formulations have been criticized as being too abstract and too isolated from concrete reality. However, the approach can be considered helpful in the understanding of political events that we do not directly experience. This model suggests three parts of a political system; the demand of input part, which states demands of the people, for instance in the Niger Delta Area; indigenes making demands or requests to the federal government. These demands are treated by the political structures involved. The people of the South-South states demand employment, local contract, provision of basic amenities such as water, electricity, hospitals, good roads, and physical infrastructures that can appeal to the educated dissatisfied elites, the unemployed youths frustrated by diminishing opportunities and stagnant development. These demands now come in form of 'Output' by the system, which may or may not achieve its aim.

3.7. General proportion of the system theorist

Society is said to be an Environment, having many parts. In other words, there are Sub-systems in a system. Secondly, Society as a system has definable elements e.g. Individuals. The wider a System is, the more individualistic it becomes, having sub-systems such as economic, political, religious, and cultural sub-systems. Thirdly, essential to any System is the interdependence of its parts. The various sub-systems interact and contribute to each other's development. Fourthly, every system has its boundary, it could be defined and specified, that is it starts somewhere and ends somewhere. Fifthly, the important aspect of the social system is not groups or individuals but the role they are expected to play in the system. Sixth, using the Estonian model of input/output, created the basis for the notion of linkages between Systems- here is policy impact in terms of how people are affected by such policy. It could be said of the system theory, however, that it is rich in concepts that could further facilitate researchers into political systems and processes of government. Taking Nigeria as a SYSTEM, the six geo-political zones; North-Central, North-East, North-West, South-South, South-East, South-West, are the six subsystems that make the Nation. Within each zone, units are coming together to form the sub-system. These sub-systems consolidate to form a System called NIGERIA. Relating this analysis to the system theorist which states that the wider a system is, the more individualistic it becomes defines the case of Nigeria.

4. Nigerian federalism: a historical analysis

The British colonial masters introduced Federalism into Nigeria. Before the twentieth century, what we now know as Nigeria was separately inhabited by the indigenous communities that had different cultural, traditional, and political systems. Before 1900, a large part of Nigeria was under the control of the Royal Niger Company (RNC). In 1900, the British government took over control of the northern region. The protectorate of southern Nigeria was later declared. By 1906, there was a unification process in which the British government took a step to unite the two administrations, the protectorate of South with Lagos which had been declared a crown colony in 1861, was then known as the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria. This was done on a basis that a common union between them would help solve the financial problems of the North of which Lord Lugard was the administrator (Rikor, 1989). The amalgamation of the Northern protectorate and the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria which came into being in 1914 was known as the colony and protectorate of Nigeria. A cursory look at this amalgamation process shows that it was done to satisfy the political and economic interests of the colonizer rather than creating a better political future for Nigeria and her citizenry. This is true as various nationalities were incorporated into Nigeria without their consent. It is a notable fact that these heterogeneous communities or nationalities that make up Nigeria differ in their languages, traditions, and

religion, even in the pattern of development drive from one community to the other. As a result, the British toyed with several constitutions in an attempt to find a way of wielding this multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-national community together. However, the federal-sponsored constitution of the Clifford constitution of 1922, established a legislative council that lacked deliberate powers. The Nigerian nationalists considered it to be non-representative enough and it was promptly abandoned and replaced. The Richard constitution of 1946 was seen to be an improvement on that of Clifford by providing a common legislative council for the whole country with the mandate to advise the governor and approve policies. It established 'Regional councils' which had no exclusive legislative powers. According to Sagayi (1999:4) "the 1951 constitution came into being after an unprecedented process of a constitution with the people of Nigeria. On 19th January 1950, a general conference of representatives from all parts of Nigeria started meeting in Ibadan to map the future system of government in Nigeria with the recommendation of the regional conference as the working document. Despite all efforts made, the implementation of the Macpherson constitution (1951) was ridden with a crisis. This led to the 1953 London conference culminating in the promulgation of the Lyttleton constitution; Nigeria became a federation of three regions; northern, western, eastern regions. According to Olubare 1991:1993, the Lyttleton constitution removed the elements of unitary contained in the 1951 constitution. In preparation for independence, the London constitutional conference of 1957 and 1958 was held leading to the 1960 independence constitution. Both the 1960 (independence) and the 1963 (Republican) constitutions were identical, claims Sagayi (1999). The only distinctions were that the Supreme Court (1963) rather than the British Privy Council's judicial committee (1960) ended the judicial appeal system and that a ceremonial president (1963) was established in lieu of the queen of England (1960). The British held firmly to their constitutional framework of tripartite Nigeria, the regional political leaders initiated their concepts of rulership in their respective areas of government and they strove to keep a hold on their regions. The deliberate act placing the percentage of the population at 54.5 (north), 20.0 (west), 23.0 (east), and 2.5 (south Cameroon) was lopsided. Consequently, The NPC was able to keep its hold on the north (which it accomplished with the British's active backing) and dominance at the federal level because the British awarded the north 55% of the federal constituencies. This was the stage of the federal election in December 1959, which was to usher in the political independence of the country. The results came and NPC won one hundred and forty-eight (148) seats, the NCNC (89) eighty-nine seats. The NPC took the lion's share at the federal level coupled with the alliance of the NCNC. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe became the first president of the first republic of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was made the first prime minister and Chief Obafemi Awolowo emerged as the leader of the opposition party (Ademoyega, 1981:1-6). The calculated attempt to silence the opposition party coupled with maladministration of the ruling party and intention to annex the Western region sprang up crisis in the Western region and later brought about coup of 15th January 1966 led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu but was hijacked by Major Gen. J.T Aguiyi Ironsi. The establishment of a unitary government backed up by decree no. 34 of March 1966 led to counter-coup of July 29th, 1966. While the military is hierarchically organized under a control command structure, Federalism has different centers of power and federalism requires greater devolution of powers from the center while military rule requires greater centralization of powers at the center. The latter part of Gowon's regime (1965-1975), the brief period of Muritala Mohammed before he was murdered on 13th February 1976 (1975-1976), and the regime of his successor, Olusegun Obasanjo (1976-1979) who later handed over the reign of leadership to a democratically elected president ruled under the federal military system of government. Under this system, the military head of state has to appoint military governors for the states. In line with the hierarchical claim of military command, these governments are directly responsible to the head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces, a process that negates the goals of federal principles. From 1980 to 1983, Nigeria witnessed the 2nd and 3rd democratically elected system of government-backed up by the 1979 constitution. However, the intervention of Buhari/Idiagbon regime in 1983 truncated the democratically elected system of government, which was overrun on 27th August 1983 by the self-styled Ibrahim Babangida military system of government. This lasted eight (8) years with ulterior motives of democratizing the nation (Elaigusi 1996: 168). He continued playing on the nation until things came to a peak. In June 1993, when he single-handedly annulled the freest and fairest election that ever took place in the country. The president-elect (Chief M.K.O. Abiola) was later put under lock and key for making self-declaration. This led to series of serious political crises with the civil society demanding actualization of the June 12 election results. In August 1993, Chief Ernest Shonekan was sworn in as head of the interim government. It lacked the support and backing of both citizens and international friends. On November 17th, 1993 Gen. Sani Abacha took over the reign of government through a placed coup and ruled the Nation with an Iron fist, clamping down on whoever dared to challenge his authority. Suddenly news of his death came and Abdulsalam Abubakar became his successor. Immediately he embarked on a transition program that brought about the democratic government headed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a onetime military head of state. Analytically, out of the 46 years of the Nation's independence, the country had witnessed 29 years of military dictatorship and 17 years of a democratically elected government.

4.1. Federalism and the 1999 constitution

Federalism provides a constitutional arrangement that shares power and resources among different levels of government, which is the Central and Regional government, enabling each government to exist separately and form interference on the other hand and to operate directly on powers and property within its territory. The federal arrangement gives the Central government authority over matters of common concern such as defense, foreign affairs, currency, and major roads while regional or states government take care of matters of local concern. And the two levels of government currently administer matters of both national and local importance. Nigeria's constitution has never been genuinely democratic. The foundation of Nigeria's federalism was shattered by military dictatorship, despite the country having a constitutional constitution. Various minority groups, the opposition and human rights movement, and ethnocultural organizations demanded autonomy and political restructuring, which were based on the commandant nature of military government and the concentration of power in the federal government (Fani-Kayode Oshido 1998, Okediran 1998). The 1999 constitution hardly demonstrates any sensitivity to these issues, it hardly pays attention to the question of autonomy or reorganization of political power and though it pays so much attention to power and the definition of power, it is lopsided in favor of the central authority. The states of the federation do not have control over their resources. This is the only method used by the federal government, which has only guaranteed 13% of the revenue generated to the states where the resources are generated. For example, the controversy surrounding the Onshore Offshore dichotomy in Nigeria's oil-bearing and oil-producing communities has long transcended percentages. Professor Nwabueze (2001) listed four areas of alternatives of power evidencing this shift from the position under the 1960/63 constitution to that under the 1999 constitution. viz;

- Matters hitherto to Concurrent to both the federal and regional governments (50% of the concurrent list) are now made exclusive to the federal government.
- Some of the matters now on the concurrent list are to some large extent in reality exclusive to the federal government.
- The federal power over taxation of the income and profit of individuals is no longer limited to any defined purpose, while the federal government now enjoys exclusive power over all kinds of trade and commerce.
- Federal power now extends to certain matters previously exclusive to the Regions such as minimum standard members of House of Assembly.

4.1.1. Problems of Nigeria federalism

The problems facing Nigeria federalism will be addressed under the following sub-sections namely:

- Distributive federalism
- Leadership succession processes
- Revenue allocation

4.1.2. Distributive federalism

The distributive policy is the attempt made by the government at the center to spread activities across the nation through the physical implantation of government projects and services. In principle, it is done to penetrate the grassroots by registering the physical presence of the central government authority as possible. The receiving communities shall in turn consider such projects as their rightful shares of the federal commonwealth (Jakakja, 1996; 83). Unfortunately, in Nigeria, a resource permitting distributive federalism is carried out mainly as political penetration rather than as a Nation-building strategy. As such, projects and services are replicated in every state and local government whether or not the recipient communities would ever need or value them.

4.1.3. Leadership succession processes

The leadership succession in Nigeria's federalism has always generated acrimony and anguish since 1966, 1983, and 1999-2003. The tension and disputes always influenced the military into Nigeria's political science. This succession crisis usually arose from the inability and refusal of the competing political elites to observe and abide by the rule of the game. For instance, in the 1993 election, the build-up towards national elections in Nigeria was marred by animosity. Right from voters registration exercise in each of the major geo-ethnic regions (North, West, and East) kicked off with a frenzied competition to return the highest possible numbers of registered voters. This inflated registration produced in advance opportunity for rigging the elections, which in turn made it possible for the ruling regional elites to determine the outcome of elections within.

4.1.4. Revenue allocation

The failure of the federating units to agree on the revenue allocation point which should be regarded as common sources of revenue, the proceeds of which should therefore accrue in the Distributive pool account. The principle on which sharing of the proceeds from the distributive pool account be placed among the tiers of government. The criteria and statistical formula for the distribution of funds from the distributive pool account among the constituent units such as States and Local government areas. In other words, the term referred to as distributive pool account (DPA) is simply the joint federation account in which all income emanating from all the revenues is kept. The sharing of these revenues accruing in this account (DPA) among the tiers constituent units of government is the most emotionally charged and violent issue of the Nigeria federation.

4.1.5. Nigeria Federalism and Canada, Switzerland, U.S.A – A comparative study

Canada, Switzerland, and U.S.A came into being as a process of many countries. Series of crises came and were resolved before arriving at a principle on which they are based. Canada, Switzerland, and the U.S.A created by processes of aggregation have further expanded and developed through a process of further aggregation and incorporation of new territorial states and provinces. It is the number of separate political organizations be it State or any kind of association that enter into the arrangement for aggregating the thirteen colonies gave birth to the American confederacy in 1776, which subsequently transformed itself into the American Federation in 1787(Akindele, 1996). Scholars have been forced to conclude that American constitutionalist's greater impact accrued not by the way of having American institutions taken over by barrel but by stimulating men into thinking about the various alternatives confronting them. Important institutions such as Immigration, Police, and others were allowed to be run by individual states while the federal has its institution managed by itself. Besides, when a large number of immigrants came from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, and France to join the immigrants from England, they failed for various reasons. They were of different cultural backgrounds but they agreed to form a strong federal state. During and after the war of independence, conferences were held which led to the drafting of a federal constitution for the U.S.A. Having deliberated for about sixteen weeks, they wrote the constitution which was approved unanimously by the delegates on December 17, 1787, and by June 25, 1788, the constitution was adopted and ten months later, George Washington was unanimously chosen as the first president of the U.S.A (THIS DAY, November 16th 1999:2). The so-called "two Nations and Compact of Culture" theory of Canadian confederation seeks to explain the union of 1867 as an agreement between two territorial groups and language-based nationalities; English and French-speaking Canadians rather than as a compact of provinces (initially four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova, Scotia, and New Brunswick). It's arguably neither historically correct nor defensible but one certainly cannot explain the central problem in the management of Canadian federalism outside the emotive issue of bilingualism and biculturalism (Akindele: 1996:4). However, a scholar known as Lord Durham (1958) remarked in Canada that the English and French differ from each other in many important respects and warred against each other incessantly. The English considered them superior and more enterprising and maintained a contemptible attitude towards the French. Durham had recommended a policy for analyzing the whole of Canada but the attempt made in subsequent of this failed. It was possible to coerce the French into foreign kingdoms or nationalities. The solution ultimately was to form the colonies into a federal union, giving both the French and English independence in important local government affairs. But Quebec, the center of French Canada has tended to maintain a recalcitrant attitude toward certain national issues in Canada. It is necessary to maintain that both Canada and Switzerland had taken to the step of the U.S.A but yet their federal system of government could be termed quasi-federal. Looking at Switzerland's federating system of government, it critically shows that it had maintained a most stable regional structure called "Canton" as constitution-making and revising has never posed any headache to the center numbering up to 26 (Akindele, 1996:13). Each of the Canton has amended its constitution more than six times in response to the agitation to add Vorarlberg in 1919-22 but came to naught. Other recent agitations for the unification of Basel and the division of Bern have not been successful (Elazare et al: 1982). Even though Switzerland is a small country of about 15,964 square miles in areas, it is divided into at least three natural regions not only of divergent economic interest but with nationalities that have different racial, religious, and linguistic backgrounds (Awa, 1976: 27-28). Here, there is increasing centralization of legislation in economic matters but the federal system has kept alive practice of the federal government to rely on the regions for the administration and execution of the federal laws. The practice permits regional variations in the administration of federal legislation and helps render national legislation easily acceptable to the units. As regards Nigeria, the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 and the subsequent administrative processes in 1954 was the root of federalism. It was sought partly in the administrative structure of colonialism that was set up and partly in the varying responses by Nigerians as to both process and culture of colonialism. The process of evolving a federal constitution was quite protracted in Nigeria. In the major constitutional conferences held in 1950, 1953/1954, 1957, and 1958, there were several issues over which the leaders of the regions had some major or minor disagreements. There was mutual fear between the Northern and Southern leaders as to whose influence would eventually come to predominance in the country. Great compromises were reached at various stages of constitutional development and this paved way for the consolidation of territories under one inclusive government.

In the 1950 conference, the main problem centered on the composition of the Executive council and the Legislature. The north whose population was about 55 percent of the total, originally wanted the region's representation in the House of Representatives that each region should have equal representation in the chamber (Awa 1976:38). Conclusively, in comparing Nigeria's federalism with issues such as how to put the Nation first should be paramount to every Nigerian and not what the nation should do for them. The resources of the Nation should not be seen as a national cake, a situation where everybody aspires to have their share rather we should think of how to contribute to her resources for a broader community development project. There is a need for a National conference where genuine representatives of all stakeholders will be present to discuss issues like the continuity of the Nation, power-sharing, delegation of power, security, defense, education, among others. At present, the constitution on which the present democratic body is being operated is not the expressed opinion of the people but rather the handwork of military cabals headed by Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar.

5. Composition of Nigerian federalism: States and Component Units

States were created in 1967 and 1976 in response to calls for fewer states that had been raised shortly after Richard's 1947 constitution was introduced. Critiques of the regional structure recognized by Richard's 1947 constitution and the federal constitution of 1954 gave rise to the demands that persisted until the military took control in January 1966. There were two primary reasons for the criticism of the regional constitution. The first was the relative size of the regions that made up the federation, as indicated in the table below. In terms of both people and territory, the northern region alone was larger than the other areas combined. This was considered to be negative and unpleasant to the successful integration of the federation. This type of criticism was expressed during discussion leading to the review of Richard's constitution. According to E.O Eyo, a politician of the eastern state, state thus: "I do not know by what sorcery the man who divided Nigeria into North, West, and East did so that every attempt to touch the boundaries is regarded as a MORBID TABOO".

Table 1 Composition of Nigeria's Federal Units, October 1954

Federal Unit	Land Area (km ²)	% of Total Area	Population	% of Total Population
Northern Region	729,815	~75%	~16.85 million	54%
Eastern Region & Southern Cameroon	119,308	~12.5%	~7.95 million	26%
Western Region & Colony	117,524	~12.2%	~3.09 million	20%
Lagos Federal Territory	70	~0.01%	~273,000	~1%
Total Federation	966,717	100%	28.18 million	~100%

He was more specific in his criticism in 1953, stating that it was incorrect to combine all 17 million people in Nigeria's northern provinces into a single region in order to form a federation with the 8 million people in Cameroon and the Eastern provinces of Nigeria, as well as the 6.1 million people in the Western provinces of Nigeria, including the colony of Lagos. Any such federation will collapse due to the use of the incorrect principle. The racial and cultural makeup of the area was criticized as well. There was a dominating ethnic group in each region, which made up over half of the entire population. The Hausa/Fulani made up 55% of the population in the northern region, 65% of the Igbo in the eastern region, and 76% of the Yoruba in the western zone. In addition to the dominant ethnic groups, there were other groups with a sizable population that wanted to maintain their pre-colonial status as not being governed or subject to the dominating ethnic countries. The Tiv, who numbered 769,536 in 1952, were the largest of the non-Muslim ethnic nations in the middle belt in the northern region. There were 4,568,000 people living in non-Muslim regions of the middle belt in 1952. The Ibibio and Ijaw, the two major non-Ibo ethnic groups in the eastern region, also wanted their own distinct areas. The Edo and other non-Yoruba inhabitants of Benin and Delta provinces live in the western area. Demanding separately by the minorities in each of the three regions was based on fears that their cultural values and norms would not be adequately developed and the dominant ethnic nations would emphasize their culture and pay more attention to their own economic and political development. Because of the persistence of such complaints, a special commission was set up to inquire into the fears of the minorities as a means of allaying them. The commission took evidence in 1957 and 1958. Although most of the minorities stated that the only acceptable solution was the creation of separate regions for them, the commission did not recommend the creation of any new region. The failure of the minority's commission to recommend new regions meant that the issue of the creation of more regions remained unresolved. For this reason, the issue of state creation became part of the manifesto of most of the political parties of

the 1959 federal elections. The creation of the mid-western region did not affect the size of the northern region. Furthermore, the minorities in the other regions expected that their demands be met. It was felt the creation of the mid-western region was aimed at weakening the western region and ensuring that the northern region continued to dominate the federation. The division of Nigeria into twelve states in May 1967 was announced at a time when it was becoming increasingly evident that the eastern region would attempt to secede from the federation because of a political crisis following the military counter-coup of July 1966. The twelve states comprised six states from the northern region and three from the eastern region. The mid-western region created in August 1963 was left intact. The statement by the Head of the military government on the organization was as follows: "evident that eastern region would attempt to secede from the federation because of political crisis following the military counter coup of July 1966. The twelve states comprised six states from the northern region and three from the eastern region. The mid-western region created in August 1963 was left intact". Another statement by the Head of the military government on the organization was as follows: "The main obstacle to future stability in this country is the present structural imbalance in the Nigerian federation. This is why the item in the political-administrative program adopted by the supreme military council last month is the creation of states as the basis for stability". This must be done first to remove the fear of domination. Representatives drawn for the new states will be more able to work out the future constitution for this country which can contain provisions to protect the powers to the fullest extent desired by the Nigerian people as soon as these states are established. A new revenue allocation commission consisting of international experts will be appointed to recommend an equitable formula for revenue allocation taking into cognizance the desires of states. The nineteen states were finally approved and created in February 1976 on the request for the creation of states (Adejuyigbe, 1989:209). Before creation, a panel was appointed to advise the federal military government on the issue of state creation. The terms of reference of the panel indicated the policy on the issue and that the panel was expected to collate public views and use its knowledge in advising the government on the policy to be adopted, that is whether more states should be created or not, and secondly to make recommendations on the implementation of the suggested policy. This view of the role of the panel is further supported by the government's announcement of its decision on the panel's report. The panel has recommended and the supreme military council has accepted that Nigeria's future political stability would be enhanced by the creation of states.

Table 2 Ethnic Composition and Population by State (1967–1976)

State	Population (1967–1976)	Major Ethnic Group(s)	Other Ethnic Groups & %
Lagos	1,443,567	Yoruba (76.18%)	Others (23.82%)
Ogun	1,550,966	Yoruba (76.58%)	Others (23.42%)
Oyo	5,208,884	Yoruba (98.45%)	Others (1.55%)
Kwara	1,714,485	Yoruba (60.31%)	Igbira (19.89%), Others (19.80%)
Ondo	2,727,675	Yoruba (90.92%)	Others (9.08%)
Bendel	2,533,067	Edo (60.88%)	Igbo (24.16%), Others (14.96%)
Anambra	3,571,072	Igbo (97.75%)	Others (2.25%)
Imo	3,706,820	Igbo (96.53%)	Others (3.47%)
Kaduna	4,098,305	Hausa-Fulani (61.12%)	Others (18.82%), Others (20.06%)
Sokoto	4,538,788	Hausa-Fulani (82.72%)	Others (12.31%), Others (4.97%)
Niger	1,194,508	Nupe (39.13%)	Gwari (25.43%), Others (35.44%)
Rivers	1,585,125	Ijaw (48.29%)	Igbo (34.11%), Ogoni (12.61%), Others (4.99%)
Cross River	3,534,217	Ibibio-Ekoi (76.79%)	Others (12.33%), Others (10.88%)
Benue	2,427,018	Tiv (48.58%)	Igala (23.15%), Idoma (18.52%), Others (9.75%)
Plateau	2,026,657	Angas (39.98%)	Birom (11.11%), Hausa-Fulani (10.24%), Gwari (6.97%), Others (6.02%), Others (25.68%)

Gongola	2,650,573	Marghi (16.86%)	Fulani (15.98%), Mumuye (13.64%), Chamba (10.27%), Others (43.25%)
Borno	2,952,187	Kanuri (52.04%)	Fulani (9.66%), Marghi (9.59%), Others (28.71%)
Bauchi	2,431,296	Fulani (40.11%)	Hausa (24.55%), Others (35.34%)
Kano	5,690,213	Hausa (82.25%)	Others (17.75%)

Abuja, the federal capital territory of Nigeria was also carved on 3rd February 1976 from Benue-Plateau, North-Central and North-Western states. In 1989, General Babangida created two additional states which brought the total number of states to twenty-one (21). Again in 1991, Gen. Babangida in response to the pressures by Nigerians created nine additional states thereby making up thirty states (Fajana, 1996:1831). Lastly, in 1996 General Abacha's regime added six more states thereby bringing the total number of states to thirty-six (36). The nation is subdivided into six geo-political zones namely: North- East, North-Central, North-West, South-East, South-West, and South-South. Using South-South as a case study, one would discover that six namely; Akwa Ibom, Delta, Cross Rivers, Bayelsa, Edo, and Rivers and out of the thirty-six states made up of these zones, it is a notable fact that the bulk of the nation's petroleum and Gas resources emanate from this region which also has minority ethnic groups.

5.1. Political, economic and cultural diversity of the South-South

In a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation like Nigeria, it is not always easy for the Minorities to have their way. The political origin of such a group is always limited. Such is the situation of the South-South geographical zone. Regarding the Berlin treaty of 1885, in which the colonial powers scrambled and partitioned much of Africa among them, many people in the region i.e. present-day northern Nigeria signed treaties with the British. While most of the settlers in the South-South region refused, the British colonial record made several references to Ogoni's fierce resistance to colonization but the struggle finally collapsed in the 1960s. Due to their settlement along the coastal land, they are very accessible to the outside world. History reveals that the Delta region grew prosperous on the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is because they were on the river mouth and skillful in politics, as a result, they obliged ships from Europe and America to trade with them. Their mode of rulership was never like that of Oba(kingship) of the West nor that of Emir of the North through which the colonial masters found it easy to establish their style of governance. Rather, a **Segmentary** type of government was paramount in the Eastern region which also cuts across the South-South zone. This type of government is a type of government without rulers. Thinking of a large family, from grandparents to grandchildren, who establish a village and farms nearby, is the greatest approach to start understanding this. Sons become fathers and children become grandparents when the family gets larger over time. As a result, the initial family unit disintegrates into numerous autonomous divisions or sections, each headed by a new family within the group (Davidson, 1960). Politically, the South-South has been sandwiched into Nigerian politics as far back as the colonial era. Being an integral arm of the old eastern region, the number of representatives that have been representing the zone at the house of assembly and representatives are so minimal to make a meaningful impact that will favor the zone. This has always affected the exercise of their political right.

5.2. Historical antiquity of resource control

A critical issue in Nigeria's fiscal structure is the over-centralization of power and resources in the federal government, leaving the states and local governments dependent. While there have been calls for a more equitable revenue-sharing formula, successive administrations have maintained tight control, with reforms often stalled at the presidency or caught in legal disputes. Revenue sharing in Nigeria began before independence. In 1946, the Philipson Commission introduced the principles of population, derivation, and even progress. By 1951, the Hicks/Philipson Commission expanded the basis to include national interest, independent revenue, derivation, and need. The Chicks Commission of 1953 placed heavy emphasis on derivation, empowering the regions significantly. This dominance led to the remarkable performance of the regional governments, but also created resentment among groups that felt disadvantaged, especially due to regional resource distribution and management. In response, the Raisman Commission was set up in 1958. It created the Distributable Pool Account and granted regions full control over personal income tax.

Following the 1966 military intervention, the Dina Report of 1968 was commissioned to review the revenue allocation system. It supported more central control in line with the military's effort to maintain Nigeria's 12-state structure. This led to changes like renaming the Distributable Pool Account to the State Joint Account, the introduction of a Special Grant Account, and a recommendation for a Permanent Planning and Fiscal Commission. General Obasanjo's regime, ahead of Nigeria's return to civilian rule, received the Aboyade Report in 1977, which introduced five new revenue principles: absorptive capacity, independent revenue, tax effort, fiscal efficiency, and equal access to development.

Later, President Shagari's administration adopted the Okigbo Report in 1980, focusing on factors like population, social development, internal revenue effort, and government responsibilities. In 1989, the Babangida government founded the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), incorporating principles like landmass, equality of states, internal revenue effort, and social development. His 1992 formula allocated 48.5% to the federal government, 24% to states, 20% to local governments, and 7.5% to special funds, which included allocations for FCT, ecology, stabilization, and natural resources. Subsequent military regimes under Abacha and Abdulsalami did not significantly alter this structure. When civilian rule resumed under Obasanjo in 1999, his administration proposed a revised formula giving 41.3% to the federal government, 31% to states, and 16% to local governments, with 11.7% set aside for special funds. However, this proposal was halted by a Supreme Court ruling in 2002, which declared the Special Funds unconstitutional following a suit led by the late Chief Bola Ige. In response, Obasanjo issued an Executive Order adjusting the revenue formula several times: first allocating 56% to the federal government, 24% to states, and 20% to local governments. After protests, he revised it to 54.68%, 24.72%, and 20.6%, respectively. In 2004, Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala further amended the formula to give 52.68% to the federal government and 26.72% to states, maintaining 20.6% for local governments. Under President Umaru Yar'Adua, discussions on revenue sharing resurfaced in 2008. The RMAFC under Dr. Hamman Tukur proposed a new formula: 53.69% for the federal government, 31.10% for states, and 15.21% for local governments. A key feature was the direct allocation of oil revenue to producing communities. While the commission saw this as a fair and equitable approach, Niger Delta communities, which had been advocating for a return to 50% derivation, rejected the proposal. They criticized the idea of traditional rulers and youth leaders managing the funds, citing corruption and lack of accountability. Nigeria's shift from a three-region structure in 1960 to the present 36 states and 589 local governments has resulted in resource strain and mounting dissatisfaction. Every restructuring has led to smaller shares for each unit, while resource availability remains largely unchanged. Many blame military regimes for manipulating state creation to consolidate central power. A 1997 report from the Central Bank criticized the misuse of fiscal federalism and highlighted disparities among the three levels of government. The Abacha regime was expected to address these issues, but his alleged self-succession agenda derailed any meaningful reform. In the end, while Nigeria officially operates as a federal system, the concentration of power and resources at the center contradicts true federalism. The repeated calls for decentralization and fiscal equity reflect widespread frustration and the need for a structure that empowers local authorities and resource-producing regions while promoting transparency and development.

Table 3 Evolution of Nigeria's Revenue Allocation Formulas (1946–2005)

Commission / Year	Federal Share	State Share	Local Government Share	Special Funds / Other Allocations	Total
Phillipson Report (1946)	Allocation based primarily on resource derivation (North 46%, West 30%, East 24%)	-	-	-	100*
Phillipson Report (1951)	A blend of derivation principles, regional requirements, and national interest	-	-	-	100*
Chick Commission (1953)	Federal government received 50% of import/excise revenue	Regional governments received the remaining 50% based on derivation	-	-	100*
Raisman Commission (1958)	Federal government's portion drawn from the Distributable Pool Account (DPA), including mining rents and royalties	20%	30%	-	100
Binns Commission (1964)	-	Regional allocations based on excise duties tied to local consumption	-	-	-
Federal Decree 15 (1967)	DPA funds split equally among six Northern states, and apportioned by population in Southern states	-	-	-	-
Dina Commission (1969)	Federal government: 60%	State Joint Accounts (SJA): 30% and Special Grants Account (SGA): 10%; Onshore royalties: Federal 15%, SJA 70%, SGA 5%	-	-	100
Federal Decree 6 (1975)	DPA (including mining and related revenues): evenly divided—50% by state equality and 50% by population	-	-	-	-
Aboyade Commission (1977)	57.0	30.0	10.0	3.0	100

Okigbo Commission (1980)	53.0	30.0	10.0	7.0	100
Revenue Allocation Act (1981)	55.0	30.5	10.0	4.5	100
Pre-Supreme Court formula (pre-April 2002)	48.5	24.0	20.0	7.5	100
RFMAC Proposal (Aug 2001)	41.23	31.0	16.0	11.77	100
Supreme Court Ruling (Apr 2002)	-	-	-	Deemed unconstitutional	-
Executive Order #1 (May 2002)	56.0	24.0	20.0	0.0	100
Executive Order #2 (July 2002)	54.68	24.72	20.60	0.0	100
RFMAC Proposal (Jan 2003)	46.63	33.0	20.37	0.0	100
RFMAC Proposal (Sept 20, 2004)	47.19	31.10	15.21	Special Funds: Ecology 1.50%, Mineral Devt. 1.75%, Agric Devt. 1.75%, Reserve 1.50% (total 6.50%)	100
Presidential Proposal (Jan 25, 2005)	47.19	31.10	15.21	Same as above	100

Can President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua defy the North's fundamental stance on resource control and radically change the country's discredited revenue sharing formula? The Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) suggested the damning obvious: 50% resource control, starting at 25% and the remaining amount being met over the next few years. Given the North's well-documented stance on the matter, this recommendation should be a pipe dream to them. Can Yar'Adua muster the courage to go against his north's fundamental interests and drastically change the ominous revenue sharing formula? President Umaru Yar'Adua of Nigeria established the 45-member Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) on September 5, 2008, with the goal of reviewing and synthesizing all prior findings on the Niger Delta and formulating pertinent suggestions for the region's future. Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, who was born in Ijaw, swore them in on the president's behalf and tasked them with finding answers to the Niger Delta issue. The committee has now discovered 50% resource control, something the president probably didn't expect. Former and current Nigerian leaders are aware that the country's absence of fiscal federalism is a ticking time bomb, but they continue to skirt the issue. The federal forces had to wage war against the separatists in 1966–1967 in order to pull the country back from the precipice. Since then, the nation's unity has remained precariously fragile and must be preserved by consolidating power and using military means. The strange form of democracy we currently practice, which excludes popular choice and leaves the masses cold, had to replace military rule when it became too unfashionable. It is a form of democracy where oligarchs choose candidates for 160 million people and use the army and police to keep dissidents silent and smiling. But given the growing odds, how long will the distorted elite survive? The Niger Deltans, for instance, are unified in their desire to control their resources and will not settle for anything less than the NDTC's suggested 50% control. Was Yar'Adua ready to face the frightening realities on the ground, or was he merely buying time to pass the torch to Buhari or IBB? We recollect these 2 generals conceived policies that amassed considerably more of the nation's resources to the center. With the quest for a suitable candidate for Yar'Adua ramping up, one of them was likely to be welcomed back by the north to continue the arrogant and cartelizing policies. Positions in different governments show that our government and several of its top officials have a keen awareness of the various flaws and the consequent lack of progress that the country faces as a result of the poor allocation of resources.

5.3. Ethnic nationalities and the quest for resource control

The argument over resource control is made more difficult by ethnic nationalities' agitation for improved treatment, which is closely related to the Niger Delta's (south-south) struggle for self-determination. The advent of violent reactions by nationalist movements, which orchestrate the disruption of oil installations and hostage kidnapping, can be partially attributed to the inability of government at all levels to deliver anticipated dividends. For example, the Ogoni bill of rights stipulates that a fair share of Ogoni economic resources must be managed and used for Ogoni development. According to the Ijaw ethnic group's Kaiama Declaration, which was issued on December 11, 1998, all natural resources, including mineral resources, inside Ijaw territory are the property of Ijaw communities and are essential to our survival. We no longer accept any undemocratic laws that are implemented without the active participation and permission of our people or communities and deprive them of the right to own and manage life and resources. These consist of the petroleum and land use decrees. We pledge to stay in Nigeria while advocating for and working toward Ijaw resource control and self-government. Nigeria's path as a federation of ethnic nationalities was endorsed by the summit. Social justice and equality should be the foundation of the federation's operations. None of these groups have yet to develop a plan for achieving resource control and ethnic sovereignty. A leading advocate for resource ownership for oil-bearing communities, Bayelsa State Commissioner for Information and Strategy Honourable Oronto Douglas contends that communities seeking complete control of their resources must work with the Nigerian government, nearby communities, and international cooperation to achieve their goal. Some factions are growing increasingly violent and confrontational in their fight for resource control as it becomes more and more clear that the current government is not ready to give in to these demands. Because of the ongoing murders and unrest in the area, these groups have made their presence known. These gangs' actions have become most noticeable in the state of Rivers, where they have caused a significant loss of life and property. An estimated fifty civilians were killed during three weeks in August 2004 as a result of their actions in the Andoni local government area's riverfront community of Ataba, the Njemeze waterfront, the marine base, Amadi Creek, and the Platform restaurant in Portharcourt. The River State Police Command established the official death toll at thirty in what appears to be a public relations ploy. The Niger Delta people's voluntary force, under the leadership of Alhaji Asari Dokubo, is the main group involved in the issue. "All oil companies must cease production or face an all-out war in the Niger Delta from October 1st, 2004," Dokubo was quoted as stating. Nonetheless, Asari Dokubo held discussions with the federal administration to try to resolve the problem, according to all of the major national dailies. According to the allegations, he even had a meeting with the president on October 2, 2004.

5.4. Agitation resource control by the south-south at national political reform confab

The south-south is coming forcefully together to fight a common front. Everybody from the region is pushing forward the fundamental issue of Resource Control and Derivation which is the only way to develop the region. With the

resurgence of Resource control debates across the country, it would appear that almost everybody in the country is sympathetic with the south-south people for the neglect she has faced under the federal government coupled with environmental degradation even though the south-south are demanding 25% allocation from the federal account based on the principle of Derivation yearly. No concrete move has been made by the federal government to actualize this demand.

5.5. The politics of resource control

Ethnic nations and civil society have been engaged in a verbal battle about who owns and controls the Niger Delta's oil resources since 1999, when the civil war returned to Nigeria. It has thus sparked fresh discussions about offshore and onshore regulation of oil exportation. In Nigeria, the ownership, control, and management of Oil, mineral exploitation, and their revenue are vested by law on the federal government through the Land Use Act and the exclusive Economic Zone Act. Another important piece of legislation that makes Oil minerals the sole property of the federal government of Nigeria is section 44(3) of the 1999 constitution which in part provides "the entire property and control of all minerals, oil and natural gas in, under or upon any land in Nigeria or under or upon the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone of Nigeria shall be vested in the government of the federation and will be managed in such matters as may be prescribed in the National assembly". The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) was created by the federal government to further consolidate its ownership and control of oil in the Niger Delta. Its duties include conducting all commercial activities related to the petroleum industry and enforcing all regulations pertaining to the general control of the petroleum sector through its Petroleum Inspectorate Department (PID). Despite the aforementioned rules that give the federal government complete power over resources, successive civil and military government administrations have made sure that states or regions that produce oil minerals receive compensation based on derivation principles. The Phillipson Commission, for instance, suggested a 50% derivation fund for the regions in 1964. Later, the federal government's contribution was raised to 20% by the Ralman's commission. Petroleum Decree No. 51, which placed petroleum resources under central control, was issued by General Yakubu Gowon's administration in 1969. A 30% derivation fund for oil-producing regions was later granted. Gen. Gowon ended the common distributive pool and ushered in a period of central tax collection and distribution to states in 1974 by abolishing the Derivation fund, marking a dramatic policy turnaround. After Derivation was reinstated, it was lowered to 25% in 1977 and then to 1.5% in 1981 under Alhaji Shehu Shagari. It was raised by Gen. Ibrahim Babangida to 3%. Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar later incorporated the 13% derivation that was adopted by the National Constitutional Conference (NCC) in 1994 and 1995 into the 1999 constitution. President Olusegun Obasanjo caused controversy during the current government when he hesitated to execute the 13% derivation until after the Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) had produced a report on the nation's revenue sharing. The 13% allotted to a derivation by the Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar administration in its 1999 budget was still in place under President Obasanjo. Nonetheless, the South-South has persisted in advocating for the adoption of a temporary rise to 25% derivation while the Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Commission's report is being prepared. While waiting for the Expert Commission's findings, the 2005 National Political Reform Conference report suggests raising the degree of derivation from the current 13% to 17%. In light of national unity, peace, and stability, delegates from the South-South and other oil-producing states requested that 50% be the acceptable minimum. They are willing to accept a 25% derivation in the interim, with a general growth to reach 50% over five years.

6. Conclusion

Oil discovery has brought about the abandonment of cultivation and exploration of other resources especially the Agricultural sector. The neglect of the Oil producing communities whose lands and waters have been subjected to unprecedented environmental and ecological degradation and pollution through the carefree attitude of the prospecting Oil companies. The lackadaisical attitude of the federal government and the Oil companies to the social and economic development of the region coupled with Youth unemployment are all responsible for youth restiveness in the area. Also, able-bodied men and women have been rendered jobless as their means of livelihood such as fishing and farming have been destroyed by oil exploration. The over-centralization of the political power in the federal government leading to undue exploitation of the federating units through exclusive control of mineral resources and lopsided manner of allocating revenue. There is an absolute lack of infrastructure such as roads, electricity, pipe-borne water, decent housing, etc. which has added to the agitation of the people of this region for social justice and equity.

Recommendations

In order to improve resource management in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I suggest the following measures: The Revenue Allocation Formula from the 1960s, which mandates that the producing states should receive 50% of the revenue based on derivation, must be reinstated in the constitution. the presence of political armed forces that prioritize their official responsibilities of safeguarding the country. Make sure that the communities in the south-south

region have ways to express themselves politically and socioeconomically in order to address the issue of disenfranchisement. Reexamine legislative procedures and environmental regulations to make sure they are sufficient to handle human rights abuses and enforcement concerns associated with oil. Investigate allegations of misappropriation of monies intended for South-South development projects in order to ensure transparency in governmental development agencies. In order to enable regions to manage their mineral resources and pay royalties to the federal government, the federal government should decentralize its political power.

Final thoughts

To achieve 'true federalism' about good Resource control, the government and the Nation at large should return to land while Oil continues to serve as the pillar of the Nigerian economy. Agriculture must remain the foundation on which to build the Nation's future economic growth and development. The persons in power should be sincere to all and sundry irrespective of our ethnic allegiance in order to move the Nation forward. A genuine political system, whereby politicians will not be self-centered, they don't need to think of their region alone at the expense of other regions. As Nigerians they are like fellow Nigerians, we should work together to build a better Nigeria where everybody will be adequately catered for. Also, an attempt should be made in the revenue sharing formula to take cognizance of the Oil producing areas. Other formulas such as Need and Internal development should be practiced. Additionally, special attention should be directed to the South-South region to engineer real development and social justice in the area.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgment

I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Suleiman Abubakar, for his patience, guidance, and support that led to the final stage of this study and his guidance and immeasurable contribution towards the successful completion of my research project. I would also like to acknowledge at this point the faculty and staff of the Department of Political Science and International Relations. I am grateful for every resource and time you invested in me. To the entire political science class of 2011, I thank you for allowing me to fellowship academically and criss-cross ideas with you.

References

- [1] Adeola T. Fundamentals of development administration. Lagos: Eagles Might Ventures; 2003.
- [2] Akhapo I. Introduction to comparative politics. Lagos: University Press; 1991.
- [3] Awa EO. Issues in federalism. Benin City: Ethiope Publishing House; 1976.
- [4] Awak I. Decolonization through resource control. The Punch. 2001 Apr 11; Sect. Opinion.
- [5] Banjo SW. Nigeria: The politics of image crisis. Lagos: Olu-Akin Publishers; 1996.
- [6] Banjo SW. Oil and intra-ethnic violence in South Eastern Nigeria: The internationalization of the Ogoni crisis [monograph]. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs; 1998.
- [7] Basil, D. (1960). The growth of African civilization: History of West Africa 1000–1800 (New ed.).
- [8] Dafinone, D. (2001, April 8). Resource control: The economic and political dimension. Sunday Vanguard.
- [9] Duze M. Macmillan senior school atlas. Ibadan: Macmillan Publishers; 1982.
- [10] Elaigwu, I. (1996). Military rule and federalism in Nigeria. In J. I. Elaigwu et al. (Eds.), Foundations of Nigerian economy (1960–1995). NCIRS.
- [11] Elazar, D. J., et al. (1982). Constitutional changes in Swiss cantons: An assessment of a recent phenomenon. The Journal of Federalism, 12(1).
- [12] Fajana, O. (1996). Three and a half decades of fiscal federalism in Nigeria. In J. I. Elaigwu et al. (Eds.), Foundations of Nigerian economy (1960–1995) (pp. 105–122). NCIRS.
- [13] Farukanmi O. The politics of resource control. The Guardian. 2001 Apr 9; Sect. Editorial.
- [14] Fayiede MO. Derivation is not resource control. The Guardian. 2001 Jun 5; Sect. Opinion.
- [15] Federal Department of Information. Oil glut effect on Nigeria's economy: What you should know. Lagos: Public Enlightenment Division, Federal Ministry of Information; 1983.

- [16] Frederick C. Federalism: National and international. London: Oxford University Press; 1963.
- [17] Ige S. Political economy of resource control (2). *The Guardian*. 2001 Jun 5; Sect. Editorial.
- [18] Jinadu A. A note on the theory of federalism. In: Akinyemi AB, Cole PD, Ofonagoro W, editors. *Readings on federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs; 1980. p. 15-29.
- [19] Livingstone WA. *Federalism and constitutional change*. London: Oxford University Press; 1956.
- [20] Nwankwo GO. Who will save Nigeria? *Reflections on the political-economic problems of Nigeria and the way forward*. Lagos: De-Nabos (Nig.) Ltd; 2002.
- [21] Ogunniyi D. *Social organizations: Social studies for schools and colleges*. Ibadan: Evans Brothers Ltd; 1984.
- [22] Oyemelukwe JO, et al. *Economic geography of West Africa*. Lagos: Longman; 1983.
- [23] Riker WH. *Federalism: Origin, operation, and significance*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company; 1989.