

FEDERALISM AND THE CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA

Samuel Ogheneruona Ejeba¹, Ndi Di Patience Oguma² & Prof. Kelly-Bryan Ovie Ejumudo³

¹Department of Political Science, ^{2&3}Department of Public Administration,
Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Behavioural Sciences,
Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State.

Email: ejeba.samuel@dou.edu.ng 08067105044¹

Email: Patience.oguma@dou.edu.ng, 08037833089²

Corresponding Author: ejumudo.kelly-bryan@dou.edu.ng, 08037145137³

ABSTRACT

The study assessed federalism and the challenges of national integration in Nigeria. The data utilized in the study were derived from both primary and secondary sources. The data obtained were analyzed using chi-square instrument. The findings of the study revealed among others that federalism in Nigeria reduced inter-ethnic competition and minimized the usual alleged fear of domination among ethnic nationalities. The study also indicated that federalism in Nigeria did not bring government nearer to the people and is not a source of integration of citizens largely due to leadership failure and management malady. The study recommended that the principle of fiscal needs should be given a dominant weight in the revenue allocation practice, that the power of the federal government to vary the proportion of federally collected revenue which goes to the federal account should be checked and that revenue should be allocated among the sub-national governments based on the length of federal roads, population size, tax efforts and equality of state.

Keywords: *Federalism, National Integration, Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

Globally, federalism has come to represent a political arrangement that does not only seek to reconcile national unity and at the same time maintain the rights of the cooperating or federating units (Ejumudo and Ikenga, 2021). Nigeria is a deeply divided and plural society. Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world with well over 250 ethno-linguistic groups, some of which are bigger than many independent states of contemporary Africa (Ojo, 2019). At the beginning of the 1960s, there were over 3,000 ethnic groups (tribes) in the world, about 1000 were represented in the geographical space called Africa and about 445 were represented in the geo-political space called Nigeria.

It is worthy of note that states all over the world adopt political arrangements that best suit their nature and composition, and which would facilitate a substantial amount of cooperation among the various segments and institutions, all in a bid to achieve the desired end. One of such institutional arrangements especially for plural societies is the federal option. That is a form of government where the component units of a political organization participate in cooperatively sharing powers and functions although the combined forces of ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity, among others, tend to pull them apart (Tamuno, 2018).

Thus, courtesy of the multiplicity of its ethnic and religious groups which qualified it as a plural society per excellence, Nigeria emerged as an independent nation-state more than five decades ago under a federal arrangement meant to reconcile the various diverse elements in the country. It is important to note that the operation of the system started formally in 1954 with the adoption of Oliver Lythleton's Constitution, which guaranteed substantial autonomy to the then-existing regions. Federalism having been operated for more than half a century in Nigeria has encountered

multiple challenges. To the above end, Ejumudo (2009) stressed that the fiscal federalism palaver in Nigeria is a product of leadership failure, management malady and a reflection of the pseudo and quasi nature of the country's federal experiment for one thing. There are, in fact, mixed feelings against the background of the over sixty years of political investment in federalism in the Nigerian state.

Presently, the operation of Nigeria's federalism since independence in 1960 has not yielded meaningful socio-economic and political development. Instead, the half-hearted practice of federalism has resulted in the over-centralization of fiscal and political power, the creation of unviable and federally dependent states and local governments, and increased corruption, ethnicity, and minority agitations over oil revenue. Consequently, the study posits that the prospects of genuine nationhood and development in Nigeria lie in a swift adoption of true federalism.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of nation-building and national development in Nigeria can genuinely receive proper attention only under a truly federal system of government and the great potential of the country would be best realized within the framework of true federalism. Similarly, one of the major challenges confronting Nigeria as a young democracy relates to the issue of achieving a greater measure of national integration amongst the various national groups that constitute her society. As a geopolitical entity, Nigeria has brought together divergently and ethnically different nations. These nations, whether major or minor, in their varying degrees of success or failure, have constituted one centrifugal force or another within this single polity.

In light of the above, Lawal and Okam (2021) were prompted to endorse the view that this political unhealthiness constitutes a major divisive force of great magnitude in terms of the peaceful and corporate existence of Nigeria. Indeed, these negative forces constitute enormous problems and predicaments that are seriously antithetical to the attainment of national integration and development in the country. As Ifeanchio and Nwagwu (2019) elucidated, Nigeria's efforts at achieving national integration have remained largely unrealized. In their words, the history of democratization in Africa, in general, and Nigeria, in particular, has remained the history of national disintegration.

Onifade and Imhonopi (2023) disclosed that the integration crises facing Nigeria are manifest in the leadership failure, minority question, religious fundamentalism and conflicts, ethnic politics, indigene-settler dialectic, resource control, youth restiveness, and militancy. The status quo has convulsed the productive sector, limited the impact of government economic programs on the people, threatened food security, complexified social insecurity, deepened the deterioration of physical and social infrastructures, distressed the living standards of a vast majority of Nigerians, militated against the educational system and resulted in the ostracization of the generality of Nigerians.

Consequent upon the foregoing, the study argues that the starting point to rescuing Nigeria's systemic collapse is the adoption and practice, by the country, of a true federal arrangement based on a different philosophy rather than the present warped union where there is too much power and resources concentrated on the center. The study further contends that Nigeria needs genuine and concerted efforts at integrative programs to ensure national cohesion, unity, integration, and development in all spheres of her life. The study posits that achieving national integration, which also means addressing existing challenges in its path, is critical to realizing economic transformation in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This study evaluated federalism and the challenges of national integration in Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Ascertain whether federalism in Nigeria reduced inter-ethnic competition.
- ii. Examine whether federalism in Nigeria reduced the alleged fear of domination.
- iii. Establish whether federalism in Nigeria has brought the government nearer to the people.
- iv. Determine whether federalism in Nigeria is a Source of integration of citizens.

Research Questions

- i. Did federalism in Nigeria reduce inter-ethnic competition?
- ii. Did federalism in Nigeria reduce the usually alleged fear of domination?
- iii. Has federalism in Nigeria brought the government nearer to the people?
- iv. Is federalism in Nigeria a Source of integration of citizens?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: Federalism does not reduce inter-ethnic competition in Nigeria

Ho₂: Federalism in Nigeria does not minimize the fear of domination

Ho₃: Federalism in Nigeria does not bring governance to the people

Ho₄: Federalism in Nigeria is not a source of citizens' integration

Concept of Federalism

The concept of federalism has received broad scholarly attention. However, there is no universally accepted definition of the word federalism. Consequently, each scholar defines federalism according to their perception. Odion (2021), observes that early writers on the concept of federalism such as Jean Bodin, Olto, Cosmanus among others, viewed federalism as a voluntary form of political union of independent authorities. The union either temporary or permanent, was based on the need for special common purposes like defense, trade, communications and other reasons that would benefit the parties involved. However, contemporary writers on the concept of federalism such as Livingstone, McMahan, and Rikers amongst others viewed federalism as mutual interaction between, and direct contact with, at least two levels of government.

These scholars take their root from the 1787 American Constitution. The definition of federalism by different scholars rest on the fundamental principle that federalism is a form of governmental institutional structure deliberately designed by political architects to cope with the twin but difficult task of maintaining unity, while also preserving diversity (Odion, 2021). Thus, federalism is believed by these writers, to be capable of mediating the potential and actual conflicts arising from the heterogeneity within a nation-state (Akpata, 2020). For Elaigwu (2020), federalism is a compromise solution in a multinational state between two types of self-determination; the determination to maintain a supranational framework of government which guarantees security for all in the nation-state on the one hand, and protects the self-determination of component groups which seek to retain their identities on the other hand.

Wheare (1963), believed to be an articulate writer on federalism, conceived of it as an association of states formed for certain common purposes but in which the member states retain a large measure of their original independence. Thus, Wheare's proposition posits that the federal principle essentially entails a legal division of powers and functions among levels of government within a written constitution guaranteeing and reflecting the division. Though subsequent scholars have criticized him for being too legalistic in his formulation and so came up with postulations that seem somewhat a departure from his, all still revolve around a legal or constitutional framework. Models such as cooperative federalism, interdependent, and in the case of Awa (1976), mature

and emergent federalism have been suggested to characterize the system, essence of which is to gain insight into its nature.

It is instructive to note that rather than characterization, political realities which often impinge upon the distribution of powers between the various levels of government in a federation are what determine the nature and character of federalism. However, since other formulation of federalism from other scholars are variations of Wheare's work, the basic tenets or elements of federalism according to Wheare will be used as template to determine Nigerian federalism and the extent to which Nigeria has fulfilled the basic tenets of federalism.

The basic tenets according to Wheare are: a) there must be at least two levels of government and there must be constitutional division of powers among the levels of governments, b) each level of government must be co-ordinate and independent, c) each level of government must be financially independent. He argued that this will afford each level of government the opportunity of performing their functions without depending or appealing to others for financial assistance, d) there must be Supreme Court of the independent judiciary. He argued that in terms of power sharing, there is likely to be conflict hence, there must be independent judiciary to resolve the case. e) in terms of the amendment of the constitution, no level of government should have undue power over the amendment process. Wheare maintains that once a country is able to satisfy these conditions, such country is said to practice federalism.

Concept of National Integration

The literature on integration is replete with different definitions of the term. As Bandyopad and Green (2019) disclosed, terms used for national integration have included national cohesion, national unity or nation-building. Integration, following Parson's (1956) analysis, involves the creation of society to solidarity and institutionalization of patterns of social interaction; ensuring that rules and regulations that define the patterns of interaction; and that the means of achieving desired goals are accorded their legitimacy within the social system. There are certain implications that characterize societal integration.

Firstly, the question of societal solidarity and the existence of normative framework which presupposes in turn the existence of shared cognitive orientation in the process of social interaction. Put in other words, in every society, for effective societal integration to be achieved, people must be aware of, or share knowledge of both their historical past and culture which makes it possible for them to adapt to, and manipulate the situation, and also plan for the future. Shared cognitive orientation more or less defines the parameter of social interaction by making acceptable norms and the sanctioning of deviant behavior meaningful. This means that when people engage in social interaction, they can more or less anticipate the consequences of their actions.

In Nigeria, this normative framework is seemingly absent as well as shared cognitive orientation. Each ethnic nationality is in search and expression of its local identity which have found expression as ethnic, political and religious conflicts across the country. Chizea (2015) demonstrated the perspective that national integration refers to establishing national central authority over subordinate political units. According to him, it is a process leading to political cohesion and sentiments of loyalty towards central political institutions. National integration is thus conceived here as the subjective feelings which individuals belonging to different social groups of historically distinct political units have towards a new nation. Such a feeling is created through the objective control which the central authority has over the entire territory under its claimed jurisdiction.

Ojo (2019) defines national integration as the process of unifying a society which tends to make it harmonious city, based upon an order its members regard as equitably harmonious. Nevertheless, Stephanie (2016) raised posers to the various conceptualizations of integration as

they give no clear indication of what the end product would look like and how one would recognize an integrated polity. How much cohesion and which commonly accepted norms denote an integrated political or social unit? How would an observer identify integration or is it dependent on some other manifestations (such as conflict) to demonstrate a lack of integration? In addition, what institutional form will an integrated unit take? Will it be democratic or authoritarian? Would it be a centralized organizational entity with full sovereignty or would it be a loosely federal unit? Or are institutional forms irrelevant to integration?

Ojo (2019) presented a better definition of national integration as the attainment, within a territory of a sense of community and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for longtime dependable expectations of a peaceful community. According to him, a sense of community is a belief on the part of individuals in a group that they have agreed on at least one point that common social problems must and can be resolved through processes of peaceful change. Peaceful change in this context means the resolution of social problems without resorting to large-scale physical force". From the foregoing definitions, it could be observed that national integration covers a vast range of human relationships and attitudes – the integration of diverse and discrete cultural loyalties the development of a sense of nationality; and the integration of the citizens into a common political process. As diverse as these definitions are, they have a common link in that they all point to the fact that integration is what holds a society and a political system together.

Evolution of Nigeria's Federalism

The journey towards having a federation of Nigeria started in 1946 under the Richards Constitution, which institutionalized regionalism in the country. Alapiki and Odondiri (2022) elucidated that each of the then three regions (North, East, and West) had its constitution attached as a schedule to the Federal Constitution. The federation was finally established in 1954 with the Oliver Lythleton constitution, which granted substantial autonomy to the regions in some matters including the establishment of regional civil service and judicial system. Before these periods, the country was administered as a unitary setup, though with some level of power devolution. It became finally consolidated at independence in 1960 when the country emerged as a federation delicately balanced on the tripodal pedestal of the three major ethnic groups (Tyoden, 2020).

Scholars have advanced reasons as to why Nigeria adopted the federal system of government. However, while they are agreed on the historical factors that made the adoption of federalism compelling such as diversities in nationalities, religion, culture, and resources, they appear to differ on the political forces that propelled the historical factors in crystallizing into a federal union. Their arguments, as Mohammad (2018) postulated, can, however, be narrowed into two basic schools of thought. The first school which can be described as the internal school located the political forces that propelled the historical factors into federalism in the nationalist leaders. According to this school, the realities of the country's historical past coupled with perceived economic advantage accruable from federalism as well as geographical and political factors made federalism attractive to the nationalist leaders before independence.

The above factors were reinforced by growing suspicion and fear of domination by one group over another among the various units. Thus, it became appropriate to have a system of government that would grant units considerable freedom and autonomy in the internal governance of their people. This desire was found fulfilled in federalism since it is inherently decentralized and deconcentrated (Mohammad 2018). The emphasis here is that Nigeria's nationalist leaders have long before independence become convinced and reached the conclusion that the country could only survive based on a federal system. For instance, this was one of the arguments of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria's first President (1960-1966), when he canvassed for a federal commonwealth of

Nigeria (Azikiwe, 2015). It was also the argument of Awolowo in his books, *Path to Nigerian Freedom* and *Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution* published in 1947 and 1966 respectively.

In essence, the internalist school of thought is of the view that the nationalist leaders had a strong preference for federalism while the British merely endorsed what Nigerians themselves had desired (Elaigwu, 2020). The second school of thought on the other hand, sees the adoption of federalism in Nigeria as externally motivated. In the light of this, Odion (2021) demonstrates the perspective that federalism is Federalism and National Integration is a panacea to National Development in Nigeria. It is therefore, as Alapiki and Odondiri (2022) reveals nothing but a contrivance of the British rule for the purpose of administrative convenience of the colonial state apparatus.

The argument of this school is that even before 1954 when federalism formally evolved, the country had been a conglomerate of different subcultures administered unitarily. Therefore, to later introduce the federal system reflects nothing but the self-interest of the British. It is the belief of some scholars that contrary to the widely shared notion of achieving unity in diversity, federalism was introduced as a divide and rule strategy, and to this extent, was an abominable, disruptive and divisive British heritage (Awolowo, 2019).

From a synthesis of submissions by the two schools of thought discussed, certain facts became obvious about the evolution of federalism in Nigeria. It is clear that some objective factors made federalism desirable if the country is to remain united. Hence, one can hardly query the foresight of the nationalist leaders who, out of the desire to have self-rule along with shared rule, opted for the federal solution. Similarly, the British overlords could not have pretended not to know that it was the most appropriate for a heterogeneous society like Nigeria, though other pecuniary considerations may have influenced the choice. Added to this is that the British would not have imposed federalism in the country if circumstances had dictated otherwise. In other words, the adoption of federalism in Nigeria is neither an exclusive action of the British nor that of the nationalist leaders alone; rather, it was a mutual desire of both parties (Watts, 2020).

A pertinent question that derives from the preceding analysis is that if mutual fears and suspicion of domination among groups, the quest for self-determination, economic prosperity, and desire for unity in diversity among other compelling factors, propelled a federation of Nigeria, to what extent then have these imperatives been transcended many years after adopting the system? Has Nigeria been able to leverage the strength of federalism to achieve the much-desired national cohesion and development? This calls for an examination of the content and context of Nigeria's federalism to identify the missing links in Nigeria's federal practice.

Federalism and National Integration: Issues and Challenges

This aspect of the article focuses on the issues and challenges of federalism in Nigeria. There have been issues concerning the attainment and promotion of national integration in Nigeria since its genesis. The Revenue sharing formula is one of the most critical problems of federalism in Nigeria, this has resulted to several debates on the proxies used in sharing of the national wealth which involves population, derivation, natural disasters and needs, etc. But still people are not satisfied with this formula. For example, people from the Niger delta or the oil region of the south-east are clamoring that the percentage allocated to them through derivation principle are not enough to guarantee their survival and development. Their land is not more fertile for agriculture, no portable water to drink, fishing in this area is not possible, and their forests have been damaged by fire.

Whittington (2021) lucidly stated that oil region in Nigeria seems to be stuck in a time warp, with little or no real change since oil was discovered for over 50 years ago. Away from the main towns, there is no real development, no roads, no electricity, no running water and no telephone. And the North is also claiming that prior to the discovering of oil in Nigeria the revenue from the export of

groundnut and cotton used to finance all capital project of the country. The northern region are again boasting of population size and using it as comparative advantages to acquire more allocations based on the principle of population, while others believes it a false figure, that the figures was initially increased to augment their allocation and also for political reasons like constituency, polling zones and wards now causing another debate questioning the workability of the principle.

Religious crisis is another factor which has inhibited the success to national integration in different parts of the country, for example the religious crisis in Kaduna and plateau states have claimed many lives and lots of properties, divided people on the basis of religious and promote hatred between the two major religion Islam and Christianity; the problem is everywhere unless it has not led to clashes that's why it has not been evident in other states.

To Usman (2024), on the 7th of September in the year 2001, over 1000 lives were lost, about 1,000 people injured and property worth millions of naira destroyed in a clash between Christians and Hausa/Fulani Muslims in Jos, Plateau state and several others as occurred since from then and till date. Ethnic crisis is also serious issue among the people, which has led to high degree of ethnocentrism among people of the different ethnic groups more specifically between the three major ethnic group namely Youruba, Hausa and Igbo's and the other minor ethnic groups feels they are being marginalized now leading to ethnic jingoism. Majority of the ethnic groups believe that the three major ethnic groups usually share the national resources and offices among themselves to their own detriments. This has no doubt created serious problem towards attaining national integration in Nigeria.

The issue of mediocrity is another problem confronting federalism in Nigeria. The principle of federal character always provide the appointment of non-qualified civil servant since the principle for appointment is based on equality but not on merit and each state is given equal number of appointment which will latter have effect on efficiency, effectiveness and goals of the Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDGs). That's why Harry (1976) stressed that appointment and promotion in civil service in pursuit of the federal character and quota provide a platform for nepotism, tribalism and a massive decline in standard of performance. Supremacy for power by elite is also a factor.

There has been tussle for power between the elite from different parts of the country so as to climb and control the mantle of leadership in order to provide policies that will serve and protect their cultural or ethnic interest. This has generated bitter politics and each ethnic group uses different strategy to gain power without looking at its consequences on the entire nation. Quota is a principle which allows the allocation of public offices such as ministries, department and agencies, and also the allocation of project for infrastructural developments and programs to alleviate poverty and other social vices in a fair manner. However, the opposite is the case; the manner in which the quota is shared is not in accordance with the stated laws which now allow some form of special treatments to some particular region, ethnic groups or religion. These factors have led to a serious catastrophe in Nigeria making the citizens to lose hope in federalism and wish for restructuring and review its principles.

Ayoade (2018) equally noted that as long as the application of the principle discriminated against groups, no unity can result. Lastly mutual suspicion is another problem that causes a serious threat to national integration because there is no more trust among the diverse tribes, ethnic groups and religion groups now living every sect not to be their brothers keepers having in mind that each one envy another's success and prefers his sect more than any other notwithstanding the situations and circumstances. From the above issues, one can deduce that the absence in national integration in which the ideology of federalism was adopted to avoid and amend is at lowest ebb because of ethnic crisis, tribal clashes.

Theoretical framework

For purpose of this study, the structural-functional theory was adopted. This theory posited that every political arrangement has its own structures and each structure is created to perform some functions which will foster the existence of that system and its survival. The examples of these structures in Nigerian include federal character commissions and revenue mobilization, allocation and fiscal commission. And each is assigned with certain functions that will promote the aims of their creation which is to promote national integration because of the diversity of ethnic groups, tribes, and religions that exist in Nigeria. And any diversion from these will leads to a lapses.

To Almond there are seven variables, four of which are input functions and are performed by non-governmental component and the remaining three are performed by the government. These four inputs include interest articulation, interest aggregation, political socialization and lastly political communication. The output functions include lawmaking, law implementation and rule adjudication. The problem is that Almond did not believe and considered that some structures are dysfunctional especially in country like Nigeria, and most third world countries where these structures are not performing their functions as expected.

The above, as a result, failed to guarantee fair representation in quota system and equity in revenue allocations. Almond also made emphasis on the capability of the system to cope with the inputs entering the system known as demands and it is not everything that goes into the system that the government can process to become outputs. However, for a system to survive it must possess necessary mechanism to process these inputs for its survival to avoid collapse in which Nigerian has done but no results from it feedback mechanisms.

Research Design

For this study, the design adopted was the descriptive survey method which used the administration and analysis of questions to arrive at dependable answers to any research problem.

Population of Study

The population of this study is the number of people living in Ukwale metropolis. The population of Ukwale, Nigeria is 134,102.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The sample size of this study was determined using the Taro Yamani formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$1 + N(e)^2$$

Where n = sample size 1 = constant

E² = margin of error (0.05 N= 134102

So, therefore, the sample size is n= 134102

$$1 + 134102 (0.05)^2$$

$$n = \frac{134102}{1 + 134102 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{134102}{1 + 335.255}$$

$$n = \frac{134102}{336.255}$$

$$n = 398.810426610$$

∴ n = 399 Approximately

Source of Data

The data in this study came from primary Sources. It is a body of data that has not been used, explored, and analyzed for the first time.

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was drafted and distributed to respondents. Out of the 399 questionnaires that were distributed to the people living in Ukwale metropolis, 167 were returned. Therefore the analysis was based on 167.

Method of Analysis

To facilitate accurate analysis of data the study used percentages and chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The chi-square formula is below: -

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Where X²: Chi-square value

O_i=Observed frequency

E_i=Expected frequency

∑ = Summation sign

Level of significance 5% or (0.05) Degree of freedom RxC Row(R-I)

Column (C-i)

Data Presentation

Question: Is federalism in Nigeria a Source of integration of citizens?

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	48	28.4%
No	119	71.6%
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 above shows that 119 respondents representing 71.6% disagreed that federalism in Nigerian is not a Source of integration of citizens while 48 respondents representing 28.4% agreed that federalism in Nigeria is a Source of integration of citizens.

QUESTION: Do you think that Nigeria practices true federalism? Table 2:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	39	34.3
No	128	65.7
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most respondents, 128 representing 65.7% said no while the remaining 39 respondents representing 34.3% said yes.

QUESTION: Has federalism in Nigeria brought the government nearer to the people? Table 3:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	27	16.4
No	140	83.6
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most respondents 140 representing 83.6% said no that federalism in Nigeria does not bring government near to the people while 27 respondents representing 16.4% said yes that federalism in Nigeria brings government near to the people

QUESTION: Does federalism in Nigeria reduced inter-ethnic competition?

Table 4:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	22	10.4%
No	145	89.6%
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The majority of the respondents 145 representing 89.6% said no, while 22 respondents representing 10.4% said yes.

QUESTION: Has the practice of true federalism alleviated the problem of national integration?

Table 5:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	26	14.9%
No	141	85.1
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A total of 141 respondents 85.1% said no, while 26 respondents representing 14.9% said yes.

Question: Has the adoption of federalism in Nigeria led to the marginalization of minority groups?

Table 6:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	145	86.6
No	22	13.4
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table above shows that 145 respondents representing 86.6% said yes, while 22 respondents representing 13.4% said no.

QUESTION: Does federalism in Nigeria minimize the usually alleged fear of domination?

Table 7:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	120	71.6
No	47	28.4
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table above shows that 120 respondents representing 71.6% said yes while 47 respondents representing 28.4% said no.

Question: Does lack of political will contribute to the problems of national disintegrations in Nigeria?

Table 8:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	128	77.6
No	39	22.4
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From the table above 128 respondents representing 77.6% believed that lack of political will contributed to the problems of national disintegrations in Nigeria while 39 respondents representing 22.4% do not believe that lack of political will contributes to the problems of national disintegrations in Nigeria

Question: Does ethnic groups' conflict create competition for scarce resources at national level?

Table 9:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	162	97.0
No	5	03.0
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 9 above shows that 162 respondents representing 97.0% admitted that ethnic groups conflict create competition for scarce resources at national level while 5 respondents representing 03.0% felt that ethnic groups conflict did not create competition for scarce resources at national level.

Question: Are there any dominant groups in Nigerian federation?

Table 10:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
-----------------	-----------------	----------------

Yes	129	77.6
No	38	22.4
Total	167	100

Source: Field Survey 2025

From the table above 129 respondents representing 77.6% believed that there were dominant groups in the Nigerian federation while 38 respondents representing 22.4% do not believe that there any dominant groups in Nigerian federation.

Data Analysis

QUESTION: Does ethnic group reduce tension in Nigeria federalism?

With reference to the question of ethnic groups reducing tension in Nigeria, 110 persons said no and 57 peoplesaid yes.

Hypothesis One: Federalism in Nigeria does not reduce inter-ethnic competition.

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	150	89.6
No	17	10.4
Total	167	100

Degree of freedom = $(2-1)(2-1) = 1 \times 1 = 1$ Expected frequency (E_i) = $67/2 = 33.5$

Response Option	O_i	E_i	$O_i - E_i$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
Yes	150	33.5	26.5	702.25	20.963
No	17	33.5	-26.5	702.25	20.963
Total	167				41.926

The calculated value is 41.926 while the value X of is higher than the table

value critical value X^2 for Id.f. at 0.05 Chi- $X^2 (X^2 > X^2)$

E00)

Square table is 3.841. The calculated Decision X^2 Computed is 41.926 and is greater than the chi-square table value at 5% level of significance using one (1) degree of freedom (v) which is 3.841; based on the decision rule, we reject the null hypothesis. In other words, we accept the alternate hypothesis; federalism in Nigeria reduces inter-ethnic competition.

Hypothesis Two

The researcher made use of the chi- square method. This method states that if the calculated chi-square value is more than the value of chi-square in the table at 5% or (0.05) level of significance, the null hypothesis will be rejected.

HO2: Federalism in Nigeria does not minimize the usual alleged fear of domination

Table 13:

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	120	71.6
No	47	28.4
Total	167	100

Degree of freedom = (2-1) (2-1) Expected frequency (Ei) =67/2 = 33.5

Response Option	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² E _i
Yes	120	33.5	14.5	210.25	6.2761
No	47	33.5	-14.5	210.25	6.2761
Total	167				12.5522

The calculated value is 12.5522 while the table value is 3.841. The calculated value X^2 of critical value X^2 for Id.f.at 0.05 chi-square is higher than the table value X^2 ($X^2 > X_0$)

Decision

X^2 Computed is 12.5522 and is greater than the chi-square table value at 5% level of significance using one (1) degree of freedom (v) which is 3.841; based on the decision rule, we reject the null hypothesis. In other words, we accept the alternate hypothesis, federalism in Nigeria is the usually alleged fear of domination.

Hypothesis Three

H_0^3 : Federalism in Nigeria does not bring government nearer to the people

The researcher made use of the chi-square method. This method states that if the calculated chi-square value is more than the value of chi-square in the table at 5% or (0.05) level of significance, the null hypothesis will be rejected.

Federalism in Nigeria does not bring government nearer to the people?

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	27	16.4
No	140	83.6
Total	167	100

Degree of freedom = (2-1)(2-1) Expected frequency(Ei) =67/2 = 33.5

Response Option	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² E _i
Yes	27	33.5	-22.5	-506.25	-15.111940
No	140.	33.5	22.5	-506.25	-15.111940
Total	167				-30.22388

The calculated value is -30.2238, while the table is 3.841. The calculated value X^2 is less than the critical value X^2 at 0.05 level of significance.

Decision

X^2 Computed is -30.22388 and is less than the chi-square table value at 5% level of significance using one (1) degree of freedom (v) which is 3.841. Based on the decision rule, we accept the null hypothesis. In other words, we accept the Null hypothesis, federalism in Nigeria does not bring government nearer to the people.

Hypothesis Four

H_{O3} : Federalism in Nigerian is not a Source of integration of citizens

The study made use of the chi-square method. This method states that if the calculated chi-square value is more than the value of chi-square in the table at 5% or (0.05) level of significance, the null hypothesis will be rejected.

Response Option	No. of Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	47	28.4
No	120	71.6
Total	167	100 .

Degree of freedom = $(2-1)(2-1)$ Expected frequency (E_i) = $67/2 = 33.5$

Response Option	O_i	E_i	$O_i - E_i$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
Yes	47	33.5	-14.5	-210.25	-6.2761
No	120	33.5	-14.5	210.25	-6.2761
Total	167				-12.5522

The calculated value is 12.5522, while the table is 3.841. The calculated value X^2 of critical value X^2 for Id.f.at 0.05 chi-square is higher than the table value X^2 ($X^2 > X^2$)/e

Decision

X^2 Computed is -12.5522 and is less than the chi-square table value at 5% level of significance using one (1) degree of freedom (v) which is 3.841; based on the decision rule, we reject the alternate hypothesis. In other words, we accept the null hypothesis; federalism in Nigerian is not a source of integration of citizens.

Summary of Findings

Based on the hypotheses testing and data analysis of this study, federalism in Nigeria reduces inter-ethnic competition: From the table above, 120 respondents representing 71.6% agreed that federalism in Nigeria reduced inter- ethnic competition while 47 respondents representing 28.4% rejected the idea that federalism in Nigeria reduced inter-ethnic competition, while Federalism in Nigeria minimized the usually alleged fear of domination. From the Table 10 above 129 respondents representing 77.6% agreed that there were dominant groups in Nigeria’s federation the following observations are made: while 38 respondents representing 22.4% disagreed that there were any dominant groups in Nigeria’s federation. Federalism in Nigeria brings government nearer to the people: Responses indicate that the majority of the respondents 140 representing 83.6% believed that federalism in Nigeria brings

government nearer to the people, while 27 respondents representing 16.4% disagreed that federalism in Nigeria bring government nearer to the people.

Federalism in Nigeria is not a source of integration of citizens: Results showed that 120 respondents representing 71.6% disagreed that federalism in Nigerian is not a Source of integration of citizens, while 47 respondents representing 28.4% agreed that federalism in Nigeria is a source of integration of citizens.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The principle of fiscal needs should be given a dominant weight in the nature of revenue allocation system.
- The power of the federal government to vary the proportion of federally collected revenue which goes to the federal account should be checked.
- The revenue should be allocated among the sub-national governments based on the length of federal roads, population size, tax efforts and equality of state.

REFERENCES

- Awa, E. (1976). Federalism and the problem of nation building in Nigeria. *Society for Research and Academic Excellence (SARE)*.
- Akpata, E.E. (2020). Federalism and the minority question. Lagos: Ginger Press.
- Alabi, D. (2016). *Federalism and the quest for national development*. Lagos, Concept Publications.
- Ejumudo, K.B.O. (2009). A critical analysis of fiscal federalism palaver as an exposition of the pseudo and quasi nature of Nigeria's federal experiment. *International Journal of Political Science and Public Administration*, 2 (1), 14-28.
- Ejumudo, K.B.O. & Ikenga, F.A. (2021). The problematic of Nigeria's federalism and the restructuring option. *Journal of Hukum Universitas Negeri Semarang*.
- Elaigwu, M. (1991), Federalism and National Leadership in Nigeria. *Journal of Federalism*, 21(4), 125-144.
- Wheare, K. C. (1963). *Federal Government* (4th ed.). Oxford: University Press.
- Parsons, T. (1956). *Economy and society: A study in the integration of economic and social theory*. London: Free Press.
- Bandyopad, A. and Green, T. (2019). Federalism and nation building in Nigeria. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 2(6), 22-34.
- A. T. (2015). *The challenges of nation building: The Case of Nigeria*. Ibadan: Caleb Publishers.
- Ifeanacho, M.O. & Nwagwu, J.F. (2019). *Federalism and National Integration*. Lagos; Zenith Publishers.
- Alapiki, G and Odondiri, B. (2022). Understanding federalism *Perspectives on Federalism*, 5(3), 45-56.

- Lawal, A.B. & Okam, D. O. (2021). *Federalism: Theory and Practice*. Ibadan: Citadel Publishers.
- Tyoden, E. (2020). *Ethnic politics in Nigeria*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension.
- Watts, S. (2020). Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Nigeria in Obi E.A. and Obiekeze, S. O. (eds), *federalism and national integration in Nigeria*. Onisha: Bookpoint Ltd.
- OdiaOfeimun (2015). *Resource control and beyond* (2) The Guardian, Lagos, July 17.
- Odion-Akhaine, S. (2020). The Bull by the Horn in Odion-Akaine Sylvester, (ed.) *constitutionalism and national question*, Lagos: Centre for Constitutionalism and Demilitarization (CENCOD).
- Odion, I. R. (2021). *A critical assessment on Nigerian federalism: Path to a True Federal System*. A paper presented at the 4th Annual National Conference, of the Colleges of Education Staff Union, Federal College of Education Technical, Potiskum, Yobe State
- Ojo, E. O. (2019). Federalism and the search for national integration in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3(9), 384-395.
- Onifade, B.O. & Imhonopi, A.C. (2023). *The problematic of national integration*. Ibadan; Peak Press.
- Azikiwe, T. (2015). *Federalism in Nigeria under the presidential constitution*. London: Sweet and Maxwell.
- Awolowo, J. (2019). *Federalism origin, operation and significance*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Tamuno, T. N. (2018). Nigerian federalism in historical perspective.
- Harry, S. (1976). Nation-building or nation-destroying? *World Politics* 24(3), 319-355
- Stephanie, A. C. (2016). Political integration and political development in Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable (eds.) *Political development and social change*. New York: John Wiley and Sons. Inc.