

Federalism and Resource Control in Nigeria: The Paradox of Nigerian Federation

by

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Abstract

Federalism and resource control have remained two contentious issues in Nigerian politics since the Second Republic. The adoption and practice of federalism in Nigeria since then, has generated critical debates in the polity, particularly, among oil producing communities of the Niger Delta Region. This is because the Nigerian version of federalism is quite different from other countries' practices and totally against the tenets of federalism. This noticeable paradox and defective federal system have increased agitation for resource control in Nigeria. As a result, most part of Nigeria, especially the oil producing states have been agitating for resource control and/or restructuring of the country to reflect federalism as practiced globally. This paper therefore sought to examine the contentious issues that led to agitation for resource control; and the implications of not addressing these contentious issues as well as recommending appropriate framework for solutions. The paper utilized Relative Deprivation Theory as its theoretical framework and descriptive research design as its research method. A comprehensive content analysis was undertaken to analyze the data qualitatively and descriptively. Findings revealed that Nigeria's federalism is defective and fall short of the tenets of federalism and what is obtainable in other federal nations of the world; hence the agitation for resource control. Recommendations include, among others, constitutional reforms to allow states control their resources and pay agreed percentage to the federal government for the maintenance of common services, abrogation of all obnoxious laws against resource control and management and above all, restructure Nigeria to reflect federal structure in operation.

Keywords: Federalism; Oil resource; Relative deprivation; Resource control; Restructuring.