

IMPACT OF NIGERIA'S FEDERAL STRUCTURE ON NATIONAL SECURITY PROVISIONING

By

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Abstract

Nigeria's federal system, though designed to address its unique diversity and heterogeneity as a flexible way to ensure national integration and balanced development, has, for various reasons, been beset by problems and challenges. Currently, the most pressing of such problems has been insecurity across the country. This has further created uncertainties, especially in some quarters, about the various causes of the problems. Indeed, all federations are designed and founded on statutory constitutional arrangements that assign various components of the state their functions. It is within this context that the problem of insecurity in Nigeria could be traced and explained. The methodology used in this paper is qualitative documentary analysis, drawing on secondary sources such as relevant books, journals, federal government archives, and official documents. The objective of this paper is to examine the constitutional design and statutory architectures for national security provisioning in Nigeria. The central thesis of this research is anchored on the proposition that the sorry state of the security situation in Nigeria is a product of its constitutional design, which centralised security provision to the central government, leaving the political chief security officers of the peripheral states and LGAs redundant. This design left the states powerless and increasingly became a massive liability for the central government, offering nothing to provide security services to their people. This is the contradiction, and it therefore explains the central government's primary failure to provide adequate security services to the citizenry in Nigeria.

Keywords: Federalism, National Security, Insecurity, Constitution

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic nation with over 250 diverse ethnic groups brought together at independence as one nation. Nigeria's federalism, adopted to manage the country's complex ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity, has been central to its governance since independence in 1960. The independence constitution of 1960 made Nigeria a federal state with three federating units, and by 1963, four federating units, with adherence to true federalism. The subsequent years of military rule shifted the practical, true federalism to principal federalism, in which the centre exercises overbearing power over the federating units (Pally, 2020).

Currently, Nigeria's federal structure divides powers between the central government and 36 states, along with 774 local government areas (LGAs), to promote to promote political stability and ensure equitable resource distribution. However, the federal arrangement and power-

sharing derived from RIA's Constitution have led to centralisation, specifically in jurisdictional conflicts and police matters, resulting in tensions and conflicts.

Evidently, this could be seen in the series of escalating insecurity issues ranging from Boko-Haram Insurgency, herders/farmers' unhealthy relationship, kidnapping for ransom, internal slavery, implosive movement of small and light arms, organised crimes, religions and electoral violence in the country (Pally, 2020). Recent statistics on insecurity in Nigeria highlighted the significant impact of federal arrangements on the country's security landscape. In the first quarter of 2024 alone, 2,336 people were reported to have been killed in various violent incidents across Nigeria. The states most affected by these incidents were Zamfara (439 deaths), Borno (437 deaths), Katsina (362 deaths), and Benue with 221 deaths (International Centre for Investigative Reporting, 2024). Furthermore, A recent fact-finding committee report attributes a total of 11,749 deaths between 2001 and 2025 to violent attacks across Plateau State (The Cable 2025). This data reflects the ongoing challenges of addressing insecurity effectively at both the federal and state levels, due to fragmented authority and coordination within Nigeria's federal system. It is against this background that this paper analysed the impact of Nigeria's federal structure on the country's national security framework and effectiveness by exploring the interplay between federalism and security provisioning in Nigeria, identifying the challenges faced by Nigeria's federal system in national security provisioning and assessing the effectiveness of Nigeria's current security framework.

While there is considerable literature on Nigeria's Federalism and its political dynamics, the specific connection between the federal structure and its impact on national security provisioning remains underexplored. Most existing studies focus on political representation, fiscal federalism, or ethnic conflicts without directly linking these issues to the inefficiencies in security management (e.g., Suberu, 2001; Agbaje, 2004). This study will bridge this gap by systematically examining how Nigeria's federal design directly affects security outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

Theories of Federalism, such as dual Federalism, cooperative Federalism, and asymmetric federalism, provide frameworks for understanding how power is shared and contested among federating entities. In theory, Nigeria is primarily practising a form of cooperative federalism. This involves collaboration and shared responsibilities between the federal and state governments. The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria outlines a federal structure in which certain powers and functions are shared between the central government and the states. The Constitution provides a framework for intergovernmental cooperation, particularly in areas like education, health care, and infrastructure development.

In practice, the country's federal system has strong elements of centralised federalism, which leans the country heavily towards centralisation of power, particularly in matters of security and fiscal allocation. Implicitly, the federal government maintains significant control over key areas such as defence, internal security (policing), and revenue distribution, thereby creating a more centralised system. This is in line with Ashindorbe (2019), who argues that it has become contentious to categorise Nigeria as a proper federal system because the sub-national units lack autonomy and the majority depend solely on federally allocated revenue to fund their administration, while internal security of the vast country depends almost entirely on poorly funded federal police.

However, despite its relevance, the theory has been criticised for

Methodology

This study relies exclusively on secondary sources, drawing on a broad spectrum of documentary materials. In practical terms, the analysis is grounded in journals, government archives, policy briefs, and security-related reports that provide both historical depth and contemporary perspectives. The study also engage relevant scholarly papers, thematic studies on security, and established monographs to build a coherent analytical framework. While this approach inevitably reflects the constraints of depending on already-produced knowledge, it nonetheless offers a rich reservoir of evidence from which to interrogate patterns, interpretations, and debates surrounding the subject matter.

Literature Review

Federalism and Nigeria's National Security

Federalism is a form of governmental and institutional structure designed to address the difficult task of maintaining unity in diversity. Federalism refers to a mixed or compound mode of government that combines a general government (the central or federal government) with sub-regional governments within a single political system (Benz & Brozchek, 2013). Its distinctive feature, exemplified in the founding example of modern Federalism of the United States of America under the Constitution of 1789, is a relationship of parity between two levels of government in an independent and coordinate manner.

Professor K.C., the globally acknowledged father of contemporary federal theories, establishes the above position, which defines federalism or federal government as the method of dividing power so that general and regional governments are each within a sphere coordinated and independent. In a similar vein, King (1982), cited in Ashindorbe (2019), explains federalism as a dual concept of ideology connoting a balance between autonomy and independence, as well as an institutional arrangement in which the central government incorporates regional units into its decision-making process.

Despite differences in conceptualising federal systems, the constant feature of federalism is a political pattern for sharing power between different levels of government, established by a constitution for the practical Purpose of accommodating divergent opinions and conflicting demands (Ashirdorbe, 2019). Thus, federalism is the sharing of powers between the central and regional units in a coordinated and independent manner to promote unity in diversity.

Federalism can enhance national security by allowing local governments to address security issues specific to their regions while the central government focuses on national and international threats. This also corroborates Alemika (2018), who argues that federalism allows for a decentralised structure with multiple layers of governance, which can contribute to a more robust, adaptable, and context-sensitive security provisioning by enabling local authorities to respond more effectively to security challenges specific to their regions.

Accordingly, countries such as the United States, with federalism, allow states significant control over security issues, including National Guard units that are essential for responding to state-level emergencies, such as natural disasters, civil disturbances, and terrorist threats. Similarly, Switzerland's federalism allows significant autonomy to the states in matters of internal security, including policing. This pattern of integrating local and federal resources has been particularly effective in maintaining high levels of internal security, even amid challenges such as terrorism and organised crime (Linder, 2010). However, federalism can also lead to fragmentation and inefficiency if coordination among different levels of government is poor.

According to Olaniyan & Yahaya (2016), a federal system that enables effective local governance can enhance security by addressing the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality, and marginalisation. Conversely, a poorly managed federal system can exacerbate security challenges by creating power vacuums and fostering intergovernmental competition rather than cooperation. This is buttressed by Filippov, Ordeshook, and Shvetsova (2004), who state that federalism can both facilitate and complicate the management of security, depending on how responsibilities are distributed among different levels of government. This can be seen in Nigeria, where the centralised nature of its federalism has complicated security matters, as the country is vast and has diverse regions that face unique security challenges. However, states lack the autonomy to address the internal security issues they face. This responsibility is only taken on by the federal government, which has so much to deal with, ultimately making the government's efforts to address insecurity ineffective.

Nigeria's National Security Landscape

Generally, it is the government's principal responsibility to protect the lives and property of its citizens. This is supported by section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999, as amended, which provides that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary Purpose of government". (CFRN, 1999).

However, despite the government's efforts to ensure national security, the country has undoubtedly continued to experience the worst crises and insecurity it has seen since its return to democracy. This ranges from Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, militancy, ethnic clashes and conflicts. The crises have been responsible for more than 50,000 deaths since 2009, and over 2.8 million people have been displaced from their homes (Matfess, 2016). Ultimately, national security has been challenged and weakened by these incessant conflicts, crimes and insecurity, especially in the North-East, North-South and South-South regions of Nigeria. The continuous threat to national security and the harmonious living of the citizenry triggered the international community to declare Nigeria a failed state in several circles and in policy papers. For instance, the Fund for Peace (FFP) 2012 report ranked Nigeria among the top 10 failed states in Africa and the 14th-fastest-growing state amid a wave of insecurity and endemic violence (FFP, 2012). In addition, the 2017 survey report published by the Business Environment in Nigeria rated national security in Nigeria (02.69%), as against 49.49% in the 2010 report, which represents a significant fall in national security.

Asanebi, Theo-Iruo and Odoh (2021) observed that Nigeria have continued to witness Mephistophelian conflicts that have threatened and challenged the national security of the Nigerian state. Some of these conflicts and crimes are politically motivated 'thuggery', armed banditry, political assassination, herdsmen and farmers' crisis, Boko Haram crisis, Niger Delta crisis and sea piracy, amongst others. In line with the above, Alhassan and Akindapo (2019) argued that internal insecurity in Nigeria includes armed banditry, kidnapping for ransom, the Niger Delta crisis, economic and social inequality, ethnic clashes and religious conflicts, with causes such as bad governance, corruption, poverty, inequality, mass unemployment, etc.

Table 1.1 Insecurity in the Most Affected Regions in Nigeria

Type of insecurity	Affected Regions/States	Incidents Reported	Fatalities	Displaced Persons	Federalism Related Challenges
Boko Haram	Borno, Yobe, Adamawa	1600+ Incidents	37000+ Deaths	2.5 Million+	Centralised control over military and police delays response; inadequate local intelligence due to lack of autonomy
Banditry	Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, Niger	2,000+ incidents	12,000+ deaths	500,000+	State's inability to create police forces; federal police stretched thin; lack of local security initiatives.
Herdsmen-Farmer Clashes	Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba	1,200+ incidents	7,000+ deaths	300,000+	Inconsistent federal policies on grazing routes; inadequate coordination between state and federal law enforcement.
Militancy in the Niger Delta	Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta	300+ incidents	5,000+ deaths	30,000+	Centralised control of oil revenues and federal policing; local grievances against federal resource allocation policies.
Separatist Agitations	Southeast (Anambra, Imo, Enugu)	500+ incidents	2,000+ deaths	50,000+	Federal response seen as heavy-handed; calls for regional autonomy met with centralised force.

Sources: Council on Foreign Relations (2023), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2023), International Crisis Group (2021), SBM Intelligence (2022), Amnesty International (2022), Global Terrorism Index (2023), International Crisis Group (2022), Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (2023) Human Rights Watch (2022), Centre for Democracy and Development (2023).

Table 1.1 presents statistics on insurgency and insecurity in the most affected regions of the country. Boko-Haram Insurgency in the Northeast (Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states) continues to be a significant threat, with over 37,000 deaths and 2.5 million displaced. This could be argued to be related to centralised control over security forces, which often leads to delays and inadequate responses, as highlighted by the Chibok and Dapchi abductions. Similarly, banditry in Northwest and North-Central Nigeria (Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, and Niger states) has resulted in over 12,000 deaths and 500,000 displaced persons, which is also not unrelated to the inability of states to establish their police forces due to the constitutional centralisation of policing, which hampers local responses.

Accordingly, Herdsmen-Farmer Clashes in the Middle Belt (Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba states) result in over 7,000 deaths and 300,000 displacements. The escalation of these conflicts could be attributed to the federal government's inconsistent grazing policies, and local law enforcement challenges are exacerbated by the centralisation of security forces. In the same vein, Militancy in the Niger Delta is fueled by grievances over centralised control of oil

revenues and policing, leading to over 5,000 deaths and 30,000 displaced since 2015. Notably, Separatist Agitations in the Southeast (Anambra, Imo, Enugu states) have led to clashes resulting in over 2,000 deaths and 50,000 displacements, with federal military responses criticised as heavy-handed.

From the above contexts, one could argue that the nature of centralised authority in Nigeria's Federalism complicates the management of the country's internal security. The federal structure is characterised by a strong central government that controls key areas of national security, such as defence, police, and immigration. In contrast, state governments have limited autonomy in security matters, often relying on federal agencies for enforcement. A situation, whereby the states do not have the constitutional rights and financial capability to address matters of security peculiar to their unique contexts, whereas the federal government, with so much burden on its shoulders, has become grossly ineffective in addressing the security challenges for the whole nation. Consequently, this has led to worsening of insecurity issues and the loss of many lives and properties, coupled with fear instilled in the living human beings in the country.

Identifying the constitutional roots that make conflict more likely and more difficult to resolve could be necessary in this aspect. The centralised nature of Nigeria's Federalism could be attributed to a response adopted to the perceived roots of the devastating 1967–70 civil war, which is estimated to be responsible for more than one million casualties (Polynational War Memorial n.d. cited in Matfess, 2016). This is in line with Suberu (2009), who alluded that the Constitution was designed to prevent violent separatist movements, predicated upon the domination of large ethnic groups. Suberu (2009) further argues that, though these constitutional reforms were a response to the country's history and enjoy a certain level of popularity, they are evident that tact as a setback in addressing a new form of insecurity in the country.

The above statement could be argued to be true because Nigeria's Federalism has complicated national security provisioning and contributed to the nation's incapacity and inability to effectively address contemporary national security issues, which are not only concerned with ethnic diversity and conflict or economic inequality but also concerned with new threats such as armed banditry and terrorism. This aligns with Aning & Pokoo (2014), who argue that national security issues in Nigeria are not only affected by ethnic diversity, economic inequality, political instability, and regional conflicts but are increasingly affected by threats from non-state actors, such as insurgent groups, bandits, and organised crime networks. This also coincides with Diamond (2016), who argues that insecurity has continued to rise and has not been effectively addressed by the Nigerian government, alluding to the precariousness of Nigeria's centralised federalism under the current Constitution.

Thus, the nature and pattern of Nigeria's Federalism acts as one of the major standing blocks to the effectiveness of the national security provisioning framework. This is evident in the mixed results, several persistent challenges, and the low success rate. Although, the government have succeeded in reduction of Boko Haram's territorial control and formation international cooperation for security purposes such as the Multinational Joint Task force (MJTF), ECOWAS and African Union, the country is still battling with insurgency and terrorism, farmers-herders conflict, banditry and kidnapping and secessionists movements relatively owing to fragmented and delayed security responses as well as centralisation of powers on security matters. To this end, security provisioning frameworks such as the National Security Strategy in 2019 (NSS), the National Security Agencies, and the counter-terrorism frameworks, such as Operation Lafiya Dole on terrorism, Operation Whirl Stroke and Puff Adder on armed banditry and kidnapping, have not been fully effective in addressing these insecurity challenges.

Drawing on the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 as amended, the Constitution provides that all security matters are on the exclusive list, meaning that only the federal government is responsible for making decisions on them. By implication, Nigeria's Federalism has centralised power to the central government, making it more dependent on the federal government to provide security for the whole nation.

The exclusive legislative list contained in Part I of the Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended). Items on this list are exclusively under the jurisdiction of the federal government, meaning that only the National Assembly (the federal legislature) can make laws regarding these matters. This includes: Item 2, Item 16, Item 17, Item 36, and Item 45. These provisions mean that the federal government centrally controls all matters related to the military, defence, and the police. In contrast, state governments do not have constitutional authority to establish or control police forces or military units independently.

In essence, the Constitution places the provision of security and the control of armed and police forces exclusively under the federal government, limiting state governments' autonomy in managing local security issues. This is supported by Section 214 (1) of the 1999 Constitution, which provides that: There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigerian Police Force, and subject to the provisions of this section, no other police force shall be established for the Federation or any part thereof. In this context, it is reasonable to argue that the Nigerian Constitution does not permit any police force other than a federal police force for the whole country. This argument is further supported by section 214(2) of the 1999 Constitution, which provides that the Nigeria Police Force shall be organised and administered in accordance with the provisions of an Act of the National Assembly. The Nigerian National Assembly, which is the federal law-making organ of the Nigerian government, is empowered to make laws exclusively relating to the management and administration of the Nigerian Police Force. This centralisation is often seen in studies that show that the concentration of security authority in Abuja results in delays in decision-making, a lack of responsiveness to local security dynamics, and inadequate resource allocation to states (Abbas & Nwosu, 2021). Moreover, state governors, who are constitutionally designated as the chief security officers of their states, often lack control over the police and other security forces, rendering them ineffective in dealing with local security issues (Olaniyi, 2019).

Ultimately, the centralisation of the police force at the federal level has led to lopsided federalism, paving the way for both vigilantism and violent anti-state revolt. Ethnic self-defence militias, political thugs, and vigilantes have all had complicated relationships with their local government counterparts, mobilising in response to a security gap, while simultaneously contributing to insecurity by reducing the state's monopoly on violence. The lack of oversight mechanisms at the state level and the corresponding political influence encourage the proliferation of informal security providers, often endorsed by the state and politicians (Olaitan, 2023).

The above argument is valid given the internal security problems and the government's responses. In recent years, Nigeria has experienced a rise in banditry and kidnapping, particularly in the Northwest and North Central regions. Armed groups engage in mass abductions for ransom, attacks on villages, and cattle rustling, creating a climate of fear and instability (Onapajo, 2017). The federal government's response to these security threats has been criticised for centralising authority, thereby limiting local initiatives and adaptability to specific regional dynamics (Osumah & Aghedo, 2011). This inability of the central government to effectively address insecurity at the local level has led to the proliferation of various groups of local policing, informally called "*yan sakai*," to protect themselves and their communities.

These cases, these groups are trusted much more than the police in the affected localities. (ICG, 2020). (Aghedo & Osumah, 2015).

Discussion of Findings

Nigeria's federalism has evolved significantly since its colonial origins. Initially established by the British to manage the country's diverse ethnic groups and regions, the federal structure has been shaped by both colonial legacies and internal political dynamics (Suberu, 2001). Key constitutional developments, such as the 1963 Republican Constitution, the 1979 Constitution, and the 1999 Constitution (as amended), have delineated the distribution of powers, including security responsibilities, between federal and state governments (Jinadu, 2010). The 1999 Constitution assigns security to the exclusive purview of the federal government, leaving little room for states to manage their security needs independently (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). This centralisation has been a source of contention, as states have limited autonomy to address their unique security challenges independently. The debate over the need for state police forces continues, reflecting the constitutional limitations that currently exist. State governors, despite being the "chief security officers" of their states, have little actual authority over the deployment and management of police forces (Olaniyi, 2019).

This centralisation is often seen in studies that show that the concentration of security authority in Abuja results in delays in decision-making, a lack of responsiveness to local security dynamics, and inadequate resource allocation to states (Abbas & Nwosu, 2021). Moreover, state governors, who are constitutionally designated as the chief security officers of their states, often lack control over the police and other security forces, rendering them ineffective in dealing with local security issues (Olaniyi, 2019). This concentration of power leads to several problems, such as delayed responses to security threats. Because state and local governments lack direct control over security forces, they often face delays in addressing immediate security threats. In many cases, bandits close the road and carry out their operations or raid villages without the intervention of security forces until after the operations are over. Moreover, for instance, state governors, who are constitutionally designated as the chief security officers of their states, do not have the authority to command the police or other security forces directly.

Citing reference from The Boko Haram insurgency, which represents one of the most significant threats to Nigeria's national security. The group's violent activities, including bombings, kidnappings, and armed assaults, have resulted in significant loss of life, displacement of millions, and widespread destruction (Agbibo, 2013). The failure to adequately contain Boko Haram is often attributed to a lack of coordination between federal and state security agencies, corruption within the military, and insufficient intelligence-sharing mechanisms (Pham, 2012). During the early years of the Boko Haram insurgency, the Borno State government and local communities frequently complained about the slow response of the federal security forces. For instance, in 2014, the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, by Boko Haram militants was marked by significant delays in the deployment of federal security forces, despite early warnings and pleas from local authorities. The state's inability to mobilise its own security apparatus due to centralised control over the police and military exacerbated the crisis, allowing Boko Haram to expand its influence and territory.

Apart from Borno state, other states such as Zamfara and Katsina, where the rise of banditry has overwhelmed the federal security forces, which are stretched thin across multiple fronts in Nigeria, could be used as examples to show Nigeria's federal structure limits the autonomy of state and local governments to develop and implement security strategies tailored to their unique contexts. State governments have repeatedly called for the establishment of state police forces to address the unique security challenges posed by armed bandit groups who carry out

mass kidnappings, cattle rustling, and raids on villages. Until recently, the lack of local autonomy prevented states from developing and deploying security forces, forcing them to rely on under-resourced federal agencies. By implication, the lack of local input has led to ineffective or inappropriate responses to localised threats, such as communal clashes or insurgencies, in these regions.

Similarly, in Benue State, the conflict between Fulani herders and local farmers has been one of Nigeria's most persistent security challenges. The Benue State government enacted the "Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law" in 2017 to address the issue, but there was limited federal support for its enforcement. Instead, the federal government, which controls the police and military, did not prioritise the state's specific security needs, leading to clashes between state laws and federal enforcement priorities. The Benue State government has often accused federal security agencies of failing to enforce the anti-open grazing law and protect local communities from herder attacks. Consequently, this has led to fragmented security responses and further escalated tensions between the state and federal governments, resulting in repeated attacks on local communities with inadequate federal intervention.

The centralised nature of Nigeria's Federalism also affects how security resources are allocated and managed, leading to imbalances in funding and support for states and regions. States that are less politically connected or considered less strategically important may receive fewer resources, even if they face significant security threats.

For instance, the Niger Delta, comprising Bayelsa, Rivers, and Delta States, has experienced prolonged militancy due to perceived marginalisation and inequitable distribution of resources. Despite being the region from which most of Nigeria's oil wealth is derived, local communities often lack basic infrastructure, social services, and security. The federal government's control over oil revenue and security apparatus has led to accusations of neglect and underfunding of local security needs. For instance, despite billions of naira being allocated to security in the region, cases of militancy, piracy, and kidnapping for ransom continue to surge, demonstrating the inefficiency and misallocation of resources by the federal government.

Other examples of how Nigeria's Federalism has complicated security provision are the lack of defined roles and responsibilities provided by the Constitution. For instance, in Plateau and Kaduna States, the recurring farmer-herder conflicts have been marked by a lack of clarity over which level of government is responsible for managing the crisis. Local governments often lack the capacity and authority to enforce peace, while state governments have limited influence over federal security agencies deployed in their jurisdictions.

Generally, State governments are restricted in their ability to form and maintain their own police forces or security agencies, relying instead on federal agencies that may not prioritise their specific needs. This lack of localised control has led to calls for the establishment of state police forces, which are seen as better equipped to handle local security issues. This is in line with Eme & Ede (2009), who state that state governors statutorily designated as chief security officers of their respective states have no control over officers and men serving within their jurisdictions. This aberration, the governors argue, has reduced their capacity to respond adequately to security challenges within their states, leading to a demand for the creation of state police under the control of the respective federating units. Notwithstanding, the argument against state police has often been framed in terms of funding costs. It is argued that states cannot afford the cost of raising and maintaining a full-fledged police force, which will require barracks, training, equipment, and personnel emoluments, including pensions. If poorly equipped and ill-motivated federal police are failing in their duty to track crime and enforce the law, there is no guarantee that similarly under-resourced state police will not suffer the same

fate. There is the perception of fears that with such a security apparatus at the beck and call of a state governor, abuse will be inevitable, as such powers will be deployed to hunt and oppress political opponents.

Conclusion

Nigeria's federalism, while intended to promote political stability and manage diversity, has contributed to the country's inability to effectively tackle insecurity. The centralised control over security agencies, overlapping jurisdictions, inequitable resource allocation, limited local autonomy, political tensions, and inadequate mechanisms for cooperation all combine to create a fragmented and often ineffective security landscape. To enhance national security, Nigeria must address these structural and operational challenges within its federal system by implementing reforms that promote decentralisation, resource equity, local involvement, and better coordination across all levels of government.

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