

NATURE AND CULTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA: SCENARIOS AND CHALLENGES (A PERSPECTIVE OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC (1999-2015))

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ABSTRACT

The doctrine of democracy requires that the legitimacy of an elected representative obtained by popular mandate, should metamorphosed into effective representation of the interest and desire of the citizens to produce decent living standards through good governance. In the light of the above, the paper interrogates the concept of democratic governance, the essential elements, its practices and challenges in the political and socio-economic climate of Nigeria. The paper posits that the practice of democracy in Nigeria requires mutual commitments from both the leaders and the lead, to adjust their attitudes toward the attainment of the universally acceptable tenets of democracy. This would help to overcome the challenges of democracy discussed in the paper and engender sustainable socio-economic and political development. The paper made use of secondary data and the descriptive cum historical approach in the analysis of the subject matter under interrogation. The data generated were systematically analyzed in a manner that would ensure a clear understanding of the phenomenon. The study concludes by advocate for the strengthening of the democratic and especially the electoral institution to promote good and accountable governance. There is also the need to discourage godfatherism, fight corruption and adhere to the rule of law amongst others. If these practices are adhered to, in the view of the paper, it would foster a culture of good governance, which focuses on goal achievement to secure greater efficiency and effectiveness in governance delivery.

Key words: Democracy; Governance; Transparency; Accountability; Electoral challenges.