

# Attitudinal Barriers to Nigeria Federalism

by

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## **Abstract**

*The study examined the foundation of federalism and particularly the attitudinal dispositions of Nigerian political elites, from the perspective that the greatest hindrances to the practice of federalism in Nigeria are the attitudes of the political elites mostly from the North. The orientation of the study was descriptive and the procedure- documentary analysis, by which it examined the classical meaning, principles and practices of federalism at the global level in contrast to what obtains in Nigeria. It revealed the colonialists partly contributed to the attitudinal disposition of the Northern elites; they attributed high population density to the North, which the 1962 census figures disproved, as a result the census was annulled for an ad hoc one in 1963; the mentality of the Northern political elites that Nigeria is their possession, hence anything that would happen must be at their behest developed from this mental set. The unification of public service of the North, West and the East by the late General Aguiyi Ironsi, generated the fear of domination of the public service in the North by the Ibos. The North seized the opportunity using the military to sustain the lopsided federalism through military governance till this day. The study then recommended robust persuasion of the Northern political elites by their Southern counterpart as one step that should be taken pursuant to correcting the situation. At the same time, it posited some radical set of actions, including giving the youths impetus to upset the economic balance of Nigeria, as another means towards attitudinal change of the elite's corps for the benefit of all Nigerians.*

**Key words:** Attitudinal, Barriers, Nigeria, Federalism.