

Federalism, Civil Agitation and the Unresolved Federal Questions in Nigeria: Some Critical Insights

by

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Abstract

This paper examined the nature and patterns of the problem of civil agitation arising from the failure of Nigeria's federal system to effectively resolve the 'federal questions'. The paper adopted a qualitative methodology and followed the federalist theory. It reviewed some of the salient issues which pointed to the unresolved federal questions within the period 1960 to 2018. The findings showed that despite the assumptions of federalism, Nigeria has witnessed the return in the public sphere of a reconfigured version of new civil agitation as a set of constructs embodied in the political and social fabrics of the increasingly marginalized sections of the federating units. The paper argued that the persisting traces of the unresolved federal questions resulted in distrust, marginalization, increasing sectionalism and agitation which are not so evident in scholarly debates in Nigeria. This threatens the corporate existence of Nigeria. Alternatively, the paper recommended that true federalism could reshape the conduct of social relations of governance, equitable power and resource distribution and foster mutual trust against the prevailing practices, conclusion followed.

Keywords: Federalism, Civil Agitation, Inequality, Marginalization, Nigeria