

Federalism: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

by

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Abstract

This paper addressed the conceptual and theoretical issues regarding the essence of federalism, and sought to investigate the presence of actionable federalism in the Nigerian political structure. A federal form of government is one with a multi-order structure with all orders of government having some independent as well as shared decision-making responsibilities. The main idea behind a federation is the acceptance of the view that a decentralized government functions better and tends to produce better social and economic results than totally centralized ones. However, the practice of federalism in Nigeria has been lopsided and the expected benefits (fast and steady economic growth and development) associated with fiscal federalism has been elusive. It was, therefore, recommend that Nigeria should adopt and practice true federalism in which constituent governments are given power in the constitution to generate and manage their resources for even development of their areas. This will forestall agitations for resource control. Also, Nigeria should put in place fair, unbiased and transparent electoral process and institutions for the functioning of true democracy where power absolutely rests on the electorates;