

Political Federalism in India: Centralization vs Decentralization in Contemporary Governance

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Abstract:

India's federal structure has witnessed a dynamic interplay between centralization and decentralization, influenced by constitutional provisions, political shifts, and economic policies. While the Indian Constitution envisions a quasi-federal system, recent trends indicate a growing centralization of power, particularly through legal amendments, fiscal policies like the Goods and Services Tax (GST), and the increasing role of central agencies in state affairs. Simultaneously, decentralization efforts, such as strengthening local governance through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, highlight the need for

grassroots empowerment. This paper critically examines the evolving nature of political federalism in India, exploring the implications of centralization on state autonomy, intergovernmental relations, and policy implementation. It also assesses the challenges faced by decentralized governance, including financial constraints and administrative inefficiencies. The study concludes by proposing a balanced federal model that ensures cooperative governance while maintaining regional autonomy and democratic decentralization.

Keywords: *Indian federalism, centralization, decentralization, governance, state autonomy, intergovernmental relations.*

