

CLASS: SS3

SUBJECT: GOVIC

TOPIC: FEDERALISM

WEEK: 2

TERM: FIRST

MEANING OF FEDERALISM

Federation is a form of power political arrangement in which the constitutional powers that exist in the state are shared between the central authority and other federating units.

ORIGIN OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

Origin of federalism in Nigeria could be traced to the division of the country into three provinces (Northern, Eastern and western provinces) by the Arthur Richard constitution in 1946. Federalism is identified with power sharing between the central government and its component units.

The Macpherson constitution of 1951 continued with a false federated constitution, and later the Lyttleton constitution of 1954 with a true federal system of government for the country. It was at the 1953 London constitutional conference, where it was decided that Nigeria should be made a federal state in 1954, and then, we had two tiers of government the – the Centre and regions, both had their powers defined and shared by the constitution.

Exclusive Legislative functions went to the central government; Concurrent legislative functions went to both the central and regional governments while residual legislative functions went to the regions.

FACTORS THAT NECESSITATED THE FORMATION OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

1. The large population
2. Fear of domination
3. To protect minority interests
4. Diversities in custom and tradition
5. Bringing government to the grass root
6. To create strong nation
7. To promote development
8. The need for Power sharing
9. Creation of more employment
10. Pressure of local independence

FEATURES OF NIGERIAN FEDERALISM

- a. Division of power: Power is shared between the federal or central government and the federating units, i.e the regions/ states and the local governments.
- b. The constitution is supreme.
- c. The constitution is written and rigid in nature.
- d. There is an existence of supreme court
- e. Power of secession: The Power of secession is not granted to the component autonomous states in Nigeria federalism.

PROBLEMS OF NIGERIA'S FEDERALISM

- 1. Revenue allocation: The revenue sharing formula affects the three tiers of government.
- 2. The Problem of minorities: In Nigeria, there are majority groups and minority groups. The fears of domination have always been there on the part of the minority and also of not being fairly treated within the federation.
- 3. Regional political parties: e.g. NPC for the North, AG for the West and NCNC for the East.
- 4. The problem of state creation: almost every interest group in the country wants a state. This may not be possible in a country with over 250 different ethnic groups.
- 5. Fear of secession: A unit of segment may threaten to break away from the federation.
- 6. **Ethnic disharmony:** This can affect the unity and the very corporate existence of the country.
- 7. Corruption, favoritism and nepotism
- 8. Census: The problem of conducting reliable and acceptance head count.

ASSIGNMENT

Trace the constitutional evolution of federalism in Nigeria up to 1954.