Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.3 No.3 September, 2020; p.g. 299 – 310; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

RELIGION, RESOURCE CONTROL AND RESTRUCTURING IN NIGERIA: AN ETHICAL APPRAISAL

OKWUOSA IKECHUKWU KENNETH
Department of Philosophy/ Religion and Cultural Studies
Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo

Abstract

Agitations for resource control and restructuring are in the front burner in the present polity of Nigeria. Religion which is at the center of the polity of the nation cannot shy away from this reality. This paper uses the ethical theory of utilitarianism to evaluate the roles of religious bodies in these calls. The paper concludes that the dominant religious bodies in the nation namely Christianity and Islam have important roles to play in ensuring that justice and fairness prevail in the nation. The paper recommends among other things that religious bodies should take a firm stand on the call for restructuring and resource control in the country; religious leaders should be vocal on the matter and adherents of the different religious persuasions must imbibe the principal of equity and fairness which is key in virtually all religious persuasion as they take their stand on the issue of resource control and restructuring of the Nigerian nation.

Keywords: **Resource control, Restructuring, Religion, Ethical appraisal, Nigeria.**

Introduction

There have been agitations from different quarters for the restructuring of Nigeria and for the introduction of resource control in the governing policies of the nation. These agitations are direct pointers to the large dissatisfaction from different quarters with the status quo in the governance of the Nation. There are perceived injustices in the distribution of the wealth of the nation with communities which contribute larger to the sovereign wealth of the nation feeling cheated in the distribution of this wealth. And other sections and regions feeling left out in the polity of the nation. These agitations have seen to the birthing of different militant groups which have caused large scale destruction of public infrastructures all in the bid to pressing home their demand.

The facts that these agitations and calls have continued for a long time are pointers to the bitter truth that successive governments in the nation have failed to adequately and effectively tackle the situation. Though a number of attempts have been made by successive governments to seek lasting solutions to these agitations, these attempts which include the calling of different national conferences have produced reports that failed to see the light of day.

Despite the fact that Nigeria is considered a highly religious country, with over 90% of its citizens belonging to one religious persuasion or the other, this religiosity has not translated into good governance, fairness and equity in the governance of the nation. Onwuka as cited by Okebukola (2012) posits that religion has in itself all that makes for peace and progress, the religiosity of Nigeria therefore if properly harnessed can be a tool for the building of a

politically stable nation. Virtually all political leaders in the nation past and present subscribe to one religious persuasion or the other. With Christianity and Islam having the largest number, hence Mathew Kukah cited in Okebukola (2012) elucidates that these two religions are straddled across the Nigerian polity. It is expected therefore that the actions or inactions of these political leaders is guided to some extent by their religious beliefs. With each of these religious persuasions teaching and advocating fairness and equity, the calls for resource control and restructuring which points to the persistence of inequity in the polity of the nation suggests either a failure of the religious bodies or institutions or a rebellion by the political class from the norms of established religious teachings.

Previous works on resource control and restructuring of Nigeria discuss the topic from its, political point of view (Abbas and Wakili 2018, Egugbo 2016), base on its implication for citizens rights of Nigeria. (Dibua 2005), and its implication on Nigerian fiscal federalism (Atoyebi, et al 2013,). Not much has been written about its ethical implications. This paper therefore ethically evaluates the calls for restructuring and resource control and recommends the roles that religious bodies must play to ensure equity and fairness. Utilitarian theory of ethics which states that the most ethical choices are the ones that will produce the greatest good for the greatest number of people was used. The paper ethically evaluates each item in the calls on its own merit based on the principle of equity and fairness and the largest good for the largest number of persons. It begins with a brief review of the governance structure in Nigeria past and present, and a brief explanation of what Resource Control and Restructuring means, reviews the calls for resource control and restructuring, ethically evaluates these calls for restructuring and resource control in Nigeria, and makes recommendations based on the submissions. The work is a qualitative research using mainly secondary sources and conclusions are drawn based on the findings.

Governance structure in Nigeria, past and present.

The Amalgamation of the Southern Nigeria with the Northern Nigeria protectorates to form a single colony known as Nigeria was done in 1914 by Sir Frederick Lugard. This unification was done more for economic rather than for political reasons. Northern Nigeria had a budget deficit and the colonial administration wanted to use the budget surplus of the Southern Nigeria protectorate to offset these deficits (Barkan et al 2001). This colony was under the rule of the British. Governor Generals were appointed from time to time to administer the colonies. These Governor Generals employed different administrative styles and strategies in administering the colonies. Local leaders governed the area under the orders of the British. Sir Arthur Clifford for example created regional councils in the three provinces in which the colony was divided. By this he was able to strengthen the already existing trends towards regionalization in Nigeria. It is worthy of note however that despite the amalgamation, the regions were still not united. Nigeria was still being considered by its elites as a mere geographic location rather than a single country. This view was reflected by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Sir Ahmadu Bello as far back as in the 1940's. (Okafor 2017).

Nigeria got her independence from the Colonial rule in 1960. With this, Governance of the Nation was handed over to the locals. However the Nation retained the British monarch queen Elizabeth as titular head of state until the adoption of a new constitution in 1963 that declared Nigeria a republic. A parliamentary system of government was introduced where the three regions have representatives at the central government with Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the

prime minister and Nnamdi Azikiwe as the President. Each region was however governed by a premier namely: Michael Okpara for Eastern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello for Northern Nigeria, Obafemi Awolowo for Western Nigeria and Dennis Osadebey for Midwestern region. Each region controlled its own affairs including its revenue and resources making its contribution to the central government. These contributions were in the forms of taxes paid and a percentage of their revenue. The 1963 constitution apart from granting fiscal autonomy to the regions also enabled the regions to retain control of their natural resources. (Egbubulem, 2011).

It was the coming of the military rule via coups and counter coups that brought about the introduction of the federal system of government which drew all powers to the center and abolishment of the regional government and the creation of states. The federal government took over control of resources giving subventions to the States for their operations. This arrangement ended competition between the regions and the efforts to grow and develop at its pace, giving rise to a system of dependence on hand outs from the center as we have it today. However true federalism as defined by Whears (1995) is a constitutional arrangement which defines the lawmaking powers and functions between two levels of government in such a way that each within its respective spheres of jurisdiction and competence is independent and coordinates. Observably, this definition of federalism is different from what is being practiced in Nigeria. The Nigerian system of government is more or less a unitary state rather than a federation. The center becomes more and more powerful while the federating states or constituent units are weak.

The derivation policy was introduced as a form of compensation to areas or communities producing mineral resources. This principle seeks to allocate natural resources such as oil and gas accruable to the federation account on the basis that is perceived to be equitable to give more considerations to the states from the resources it produced. By this policy such communities were to receive a percentage of the earnings from the produce. This was to serve both as compensation for the use of their land and for the restoration of the land from the damages that might have been caused by the exploration in the area. The percentage derivations due for mineral producing states have declined over the years from the initial 50% to the current 13% with different bodies and state especially Akwa Ibom and Ondo States considering it as unfair. Edevbie (2000) posits that the nation have failed to uphold the fundamental principles of derivation since 1914.

Resource control in Nigeria: concept and practice

A number of scholars have severally defined resource control in different ways, Douglas (2005) cited in Atoyebi et al (2013) views resource control as the actual control of resources by the people who live in communities with these resources for the support of life. Nwokedi (2005) defines resource control as the access which the communities and state have over the natural resources situated within their boundaries. Ofeimum (2005) cited in Atoyebi et al (2013), holds that resource control is the principal that every federating unit of the federation should be empowered to be self governing. Atoyebi et al (2013) defines resource control as "the way and manner the government's revenue and democratic dividends are shared among the various tiers of government."

Principally, resource control is the ability of state government to exploit the natural resources of the state for the benefits of its citizens. Resources here refers to benefits from forest to open lands, air space, land depth resources(like oil and mineral resources), sea shores, water etc. Shebbs and Njoku (2016) identify three factors relating to resource control in Nigeria:

1. **Territoriality**: the state has to have territorial rights over a land for it to exploit the resources in the land. This right is usually given to the state by the people in whose land the resources in deposited. The location of the resources determines its ownership.
2. **Inexhaustibility:** resources control goes beyond the exploration and exploitation of the visible and available resources. This is because resources are inexhaustible. Resource control includes the ability and capacity of government to discover new resources and exploit them for the benefit of the state.
3. **Intangibility:** views on resources control goes beyond tangible resources to include intangible resources such as value and services. Man generally has a lot of values and tactful potentials that when exploited could be an economic value for the state just like any other revenue making resources like oil. For instance an administrator could be employed by the government to analyze the social challenges of a particular people and come up with reasonable solutions. Also military could be deployed by the government to combat threats from terrorist, etc. these are all examples of resources embedded in values and service that are often overlooked by scholars.

There have been a lot of disagreements with the issue of resource control and the practice of true federalism in Nigeria. The situation in the Niger delta region of Nigeria does not place Nigeria among the nations operating a federal system of government. Little wonder James Ibori former governor of Delta State said: "The fight for resource control is all about allowing the Niger Deltans to control their oil wealth and pay adequate taxes to the central authorities as is done in a true federation". One could deduce from this statement that the clamor for resource control is not a fight for total control of the oil in the Niger delta but an increased control and share in the revenue accruable from it. In an ideal federation like the USA, and Canada, the states have some autonomy from the center and control their resources but pay a form of royalty to the center. The protagonist of true federalism in Nigeria argue that if the regions of the first republic had control of the agricultural products produced in their area and still got as high as 50% derivation from whatever accrued to the federation account as revenue, why then should the case be different when it comes to Niger Delta region. The people of the Niger Delta feel cheated that the practice of resource control was jettisoned, while derivation was drastically reduced as we have today. There is every possibility that this situation if not resolved shall continue to be a source of conflict in the nation.

Restructuring: concept and practice

An article published on vanguard of 30th June 2017 with the title "Nigeria: what is resource control?" Attempts to give a simple explanation of the term restructuring as it relates to the Nigerian nation to mean the devolution of powers such that more responsibility be given to the state while the federal is vested with the responsibility to oversee our foreign policy, defense and economy. Najakku (2016) explains restructuring as the re-organization and re-arrangement of the nature of resource control by the various government and regions to foster

unity and development. Restructuring as a concept in this paper refers to the reorganization of the political structure in Nigeria to allow more powers and autonomy to States.

Calls for restructuring and resource control in Nigeria

The calls for restructuring and resource control in Nigeria are basically a call for political reorganization of Nigeria's federal structure, the system of government and other aspects of governance that require constitutional amendment (Abbas and Wakili 2018). The call is also a call for fiscal federalism which is an aspect of federalism which deals with the constitutional definition of the responsibility of various tiers of government along with laid down principles and procedures for sourcing revenue among the levels and for sharing the revenue among the constituent parts in a manner that enable them to fulfill their constitutional responsibility. Simply put this means the decentralization of the powers of decision making in terms of finance from the center to the component units.

The calls for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria are born majorly out of the unacceptable level of unemployment and poverty in the Nation especially in the oil producing regions of the nation. This is despite the fact that about 90% of the Nation's revenue is generated from the region. The oil producing states of Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Abia, Imo, Delta, Bayelsa, Ondo and Cross River are therefore vehement in their continued calls and agitations for resource control.

It is important to note that these areas are not alone in the calls. The Southern Governors since the return of democracy in Nigeria in May 1999 have also advanced the calls for resource control and true federalism. Their stand was made clear in a 17 points communiqué they issued at the end of a conference they had organized in this regard. The communiqué reads in part.

> That resource control and derivation should henceforth be accepted as the basis for revenue generation and allocation, and the Nigeria's federal status as presently constituted be restructured along a legal framework that would grant a reasonable measure of autonomy to the states and component parts of the federation (Omenma 2002).

Virtually every geo-political zone in Nigeria is faced with the challenge of unemployment and poor provision of social amenities, and studies have noted massive corruption, embezzlement of public fund, poor accountability, high cost of governance and the crisis of legitimacy, recurring ethnic, regional and religious clashes, abuse of constitution and constitutionalism as being responsible for this. (Abass and Wakili 2013, Babalola 2016, Ezeji-Okoye 2009). The call for restructuring is a call for proper accountability. A number of contentious issues have been identified as leading in the calls for the restructuring of Nigeria. Abbas & Wakili (2018) identifies the following:

Call for devolution of powers

The call for restructuring is a call for the devolution of powers. The argument here is that the over concentration of powers at the center is a dirge for the Nigerian federation given that the constitution grants powers for the control of mineral resources in the country to the federal government through the exclusive legislative list which is considered to be against the

principle of true federalism. With the concentration of control of resources of the nation at the center, those who hold power at the center are at liberty to continue to allocate a large amount of the resources to its advantage. The devolution of power will seed more control of the resources to the component units allowing it to determine the needs of its people and the best way of satisfying this need.

Review of revenue sharing formula

Since the year 2000 the revenue sharing formula of the nation has been 52.68% for federal, 26.72% for States and 20.60% for Local Government. This formula has been noted not to have brought about the needed socio-economic development as envisaged by its architects. The dominance of the central government with regards to the amount of revenue allocated to it is a major reason for the calls for a review of the revenue sharing formula in the nation. The 1999 constitution provides the principle of population, derivation, equality of state, internal revenue generation, land mass, needs and even development for the horizontal allocation of revenue. The principle of derivation which provides for allocation of 13% of the revenue generated from natural resources to the unit from where they were generated. That would mean that 13% of oil revenue be allocated to the oil producing states in addition to the normal federal allocation. The oil producing states have however continued to demand an increase in derivation from 13 to 50 %. There has however been counter argument from other regions who argue in favour of allocation on equity and population with the main argument being that since natural resources are a gift of nature, it should belong to all Nigerians irrespective of tribe or region that must not be allocated exclusively to a certain region or people.

Creation of more states

The call for the creation of more state is aimed at massive devolution of powers to sub national levels with the view to bringing about economic development. The currents number of states in Nigeria is considered to be un-balanced by some interest groups. In terms of geo-political zones, north-west has 7 states, north east has 6, north-central 6, South South 6, south west 6, and south east only 5. This in-balance have provoked serious agitation from many especially the Igbo of Southeast which has only 5 (five) states. There should be at least 6 (six) states in the zone to make for equity and fairness.

Return to regional federalism and parliamentary system of government

Many proponents of restructuring have maintained that the current presidential system of government being practiced by the nation is too expensive to run in terms of financial management. A return to a parliamentary system of government in the country has been seriously advocated. In the parliamentary system the members of parliament are members of the executive hence reducing the cost of government. Other proponents have also advocated for part time legislature instead of a permanent as part of the cost saving formula for governance.

Re-organization of the Nigerian Police

Given the rising rates of insecurity in the nation there have been calls for the reorganization of the Nigerian police. This call has largely been in two forms. Some propose the creation of state police which would serve the needs of the individual state and further strengthen the powers of the state governors as the chief security officers of the states which function is presently being performed by the commissioners of police who are appointed by the inspector

general of police. Those who propose the creation of state police argue that having a local policing organization who understood the dynamics of the location would ensure proper policing of the area and a reduction in crime rate.

Concerns have however been raised by those who oppose the creation of state police, that they very easily could be used by sitting governors to victimize their opponents. Furthermore giving the difficulty being experience by some state in the payment of salaries of their workers, the funding of these state police therefore might pose a challenge to some states. They rather propose the reorganization of the present police formation to make it more efficient in the fight against insecurities in this nation

Ethical evaluation of the calls for resource control and restructuring

Ethics examines the rightness or wrongness of an action (Omoregbe 1993). every action of man falls under the scrutiny of ethics and evaluation of the action and motive behind the action speaks a lot on whether the action should be supported or not whether it should be encouraged or not. The calls for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria have taken a lot of dimension and have received mixed reactions some for and some against. It is necessary to ethically appraise these calls. On the review of the revenue formula and increasing the derivation funds allocation from 13% to 50% is not asking for too much. On the principle of equity and fairness a community that have lost land and suffered environmental degradation as a result of exploration or mining activities should received a greater chunk of the revenue accrued from the resources as compensation and it is expected that a good percentage of this money would be channeled towards cleansing and restoring the land and creation of a better means of livelihood for the people who have had to lose their sources of livelihood as a result of such activities.

The agitation of the Niger delta region is therefore justified. More so, before the discovery of oil resources, the derivation percentage was 50% and at such time every region struggled on its own to generate its own revenue with palm oil in the southeast, cocoa in the west and groundnut in the north, with the nation having multiple streams of income the over dependence on oil revenue has created a dependent form of economy with states preferring to wait for handouts from the Federal rather than exploring avenues of meeting their needs.
It is certainly unethical for states to depend entirely on revenue generated from other states for their sustenance without making efforts at contributing to the sovereign wealth of the Nation. The country is rich in different natural resources with the different with the different regions having a fair share of these resources. What is obtainable however is the attention focused solely on oil revenue leaving the other resources untapped thereby allowing corrupt politicians and illegal miners enrich themselves from these resources that is supposed to boost the revenue of the Nation. The overemphasis on oil which is generated mostly by one region and the neglect of other resources available in other region is no doubt unethical. It is not fair that this region would have to suffer degradation occasioned by exploration in their land to generate revenue for the entire nation while other regions with mineral resources remain intact depending on the revenues oil revenue. What assurances are there that the derivation formula would continue like this when the oil revenue drops and the focus now shift to other forms of revenue?

The cost of governance of the nation is no doubt a thing of concern. Issues of ethics arise with a nation that has a high rate of poverty and unemployment amongst its citizens to be spending so much on maintaining its government officials. A review of the present presidential system of government and an adoption of a parliamentary system where the legislature are the executives and or the adoption of part time legislature instead of the present form of permanent legislature would no doubt reduce the cost of governance making available funds that could be channeled towards the development of the Nation. Considering the level of poverty and unemployment in the land there is no moral justification for the maintenance of this very expensive system of governance. The call therefore for the restructuring of the system of government in this regards could be considered ethical.

There is certainly an ethical concern in the inappropriate distribution of states among the six geo-political zones. To make for equity and fairness the south east zone should have six states like the other zones. There is a semblance of marginalization with it having fewer states than the other zone. The argument have been that land mass and population was the criteria used for the creation of States and if that is so the distribution of the states does not tally, this raises critical questions like what land mass make a state, or how many people make up a state. The answer to these questions no doubt will cast doubt on the equity in the distribution of states and make a case for the creation of more states especially in the South East. There is therefore a moral justification for such calls.

The security situation in the Nation no doubt is a thing of serious concern. It shows to a large extent a failure in the part of the security forces. Calls for the reorganization of the Nigerian police and the creation of state police no doubt have merit. It is certainly ethical for one to be concern about his/her safety. With the rising insecurity and the failure of the security forces, the calls for a reorganization of the Force and the creation of state police are justified. Effective policing requires knowledge of the area to be policed. The national policing system which allows for the deployment of officers to various parts of the country irrespective of their places of origin does not seem reasonable considering the fact that good knowledge of the area is required for them to be effective in their functions. Having locals organized into police units in the form of state police would no doubt offer a better opportunity for effective policing and the protection of lives and properties. Fears of state governors using the state police to oppress their opposition are no doubt germane. However having a structure on ground that will make this difficult by granting autonomy to this police is not impossible. Having a state police with a properly worked out structure for its existence and operation is not impossible and is considered necessary.

It is certainly unethical for state governors to bear the title 'chief security officers' and not have the opportunity of exercising that responsibility as a result of being handicapped by the current security arrangement that confers such powers to the commissioner of police appointed by the inspector general of police. Since state governors are the chief security officers of the state they should also have some powers over the security apparatus in the state. The creation of state police would no doubt ensure that.

Religion, Resource control and Restructuring in Nigeria

Nigeria though a secular state has religion laced in virtually every part of its national life. This is not surprising given that the majority of its citizens adhere to one form of religious

persuasion or another with Christianity and Islam having the largest chunk. It is safe to say that a good number of government officials in Nigeria are adherents of either the Christian or Islamic faith. This however is not to deny the fact that there could be some who might adhere to other faiths such as the African traditional religious faith, and Judaism. They are no doubt in the very minority. The religiosity of the Nigerian nation is seen in many aspects of its national life even in the swearing in of political office holders where they are required to take their oaths of office with either the bible or the Quran. Prayers are also usually said at different state functions with public holidays also given for the commemoration of different religious (Christian and Muslim) festivals. Public funds are also used to sponsor pilgrimages for both Christians and Muslims. All these give religion a pride of place in the polity of the Nigerian nation and religious leaders and religious institutions also enjoy a lot of privileges by virtue of the office they occupy as religious leaders. In some states for example religious leaders and religious institutions are exempted from taxes. Though these institutions enjoy these privileges partly because they are considered as charity organizations but more because of the sentiments that the Nigerian people attach to religion.

Despite the position that religion and its institutions occupy in the scheme of things in the Nigerian nation, religion seems to have shown very little interest in the calls for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria. There has been very little imputes from religious leaders and religious institutions on the calls. The Christian association of Nigeria which is the umbrella body uniting all Christians in Nigeria and the Jama'atu Nasril Islam which represents the Muslim body in Nigeria have been largely silent in the calls and agitations for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria. The few documented discussion on restructuring of Nigeria was from the Anglican communion in its communiqué issued from the 12th General Synod of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican communion) held from Monday , the 18th to Friday, the 22nd September, 2017 at St Paul's cathedral church Diobu, Port Harcourt, Rivers state which reads:

> The call for restructuring: the Synod calls upon the opinion leaders to explain, in simple terms, what they mean by restructuring so that the ordinary person may understand clearly what restructuring is all about as fellow stakeholder in the Nigeria project.

This statement acknowledges the need to take the discussions on restructuring to the grass-root so that every Nigerian will be part of the discussion. This call no doubt will have gone a long way in addressing the agitations were it heeded.

As stated above there have been very little discussions on restructuring and resource control in Nigeria across religious circles. This is probably due to the fact that the religious bodies would not want to be seen involved in activities that could breed conflict or ginger unrest among the citizenry of the Nation. This is rather unfortunate since religion and religious institutions play integral roles in the life of the Nigerian nation one would expect that religious bodies would play active roles on matters that boarder on justice, equity and fairness. The involvement of religious bodies in the discourse on the agitations for resource control and restructuring of Nigeria would no doubt score highly in finding lasting solutions to the problems in relation to governance and resource control in the nation. The silence of religious bodies on the issue is tantamount to shying away from its responsibility of being the

conscience of the society and a voice for its many adherents who look up to it as its hope for a better future.

Sanusi (2007) posits that Islam has never accepted the dichotomy between religion and politics. For the Muslim, political life is guided by Sharia and is expected to supersede any other law. Despite this stand on religion and politics, there has been very little said by Islamic religious leaders on the agitations for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria. Despite the cry for justice, equity and fairness by some regions in the nation these religious bodies that are expected to be the conscience of the political class have been very silent. These silence no doubt contribute to the continued agitations and the poor attention given to this matter by the government. There is therefore the need for religious leaders and religious organizations to be more involved in this very important matter as this could see to a speedy end of these agitations and the challenges associated with it.

Mepaiyeda (2012) posits that the church is not merely a voluntary association of individual disciples but an organization driven by the purpose of evangelism and transforming the society. Both Christianity and Islam, which are the two dominant religions in the nation teaches and advocates for equity and fairness. The lifestyle of Jesus for example was a model and sent signals to political leaders of his days as noted by Enwerem (2003) it is therefore expected that political leaders who are adherents of the Christian faith should model the kind of lifestyle which stands for equity and fairness. Religious bodies can hold its adherents in political office to account and positively introducing sanctions to guide their actions. Mobilizing mass actions against injustice and collaborations amongst different bodies on lines of agreements are more ways that religious bodies can contribute to the assurance of justice, equity and fairness in the governance of the Nigerian nation.

Conclusion

The agitations for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria are certainly not without merit. The present state of the nation which is seen in the rising cases of insecurity, poverty and unemployment are more than enough reasons to set citizens who feel cheated on edge. There is no doubt perceived inequity in the distribution of the resources of the nation. Regions which give more and get little are well within their rights to feel aggrieved. The calls for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria are no doubt within merit ethically. Religious bodies must lend its weight behind the calls to see to its fruition. Christianity and Islamic religions which are the dominant religions in the nation no doubt have very important roles to play in ensuring equity and fairness in the governance of the nation. Reports and recommendations of national conferences held in the past should be implemented. The dominant religious bodies have a responsibility of providing moral leadership for the nation. One way of doing this is by ensuring that its members who are key political actors act in ways that make for equity and fairness. Policies in the nation should be such that promotes the good and wellbeing of the larger group in the Nation. Equity and fairness must be promoted in the Nation at all cost.

Recommendations

The fact that religion is key to the polity of the Nigerian nation cannot be over emphasized. Religious institutions have to play their part to ensure that equity and fairness prevails in the

governance of the Nation. The following recommendations are therefore considered necessary.

1. Religious institution should play active role in the call for resource control and restructuring of Nigeria. There are serious concerns on the present state of the Nigerian nation, the rising case of insecurity; poverty etc. Religious bodies cannot continue to be missing in the discussions towards seeking a way forward for the nation. Religious bodies should actively engage the government on this matter. Different strategies should be used to get the attention of the government including the staging of peaceful protest and using different platforms including their pulpits to get the government to listen.
2. Religious leaders should take time to understand the meaning and implication of resource control and restructuring in Nigeria and should educate their members on this as stakeholders in the Nigerian project.
3. Religious leaders should task political office holders who are members of their faith to consider highly the issue of fairness and equity in the deliberations and decisions on the agitations for resource control and restructuring in Nigeria. The matter should be given the attention it deserves. Reports of the different national conferences should be revisited and the recommendations made by the conferences should be implanted. It is certainly not right that such a huge amount of money is expended to organize such conferences that had the cream of the nation in attendance and yet have its recommendations abandoned.
4. Corruption is noted to be part of the reasons behind the agitations. Religious bodies should provide moral leadership to the nation. The best way of doing this is to join seriously in the fight against corruption. Religious bodies should call out corrupt politicians publicly. They should be made to understand the stand of religious bodies on corruption and should not be allowed to feel comfortable at religious functions.
5. It is very obvious that Nigeria as it is today is not working. The government must give priority to the restructuring of Nigeria as this above all else is key to the development of the nation. Religious bodies should impress this on the government and play active roles in its implementation.

References

Abass I.A & Wakili G.S, (2018) "Agitation for Restructuring and Resource Control in Nigeria's federalism: Issues Perspectives and the way forward". *Covenant university journal of politics and international affairs.* Vol. 6 no. 1 June 2018, pp 1-18

Amucheazi, E. (2001). Resource control and the future of Nigerian federation. Unpublished seminar paper

Atoyebi K. et al. (2013) "The implication of resource control in Nigeria." *International journal of humanities and social science invention* Vol. 2 issue 2, pp 53-57

Barkan, Joel D.et al. (2001). "State and Local governance in Nigeria" *public sector and capacity building program: Africa region. The world bank*. March 6,2011" p 1 accessed from www. en.m.wikipedia.org on 24th august 2019 by 2.21pm

Dibua J.I (2005) "Citizenship and resource control in Nigeria: the case of minority communities in the Niger delta". *Africa spectrum* vol. 40 No.1, pp 5-28

Edevbie David (2000) Nigeria: the derivation principle. *Allafrica* October 4, 2000. Available at www.allafrica.com/stories/200010040145.html

Egbubulem, J. C.(2011) Federalism and the politics of resource control in Nigeria: a critical analysis of the Niger Delta crisis. *International Journal of humanities* Vol 1 No. 12; September 2011, pp 218-229

Egugbo C.C (2016.), "Resource control and the politics of Revenue allocation in Nigerian Federation" *AFRREV IJAH: An international journal of Arts and humanities* Vol. 5 No. 4, pp186- 201

Enwerem, I. (2003), In preaching in contemporary Nigeria, essays in memory of M.JDempsey, O.P Lagos. Dominician Publication. P 108

Ezeji- Okoye, K. (2009) Political, economic and cultural rationales for state creation in Nigeria. Phd dissertation. Atlanta Georgia

Mepaiyeda S.M (2012), The Church and Governance in Nigeria. *Religion and governance in Nigeria*, department of religious studies university of Ibadan, p 31

Najakku, A (2016) The Politics of Restructuring. Daily trust online august 2, 2016

Nyekwere E. H. and Duson N A (2020.) "Fiscal federalism, resource control and restructuring in Nigeria: The contending issues." *Global Journal of Politics and Law Research.* Vol 8. No 4 July 2020, pp1-29

Nwokedi R.C (2001) revenue allocation and resource control in the Nigerian federation, Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.

Omenma, J.T (2002) The federal structure and the politics of resource control in Nigeria an Msc dissertation, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Omoregbe, J., (1993), *Ethics: A systematic and Historical study* Lagos: Joja Educational research and Publishers Limited, p 4

Okafor, K. (2017) Amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 by Lord Lugard. accessed from www.legit.ng on 24th august 2019 by 2.08pm

Okebukola, A.O, (2012), "Religion and Good governance: Nigerian experience." Religion and governance in Nigeria. Ibadan. Department of Religious Studies University of Ibadan, pp1-7

Sanusi L.S. (2017) "Politics and Sharia in northern Nigeria." In *Islam and Muslim politics in Africa* pp 177-188

Shebbs, E.U and Njoku R, (2016) Resource control in Nigeria: Issues of politics, conflict and legality as challenge to development of the Niger Delta region. *Journal of good governance and sustainable development in Africa (JGGSDA*) Vol 3, No , December 2016. Pp 32-45

Wheare, K. (1946) *Federal Government*. London : Oxford University Press