

Biafran Agitation: Analysis and Implications for Nigeria

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**Being a M.Sc Thesis Submitted to the Department of Politics & International Relations,
Faculty of Management & Social Sciences,
Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Science Degree (MSc)
in International Law and Diplomacy**

2024

Certification

This is to certify that Imaobong O. BASSEY with matriculation number LCU/PG/001816 carried out this research work titled Biafran Agitation: Analysis and Implications for Nigeria in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo state, for the award of Master Degree in International Law and Diplomacy and that this has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty.

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Acknowledgement

I give profound gratitude to the prestigious Lead City University, Ibadan, for the opportunity and platform to consolidate my academic success. To Lead City University Library, for the easy access to scholarly databases, data and information utilized in this research work.

My utmost appreciation goes to my amiable research supervisors, Dr Olubunmi Akande and Emeritus Professor Alaba Ogunsanwo, for painstakingly reading through this research work and making correction until it became a valuable material. I am most grateful for your encouragement, correction and patience. Special gratitude to the Dean of Post Graduate School, Professor Afolakemi O. Oredein, Dean of Faculty of Environment, Management and Social Sciences, Professor Omolara Campbell, Head of Department of Politics and International Relations, Professor Akeem Amodu, Professor Tunde Oseni, Professor Olatunji Kolapo, Dr Emma Jimo, Dr Abimbola, Dr Chuckwuebuka Akuche, and Dr Modupe Albert, Departments Post Graduate Coordinator.

Deepest and fondest gratitude to my caring and loving parents Mr./Mrs. Okon Basse, my siblings, friends, and colleagues I appreciate the unfathomable love and support thank you.

Finally, even though the above-mentioned institution and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in the work.

Abstract

This study focused on the resurgence of Biafra agitation and its implication for Nigeria. The research examined the agitations effect on regional and national security, impending political and economic catastrophe in the southeast regions, and Nigeria's preparedness and capacity to resolve the protracted dissidence. This study sought to fill a gap in research on understanding radical secession, ethnic sentiments and trigger. Hence, this research utilized the primordialism and instrumentalism theories. The research adopted the qualitative research methodology, utilizing the descriptive design. The researcher using purposive sampling generated primary data through interviews conducted with 10 older respondents and historical narrations from civil war survivors. Secondary data detailing past incident, circumstances and occasions were broadly collated and analyzed using descriptive content analysis. The study thus highlighted after careful analysis that the Igbo people are marginalized, Biafran agitators require autonomy and inclusivity in all spheres of Nigeria's political, economic, social and developmental road map.

The cultural and ethnic indifference of the Igbos constantly triggers the memories of the civil war, resulting in unrest. The research recommends that Igbo people should be aware of their tenacious sense of community in partnership with the Nigerian government should encourage a high-level Peace and Reconciliation module. Strengthening of weak institutions, political inclusion, and economic restructuring are identified as some of the measures that could contribute to addressing the conflict.

Keywords: *Agitation, Biafra, National Security, Reconciliation, Resurgence.*

Word Count: 222

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
AG	Action Group
AU	African Union
BHRI	BILLIE Human Rights Initiatives
BADS	Biafra Actualization and Defence Squad
BPC	Biafra Peace Corps
BRO	Biafra Revolutionary Organization
BLC	Biafra Liberation Crusade
BULCO	Biafra United Liberation Council
BSS	Biafran Secret Service
BZM	Biafran Zionist Movement
CIA	Central Investigation Agency
CNG	Coalition of Northern Groups
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPC	Eastern Peoples' Congress
EU	European Union
ESN	Eastern Security Network
EZLN	Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional
FMG	Financial Management Groups
FMG	Federal Military Government
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IHCR	Igbo Hebrew Cultural Restoration
IPOB	Indigenous People of Biafra
IPCA	Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly
JRCB	Joint Revolutionary Council of Biafra
LNC	Lower Niger Congress

MASSOB	Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NDI	National Development Index
NINAS	Nationalities Alliance for Self-Determination
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OPC	O'odua Peoples' Congress
PDP	People's Democratic Party
SSS	State Security Services
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
UN	United Nations
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USIP	United States Institute for Peace

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Biafra as a topic is a difficult and emotional one. The synopsis of the Biafran movement lays rudiment to the generational, cultural and ethnic indifference of the Igbos. Ultimately the existence of the Igbos constituting the south east, in the entity called Nigeria has led to observed and alleged feelings of maltreatment and marginalization in the larger circle of national matters which has led to organized movements for secession over the years. The secession agenda of the Igbos identifying as Biafrans rivaled its obliteration from the Nigerian entity, from the period before 1967 initiated Nigeria into the civil war conversation subsequently this movements has planted its roots of ethnic triggery and fanaticism owing claims to the remains of Biafra and the quest to make Biafra a reality. The commemoration of Nigeria's civil war experience is still a contentious issue. The date the war started 6th July, 1967 is commemorated nowadays only within the military. Additionally, no public commemoration is made of the official end of the conflict on January 15, 1970¹. After the military presided over the affairs of the nation, the former Eastern Region, which was predominately made up of Igbo people, one of Nigeria's three main ethnic groups, proclaimed itself the Republic of Biafra, piqued a bloody civil war. Consequently, these two events depicted above, Nigerian politics have been influenced by (the January 15th, 1966 military coup and the civil war) ever since. As a result, the country has witnessed several secessionist movements, with the neo-Biafran movements being a forerunner, laying antecedents to actually being Biafrans and not Nigerians this regrouping consists of some Nigerians of ethnic Igbo origin².

Discordance and violence between Nigeria's regions and ethnic groupings, particularly between those from the east and the north, formed a complicated immediate background to the conflict. Following the conspiratorial attempt by Army officers to seize power in January 1966, majority of whom were Ibos (from the East) killed several prominent politicians as well as officers with northern ancestry. Desirably of Major General Ironsi to restore order in the army, an Ibo himself suspended the constitution, outlawed political parties, established the Federal Military Government (FMG), and appointed military governors to oversee each of Nigeria's regions³. Late in 1966 and into early 1967, the conflict heightened as attacks against the Ibos in the north were reinstated in September 1966 with a brutality never before seen, and there were rumors that soldiers from the region's north had taken part in the atrocities. The number of fatalities was expected to be between 10,000 and 30,000, more than a million Ibos returned to the eastern region out of fear⁴.

A disquisition is necessary, as the continuance of Biafra separatism is particularly intriguing after the current uptick in desire for a separate Biafran State. Determining why the agitation has continued for decades, may shed light on other separatist groups and identity-based conflicts in Nigeria. A lengthy history of calls for the independence of the Southeastern states and some regions of the South-South zone of Nigeria from the Nigerian state led to the resurrection of the Republic of Biafra agitation in 2015⁵. This apprehensiveness ignited the 1967–1970 civil war in Nigeria, with failure to attain independence, the area was reannexed to Nigeria but this did not halt the agitation for Biafra instead, it sparked the creation of many pro-Biafra movements in the zone.

The first formalized vehicle for articulating the agitation was established in September 1999 with the founding of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra, to increase the appeal to separate from the Nigerian state, MASSOB participated in community-level

grassroots sensitization of the Igbos, establishing a systematic fund raising at the community⁶. This was accomplished by imposing monthly dues that were necessary on local communities in the South-Eastern states as well as other states having ties to the Igbo people, these donations were raised with the support from Igbos in the diaspora as well⁷. With the assistance of MASSOB, more formalized platforms were created which included Radio Biafra, Biafra Television, a satellite-based television channel, Biafra 24 Radio was established as a Radio Biafra substitute in July 2015. To continue the agitation, more platforms were developed, like the publications, Facebook sites for the Biafra Herald, and Twitter accounts⁸. Despite MASSOB's claims that its agitation was mostly non-violent, it nevertheless resulted in a number of crackdowns, arrests, detentions, and acts of torture, as well as reports of movement members being killed, this accompanied statements of the Nigerian government labeling MASSOB an extremist organization in 2005, it detained a number of its members and imprisoned its renowned leader Ralph Uwazurike on treason-related charges, however, he was released in 2007⁹.

These events further trickled down to the procreation of several other secessionist groups waiving solidarity to the Biafran flag. An offshoot of MASSOB is the Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), which was founded in the early 2000s, it promoted the legitimacy of Biafra and announced the country's new state of independence on November 5, 2012, as well as the republic's revival in 2014. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), a group that claims to be led by Nnamdi Kanu, was created in London in 2012 by individuals from the South-South and South-East areas of Nigeria, among other organizations. The campaign for the independence of Biafra also includes the Biafra Independent Movement, which was established by MASSOB leader Ralph Nwazurike on December 6, 2015, following his purported expulsion from the mainline MASSOB, Eastern Peoples' Congress (EPC), Biafra United Liberation Council (BULCO), Joint Revolutionary

Council of Biafra (JRCB), Igbo Hebrew Cultural Restoration, Biafra Actualization and Defence Squad, Biafra Revolutionary Organization (BRO), Biafra Liberation Crusade (BLC), Salvation Peoples of Biafra, Ekwenche Organization, Biafra Peace Corps, BILLIE Human Rights Initiatives and Igbozurume Organization¹⁰.

The most recent pro-Biafra agitations were spearheaded by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and a division of MASSOB. The agitations were made worse by the Nigerian government's capture and custody of Nnamdi Kanu, the purported founder of IPOB, on October 15, 2015, while he was visiting Nigeria, and he was accused of crimes against the Nigerian state. Widespread demonstrations began both local and international in response to his incarceration, Igbo youths demonstrated against his detention and demanded his immediate release in the streets of the southeast zone, Rivers, Delta state, and Abuja-FCT¹¹. The persistent protests interrupted socioeconomic activity in the Southeast region and caused conflicts between protestors and security personnel, with the most violent episode being on December 2, 2015, in Onitsha, when protesters and the Joint Task Force clashed. According to reports, the fight resulted in the deaths of two police officers, nine pro-Biafra demonstrators, and the destruction of vehicles, a Central Mosque, and other city facilities¹². A video of unarmed demonstrators being shot by Nigerian security forces in the city of Aba-Abia state in the country's southeast went viral in February 2016. Gunshot wounds resulted in 13 of the demonstrators passing away instantly¹³.

The Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, declared suggesting his reaction to the protests and the reported killings of unarmed Igbo protestors in Abia by the Nigerian security forces in a statement,

“that we fought a 30-month civil war in which at least 2 million Nigerians died in. want someone to awaken and declare that they want Biafra once more. Allow them to band together and choose a state within the country. However, to attempt to impede army movements, the economy, or the

search for Biafra after losing 2 million people, I believe they are jesting with Nigeria's security, and Nigeria will not put up with it”¹⁴.

When prodded by the *Aljazeera* interviewer to consider holding talks with the Igbo protesters, the Nigerian President retorts: “Why should we invite them? They didn’t know what happened”¹⁴. The President’s response may variously be interpreted as either his denial of transgenerational trauma or his inability or unwillingness to engage with it. As rightly noted, it is impossible to completely silence trauma, and that the silence intended to cover up a traumatic event or history only leads to its unconscious transmission that spans generations¹⁵.

Threats or agitations against secession in Nigeria have their roots in the Lugard's Amalgamation of 1914. Northerners, who did not wish to interact with the Southerners, thought the amalgamation was a mistake. The uneven way Nigerian nationalism evolved foretold the emergence of ethnic divisions following independence¹⁶. As other tribes recognized their own exclusion from the advantages of industrialization and self-government and joined the struggle, ethnic nationalism grew stronger. The Igbos' disproportionate influence over the leadership of the Nigerian nationalist movement contributed to the rise of Yoruba nationalism in 1948. Later, in response to the threat of southern economic and political dominance, Hausa nationalism was sparked¹⁷. Since Nigeria's return to civil government in 1999, the Igbos have allegedly been clamoring through MASSOB and IPOB, for a society in which every ethnic group can successfully compete for political influence and where economic resources are divided fairly through non-violence¹⁸.

Furthermore enraged Biafran movement has distorted the peace and normalcy of the south east , to quell this escalating tension in the region, the South-East Governors Forum, which is made up of the five states in the region, prohibited IPOB's operations and the Nigerian military designated it as

a "militant terrorist organization"¹⁹. Later, the military took action against IPOB members, Nnamdi Kanu the leader of Ipob fled the country, and IPOB resumed its campaign, sparking a number of violent clashes between its supporters and law enforcement, the military, and security personnel between 2017 and 2021. Numerous conflicts and fatalities in Nigeria have been attributed to the Igbo people and their persistent claims of marginalization²⁰. Their claims of marginalization stemmed from a perceived violation of their rights in the way that the nation's national leadership posts have been distributed for more than 60 years²¹. Nnamdi Kanu was subsequently detained abroad, extradited to Nigeria in June 2021 and is currently in detention as he is tried for terrorism and other offenses. Southeast Nigeria has seen rallies and weekly sit-at-home demonstrations in response to his return, incarceration, and prosecution²².

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Biafra agitation resurgence has its negative effects on regional and national security. Repeated calls for Biafra on a national level might exacerbate security issues already present, and the ability of the security authorities to handle the pro-Biafra movement in a peaceful and professional manner may tend to deteriorate, leading to grave abuses of human rights. Economic activity in the areas where these protests take place is frequently disrupted by regular demonstrations and skirmish with the security forces. The Biafra protests in Nigeria and in the South East specifically may deter investments, as the normalcy of business operations has been halted due to the total shutdown in the area this is as a result of the sit at home order every Monday in the region as well as any other day Nnamdi Kanu is expected to appear in court, the people insistently must observe a sit-at-home as a mark of solidarity. Thus, economic and social activities have remained low in the Southeast region, as businesses have taken a hit, schools, markets, banks

and offices have resulted to operating for just twice or three times on some weeks in the zone against what is obtainable in other parts of the country. This series of events took wave due to the extraction and detention of separatist leader Nnamdi Nwannekaenyi Kanu by the Department of State Services (DSS), riling up the agitation from IPOB as this action was perceived to be unlawful and a violation of his human rights, following this event the Biafran agitators are demanding for his freedom and that of Biafra as an independent state. The revenant agitation for Biafra has grave implications for Nigeria's political stability and democratic constancy. Consequently, this study will pinpoint recurring events that seems to be getting ignored which may lead to increased violence or even war while providing solutions to eradicate these issues.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to accentuate the implications of Biafran agitation on Nigeria's development and stability.

Specifically, the objectives are to:

- i. investigate the driving factors for resurgence of the agitation for an independent Biafran state.
- ii. explore the effect of Biafran agitation on Nigeria's political and economic stability.
- iii. examine the impact of Biafran agitation on the national security of Nigeria, and
- iv. find out the implication of Biafra agitation on Nigeria's foreign image.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

- i. What are the driving factors for resurgence of the agitation for an independent Biafran state?

- ii. How does Biafran agitation affect Nigeria's political and economic stability?
- iii. What is the impact of Biafran agitation on the national security of Nigeria?
- iv. What is the implication of Biafran agitation on Nigeria's foreign image?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study interrogates the reasons for resurgence in the agitation for a separate state of Biafra and why these agitations have remained persistent with a view to unearthing its impact on national security.

In particular, the following are connected to persistent separatist movement throughout the Biafran War of 1967–1970: 1) the complaints that contributed to the start of the war, 2) the complaints about how the war was fought, and 3) the complaints about how the post-war settlement was carried out.

The study will reveal reasons, public opinion as well as the consequences of the recurrent agitation for Biafra.

Finally, it is thought that the results of this investigation will help pin point reoccurring events, generational impact and disposition towards the Biafran agenda and provide suggestions that will deter conflicts that may slowly lead to war thereby enhancing peace building and development, sustain socio-political and economic structures in Nigeria and safeguard her National Security.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research work focuses on Biafra Agitation: Analysis and Implications for Nigeria. Here the research work is mainly focused on Nigerians especially people from major region of Nigeria (West, North and East) as well as international perception. The time scope of the study covers the period of 2017 to 2023.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Every research project has constraints, and this project is no exception. The research's main limitation was its inability to carry out extensive survey of the south eastern region due to security challenges and inability to commute due to distance and financial barrier. Primary data from questionnaires and focus group discussions which would have enhanced the study were not feasible.

However, the researcher utilized oral interviews through phone calls, with selected civil war survivors and experts, to acquire data for the study. Accordingly, the validity and integrity of the study will not be affected by the limitations.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

The following technical terminology have been defined clearly in relation to the context of the research activity in order to prevent word confusion.

Agitation: *It also* refers to the process by which IPOB forcefully protest for a Sovereign state of Biafra.

Separatist Agitation: This is a social movement as collective challenges (i.e., agitations), mounted by relatively IPOB against powerful elites and dominant ideologies.

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of National Security

The term national security refers to governmental measures taken to assure the continued existence and safety of the nation-state, including but not limited to the use of diplomatic, economic, and military force in both peacetime and times of conflict¹. The security of a nation state, including its citizens, economy, and institutions, is considered to be the duty of the government. It is now widely accepted that national security also includes non-military components, such as protection against crime, terrorism, the economy, energy, the environment, food security, and cyber security. The concept of national security was originally intended to serve as defense against military attack².

Similarly, in addition to the activities of other nation states, violent non-state actors, narcotics cartels, multinational businesses, as well as the results of natural disasters, are also potential threats to national security. To impose national security, governments rely on a variety of tools, such as political, economic, and military power, as well as diplomacy. By addressing transnational sources of insecurity including climate change, economic injustice, political exclusion, and nuclear proliferation, they may also work to improve regional and global security circumstances. The

maintenance of national security is necessary for the state to continue existing through the employment of economic power, diplomacy, power projection, and political power³.

- Despite its evolution from more basic conceptions that prioritized independence from military threat and political pressure, the concept of national security still contains many unanswered questions. The following definitions, among the many that have been put up to date, demonstrate how the idea has expanded to include non-military concerns:
- When a country's legitimate interests can be upheld by conflict in the event they are threatened, it is considered secure. Freedom from foreign dictation is the unique meaning of national security⁴.
- In terms of national security, there are no risks to acquired values, and there is no subjective worry about such values being attacked⁵.
- The capacity to protect a country's borders, economic ties with other countries, nature, institutions, and governance from external threats, as well as its territorial integrity and physical integrity, is referred to as national security⁶.
- The ability to manage the internal and international circumstances that a specific community's public opinion deems necessary to enjoy its own sovereignty, prosperity, and well-being is how national security is best defined⁷.
- National security is an aggressive combination of political resiliency and maturity, human resources, economic structure and capability, technological competence, industrial foundation, and the availability of natural resources. The military may also play a role⁸.
- One way to think of national security is as a shared absence of dread, want and the freedom to live in dignity, it alludes to the quality of social and ecological health rather than the

absence of risk as a common right. Actions by foreign governments (such as military or cyberattacks), violent non-state actors (such as terrorist attacks), organized groups like narcotics cartels, as well as the results of natural disasters, are all potential sources of national instability (e.g., flooding, earthquakes)⁹.

2.2.2 Concept of Agitation

Agitation is an uneasy feeling that is frequently accompanied by overtalking or pointless movements like pacing or wringing the hands. Agitation is broadly defined as restlessness, pacing, shouting, and verbal or physical aggression; it is complex and multifactorial with a range of biological, psychological and social causes. It may be a direct result of neurodegeneration, affecting brain circuits that control behavior, and also an expression of unmet needs (e.g., pain or thirst, lack of communication or comfort)¹⁰. For many people who live with a mental disorder, this symptom is of particular concern which often led to agitation. Agitation is not a medical condition in and of itself, unlike depression and bipolar disorder, it's often a sign of a medical ailment, such as a mood disorder¹¹. When a person's treatment for a mood disorder is not working as effectively as it should, agitation may be provoked in them. Anger can also be brought on by trauma or stressful situations. Even though it is a terrible experience, many people are able to control and stop an agitation episode from getting worse by becoming knowledgeable about the symptoms of agitation and creating a strategy for when they emerge. In addition to discomfort, agitation can also be defined as excessive verbal and/or muscular conduct, it can appear in a variety of ways, from agitation to aggression¹². A few agitation indicators include;

- Involuntary behaviors such as hand-wringing and pacing
- Talking excessively

- Excitement, tension or hostility
- Poor impulse control
- Potential to harm self, others, or property

2.2.3 Concept of Self -Determination and Political Stability

Every group desire self-determination since it will definitely prepare them for greater success. Previous research defines self-determination as the people's right to choose the status of their politics while also tracking the progress of their economy, social well-being, and culture. The above concept incorporates the people's economics, politics, and culture elements of existence. According to research, self-determination is about ending colonialism and establishing new nations¹³. Other experts, on the other hand, regard self-determination as tied to the right of people in colonial countries to achieve independence; yet, many ethnically or religiously based internal disputes imply pressures to extend the concept to ethnic, religious, and linguistic domains. All of these aspects, such as religion, culture, and languages, are not the same in conflicting nations, as there are disparities that come down to politics and historical histories¹⁴.

As a result, some academics claim that the concept of self-determination respects the right of the people to organise their future in political regions, which may be a unitary system, federal system, confederal system, or other configuration that the people will be content with. According to certain research, self-determination signifies people's right to choose their own fate¹⁵. In other words, individuals may make their lives worth living or not, but what they create of life is entirely up to them. Previous academics say that a simple definition of self-determination refers to the right of the people to establish their own state, enjoy self-government, and have self-management or home

rule. Scholars' definition of self-determination is founded on the philosophical affirmation of humans' urge to turn what they wish to attain into an actual shape, as well as the postulates of inherent human equality¹⁶.

The issue remains as to how much the presence or attainment of self-determination has been able to alleviate crises in the country of the achievers. This concept is supported by certain writers' description of the self-determination expression as an explosive that spreads false optimism, resulting in its execution and the loss of life. This contribution demonstrates that the majority of people's desire for self-determination, particularly in Africa, has detrimental consequences¹⁷. It is also necessary to consider if the benefits exceed the hazards associated with agitations or even the accomplishment of self-determination by any group.

Recent studies define the phrase "right to self-determination" as a people's right. This brings to mind the homogeneity of people: do the people seeking freedom have things in common, or do they still have significant internal distinctions that will likely provide problems to the obtained freedom? Some scholars asserted that sinking and alienation in a state of a group that already has a partial or entire sense of belonging to the state might lead to demands for secession from the country¹⁸. Some of these organisations may have had their needs met, while others may be fighting to avoid such a heinous occurrence. In actuality, these various perspectives may lead to a crisis that is either manageable or uncontrollable, and the result is greatly reliant on the actions of the government. The right to self-determination is widely acknowledged across the globe and must be upheld¹⁴.

The right to self-determination, a fundamental human right, is incorporated in the United Nations Charter. According to the Charter, each state has the freedom to freely choose and develop its own political, social, economic, and cultural systems. The United Nations' stance has bolstered people's freedom as they desire self-determination, whether in terms of social, political, or economic freedoms¹⁹. These three components include almost every area of man's existence. The fulfilment of certain normal requirements is thought to have resulted from self-determination that leads to departure from the state. For starters, it would result in a condition free of violence, a secure environment, overall stability, and progress. The second prerequisite is instability, which should not lead to insecurity²⁰.

However, obtaining self-determination should not be sought selfishly. The many ways it influences the people around it is crucial for their sociocultural and economic well-being. A backup to this is indicated in the updated section 42 sub-section (1) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution, which specifies the treatment of citizens from any portion of the country: A Nigerian citizen of a certain community, ethnic group, place of origin, gender, religion, or political position must not be discriminated against only because he is such a person²¹.

1. be subjected to limitations or restrictions that Nigerian citizens of other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex, religion, or political opinions are not made subject, either explicitly or in the actual application of any law in force in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government; or
2. be granted any benefit or advantage that is not granted to a Nigerian citizen of another community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion, or political viewpoint, either

formally or in the practical execution of any legislation in effect in Nigeria or any such executive or administrative action²¹.

Any nation's constitution serves as a set of laws that guide how that nation is run. Finding out if leaders or others in positions of control respect constitutions is also crucial. Why are there still calls for self-determination in a circumstance when the constitution has addressed issues like human rights, unity, fair treatment, and other elements that give people a feeling of belonging? The solution to this question depends on how far the current constitution may be applied²¹. The issue of whether a country's constitution is applicable is heavily influenced by its political establishment. Leadership is crucial to the prosperity of any nation. The ability of any organisation is a direct result of its leadership, a default of weak leadership, leads to a weak organisation, and when leaders are strong, it promotes a strong organisation. This means that the rise and fall of any organization greatly depends on the nature of its leadership²².

In a similar line, academics have blamed weak leadership for the poverty in Nigeria and other nations. In other words, the fact that a nation or state's leadership provides the foundation for its existence cannot be contested. Therefore, every political system that wants to improve has to start with its leadership²³. On the other side, political stability occurs when political institutions and processes are solidified and consistency in function advancing the presence of power without fear of danger. The citizens of the political system will feel secure and able to participate in politics in this scenario²⁴. Political stability refers to the capacity to foresee the country's political climate, which makes the atmosphere seem favourable for prospective investors from both within and outside the nation. Political stability is a contentious word, according to scholars, who define it as

having three possible meanings: first, the lack of extensive internal civil unrest and bloodshed; second, the duration of the administration; and third, the absence of structural change²⁵.

Alternatively put, political stability implies that no change can be made both from in addition to inside the political system. According to some scholars, there are four alternative methods to define political stability: stable government, stable political system, internal law, and external stability. Through fairness, honesty, accountability, and openness, a stable political system may be built in many nations. This degree of stability may be attained by coordinated awareness, the results of which will be greatly influenced by various stages of growth²⁶. In the last fifty years, Africa has gained notoriety for its political unpredictability, however, the continent's fundamental issue with leadership has remained mysterious. In Africa, those who fought for independence and became tyrants, like Robert Mugabe, became an advocate for looting of national treasury, institutionalized tyranny, constraining democratic space and engaged in sit-tightism while holding political power²⁷. According to studies, autocracies are characterized by stability in leadership since leaders sometimes utilise their own judgement to devise strategies for fostering progress. This is a viewpoint opposed to democracy that upholds extensive due process and dialogue in order to avoid handing power or making decisions to a despot, a leader, or a minority. It has also been made clear how common Africans fought valiantly in their own way to express their displeasure with such dictatorial impositions brought about by international conspirators, this indicates that western nations have contributed in a variety of ways to the issues facing Africans in relations to political instability²⁸.

2.2.4 Historical Perspectives on Biafra Agitation

Nigeria was established as a single country in 1914 by combining the British colonial territories in the area. After achieving independence in 1960, Nigeria was considered to be one of sub-Saharan Africa's most promising postcolonial regimes. With over 45 million people and vast, high-quality oil deposits discovered just before the end of colonial authority, the potential for development appears to be quite plausible²⁹. However, the development of a stable political system and social relations was hindered by two British legacies; colonial rule separated the people along ethnic lines but incorporated the groupings so constituted in a federal state with central government³⁰.

When Nigeria gained independence, the racial and territorial divisions that characterized colonial life there remained. Postcolonial Nigeria was organized as a federal state and divided into three primary regions, each of which was ruled by one or more ethnic groups: the Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the west, and the Igbo in the east³¹. The remainder of the population was made up of countless additional ethnic minorities of various sizes. When the multiethnic Midwestern State was formed by carving out portions of the Western Region, the federation was divided into four states in 1963³². What many saw as a religious divide ran through the region, running partially parallel to these political borders: the south was predominately Christian, while the north was heavily Islamic³³.

By the middle of the 1960s, the decolonization euphoria had started to disintegrate. Contrarily, the postcolonial democracy was undermined by the population's expanding participatory options. A patronage structure was developed along ethnic lines at the local level. The three "mega-tribes" fought for state resources at the national level, which had grown more valuable as a result of the

profits from oil and other commodities³⁴. The northern and southern regions were divided by a fissure that was growing wider. Geographically located in the southeast of the country, the Eastern Region was becoming especially isolated. Politicians in every region dreaded the potential hegemony of their counterparts from other regions of the nation. Election rigging and other forms of manipulation became commonplace, and federal and national elections turned into heated power struggles³⁵.

A putsch conducted by a group of army officers with an Igbo majority in January 1966 was the first in a series of coups and countercoups that resulted in the establishment of military dictatorship³⁶. The first attempt was put down, but only after several high-ranking officials were assassinated, including Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, a prominent member of the northern leadership. The remaining rump cabinet gave the highest-ranking official, Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, general commanding commander of the Nigerian army, control over the state. Most of the advisers to the new head of state and he were Igbo. Ironsi was caught and assassinated in a counter-revolution by a group of northern officers and troops in the final days of July 1966 because many in the north saw his administration as a continuation of the southern-instigated coup³⁷. Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon was chosen as the new leader of the country by the remaining officers. Except for the Igbo-dominated Eastern Region, where military governor general Ojukwu retained authority, the coup d'état was successful. Between June and October 1966, there were numerous violent outbreaks that culminated in massacres of Igbo residents of the Sabon Gari, or "foreigners' quarters," in northern Nigerian towns. It is still debatable if the deaths were deliberately planned by Nigerian government officials. The Nigerian administration, at the very least, was unable to put an end to the unrest³⁸.

The homeland of the Igbo diaspora, the Eastern Region, received more than a million refugees, as a result of this violence. One of the major developments in the civil war's development was the massacres. As widespread fears gripped Igbos in particular, the Eastern Region began to demand more autonomy³⁹. After numerous unsuccessful conversations, this drastic action was now ultimately executed. The political establishment in the east, centered around Ojukwu, proclaimed its independence as the Republic of Biafra on May 30, 1967. The Bight of Biafra, a bay on the country's Atlantic coast, is where the country derived its name. A few weeks later, fighting started. On July 6, government soldiers marched into rebel territory, sparking the Nigeria-Biafra conflict⁴⁰.

Both sides military might be constrained by a lack of resources, men, discipline, and knowledge. Even though the secessionist forces made up a sizable portion of the previous Nigerian officer corps, which had been predominated by Igbo, the federal army was nonetheless better armed. Although both sides launched a number of impressive offensives, the military situation was mostly at a standstill³⁶. The Financial Management Groups, also known as the FMG, adopted an important strategic advantage that was not related to its military might but rather to its diplomatic standing as an internationally recognized state. It was crucial that the FMG be able to claim that it was a sovereign government dealing with an "insurgency." The majority of foreign governments, especially those affiliated with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), saw the conflict as an internal matter. As a result, the regional agency in charge of mediating made sure that no action was taken that might be perceived as recognizing the Biafran administration. The latter quickly refused any OAU participation in turn⁴¹.

The FMG's decision to blockade the secessionist state was the most important development in the early stages of the war, and Nigeria's diplomatic standing was essential for that development. Air

and sea ports were blockaded, foreign currency transactions were prohibited, incoming mail and telecommunication were stopped, and global trade was hindered in an effort to shut off Biafra's channels of connection with the outside world. Nigeria was able to organize a blockade successfully despite its low resource's thanks in large part to other governments and businesses that were willing to accept Lagos' handling of the situation. Furthermore, since it was a legitimate government, the Gowon dictatorship had little trouble buying weaponry on the black market. Contrarily, the Biafrans were compelled to purchase weapons on the underground market because of their status as "rebels". The overnight change in Nigeria's currency in early 1968, which made worthless millions of Nigerian pound notes in the Biafran treasury, further hindered the secessionists' operations⁴².

The Biafran leadership shifted the war into the realm of propaganda in light of their precarious chances on the battlefield. For the propagandists of Biafra, things did not look good internationally either. Governments in the developing world were especially wary. Because many of them were dealing with separatist movements at home, they were vehemently opposed to what they considered as illegitimate secession rather than the real exercise of the Biafrans' right to self-determination⁴³. The Biafran campaign demonstrated the duality of the postcolonial international system's treatment of self-determination initiatives and left a similarly duality-laden legacy. The OAU's founding premise has been the rejection of separatism ever since it was established in 1963 following the Congo crisis and the attempted secession of Katanga. With just a few exceptions, the Biafran campaign received insufficient support in African intergovernmental circles because to the country's deeply rooted commitment to defending postcolonial sovereignty⁴¹.

Therefore, despite the secessionists' arduous efforts, there was little worldwide interest in the struggle throughout the first year of fighting. Despite the fact that there were several casualties right away. Throughout the conflict, federal planes frequently caused a large number of civilian casualties by bombarding cities and other targets in Biafran territory. Despite these ongoing dangers, the people in the conflict area were especially in danger during times of unrest brought on by military victories and failures⁴⁴. Biafran forces launched a major offensive in August 1967, crossed the Niger, and advanced through a state in the Midwest towards Lagos. The Biafrans were unable to capitalize on the momentum and instead stopped around 100 km east of the capital before retreating in the face of federal troops retaliation. In border towns that were subject to dual occupation, there was violence against civilians. Asaba's ethnic minorities, for instance, identified as Igbo kin and were treated as "rebel" sympathizers; they were murdered and raped by federal soldiers⁴⁵.

On the other hand, The Asaba atrocities is still unimpaired in people's minds, despite the Nigerian government's efforts to prevent the publishing and commemoration. The massacre's traumatic memories still cause many Asaba residents' pain, and they prevent interethnic harmony⁴⁶. Nigeria made attempts to stifle accounts of these incidents, but the humanitarian catastrophe facing the Biafran populace only grew worse, drawing attention to the conflict on a global scale. By the end of the year, it was evident that Biafra would be facing a severe food crisis, and the people would soon face starvation⁴². Due in significant part to the arrival of western missionaries, an increasing number of religious and humanitarian organizations became aware of the situation in the first half of 1968. These ties to religion served as conduits for the worldwide networks that would use the conflict as a source of humanitarian concern. Many clergy and laypeople of the Christian faith held that the conflict between a weak Christian Biafra and a federal Nigeria dominated by northern

Muslims was a cosmic drama⁴⁴. Federal forces captured Port Harcourt, the key port city and last remaining seaport in Biafra, in the first few days of May 1968. The separatist nation became a landlocked enclave. Federal forces began to tighten the noose around the separatist zone, and the Biafran enclave eventually only included the center of Igboland. This region had to accommodate an increase in the number of persons escaping government offensives at the same time. The rump state had become overpopulated, destitute, and short in supplies, food, and medication after a year of conflict⁴⁷.

The humanitarian crisis, which increased attention to the battle on a global scale, played a significant role in political and military developments, ostensibly favoring Biafra politically. The weight of evidence did not shift in favor of the secessionists as a result of these numerous sources⁴⁸. Following the rise in global interest in the middle of 1968, the military standoff persisted for a further eighteen months. Both sides attempted to make breakthroughs. They always fell short, at least until the end of 1969. By that time, Nigerian military command had changed and strategic adjustments had been made, ensuring a successful final assault on the Biafran enclave⁴⁹. Ojukwu and a few of his supporters fled to the Ivory Coast at the beginning of 1970. On January 15, 1970, the final secessionist regime capitulated after 2.5 years of conflict⁵⁰.

2.2.5 Resurgence of Biafra Agitation in the post Military Era (1999 - 2014)

The military's withdrawal from politics and the subsequent switch to civilian administration in 1999 opened up Nigeria's previously small political space, which rekindled interest in Biafra⁵¹. While the need for the Igbo people to be secure informed the declaration of the Republic of Biafra in 1967, the current agitation for Biafra is motivated by what is seen as their marginalization

following the end of the civil war⁵². The government is expected to handle issues that affect the people because it receives mandates from the people, especially in the case of the Igbo, redressing the perceived marginalization. The transition to democracy created the conditions for the formation of an accountable administration⁵³.

Following this conviction, the Igbos eagerly engaged in all chances made available in Nigeria during the democracy processes as a means of completely integrating into Nigerian society as equal partners with the other ethnic groups. The Igbo were especially pleased about the political change that brought in the fourth republic in Nigeria in 1999 because they believed that the chance for freedom and openness that democracy gives would result in the group's marginalization being diminished⁵⁴. Chief Ralph Uwazurike, one of the pessimists, the founder of MASSOB, participated in the Obasanjo presidential campaign organization and collaborated with others to help him win on the PDP platform. According to Uwazurike, he anticipated receiving lucrative posts to honor the role that Igbos played in Obasanjo's win⁵⁵. However, the newly electee's initial activities. Indeed, there is a very strong sense of exclusion and marginalization, which serves as the foundation for the resurging desire for Biafra⁵⁶.

By 1999, MASSOB had established itself on the 13th of September, expressing their frustration with statements like our leader saw a dream of liberating his people, the oppressed people of eastern Nigeria⁵⁷. They are slaves because nothing in Nigeria benefits the easterner, no development in the area, they are hardly employed into federal establishments and even when it occurs, they are not promoted. Go to the east, you cannot see government presence especially in Igbo land. In the scheme of things, we are not regarded. Another thing again is that every year, you hear that the northerners are using us as sacrifice, killing us in mass. Even in the west Igbos are

killed every year. These massacres have been happening from time to time and when we are crying, no government listens to us because of that, the Igbo rallied round Ralph Uwazurike, who came out to say enough is enough⁵⁸.

The main reason for the renewed desire for Biafra was commonly cited as issues of marginalization. First off, the present movement for Biafra was not comparable to that of 1967–1970, when a state by the name of Biafra actually existed. Furthermore, according to others, the war at the time was a historical accident that would not have happened if Nigerians had the understanding that prevails in contemporary Nigeria⁵⁹. The argument is based on the observation that despite provocations that might have resulted in a repetition of the events of 1967 to 1970, Nigerians in the present day appear to have made the decision to live together both individually and collectively⁶⁰. The Biafran surrender's method, which was far from a negotiated settlement, and the federal military government's conception of itself as the victor greatly influenced the dynamics of post-war Nigeria, which in turn provided the necessary conditions for the resurgence of the demand for Biafra⁶¹. It is speculated that there would not have been a shooting war if Nigerians at that time had been as civilized, educated, and open-minded as those of today; if Nigerians today who feel a sense of unity were Nigerians in the 1960s and felt the need to be together and have respect for each other as we do today; because a lot of things have happened that may have led to a similar circumstance, but these issues have been fixed. This current development would not have been necessary if the current Nigerians and the past Biafrans had fallen in love with one another⁶².

Thus, the article of capitulation, which was signed by the leaders of Biafra, was an unbalanced arrangement that contributed to the marginalization of Igbo people in Nigeria quickly after the war became visible⁶³. The federal government that had won the war and its officials acted in bad faith

by taking quick decisions that could not be squared with the declared post-war goal of reconciliation, which led to the unbalanced issue⁶⁴. One such bad faith action involved the expulsion from service of all Nigerian army officers over the level of captain who fought on the Biafran side. Normally, these commanders would have been reintegrated into the army to maintain unity and quell rebellion. Another dishonest action taken to crush the spirit of the populace for their alleged support of the rebels was the federal government's policy on bank deposits, which limited entitlement to a flat twenty pounds for former Biafrans who lodged money in the banks before the start of the war, regardless of the amount they had in banks. It appears from these measures that Nigeria's war on Biafra was not conducted to restore the Biafran people as citizens but rather as woodcutters and water drawers⁶⁵. The 3Rs (reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction), which General Gowon announced at the close of the war and were intended to rebuild the war-affected areas of Ibo land and integrate the former Biafrans into Nigeria, turned out to be empty words.

Additionally, as evidenced by events, reconciliation was the only outcome. Ordinary Nigerians resumed their normal lives shortly after the conflict, and those who had fled to or from the battle zone went back to their original destinations to carry on with their regular lives⁶⁶. However, rehabilitation was not comprehensive; those who had to flee the conflict zone and leaving behind their jobs and enterprises, as well as the combatants who were injured on the Biafran side, were not rehabilitated, nor were those who had been discharged from the military. Once more, the infrastructure that was destroyed during the conflict were not reinstated in the war-affected areas. The worst part is that the punishment for participating in the war wasn't just applied to the fighters; rather, it was also applied to the general public through intentional policies of marginalization⁶⁷. This reality is what has led to the resurgence of this modern issue.

In light of the foregoing, it is convincing to argue that the MASSOB-led renewed call for Biafra is connected to the way postwar issues were handled. The fact that members of the military who battled Biafran insurgents on the battlefield went on to seize, dominate, and monopolize the levers of power in Nigeria for a considerable amount of time is compelling evidence in favor of this viewpoint. It is interesting that several military leaders in Nigeria, including Murtala Mohammed, Olusegun Obasanjo, Mohammed Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Sanni Abacha, and Abdul Ali Abubakar, were Federal side combatants. Furthermore, several marginalization measures directed towards the Igbo people who were in reality considered as losers who needed to be treated as such, show how the warriors managed the business of the country while still harboring bitter memories of their wartime experiences⁶⁸. This was particularly evident in the military, where Igbo representation, particularly at the top echelons, was extremely minimal and insignificant. This was partly due to the expulsion of former Nigerian officers of Igbo descent who had defected to the Biafran army and the resulting lack of an effective voice in the military councils that predominated Nigerian politics prior to 1999⁵⁹.

In addition, the ongoing, unrelenting attacks on persons of Igbo ancestry contributed to the perception that things would have been different if Biafra had been successful. Because of this, it was simple to reactivate support for Biafra when it became clear that the ruling military classes were losing ground⁶⁹. As a political observer in Nigeria, Uwazurike may have been affected by the success of the Ododua People's Congress (OPC), a militant group with Yoruba ethnic roots that challenged the military over the annulment of the presidential election on June 12 and led to the ruling elite in Nigeria conceding the presidency to their ethnic group in 1999⁷⁰.

Through persistent agitation and cries of unfairness over the annulment of an election won by one of their sons, Moshood Abiola, the OPC, along with other cunning organizations, succeeded in

persuading the rest of the country to concede the president to them in 1999⁷¹. There has been close monitors and participants in the process that closed the contest for the presidency to only Yorubas, felt that a greater Igbo militancy manifesting in the form of demand for Biafra, can also result into a similar concession in the future and finally remove the scar of the war by forcing governments at the center to end those policies that marginalized the Igbo in post-war Nigerian political processes.

The function of the judiciary under the democratic regime is another crucial factor that further supports the idea that the Biafran comeback activities are linked to the democratic transition that took place in 1999⁷². The ability of the police and other state security forces to stifle dissent or restrict the activities of civil society organizations has been constrained by court rulings and verdicts. In the early stages of the organization's development, for instance, the police and State Security Services (SSSs) had fought with MASSOB activists while the group was staging demonstrations to inform the public of their goal. But unlike the military past, when these bodies could get away with arbitrary behavior and disdain for the law, such mischief has been restrained by a number of court rulings. Due to the timely arraignment of activists who have been arrested, problems like wrongful detention have decreased. Judges have found insufficient evidence in some cases that reach the courts to grant prosecution requests⁷³. An illustration of this is the April 2000 case in Lagos, where the prosecution asked the court to prohibit MASSOB from participating in rallies⁷⁴. The court refused to grant the request since it would have violated the activist's rights to peaceful protest and assembly.

2.2.6 Resurgence of Biafra Agitation in 2015

Biafran separatist protests have been taking place in South East Nigeria, which is dominated by the Igbo ethnic group, since November 2015. Among the tens of thousands who had obstructed the

crucial Niger Bridge in the commercial hub of Onitsha, Anambra State, the protests apparently turned violent on December 2, 2015, when two police officers and at least nine protestors were reportedly slain⁷⁵. Since the incident on December 2, 2015, there have reportedly been multiple protestors murdered in skirmishes with law enforcement in Onitsha, Aba, Port Harcourt, Owerri, and Asaba⁷⁶. Prior to their planned May 2016 celebration of Biafra, Amnesty International accused the Nigerian military of shooting unarmed supporters of that nation in Onitsha. According to Amnesty, opening fire on peaceful IPOB supporters and bystanders who clearly posed no threat to anyone is an outrageous use of unnecessary and excessive force and resulted in multiple deaths and injuries⁷⁷. Undoubtedly, there is a history of extrajudicial executions of Biafra supporters that predates the current administration⁷⁴. For instance, fifty people are still believed to support Biafra and were discovered floating in the Ezu River in Anambra State in January 2013⁷⁸. However, neither the past nor the present murders have received a full investigation from Nigerian authorities.

The latest demonstrations by Biafran separatists were immediately sparked by Nnamdi Kanu's arrest on October 19, 2015, as the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the editor of the website Radio Biafra, on charges of sedition, ethnic provocation, and treasonable offense⁵⁷. The most prominent and militant movement currently in existence demanding a separate State of Biafra is the IPOB and Radio Biafra. The Movement for Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) was established by Ralph Uwazuruike in 1999⁷⁹. The IPOB and Radio Biafra have now intensified this fight. Although MASSOB pledged non-violence as the cornerstone of its campaign, its members have frequently clashed with police on the grounds of provocation, resulting in multiple fatalities⁸⁰.

Internal unrest and official repression combined to undermine MASSOB and create significant organizational fissures. A significant section attempted to remove Uwazuruike on November 30, 2015, on the grounds that he had undermined the secessionist cause and strayed into Nigerian politics⁸¹. The Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), later known as the Biafran Zionist Front, was formed in September 2010 and existed before the attempted expulsion of Uwazuruike (BZF). Following a gathering in Enugu where the group re-declared the Republic of Biafra, BZF leader Benjamin Igwe Onwuka and over 100 other members were detained and charged with treason on November 5, 2012⁷². They were later released on bail. But on 8 March 2014, Onwuka and other BZF members were again arrested and placed on trial for attempting to seize an Enugu-state-owned radio station and broadcast of another Biafra declaration⁸². The BZF's operations have decreased as a result of the arrest of its members. However, it appears that the waning of MASSOB and BZF has given IPOB more room to prolong the unrest⁸³. The IPOB protests have increased tension and security concerns in Nigeria's South East and Niger Delta, and they have increased pressure on the government to put an end to the unrest. The recent increase in support for a separate Biafran State, which comes nearly 50 years after the end of the Nigerian civil war, calls for a study to find out why the movement has persisted⁸⁴.

2.2.7 Biafran War Victimization

- **Victimization before the Biafran war**

In the early stages of Nigeria's political history, the Igbo community cultivated a sense of collective victimization, Nnamdi Azikiwe, a well-known nationalist and important Igbo leader,

charged British colonialists with orchestrating acts of systemic discrimination against the Igbo several years prior to Nigeria's independence in 1960⁸⁵. The rising hostilities between the Igbo and other ethnic tribes resulted in violence in 1945. The first significant interethnic conflict involving the Igbos occurred during the Jos riot in October 1945, which resulted in at least two deaths, numerous injuries, and a significant number of destroyed properties⁸⁶. According to the investigation into the incident, the key factors that contributed to the attack were increased interethnic contact and competition brought on by the city's growing Igbo population, frustration from the time's economic hardships, and status insecurity brought on by the Igbo's growing prominence as a result of Igbo activists like Nnamdi Azikiwe's nationalist activities⁸⁷. The Jos riot served as a template for attacks on the Igbo in other parts of Nigeria, as the Biafran leadership attempted to build during the civil war⁸⁸.

Eight years after the riot in Jos, the Igbo in Kano were once more the target of a violent onslaught. A more violent incident than what occurred in Jos was the Kano riots, which broke out on May 16 and lasted for four days. The Action Group decisions to hold a rally in Kano on May 16 as part of a northern tour to advocate for national self-government in 1956 served as the immediate catalyst for the attacks, but deeper-seated resentments of southerners, especially the Igbo, who lived in Northern Nigeria, also contributed to the violence; the House of Representatives' self-government debate and its fallout further inflamed resentments⁸⁹.

Although the AG was primarily a Yoruba party and the majority of its supporters in Kano were Yoruba settlers, once the violence broke out, it quickly devolved into simple attacks against the Igbo, who had traditionally been the target of Northern hostility as the major socioeconomic rivals of the Hausa. According to an official government assessment on the incident, there were 46 fatalities and 205 injuries. Only seven Yoruba patients were admitted to the hospital, and the

majority of the injured and dead were Igbo and Northerners. No Yoruba deaths were reported. The atrocities in Kano in 1953 served as a metaphor for the more severe assaults on the Igbo people in Northern Nigeria thirteen years later⁹⁰. Following the coup on January 15, 1966, and the countercoup on July 29, 1966, there was a surge of targeted attacks against the Igbo population, mostly in Northern Nigeria. Today, these assaults are commonly referred to as the 1966 Igbo pogrom⁹¹. The attacks started on May 29, 1966, after a peaceful protest by students at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria against the military government's unification decree descended into violence against the Igbo. The attacks swiftly extended to several towns and cities in the North. Over 3,000 Igbo were reportedly killed or injured by the conclusion of the crisis⁹². The Nigerian military massacred Igbo officers and soldiers exactly two months after the May massacres, by the time the killings momentarily stopped on August 9, 1966, 154 men of "other ranks" from the Eastern area, 27 Igbo officers, 12 non-Igbo officers, and 17 from the Western and Mid-Western regions had died, along with several others who had been injured. A more destructive pogrom broke out in the North and other regions of the country where Northern soldiers were stationed, two months after the July slaughter. Over 50,000 Igbo were reportedly slain between September 29 and the end of November 1966, according to various reports⁹³.

The return of nearly 2 million persons to the Eastern Region, and specifically the Igbo districts, many of whom were in a destitute state (wounded, damaged, degraded, and devoid of their material goods), was one effect of the 1966 pogrom. In response, the Igbo's return to their homeland caused a dramatic rise in population in the Eastern Region's already densely inhabited districts, placing further strain on the region's already few resources. The Igbo community lost a significant source of remittances as a result of the migration of the Igbo migrants; as a result, those who were heavily reliant on the wealthier migrants were suddenly forced to house and feed the

migrants who had returned in poverty The inter-human network that crossed regional lines and the residual sense of oneness between the Igbo and the rest of Nigerians were destroyed with the return of "Igbo refugees." Therefore, the 1966 pogrom and the massive population relocation it generated contributed to the emergence of separatist sentiment that ultimately led to the proclamation of Biafran independence⁹⁴.

- **Victimization during the Biafran War**

In order to determine whether conflicts are likely to repeat again, the Civil War literature examines how they were waged. One of the most insightful studies on civil war recurrence makes the argument that conflicts that cause significant harm to the participants and those who support them may intensify hostility and fuel a strong desire for vengeance long after the conflict has ended. Such conflicts may result in grievances and divides that are so severe that they may not go away for a very long time⁹⁵. In separate research, it was shown that taking part in such battles was often motivated by the desire for personal or communal retribution. In this regard, one can argue that the Igbo's tremendous losses and suffering during the civil war, their profound resentments and divides as a result of the conflict, and their desire for vengeance in the post-war period are contributing causes to the Igbo people's ongoing calls for secession⁹⁶.

For the Igbo, the Biafran War was exceedingly expensive. The majority of the fighting took place in Igboland, a region of Biafra, where there was a great deal of willful damage of people's lives and property. Many Igbos believe that the war was a continuation of the pre-war period's mass murder because of how viciously it was fought. The Biafran leadership really made a concerted effort to portray the conflict as a struggle for ethnic survival, and it has been determined that one of the things that contributed to the war's protracted nature was the widespread fear of genocide⁹⁷.

The crimes the Nigerian troops perpetrated throughout the conflict and their disdain for the limitations of wartime standards are seen as signs of a pervasive animosity for the Igbo. Nigerian troops were accused of focusing their assaults on civilian targets throughout the duration of the conflict. The Biafran administration vigorously argued that civilians had been massacred in towns and cities such as Asaba, Aba, Onitsha, Calabar, Uyo, and Oji River⁹⁸. Unquestionably, the Asaba Massacre of October 1967, which was well recorded by several media reports, articles, and books, is an example of Nigerian forces murdering many people at once. Over 700 men and boys are said to have been slain by Nigerian troops during the atrocity⁹⁷.

The Nigerian troops were charged of indiscriminately destroying their objectives, raping and dehumanising women, and mistreating war detainees in addition to focusing their assaults on civilian targets. The worldwide outrage over the careless deaths, according to the Oha-na-eze Ndi Igbo, was one of the things that forced Nigeria to draught a Code of Conduct for her military⁹⁸. Before the Code of Conduct was established, the International Red Cross complained to the Federal Military Authority about the inhumane treatment of Biafran prisoners of war and civilians by its soldiers between January 1968 and March 1968⁹⁹. The creation of a code of conduct for Nigerian soldiers primarily served to lessen pressure from the international human rights community; as a result, the code had little impact on how Nigerian troops operated on the ground; locals continued to report that the soldiers had violated international conventions on war¹⁰⁰.

Due to widespread famine and death that followed the Nigerian forces' 1968–1969 enclosure of Biafra, the Igbo sustained the worst casualties throughout the civil war. The Igbo lost their agricultural regions as a result of the displacements brought on by the war and the pogrom in 1966. Nigeria's wartime strategy, which maintains that famine is a legal tool of combat, has made the

situation for the Igbo people worse. The strategy made sure that international help, notably food supplies, couldn't get to Biafra. Biafra was purposefully denied food, which led to food shortages, famine, malnutrition, sickness, and the deaths of millions of people, mostly children. This extraordinary war experience left many Igbo with a profound feeling of community anguish and collective oppression¹⁰¹.

- **Perceived Victimization after the Biafran War**

The extent to which fighters are able to resolve their post-war differences relies heavily on whether the post-war peace will last. According to academics, governments that are prepared to confront and resolve significant rebel complaints are more likely to prevent further unrest than those that do not¹⁰². In other words, establishing a lasting peace depends on successful post-conflict reconstruction. It is impossible to say that the post-war settlement in Nigeria was successful since it was based only on the government of Nigeria's rhetoric of "No victor, No conquered" and "Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Reintegration" (the 3Rs)¹⁰³. Despite allowing general amnesty to secessionists and ensuring that the widespread fear of post-war genocide did not materialise, the policy of "No victor, No vanquished" prevented any critical reflection on the past, particularly in the form of a meaningful discussion of the pre-war and war time grievances. However, the 3Rs, which are an indication of the Nigerian government's determination to rebuild infrastructure and assist those injured by the conflict as well as reintegration Biafra into Nigerian society, were not properly carried out¹⁰⁴. The relief and rehabilitation programme were managed on two levels: the National Commission for Rehabilitation was in charge of managing all official foreign relief contributions, while the Nigerian Red Cross was authorized to handle all private international donations and direct field activities. The post-war relief effort was poorly coordinated

and severely underfunded, making it difficult for the government to provide direct assistance to individuals on any significant scale⁴⁸.

This outcome compelled the administration to concentrate more extensively on national rebuilding as a means of fostering a climate that would facilitate rapid adjustment and recovery on an economic and social level. Some have thus concluded that the Nigerian government's refusal to appropriately handle the humanitarian catastrophe brought on by the conflict in the Igbo region is a continuation of the government's victimisation strategy¹⁰⁵. The government's choice to refuse help from nations and humanitarian groups that were thought to have supported Biafra during the conflict was considered as a sign of its insensitivity to the misery of Biafrans in light of the deficiency of its supplies¹⁰⁶. Some people, like the former Biafran leader Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, claimed that the Nigerian administration did not really want to make amends with the separatists. According to reports, the federating force is notably reluctant or unwilling to federate. People's fundamental needs, such as those for food, medication, shelter, and money, are not being satisfied. Promises made both before and after the conflict are not kept¹⁰⁴.

The design of the post-war reconstruction programme indicates that the Nigerian government did not plan to focus on the reconstruction of the Igbo areas which were the main theatre of war. The reconstruction programme was broadly formulated and embedded in the Second National Development Plan (1970-74)¹⁰⁷. Although reconstruction of war damaged facilities was a guiding factor in prioritization of projects in the plan, the reconstruction focused on the economy as a whole in order to correct the generally accepted weaknesses of past economic development and present war-time financial policies. Indeed, the main grievance of the pre-war and war-time period was the mass killing and destruction of properties of the Igbo population, this grievance persists in

the post-war period, and has become aggravated following perennial killing of Igbo residents of Northern Nigeria. There have been strong accusations that the Igbo have been used as the preferred scapegoats of the numerous ethnic, political, and religious disputes in post-war Nigeria, similar to the predicament of the Igbo during the 1953 Kano riots¹⁰⁸. Regardless of whether an Igbo was directly engaged in the dispute, the group recorded 10 violent confrontations between 1980 and 1993 in which the Igbo were murdered and their property was robbed or destroyed¹⁰⁹.

Since the 1970s, the main issues of the Igbo people have shifted from the issue of personal and property insecurity to economic disadvantaged and political marginalization, the government has implemented a number of economic measures and policies that are seen to be punitive and intended to economically weaken the Igbo. The choice to only exchange Biafran for Nigerian money for a predetermined lump sum, regardless of the amount of cash a person has, is one of these policies that is often given as an example. Another is the 1972 indigenization policy's auctioning off of foreign-owned businesses to Nigerians. The programme is seen negatively since it was implemented while the Igbo were still recovering from a traumatic war and lacked the funds to buy stock in the enterprises that were being auctioned off ¹¹⁰. Perhaps the most prominent example of post-war injustice against the Igbo is that of "abandoned property," which refers to the taking over of Igbo-owned real estate by "indigenes," particularly by minority groups in Port Harcourt, without providing any kind of compensation¹¹¹. Another significant act of economic disempowerment was the 1976 border adjustment exercise, which removed and relocated mineral-rich Igboland regions like Ndoni/Egbema and portions of Ndoki South of the Imo River to the nearby Rivers and Cross River (now Akwa Ibom) States¹¹².

Notably, Igbo leaders cite a stark illustration of economic disempowerment in the federal government's seeming inability to fund the development of Igboland's infrastructure¹¹³. They see the decision as the government's continued resistance to restoring the region's war-damaged infrastructure. The last kind of oppression experienced by the Igbo in the post-war era is political marginalisation. The assertions of Igbo political marginalisation have two basic aspects. The alleged intentional exclusion of the Igbo elite from the highest echelons of federal politics is the first. The Igbo elite have argued against the apparent deliberate attempt to treat the Igbo as second-class citizens by excluding them from representation in important appointment positions in the nation at every chance¹¹⁴. The formation of states is included in the second aspect of the accusations of Igbo political marginalisation. The Igbo elite has often maintained that the region has been terribly underrepresented in the state construction process since the 1970s, when states first became the fundamental units of distributing federal resources and services¹¹⁵.

The aforementioned does demonstrate that there has been a persistent example of Igbo persecution over a number of decades. The Igbo have effectively distinguished their argument by referencing a historical tendency in the group's victimization in contemporary Nigeria, even in the middle of the reciprocal claims of marginalization by diverse communities in post-war Nigeria⁷². Many Igbo believe mistreatment of the group is a sort of war restitution, which is supported by Chinua Achebe's claim that "the civil war offered Nigeria a perfect and valid pretext to place the Igbo in the position of treasonable criminal, a wrecker of the country"¹¹⁶. This sentiment serves as both a foundation for the continuing of Igbo complaints and hostilities and an obvious example of the post-war settlement's failure in Nigeria. Overall, all of these have led to many Igbo people being "secessionists at heart," in James O'Connell's words, while accepting the Biafran loss¹¹⁷.

It is quite doubtful that the Hausa-Fulani, who make up the majority in Nigeria, and the Yoruba (the second majority), who make up the majority, would vote for an Igbo presidential candidate given the bigotry that permeates the country's population. This implies that an Igbo guy has no chance of winning the presidency since, even if he ran, he would lose due to the vote strength being against him. The Igbos feel entirely robbed of what they see as being essential to ensuring their welfare in the nation, which makes them angry and disappointed. New waves of agitation and a fresh desire for second Biafran independence have developed both from the area and among the Diaspora populations abroad as a result of these problems and the federal government's failure to address the concerns of development in the southeast¹¹⁸. In terms of growth, the South East lacked a seaport, and the possibly nearby Port-Harcourt port isn't operating. In the whole area, there is just one international airport and no railway. Many supporters of the Biafran agenda believe that the nation did not desire the advancement of the Igbo man, which is supported by these and several other types of infrastructure deterioration in the region. The Igbos, who are largely traders, would be able to bring their goods from outside with the aid of dredging the River-Niger, but that has turned into political bait to entice the locals to vote for a presidential candidate year after year¹¹⁹.

2.2.8 Factors that Contribute to the Biafra Agitations

Existing theories regarding why there is ongoing agitation for Biafra may be divided into three basic categories: 1) Those that concentrate on interethnic rivalry and conflict; 2) Those that concentrate on economic angst; and 3) Those that concentrate on state-society connections.

- Ethnic Divisions and Competition

In order to understand why Biafra agitation continues to resurface, scholars of Nigerian politics often concentrate on ethnicity and inter-ethnic struggle for federal authority. The clearest evidence for this point of view is that the Igbo people, who are angry that their elite was unable to seize federal authority, are driving the current campaign for Biafra¹¹⁰. He asserts that the inability of the Igbo elite to win the presidency of Nigeria has caused the current Biafra movement to "represent a complete fracture between the Igbo elite and their masses," and that "the Igbo elite has a strong empirical basis to read Nigerian political history as one of failure and frustration for them. The Igbo lumen have taken the initiative to pursue the route of fragmentation in response to the failure of the elite¹²⁰.

Similar accounts of the recurrence of Biafra separatism, although they see the elite rather than the masses as the main drivers of the agitation. Because of this, recent upsurge in Biafran separatism involves local elites negotiating for power which many groups in the country have never felt represented by the central power. Local elites play on these emotions for their own personal gain this is how local elites try to create greater political space for themselves¹²¹. The recent agitations for Biafra represent a bid for re-inclusion by political actors excluded from power. More so, there are believes that the recent surge in Biafra separatism is engineered by the political elite in response to the significant realignment of power at the federal level following the defeat of President Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) whom the South East offered vast support. The change of government, according to him, has relegated many career politicians from the region from juicy federal positions in Abuja, making them susceptible to use instability as a form of political leverage and channel of engagement with the federal government¹²². While it is possible that some political actors see in the Biafra agitation a route to political inclusion in the aftermath of the defeat of President Jonathan, these arguments cannot

explain the widespread agitations for Biafra under the Jonathan administration, as well as their systematic repression¹²³.

A constructivist version of the ethnic competition argument, linking the re-emergence of Biafra separatism to the interaction between history, institutions and political actors. His fundamental contention is that although Nigeria is democratizing, the country's political institutions have remained largely authoritarian, constraining political actors, but at the same time, offering them incentives to mobilize along ethnic, as opposed to civic lines¹²⁴. These actors, according to him, are forced underground into armed dissent because of obstacles to their ethnic project and their inability to utilize civic strategies to build a winning electoral coalition due to election-rigging by the dominant ruling elite.

- Economic Frustration

A second set of arguments for the persistence of the Biafra agitation focuses on the effects of economic frustration or absence of it on separatist feelings. It sees the current agitation for Biafra as a struggle by young people expressing resentment over their material condition - a condition which they face because of broader contradictions of the Nigerian political economy, but which they perceive as ethnic exclusion. The main argument of this perspective is that Biafra separatism is a political expression of economic frustrations of young people. These frustrations are, however, perceived by these agitators as resulting from the marginalization of the South East in national economic life. Contracting economic opportunities in the region, which has seen a very high level of unemployment even among highly educated young people, account for the proneness of the area to separatist agitations and insecurity¹²⁵. This is deepened by a perception that other parts of the

country are unduly privileged by the federal government. It is widely acknowledged that groups are more likely to rebel when they feel disadvantaged vis-à-vis other groups in the society¹²⁶.

- State-Society Relations

Consequent upon the persistence of Biafra separatist agitation links it to the nature of state-society relations in Nigeria. Studies represent this perspective¹²⁷. A number of academics have defined state violence as any act by the state or its agents that causes bodily or mental hurt to the person or property of its law-abiding citizen or group of citizens in order to explain why the Biafra separatist movement has reemerged¹²⁸. This concept explains the decrease and resurrection of Biafra agitation in the post-war period as the lack of state violence in the immediately post-civil war era and its emergence after the bloody military takeover of 1976¹²⁸.

Following Nigeria's conversion to democracy in 1999, the country's political landscape opened up, which coincided with the resurgence of Biafra separatist¹²⁹. According to his theory, after 1999, Nigeria's political landscape has changed as a result of the entry of new non-state players including ethno-nationalist groups. The confrontation between state-driven nationalism and state-seeking nationalism headed by non-state forces is what defines the political environment after 1999¹³⁰. The state-seeking nationalists seem to be losing the battle against the hegemonic state-led nationalist agenda, forcing ethno-nationalist organisations to shift their tactics and step up their demands for alternative venues and parallel structures of power. These changes have led to a rise in separatist sentiment³⁸.

2.2.9 Igbo Elites and Pro-Biafra Agitation

The ongoing pro-Biafra protest brings to the fore the fact that the Igbos do not hold homogeneous view about its independence from the Nigerian state despite the ethnic affiliation and sentiments shared by them. The call for secession of Biafra brought out different reactions from the Igbo elite political class, the diaspora and common woman and man in the south east¹³¹. Disadvantaged Igbo youths that are mainly unemployed and under employed embraced the agitation and protest as life line to more economic opportunities in the 'parasitic' Biafra Republic. However, the political elites, business owners and economically advantaged Igbos seems diplomatic in supporting the agitation perhaps for personal interest¹³². The survival of the economy of the landlocked proposed Biafra Republic is also another concern for the Igbo businessmen/women known for extensive importing and exporting business¹³³. The Ohaneze Ndigbo reportedly disassociated itself from the protest and agitation for Biafra, Igbos in Lagos, Kano, Gombe states also disassociated themselves from the secessionist move of the agitators¹³⁴. The reaction of Igbo traders under the auspices of the South East Markets Amalgamated Traders Association contained in a press release dissociated Igbo traders and further complained about how the protesters enforce the incessant closure of shops and markets in solidarity with the agitators¹³⁵. The interest of Igbos in the diaspora in the agitation for the secession of Biafra Republic from Nigeria is another strong force supporting and promoting the agitation¹³⁶.

The elites frequently conceal their intra-elite and intra-class conflicts for control and resources under the guise of ethnicity. However, ethnicity in Nigeria has evolved over time to take on a more objective nature, resembling more or less an ideology and a lens through which the majority of governmental actions are filtered. It is also an effective tool for mobilization. For instance, the

prolonged detention of Nnamdi Kanu and his denial of bail despite court orders ordering his release sparked ethnic solidarity even among those who disapproved of his brand of harsh rhetoric. The more that Buhari's supposed hate of the Igbo is used by his ethnic brethren as justification for the refusal to issue bail, more of Buhari's northern kin felt impelled to stand up for one of their own. When things do not go their way, the dominant ethnic groups frequently employ threats of secession as a negotiating tactic. Some ethnic groups may have come to believe that they are better off on their own due to the widespread use of hate speech and ethnic profiling in the media⁸².

2.2.10 Resurgence of Biafra Agitation from 2017 Till Date

It is vital to remember that the motivations for the Biafran movement are very contradictory. Some use it as a negotiation point, some for personal benefit, while yet others really want independence. The vast majority of Igbos in the south-east and other sections of the nation oppose the idea, preferring a fair and equitable Nigeria than a separate state of Biafra¹³⁷. The proscription of IPOB, with the rise of Neo-Biafran groups, notably IPOB, is rooted in the Igbo people's sense of marginalisation, alienation, and injustice following the conclusion of the Nigerian civil war. Some of these grievances are fueled by the belief that certain principles of the federal revenue allocation formula, particularly the emphasis on state and landmass equality in revenue, were designed to favour the northern and western parts of the federation that won the civil war and dominated federal power, to the detriment of the Igbo¹³⁸. In terms of landmass, a few northern states have more room than the whole Igboland, which has a high population density. The Igbo were also hampered by the nation's quota system for recruitment into the military services and police, which resulted in the exclusion and dissatisfaction of many talented applicants¹³⁹. In Nigeria, the quota system appears to be a distorted version of the United States affirmative action programme, which

was designed to help the African-American community, which has historically been oppressed through slavery and disenfranchisement, gain representation in highly competitive educational and employment sectors¹⁴⁰.

The quota system is intended to obtain representation based only on state of origin, with no consideration for talent or ability. As a result, majority ethnic groups dominate every industry, hurting Nigeria's competitive spirit among other communities. The quota system was thought to restrict Igbo access to other federal organisations such as public service and parastatals, educational institutions, the military, police, and security agencies on the basis of merit¹⁴¹. Most Igbo youngsters saw such exclusion as unfair and discriminatory, especially after seeing those from other regions of the country who outperformed them in competitive tests accepted to government colleges and agencies while they were not. Many of their parents were also dissatisfied with their perceived exclusion from lucrative federal posts and economic prospects, as well as the region's lack of federal government infrastructure projects¹⁴².

In post-war Nigeria, the Igbo were alienated by memories of losses and other perceived injustices, including as the disproportionate implementation of the quota system and discriminatory government posts and projects. Such concerns became stronger over time among younger Igbo, especially those born after the war and who did not see or experience its horrors. This post-war generation was quite different from those who served in the war that ended fifty years ago and accepted loss with grace¹⁴³. Since Nigeria's restoration to democracy in 1999, Igbo youths' rage at their continuing marginalisation inside the Nigerian federation has led to a revival of Biafra agitation. Following the demise of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was formed in 2012, partially to

protest Igbo marginalisation and solve long-standing concerns¹⁴⁴. However, its original use of nonviolent protest gave way to a more aggressive attitude over time. The success of his request for a day of mourning for those slain in the conflict emboldened him further, contributing to a clash between IPOB militants and the Nigerian army in Umuahia during a military operation in the Southeast codenamed Operation Python Dance¹⁴⁵. Prior to the clash, following Kanu's first arrest in October 2015 for treason, on health concerns, he was granted bail in April 2017 on the condition that he not engage the public on Biafran independence issues however, Kanu breached his bail restrictions and resumed his rhetorical battle against the government after his release, and his gang was accused of harassment in certain south-east states. Subsequently Kanu, went ahead to establish the Biafran Secret Service (BSS), according to him, the BSS was formed to combat the threat of Fulani herders devastating rural villages and agriculture in Southeast Nigeria. He said that the herders who had become robbers were the same as the Hisbah in Kano, Sharia police, and other vigilante groups throughout the nation¹⁴⁶.

In response, several northern youth organisations declared "war" on all Igbos in the north, demanding that they leave within three months, Northern officials intervened and put pressure on the youth to retract the threat, while the Nigerian army sent a special unit, Operation Python Dance II, to the south-east states to help with security¹⁴⁷. The Nigerian army invaded Nnamdi Kanu's residence only 24 hours after announcing the start of Operation Python Dance (Part Two) in the South-Eastern regions, during the assault, the army reportedly raided Kanu's family house and shot and detained several IPOB members. Kanu and his parent's location before and after the invasion were unknown until he reappeared in 2018^{148,149}. Following an emergency meeting in Enugu, the South East Governors Forum prohibited IPOB's operations and urged that any issues be channeled to the chairman of the South East Governors Forum¹⁵⁰. President Buhari also started the process of

outlawing IPOB in the country after accusing the group of terrorist actions such as establishing parallel military and paramilitary organisations, battling with the national army, and erecting roadblocks to extort citizens¹⁵¹. Through a court decision, the Nigerian federal government has gone ahead and declared IPOB a terrorist organization, according to a report on the 20th of September 2017, Justice Kafarati issued an order banning IPOB and designating it a terrorist organisation in response to an ex parte application by the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami. Declaring the group, a terrorist organisation suggests that the group will henceforth be treated as terrorists by security personnel if they are seen assembling or engaged in any of their operations¹⁵².

The IPOB leader's house invasion has not brought the agitators and the Nigerian government any closer together. Between 2017 and 2021, the military went against IPOB members, and Nnamdi Kanu fled the nation, but IPOB maintained its campaign, resulting in multiple deadly incidents between its supporters, the military, security agents, and police. Some Biafrans were abducted and slain in cold blood without justification during the Python Dance operation in September 2017, and they have yet to be buried, similarly a demonstration held in celebration of Donald Trump's election became violent, resulting in 11 fatalities and several injuries^{153,154,155}. Nnamdi Kanu, however, was arrested outside the nation, forcefully returned to Nigeria in June 2021, and is presently detained while awaiting trial on terrorist allegations. Protests and weekly sit-ins in Southeast Nigeria have erupted in response to his return, incarceration, and prosecution¹⁵⁶.

The agitations of IPOB the organisation, as well as all of the techniques used, cannot be divorced from Nigeria's political stability. Since a result, President Muhammadu Buhari's use of force in response to the IPOB's agitations has not been helpful, as it inflames passions and raises people's

emotions for separation, perhaps leading to political instability. This seems to be the case with the Igbo people in relation to the Nigeria-Biafra War, many Igbo people have not forgotten their plight and have proposed various remedies to their perceived marginalisation. The Igbo people survived a civil war that lasted between 1967 and 1970, destroying their territory and reducing their number by almost three million fatalities, faced with tremendous difficulties of starting again with nearly nothing, the Nigerian government has continuously taken the Igbos as an afterthought, despite this the people's collective spirit, which carried them through the civil war, has continued to solidify their survival drive in the post-war age¹⁰⁴. On the other side, some Igbo people demand nothing less than complete independence from Nigeria, with the Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), following Nigeria's restoration to democratic government in 1999 and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) later in 2012, leading the pack of Igbos with similar purpose, attempting all means to achieve their demand.

2.2.11 Biafra Agitation and Nigeria's Idea of Unity

Despite existing divisions, the Nigerian constitution asserts the nation's indivisibility. Azikiwe and other founding figures stated that because tribalism may be utilised to create national unity, it is not bad. He endorsed the idea that tribalism exists everywhere and that it is acceptable and natural given the significance of cooperation and the preservation of the people's identity as they form a new society. Some academics also hold the view that a nation's government may devise whatever tools at its disposal to guarantee unity¹⁵⁷. Nigeria is hardly the only country experiencing this horrible condition of unrest and protests. As revealed in the submission of earlier research that Britain, which is thought of as a well-integrated nation, had a deadly conflict with and in Northern Ireland.

Regional issues have become more prominent in nations like France, Spain, Canada, and Yugoslavia, according to recent research. The government should never shirk its duties in regards to national growth when addressing these issues. The Nigerian government has embraced the employment of security services like the police as the best strategy to deal with the agitated IPOB along with high level use of coercion and repression, according to the argument made by prior researchers¹⁸. Any government's responses to a group may improve or impair the stability of that state. The ramifications include humiliation of Nigerian nationals by IPOB organisations overseas, such as Rochas Okorocha, the former governor of Imo State, at Catham House in London. Recent publications revealed that Imo State Governor Rochas Okorocha had intended to travel to London to give a lecture on human development, but he was unable to do so because the local conditions he encountered forced him to announce the Biafra agitations to the world and cause them to go viral instead of delivering the intended lecture, which was never heard of. The drama that developed between the governor and the IPOB group in London embarrassed both Nigeria and the governor in particular¹⁵⁸.

In a similar vein, one more instance has to be supported here as a way to stoke political passions and in order to stir up unrest, the Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG), a partisan organisation supporting President Muhammadu Buhari, falsely claimed that Nnamdi Kanu, the embattled leader of the outlawed indigenous people of Biafra, had organised Nigerians living there to attack the president when he travelled to the United States to address the UN General Assembly¹⁵⁹. This sentence makes it apparent that other tribes or groups with other interests to preserve may be provoked by the agitations and embarrassments of Nigerian leaders overseas. The recent assault on former deputy senate president Senator Ike Ekweremadu in Germany when he was attending the

second annual cultural festival and convention organised by the Igbos in Germany was a step in the same direction. The statement from IPOB's publicity secretary reads,

“Today being the 17th day of August 2019, the Nuremberg IPOB family in Germany in keeping with the directive from our leader to hound all instigators of Operation Python Dance, is glad to report that Ike Ekweremadu was confronted and duly hounded out of a so-called new yam festival event in Germany,” ¹⁶⁰.

These are the effects of the various strategies used by the Nigerian government to address IPOB protests. Most of the time, countries are not the only ones that suffer from instability. Any country experiencing conflict or ultimately war has a strong propensity to have an impact on other nations that are nearby in a variety of ways, the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the Yemeni people's interests have all suffered as a result of the ongoing conflict in Yemen. It has brought focus to a human tragedy that is well-known on a global scale. Tens of thousands of people have died as a consequence of this crisis, and 14 million people are said to be at danger of hunger^{161,162}. Yemen's circumstance, however, cannot be compared to Chechnya's. The course of a person's quest for self-determination is always determined by differences in their evolutionary development¹⁸. The Chechnya issue is a symbol of the world's mounting troubles at a time when terrorist attacks were occurring in many different countries and there was a need to prevent the state from disintegrating. Since they have historically endured torture at the hands of the Russians, the Chechen people are never willing to submit to their rule¹⁶³.

According to studies, Chechnya is the only place where Russia consistently deploys its military to prevent actions that may lead to independence, and there hasn't been a better approach that would minimise losses. For a very long time, Aceh has pushed for independence from Indonesia. Aceh has been governed by Indonesia for half a century, during which time the Indonesian government

repeatedly violated human rights¹⁶⁴. Perturbation for self-determination have been a problematic movement in several nations across the globe, as the battle for self-reliance has never been facile. The unpredictability of the political atmosphere is always present with such conflicts.

2.2.12 Manifestations of Agitations in the World

Various nations across the globe have experienced agitation for self-determination, which took various forms depending on what they fought for. Kosovo was a self-governing entity inside the Republic of Serbia in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). According to recent accounts, Slobodan Milosevic terminated Kosovo's autonomy in 1989. In Yugoslavia, there was a power struggle between the strong and the less powerful¹⁶⁵. In a study, an examination of Kosovo reported on how Kosovar Albanians sought and restored autonomy for Kosovo during the 1990s, and how the Serbian government implemented military operations in the state in 1998, resulting in activities expanding to other locations. It is worth noting that nations have all tools at their disposal to reach peaceful settlements without the need for outsider involvement. The circumstances in Kosovo, the quest for self-determination, the split of Yugoslavia, and the UN's handling of Kosovo made the Kosovo case unique¹⁶⁶. This, however, is not prevalent in other nations with self-determination difficulties.

The battle for self-determination in Catalonia has been obvious, as it has been in Biafra, Eritrea, Somaliland, and other places. According to BBC News, an assessment of all regions in Spain has highlighted Catalonia as being at the top in terms of wealth, coupled with its 16% addition to the national population and responsible for 19% of Spain's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but Catalans believe the central government has exploited them by taking more from it and giving back less to them¹⁶⁷. The anguish of having their independence wished away, along with many

years of recession and reduced public investment, drove Catalans to the polls to vote on their independence. Organizers claim that 90% of voters supported independence, but the Spanish government deemed the elections invalid. A spokesman of the Spanish government apologised to Catalans for the many injuries inflicted by members when the police attempted to halt the vote. The Catalan parliament then publicly declared their independence, prompting Madrid to suspend the Catalans' independence, depose their government, and impose direct control on them¹⁶⁸.

In this instance, Catalans surrendered to the central government the autonomy they had enjoyed over the years in their quest for self-determination, such as authority over their own education, banking system, and others. In Madrid, the Catalans' battle for self-determination has exacerbated the country's political instability¹⁶⁹. Has reported on the Bougainville resolution to have a referendum on self-determination before the year 2020, this has become a focal point since the whole world is watching to see what happens¹⁷⁰. It is worth noting that Bougainville has been subjected to violent secession, imperialist invasion, and oppression, every agitation has a cause, as has been described in the instance of Bougainville. In the Second World War, Japan was able to take Bougainville only after heavy warfare¹⁷¹.

Every country that believes it is being kept back by another wishes for self-determination. On August 30, 1999, the United Nations sponsored a Popular Consultation in which East Timor opted to reject the Indonesian autonomy offer overseen by the UN as part of the transition to an independent state. Because Indonesia was under pressure to leave East Timor, the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly repealed its controversial legislation of July 1976, which annexed East Timor, on October 15, 1999. (IPCA)¹⁷². This crisis surely laid the groundwork for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to seize complete control of East

Timor. Certain academics said that security improvements in East Timor had been a major success, and that INTERFET troops had solid authority over all regions of the country, removing the dread of instability. According to research, the Indonesian refugee camps formerly housed around 150,000 East Timorese in humiliating conditions in militia-controlled camps¹⁷³.

Differences in the historical nature of political conflict have remained a feature of global politics, in the instance of Puerto Rico, the Americans took them over from Spain in 1898 and awarded them full US citizenship in 1917, confirming the Island's complicated situation¹⁷⁴. Similar to several other incidents on other islands, the Indigenous People of Puerto Rico were virtually wiped off when they were invaded by Spain, and the people who live on the island now do not have the legal inheritors¹⁷⁵. In other words, the current people have no connection to the previous indigenous natives and are made up of descendants of European settlers and Africans brought in through slavery. Many proponents of self-determination are external, while others are internal. Chiapas, Mexico, is an excellent example of internal self-determination. In Chiapas, Mexico, the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional, or EZLN, started its campaign from the Lacandon jungle in 1994, drawing attention to the struggle of Mexico's indigenous peoples as a whole. According to studies, the Zapatistas are encouraged by their love for their culture to maintain their own native ways of organisation, grassroots governance of the economy, which required immediate attention due to the high level of intrusion of the global economy into various parts of Chiapas, and the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)¹⁷⁶.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, two theories were adopted for analyzing the contents as well as approaches present in the study. The primordialism theory and instrumentalism theory. However, instrumentalism has been adopted as the theoretical framework on which the study is based.

Primordialism

The primordialism theory can be explained in two settings which are the sociobiological and cultural perspective. Sociobiological primordialism first associated with the work of Peter Van den Berghe, describing ethnic groupings as populations delimited by the rule or practice of endogamy, driven by a shared belief in the uniqueness of the group and thus a primordial desire to maintain its purity¹⁷⁷. The second perspective cultural primordialism, attributed to two contributions made by Clifford Geertz and Steven Grosby, firstly, Geertz affirms that humans have primordial truth to the givens of social existence, be it an immediate kin connection or a particular religious and/or linguistic community¹⁷⁸. These attachments, as delineated by Geertz, are deep-rooted and perhaps even inescapable to the individuals constituting the ethnic group or ethnic nation. Such an explanation would account for why so many people have such ardent attitudes about ethnicity whether positive or negative and often engage in seemingly inexplicable acts, including self-sacrifice, for the sake of these givens¹⁷⁹. Parallel to the above, Steven Grosby's work having received far less attention does insist on the objects or givens, as identified by Geertz to which members of an ethnicity attach themselves are indeed primordial. Grosby's argument essentially is that Ethnic groups and nationalities exist, because there are traditions of belief and action as regards to primordial objects such as biological features and territorial location¹⁸⁰.

Primordialism posits that blood ties or kinship are the basis for ethnic groups. According to the notion, an individual's essential ethnic identity is set in stone at birth and cannot be altered; as a result, ethnicity is historically anchored and connected to geography or a specific country. This physical line identifies the traditional territory of a certain ethnic group¹⁸¹. The primordialism approach, explains ethnicity as a set of characteristic relatable to certain individuals and communities, embedded in inherited biological attributes, a long history of practicing cultural differences, or both. Ethnic identity is seen as radically distinctive, unique in intensity and durability and as an existential factor defining individual self-identification and communal distinctiveness¹⁷⁹. Mobilization of ethnic identity and ethnic nationalism is a powerful tool to engage the group in a political struggle. Ethnic divisions and ethnic conflict are considered inherent to multiethnic societies and a common phenomenon. Primordialism therefore attempts to address the root of ethnic identity and the reasons for its tremendous strong pull in the lives of modern as well as ancient people¹⁸⁰. Nations are seen by primordialists as old, something that is rooted in both human biology and historical antiquity, therefore the likelihood of change of ethnic identification is slim.

The primordialism theory when applied to this study, contends idea of ethnicity, giving a better understanding to reasons why individuals may react in certain ways and their interaction with others outside of their ethnic grouping. It gives context to the history of common efforts, stories of sacrifices for a common goal, and memories of human suffering creating a stronger connection among the members of affected ethnic groups. The concept of ethnic sentiments and group feeling of alienation and struggles become a personal vendetta whether directly or indirectly irrespective of their domicile. With the case of the Biafran agitation and the new waves of secessionist groups in Nigeria it highlights how individuals that are not domicile in Nigeria are even more passionate

about the movement and agenda of seceding from Nigeria, with reference to the Igbo community abroad who have played key roles in the resurrection of agitations for Biafra which was headed by the Ipob leader Nnamdi kanu who is a citizen of two other countries.

Instrumentalism

The theory of instrumentalism emphasizes on flexibility of ethnic sentiments that depends on circumstance and the choice of the individual. An elite perspective from Paul Brass emphasizes the role of elites in the formation and persistence of ethnic identity. He argues that elites and counter-elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group's culture, attach new value and meaning to them, and use them as symbols to mobilize the group, to defend its interests, and to compete with other groups¹⁸². The theory of political instrumentalism attributes the outbreak of inter-group conflict to ethnic entrepreneurs who capitalize on the availability of ethnic networks to mobilize masses along ethnic lines¹⁸³. This especially occurs when political elites are in danger of being 'ethnically outbid' by extremists or when domestic or international challenges threaten their political survival and interests. This view relies on circumstantially playing up the ethnic identity as a means to some specific political end.

Therefore, instrumentalism emphasises the malleability of people through inflaming ethnic feelings. According to the instrumentalist approach to the study of ethnicity, ethnic identities are significant because of the environment or because of how elites manipulate identification. Once its value is no longer needed, ethnicity vanishes. This only demonstrates how ethnicity is profoundly ingrained and prevalent due to its political use. In order to mobilise individuals towards ethnic identity and achieve a political objective, leadership plays a crucial role. The role is provided by mainly educated people in ethnic movements, as shown in some Western societies¹⁸⁴. These people

constitute themselves as alternative elite groups to challenge the dominant elite using ethnic sentiments.

In the same vein, Brass whose work is based on Indian politics, posited that ethnic identities in a complex society as India are fluid and often conflictual because of the role played by the elites who were not accommodated in leadership positions¹⁸². The instrumentalism viewpoint, however, falls short in explaining ethnic identification that does not have any clearly defined political goals for a specific person or elite, particularly when individuals claim to identify with a certain ethnic group because it makes them feel like they belong. However, the theory of instrumentalism tackles the main topics of this research, which are ethno-nationalism and a resurgence of the desire for Biafra. It examines the question of why ethnic groups with a violent bent, like MASSOB, are growing in Nigeria. This decision becomes flawless because instrumentalism sees ethnic mobilisation as a means to an aim in politics and because of the involvement particular MASSOB leadership figures played in the creation and upkeep of the organisations¹⁸⁴.

Elites who want certain responsibilities that have escaped them in a diverse political system, according to instrumentalists, exploit ethnicity to mobilise people for their own personal advancement. It highlights the aspirations of the ethnic group and plays up how situational identity is. Instrumentalism emphasises how ethnic feelings may change depending on the situation and the individual's decision. Although emphasis is placed on behaviour, it is acknowledged that objective markers like symbols, traditions, language, and appearance are important. This means that an individual's ethnic identity may be identified by looking at his choices and behaviours¹⁸⁵. This only demonstrates how ethnicity is profoundly ingrained and prevalent due to its political use. In order to mobilise people into ethnic identity and achieve political objectives, leadership is seen by

instrumentalists as being of utmost importance. People who lead collective action in the name of ethnicity have a decision to make, and they only do so when they are certain that the benefits will exceed the disadvantages. When it is no longer politically advantageous, these elites stop the choices, feelings, and behaviours that their manipulation of ethnic identities has produced¹⁸⁶. In other words, when there is little chance for furthering local elite interests masked as a communal cause, the boundaries that separate individuals based on their ethnicity become fuzzier.

When this theory is applied to the study, it makes reference to internal elite-level factors that which is present in the resurgence of agitation for Biafra. These include power struggles by leaders of different groups, ideological disputes over the way the country should be organized, and alleged criminal activities directed at the country's sovereignty by leaders of organized crime. Leaders facilitate the ethnic card to evoke ethnicity in situations where it may or may not be relevant in a manner that can quickly lead to increased tensions between ethnic groups. This argument adequately explains Ralph Uwazurike's involvement in the revived movement for Biafra. Ralph founded MASSOB, which sparked the fresh call, with his prominence in the Nigerian political system especially during the period of Obasanjo's presidential run following the outcome, his involvement can be deduced as supporting the ideas of instrumentalism.

It is observed that while the security gap speaks to the state's inability to defend its sovereignty from external and internal attacks and is prone to conflicts while gradually degenerating into anarchy, the capacity gap lends credence to the state's and its agencies' inability to meet the socio-economic needs of the people by way of providing essential services like job opportunities, good roads, and potable water. The legitimacy gap considers the people's disregard for the legitimacy of the state, particularly one that conducts democracy¹⁸⁷. Given the foregoing, it is accurate to say that

a fragile state is on the verge of losing or has lost its ability to govern, subjecting the populace to various crises that impede human capacity development while the state itself will be marked by gross underdevelopment and thus dependent on other states for its survival¹⁸⁸. In fact, it could be argued that the Nigerian government's inability to provide effective leadership, particularly given the level of unrest caused by Boko Haram's banditry, insurgency, and terrorism as well as violent clashes between farmers and herders, is one of the main reasons why the South-Eastern region of the country is calling for secession¹⁸⁹.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

Several researchers and scholars have examined the possible causes and developments on Biafra agitations and the possible challenges it poses on Nigeria's unity since the upsurge of secessionist campaigns with the likes of Uwazurike to this current Nnamdi Kanu era. Research conducted highlighted the systematic exclusion of the Igbos from key national leadership positions in Nigeria as a given for the rise of secession-seeking groups and inevitable demand for self-government in the region. The study was anchored on cultivation and social exchange theories with survey and FGD as research methods. It was discovered that IPOB one of the recent secessions seeking groups utilizes its radio station to communicate its stirring rhetoric and extremist views, owing to radio's ability to cultivate social and political realities in the minds of people, rhetoric of marginalization which forms the basis of radio Biafra's broadcast may not leave people free from thinking of what is being communicated and what could be done to actualize the desired self-freedom which the station cultivates.

Against this background, the study examined the level of exposure to radio Biafra's broadcast, perception of the broadcast messages and how persuasive the messaging from the station. The

study therefore, recommended that radio Biafra content presenters should reconsider the messages sent out to the people to avoid a repeat of the Rwandan episode in Nigeria. It also recommended more inclusiveness in government as a remedy to assuage the Igbos' desire and quest for this Biafra if the country still appreciates the unity of its existence. However, with this in mind, the purpose of this research is to fill a knowledge vacuum on the already reflective effects of Biafran movement on the security and economic life of the eastern region using interviews with intellectuals and accounts from civil war survivors¹¹⁹.

The next study articulated the relevancy of new media in shaping our society and its influence on how we interact especially as it concerns issue of insecurity. This study identifies new media as communication technologies that facilitate or improve interaction between users and with content it includes a wide range of online communication tools, including blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networking sites, and other social media. The theory of technological determinism was utilized to explain the central tenet that a society's use of technology reveals much about what kind of society it is. With the aid of new media people are likely to know the security situation in a place and such knowledge usually serves as a guide in their actions. In this investigation, the researcher employed the survey methodology, eliciting opinions on how new media is used to communicate insecurity in the Southeastern region. The multistage sampling technique was used for the investigation, making use of questionnaires and purposively selecting respondents who are literate, have smart phones with accessibility to strong internet availability through which they can access new media.

The findings from the study showed that all the respondents had been exposed to insecurity messages via new media to a very large extent, among residents in southeastern Nigeria. This may be a result of the free flow of information within the media space. They also reported that social

media platforms are used to promote social and national insecurity, subsequently it factual to imply that new media platforms can either be used to fuel further insecurity problems or can be very useful in raising the consciousness on the need to be security alert especially now the security situation in the southeast is very precarious. The study laid out the following suggestions in light of the finding, the sensitization of new media users is necessary on the need to use the platform appropriately or with a sense of responsibility instead of using it to fuel more security problems within the southeastern region specifically and Nigeria at large, while also maintaining a positive attitude towards insecurity respondents should, be constantly encouraged by those in authority to always avail themselves to information that can help them maintain top security alertness and can readily curtail them. However, the unique submission of the present study does not focus solely on the intricacies of new media but addresses the core issues that have led to the resurgence of secessionist agitation for Biafra¹⁹⁰.

Research was conducted to investigate the factors attributed to the recent upsurge in Biafran agitation. The researcher utilized a library-based research strategy to appraise existing literature on topics akin to the Biafran agenda dating back to 1966. The study revealed that shared systemic concerns of marginalization, economic imbalance, social alienation, ethnic suspicion, and superior-subordination contestation are driving forces behind the recent uptick in Biafran agitation. The study advocated for the dispatch of peacekeepers and builders, as well as initiatives of various peacemaking measures such mediation, negotiation, and settlement, as well as other diplomatic channels, in an attempt to surcease the Biafran war. Multi-track diplomacy to reach out to all ethnic groups, notably the Hausa Fulani Moslems and the Igbo Christians, is also suggested as part of the study's three-tiered peacemaking procedures, which also include intra-group engagement within the Biafra separatist movement. Unfortunately, the Biafran agitators are desiderating for

true governance, guileless institution free of marginalization of any type, this core facts were not addressed in this research. Primary data, based on interviews and accounts from persons with first-hand knowledge regarding the Biafra movement, distinguishes this study from the previous one, which relied on library resources¹⁹¹.

Another research was conducted to examine the longstanding agitation in the South-East Nigeria for the break-up of Nigeria. This desire according to this study is motivated by both individuals and groups, with the flag bearers being the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Biafran Zionist Movement (BZM) haven't been influential in earlier years in promoting the idea for the Biafran State, which ultimately ended up being weakened over time by internal rift and the might of the Nigerian state. However, a more audacious movement emerged as IPOB with increasing legitimacy regardless of the efforts of the Nigerian government to suppress its activities considered threat to national security. The study employs the framing theory to examine the logic of the IPOB campaigns and its supporters, highlighting the tripod relationship between IPOB, its narratives, and supporters, and the reasons such narratives are emotionally appealing and compelling enough to trigger collective action and sympathy for a common course. The study is an exploratory study which incorporated secondary sources of data including published sources such as peer-reviewed journals, official reports, documents, and media sources. Data was analyzed through thematic analyses, especially to explain the logic of IPOB framing.

It concluded on the premise that IPOB enjoyed mass following because of its strategic logic of creating quality framing and the ability to align its propaganda with its audience. This paper recommends the need for good optics of governance to counter the narratives of IPOB and the need for negotiated political solutions with the leadership of IPOB and relevant stakeholders. A

major limitation of the study is the inability to conduct an in-depth interview, data was obtained from the group's public comments in the media. The present study addresses this limitation by utilizing first-hand information from interviews conducted by individuals associated with the Biafran struggle and intellectuals to give unbiased opinions on the topic of discussion¹⁹²

Similar research concludes that the Biafran conflict was more of a generational movement that questioned the ability of the old leadership to speak for the Igbo of today, at the height of the region's political marginalisation since the restoration to democracy in 1999. According to this study, the Igbos would use the current crisis to finally get the national status and political representation that they believe has long evaded them. This violence has been what has kept IPOB's campaign for Nigerian independence going strong¹⁹³. There was another research that looked at the Igbos in Nigeria and their history, status, and self-determination movements, as well as the Federal government's reaction to those movements throughout time. Academics agreed that the state's inaction on the Igbo subject was a major danger to national cohesion. While agreeing that the right to self-determination is inherent, they insisted that any group seeking self-government must follow due process rather than using the issue as a platform for attention-seeking, personal adulation, or political subversion and urged the federal government to address these kinds of problems through dialogue and an inclusive policy rather than the use of military force. The research showed that although the concept of self-determination is not novel in international politics, the Nigerian constitution is in violation of international law. As with the previous research, this one drew on already published materials on Biafra and the current administration in Nigeria. In sharp contrast to the present investigation, which aimed to analyse what impact the Biafran struggle on Nigeria really had¹⁹⁴.

Studies have shown that Nigeria's persistent social, political, and economic inequality is due in large part to the country's politics of imbalance and the leadership crises at all levels of government and administration. Insecurity, rancour, fear, suspicion, and feelings of agitation, exclusion, and isolation within and among the various ethnic nationalities in the Nigerian state are widespread due to the politics of imbalance in the nation's social, economic, political, and cooperative governance in the management, sharing, and allocation of the nation's commonwealth¹⁹⁵.

In terms of Biafra, research indicates that the group's protests were caused by the government's lack of effective leadership, which added up to years of social neglect and economic and political isolation for the people of Nigeria and, in particular, those living in the South East of the country. The gargantuan underdevelopment, insistent youth unemployment, askew political structure and composition, and dawdling speed of economic growth in the Nigerian state, all of which have contributed to rising poverty, hunger, and insecurity in the region, are additional factors driving the call for secession for the South-Eastern part of the country through the establishment of the sovereign state of Biafra¹⁹⁶.

There have been violent battles between the separatist organisation IPOB, headed by British Nigerian political activist Nnamdi Kanu, and security services in various sections of the South-Eastern regions of the nation as a result of renewed agitations for the independence of Biafra under IPOB's platform. Notably, although some security personnel have been slain in battles between security agencies and IPOB members, IPOB has retaliated with assaults on police stations and security personnel in several South-East states, including Enugu, Ebonyi, Imo, Anambra, and Abia¹⁹⁷. Nnamdi Kanu founded the Eastern Security Network (ESN) on December 12, 2020, with the goal of protecting the people of Eastern Nigeria from violent herdsmen in the country and from

attacks by security personnel. However, the security situation in the region has worsened as a result of security forces invading the camps of ESN located in various parts of the region¹⁹⁸.

People's innate diversity of thought and ideology has been used to argue that conflict is inherent to the human condition. When people have differing opinions on a topic and everyone wants to be heard, agreement may be difficult to achieve. Previous research has portrayed conflict as an inevitable element of human life, often resulting from different points of view on topics and/or competition for scarce resources¹⁹⁹. Additional studies classify conflicts as falling into the categories of religious, human, ethnic, political, and civic strife. The notion that conflicts fosters inefficiency, underdevelopment, political instability, and anarchy is central to each of the aforementioned classifications. In addition, Nigeria is the country where the aforementioned conflict variations are seen or experienced to the greatest extent²⁰⁰. Political conflicts may be traced to insurrection or revolution, such as the Niger-delta militancy and the Boko Haram insurgency, while ethnic conflict can be traced to the Ife-Modakeke, Aguleri-Umuleri, and Benin-Igala crises. One of the main crises responsible for the expanding chasm of divisiveness in the country is the interplay between religion and ethnic politics at the national level²⁰¹.

Intermittent violent clashes between Christians and Muslims have resulted in the deaths of many and the displacement of many others in Nigeria; recent study on issues of conflict and secession argue that religious and ethnic nationalism in Nigeria is often triggered by the control over state power, unequal allocation of resources, citizenship issues, and economic decline²⁰². It might be claimed that ethnic nationalism lies at the heart of IPOB's and the Nigerian government's conflict. This is due to the poor administration that has come to define the Nigerian state and the persistent marginalisation of the area. There have been a number of studies done on the topic, and the consensus among them is that the main obstacles driving secessionist movement in the South and

East are a sense of being left out and a sense of unfairness²⁰³. Conflicts between Biafran agitators on the one hand and the Nigerian government on the other have escalated due to the Nigerian government's refusal to solve these concerns.

The concept of national integration has been defined in a variety of ways throughout the years. As a result, several academics have come up with diverse ways to define and explain the essential meaning of national integration. Although different academics may have different interpretations of the term, most agree that the goal of national integration is to unite formerly separate groups for the benefit of the country as a whole²⁰⁴. National integration, in the perspective of some academics, requires the formation of an agreement amongst parties that do not all have the same set of values. According to other research, national integration is the ongoing process of releasing the pressure caused by regional and cultural differences for the benefit of a united State or country. Disintegration and violent conflicts in Nigeria may be attributed to a number of issues, including the country's ethnic and religious instability, weak government, and a lack of employment prospects and deteriorating infrastructure²⁰⁵. The lack of resources, religious and ethnic diversity, marginalisation, and citizenship are all factors that contribute to these violent conflicts. Results also show that the Nigerian state towed a disjointed and disintegrative posture prior to independence, especially with the formation of political parties, which still today affects the cohesion of the country, fueling ethnic nationalist movements like the call for the declaration of the sovereign state of Biafra under the aegis of the various pro-Biafran movements whose activities are well-known and are in recent times being criminalized²⁰⁶.

Scenarios and Trajectories

The mixed mass that is drawn to Nigeria's separatist movements includes those who are in it for their own personal benefit, others who use it as a bargaining point, and those who may be in it for

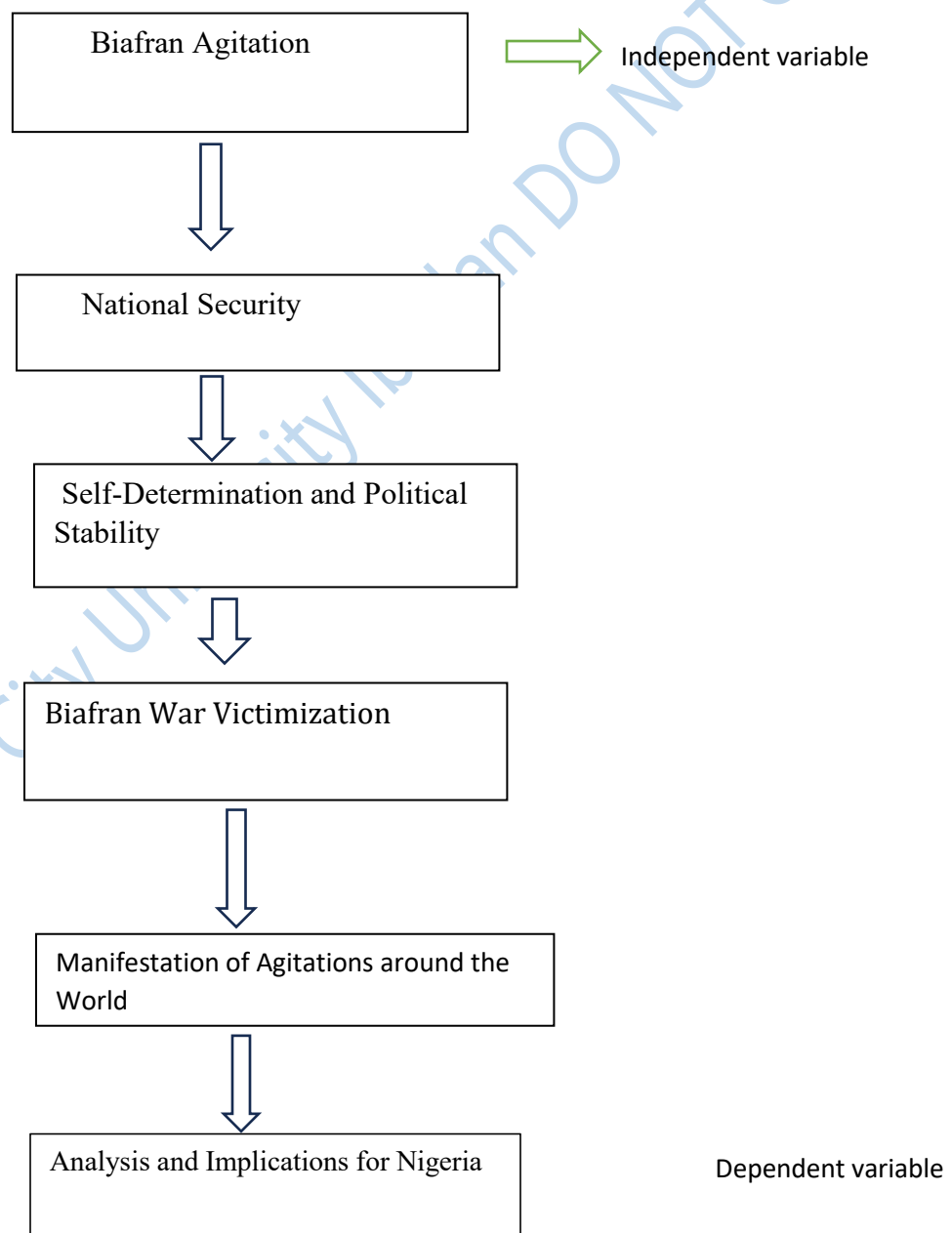
independence or complete regional autonomy. However, there are so many internal conflicts inside each separatist region that it is far from certain that the separatist forces will prevail if open discussions and referendums are permitted. For instance, IPOB unilaterally designed a map of Biafra including large portions of the Rivers, Delta, and Benue ethnic groupings. Many of these organizations no longer identify with IPOB's Biafra movement, even among the Igbos, it is uncertain whether States like Ebonyi or a number of Igbos would desire to join Biafra, unless they intended to use it as a negotiating tool. Furthermore, there are numerous inconsistencies among the Biafra separatist factions that have caused fractionalizations²⁰⁷.

Due in large part to the aforementioned, there is a perception that the various separatist agitations would likely die down on their own as the nation's democracy develops, the economy grows, and Nigerians move on to other issues as long as they are not excessively stoked. On the other side, if the Biafran separatist groups succeed in their demands for independence, it is likely to inspire a number of other separatist movements. Nigeria is likely to fragment into smaller units in such an event. As some newly created minorities launch agitations for greater autonomy or outright independence, internal conflicts within the newly independent states will erupt in this scenario.

Another situation worth considering is how the Igbos would likely be affected by the Arewa Youths' quit notice ordering them to depart Northern Nigeria by October 2017. Though the quit notice has now been suspended, it is likely to lessen many Nigerians' (especially the Igbos') enthusiasm for making significant investments outside of their own region. The quit notice and its associated hate speech may also make Igbos quietly less welcome in other regions of the nation, particularly in the North, as suppressed mistrust and animosity toward them develop throughout the nation, particularly in the North²⁰⁸.

Over the years, Nigerian administrations have typically responded to separatist agitations by calling the agitators "troublemakers" and dispatching law enforcement to employ force to put an end to their agitations. This frequently causes casualties and stokes ethnic tensions, which feeds or intensifies separatist agitations. Amnesty International, for instance, charged that the military-led Nigerian security forces had engaged in a "chilling campaign of extrajudicial murders and brutality that resulted in the deaths of at least 150 peaceful pro-Biafra protesters. Supporters of IPOB who believed that the Buhari government had used the report by Amnesty International as justification for killing Igbos by using it as evidence exploited it. Nigerian officials refuted Amnesty International's assertion, claiming that it was simply intended to harm the security forces of the nation²⁰⁹. Although the administration has recently seemed more open to using discussion to address some of the separatist issues facing the nation (such as acting president Yemi Osinbajo's statement that residents have the right to discuss their continued existence in Nigeria, much more needs to be done²¹⁰.

2.4 Conceptual Framework Model



2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

Subsisting explanations for the perennial struggle for Biafra are constrained in three crucial respects, although they are not necessarily incorrect. The Biafra separatism agenda has been pictured insufficiently by placing focus on the years after 1999 without laying grounds to the connection between the experiences of the colonial era, circumstances leading up the unavoidable disaster the generational dynamic and cultural indoctrination that may have encouraged the current struggle for Biafra. Second, the argumentative basis of ethnic incitement and rivalry, does not foreground the plight, opinions and free will of the general public. Additionally, it presents Biafra separatism in mostly static terms, neglecting considerable changes in secessionist movement, agitation's strength over time or the variables that can cause spikes and falls in the agitation's intensity.

Furthermore despite the fact that the economic dissatisfaction theory of Biafra separatist seems intriguing, actual evidence is in line with its assertions, previous studies have relied on this factor without asserting control measures and strategies introduced by the government to eradicate this issues while studies have indicated that the South East region in previous years had performed on par with or even better than many other regions of Nigeria in key development areas like education, health, job creation, infrastructure provision, and poverty reduction, the region's development

records still showed it was comparatively worse in standard compared to other regions in previous decades, with the availability of these facts, there is still a strong feeling of marginalization and economic backwardness in the area. Therefore, the problem may not be with the actual material circumstances of living in the area, but rather with how the populace perceives these circumstances and what they require to get out of the Nigerian State.

Finally, although it is undeniable that the variables raised by previous publications on Biafra have sometimes been present in separatist agitations, we still don't understand why or how they lead to organized agitations like MASSOB, IPOB, and the others. This is crucial since similar circumstances have affected certain other communities in Nigeria, but they haven't resulted in organized separatist agitations and creation of several platforms like the radio Biafra, Biafran television, Biafran secret service, and several social media platforms used to disseminate information about the Biafran agenda. The fact that these variables have not always resulted in separatist agitations like the case of Biafra is noteworthy.

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Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In this study, a qualitative research approach was adopted and employed a descriptive research design. This method is particularly well-suited for gathering and evaluating information about the "who, what, where, and when" aspects related to specific issues. Qualitative research is a method that focuses on exploring the richness and depth of data rather than quantifying it. It allows researchers to gain a nuanced understanding of complex issues and human experiences¹. In the case of this study, the use of a descriptive research design enabled us to systematically collect and analyze data regarding the Biafra agitation and its historical context. As a result, our research relied on interviews and historical narration, primarily from survivors of the civil war.

3.2 Population of the Study

This study centers its focus on the population residing in the South-Eastern region of Nigeria, which is not only the primary residence of a significant number of Biafra agitators but also the epicenter of various Biafra-related movements. The study area encompasses the major states with strong Biafra affiliations, specifically Anambra, Abia, and Imo states, with an estimated population

projection of 21,015,291 in 2022².

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

To gather data for this study, a purposive sampling technique was employed. This approach allowed us to deliberately select 10 older respondents who were chosen based on their age, wealth of experience, which was deemed essential for providing comprehensive historical accounts and professional expertise³. These respondents were considered instrumental in offering valuable insights into the Biafra agitation and its historical context.

3.4 Description of the Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this study was an interview guide. It was employed to gather primary data related to the resurgence of the Biafran Agitation in Nigeria. The primary goal of using this instrument was to sample the opinions of selected Nigerians to gain insights into the Biafra agitation. The interview guide consisted of a series of open-ended questions that were designed to elicit responses about various aspects of the agitation, including its causes, the methods and mediums used for agitation, and the impact of the agitation on Nigeria. The review of relevant literature sources, such as journals, books, online documentaries, newspapers, and magazines, provided a broader context for the study and a well-rounded understanding of the subject matter.

3.5 Validity of Research Instrument

A critical review was conducted using experts specializing in Nigerian politics and social issues, this step was instrumental in identifying any potential ambiguities or inadequacies in the interview guide's questions. Subsequently, necessary revisions were made to enhance the clarity and relevance of the questions.

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The interview process was conducted systematically, adhering to standardized procedures governing the approach to participants and the framing of questions. In feasible instances, the test-retest reliability of the interview guide was used by re-administering the instrument to a subset of participants after a period. The similarity of responses between the initial and subsequent administrations further affirmed the reliability of the instrument over time.

3.7 Data Collection

The data used in the study was collected through primary sources whereby participants are interviewed to ascertain their views regarding the subject under study. Data used in this study was also collected from secondary sources such as encyclopedias, books, newspapers, magazines, dictionaries, journals, government publications and unpublished sources, all utilized to supply background information for the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

In this study, the descriptive content analysis method was employed to gain deeper insights into the resurgence of the Biafra agitation. The interviews conducted was instrumental in extracting valuable information from the respondents, the responses obtained from the interviews were focused on several key aspects, including the reasons behind the revival of the Biafra agitation, the perspectives of respondents on the alleged victimization of the Igbo community, their opinions regarding the consequences of this recurrent agitation for Biafra, and the potential implications for Nigeria. These interview findings will be further interpreted and discussed in the subsequent

chapter of the study. The research also involved the use of secondary sources, which encompassed pre-existing data collected by various authors from a wide array of sources such as encyclopedias, books, newspapers, magazines, academic journals, and government publications. The data derived from these existing literature sources, including reviews of theses and books that address themes related to ethnic conflicts and interpersonal discord, were meticulously analyzed.

3.9 Ethical Approval

This research work has obtained institutional approval for ethical conduct of research.

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Endnotes

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Chapter Four

Results and Discussion of Findings

This section presents the data utilized in the study from interviews and other secondary sources in order to reach a conclusion. Also, the findings of the study are presented in the segment to identify the unique submissions made by the present study. This chapter explains research findings on the extent of human and resources devastated as a result of Biafra agitation in Nigeria, examines the roots causes of Biafra agitation in Nigeria and recommends constructive solutions and strategies to resolve Biafra agitation in the country.

4.1 Presentation of Data

All field data was presented descriptively, the study's findings and outcomes were examined in the context of related research and theoretical frameworks.

4.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. What are the driving factors for resurgence of the agitation for an independent Biafran state?
2. How does Biafran agitation affect Nigeria's political and economic stability?
3. What is the impact of Biafran agitation on the national security of Nigeria?
4. What is the implication of Biafran agitation on Nigeria's foreign image?

4.2.1 Results based on research question one: What are the driving factors for resurgence of the agitation for an independent Biafran state?

The underlining driving factors for the resurgence of agitations for Biafra are resounding as these issues have clamored secessionist movements over the years, it is rather sad that these issues have persisted for so long. Notwithstanding these factors have been ignored as the continually ignite present day struggle and agitations. Information obtained from the primary data revealed that the most significant and clamored factor for the resurgence of agitation for Biafra is the issue of maltreatment and marginalization of the Igbo people. Marginalization, also known as social exclusion, takes place when certain groups of people feel excluded from accessing areas of a particular society. Certain factors can be considered for the intentional or unintentional sidelining of a group from basic institutions and opportunities. However said marginalized people might not necessarily belong to one particular demographic, marginalization in context can come to play due to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, socioeconomic level, and age. The marginalized groups are frequently in less favorable positions when it comes to obtaining basic amenities like healthcare, decent education, employment, and representation necessary agents that would improve their well-being¹. The momentum for Biafran agitation is ignited by shared

feelings and transferrable grudge of the different generations of Igbos towards the Nigerian government.

As expressed by Mr Chinkata Obadaiah

“Biafra agitation has been a key source of expressing unhappiness in the region, Nnamdi Kanu who is presently projecting Biafra, is highly illuminating in terms of knowledge about the plight of the Igbo man in this nation and all concealed information from the war is being revealed to the public, it is a learning process to unfold the Biafran agenda as being for the collective good of the Igbo man and his generations to come believing for a better Nigeria rid of ethnic marginalization”².

This idea is subject to the consideration that some people might not really understand the circumstance that unfolded into the civil war and his opinion is rather the resurgence for Biafra will educate mostly the younger generations about the plight of the Igbo man, the struggle for recognition and acceptance, and the continuous projection as the sore thumb within the Nigerian umbrella,

As noted by another respondent Engr. Uchenna Nwaodu

“The Nigerian government should just let the Igbos depart, Igbo man to know his level and position in this country because the fact that the Igbo man is not respected, neither regarded as a factor of importance in Nigeria’s political system and it makes no sense for him to still be part of Nigeria. How can we be intentional sidelined in our own country, the Igbos are constantly denied of certain legitimate positions of authority in the country and you expect us to remain here let us depart and make our own rules. Nigeria have been cheating the Igbos and its time everyone goes their separate ways. Good administration free of marginalization, he believes, would satisfy his quest for self-government”³

According to another respondent Mr Ogunbanjo

“The politics of imbalance in the nation’s political, social, economic, political and co-operate governance in the management, sharing, and allocation of the nation’s common wealth, constitute to a very large rampant state of insecurity, rancor, fear, suspicion and feelings of agitation, exclusion and isolation within and among the various ethnic nationalities in Nigerian state”⁴

As observed by Mr. Okon Bassey who started out by identifying that

“the agitation of the Igbos in the late 1960s for self-governance did not end favorably as it led to a civil war and the tension has been in existence, identifying that the aroused agitation for self-governance can be attributed to several factors, including maltreatment and marginalization of the people of Igbo extraction in the Nigerian military and in the governance process, lack of trust of the Igbos by other ethnic groups particularly the Hausa Fulanis and the Yorubas, the effect of betrayal of the Igbos by the Yorubas, the domineering character traits exhibited by the people of the Igbo extraction, their tribalism tendencies making other tribes afraid of them with the idea that they are always looking out for avenues to outsmart others which is perceived as them being able to cheat others at the slightest opportunity, their growth in population, never die attitude, and wildfire spread is a pointer to their capacity to subject others to servitude”⁵. His view is necessarily that both parties can take accountability to the resurgence of agitations for Biafra.

According to one senior participant, Mrs Hannah Nwandiuko

“Our issue is self-inflicted; we love money more than any other tribe in Nigeria, and we are even willing to sell our blood brother to earn the necessary millions of dollars, regardless of the consequences tomorrow.”⁶

Supporting her view another discussant Mr Ndubuee Ubani added that

other tribes pursue group interest more than the Igbos and that is what caused the height of the marginalization. the issue of Igbo marginalisation in the nation is honestly self-inflicted. We isolate ourselves, and some of us would listen to Biafra radio to find someone to fool⁷.

As buttressed by Mr Mike Agbabiaka that the

“Biafra agitation is evidence that fraction of the South-East Nigeria is tired of the marginalization and have decided to separate from the country. The government should employ lasting solutions to address the demands of the agitators before it turns into violence”⁸.

The information from the interviews show that respondents coincide with the previous literature that major instigator for agitation is the marginalization of the Igbos in Nigeria, respondents acknowledged marginalization as a key factor, although few individuals blamed the marginalization on the Igbos themselves. The preceding discussions revealed that, although the younger generations blame the older generations for marginalization, the elderly blame the younger generations for their love of money, which they claim led them to seek personal rather than community interests in politics.

4.2.2 Results based on research question two: How does Biafran agitation affect Nigeria's political and economic stability?

Biafra agitation effectuates the further downgrade of Nigeria's political and economic stability, these feelings of marginalization and exclusion from the political, social and economic wealth lays its claim to present socio-political composition of the nation which has created tension, insecurity and consciousness among its constituents. Many scholars have contended that the skewed composition of Nigerian political structure constitutes avenues of conflict, political instability and unending agitations for balance, fairness, sense of belonging and social inclusion, and most recently restructuring in the polity⁹.

There are numerous major effects for the area and the country of repeated Biafran movement, grave ramifications await the political system and democratic consolidation of the nation as the continuance of the Biafra agitation could serve as a rallying point for opposition to the Nigerian project as separatist movements simmer in other regions of Nigeria. Biafra secession has the potential to have a snowball effect, providing the groundwork for the downfall of democracy by

spurring successive groups to call for further autonomy or split. Pro-Biafra separatists considering past attempts have linked their struggle with the hope that other groups can share their unhappiness regarding the composition of the Nigerian state. Identified as one of the impending issues is the idea that the quota system adopted and its implementation by Nigeria is skewed, faulty and unreliable as it believed to favor the North and does not reflect a true federalism. The system which supposed to encourage inclusivity and fairness among the geopolitical zones as in turn led to divide, in reference this marginalization as fueled the agitation of the Igbos for an independent state, as the quota system is faulty and not equitable. The issues are also compounded by the zoning policy argued by an interviewee Mr Mike Agbabiaka that,

“the Nigerian government has not been able to establish a reliable zoning policy that ensures even rotation of the leadership of the country between the 6 geopolitical zones thereby making it extremely hard for the Igbos to capture power⁸”.

Due to these connections, movements opposing the Nigerian idea and calls for secession have emerged, such organizations are well represented by the Lower Niger Congress (LNC), which spread across pre-1966 Eastern and Midwestern Regions of Nigeria, it is also a part of a larger group movement of the Nationalities Alliance for Self-Determination (NINAS) which recently protested in front of the United Nations building in New York with discussions surrounding how the 1999 constitution sustains insecurity in the country, calling the international community's attention to the need for a referendum to determine the future of Nigeria¹⁰. The LNC issued a five-point mandate in 2015 that included a referendum to determine if the residents of the two areas wanted to remain a part of Nigeria. Separatist groups would probably multiply as separatist agitation increased, the combined actions of these organizations could increase the possibility of

inter-ethnic disaffection, undermine Nigeria's budding democracy, and exacerbate the country's current crisis of confidence in both the government and ethnic groupings.

As narrated by elder Anko Moses

“The origin of imbalance and power struggle dates back to after the colonial rule, the fate of Nigeria was handed over to the Hausas and this has caused them to believe that ruling Nigeria in every sector is their birth right. Ruling a country is not for monopoly the government shouldn't be monopolized and since we are running a democratic government the rules and proceedings of democracy should be maintained”¹¹.

A lack of progress towards national integration has been a result of Nigeria's ethnic and religious diversity throughout the years. However, factors that threaten the country's cohesion manifest in the economic marginalization of one ethnic group over another. Over the years, two of Nigeria's three major ethnic groups the Yoruba and the Igbos have protested the economic marginalisation of their region under the aegis of various pan-cultural cum sociopolitical groups, including the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Biafran Zionist Movement (BZM), the O'odua Peoples' Congress (OPC), and most recently, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)¹². It is notable, particularly in light of recent events in the nation, that these organisations now regard secession as the answer to the issue of marginalisation afflicting the regions, as reported by the Senate Minority Leader, Enyinnaya Abaribe, the existence of over 30 separatist groups in Nigeria's South-east, besides the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), a route that has seen the proscription and proclamation as a terrorist organization by the Nigerian government¹³.

Furthermore, as examined by one of the respondents Mr Okon Bassey

“there's is no country that can prosper and achieve meaningful growth nor development politically and economically under insecurity, as a result businesses are shutdown or slowed down,

there's reduction in the location of sensitive state facilities in turbulent areas for fear of safety and accessibility , poor economic rewards as investors both local and Internationally are seriously discouraged from investing there, thus in turn leads to braindead and geographical migration of labor particularly the professionals who will flee from the country. The negativity indices will impact the extraction and exploration of mineral recourses and well reduction in foreign earnings as crude extraction is limited to the areas that are safe to work and even much of the already extracted crude will be list to thief's and militants. This has the capacity to collapse the economy and increase mortality rate''⁵.

The symptomatic economic decline in Nigeria's regions during the last two decades, explains poverty increase in all areas, the extent to which the number of poor in the South East has spiraled is reflected in the region's low number of publicly traded enterprises, due to the effects of the stay at home order launched in the region ^{14,15}. The South East's economic fortunes are dwindled by the lack of formal firms, relying only its informal economy, and employment rate of graduates is fewer than other areas, the South East's informal economy is linked to the Biafra conflict, many formal businesses were forced to leave the zone as a result of the war, and when many of these enterprises were indigenized and transferred to persons from other regions of Nigeria, few corporations thought it was worthwhile to return to the South East¹⁶. According to earlier research, the late 1970s and 1980s economic crisis suffocated the surviving formal enterprises and hindered Igbo entrepreneurs' efforts to continue formal businesses in the region. With rising tensions between Biafra separatists and Nigerian authorities, the investment environment in the South East may become more hostile, prohibiting prospective investors from putting their resources there¹⁷.

It is critical to assess the economic and commercial repercussions of the separatist movement in Nigeria's south-east, the South-East is largely economically constituted with many micro, small, medium-scale enterprises, indigenous manufacturing, fabrication, and agro-allied industries. According to the NBS, South-East harbours about 43% of citizens who are classified as very poor with a below per capita annual expenditure of about N137, 430 as the baseline for being described

as poor¹⁸. It is also pertinent to note that out of the ten states with the least poverty level according to NBS, only Anambra state out of other South-East states made it at 8th position. About 80% of Ebonyi state citizens are described as very poor being the worst in the South-East, followed by Enugu state with about 60% poverty level. Abia and Imo states are with about 31% and 29% respectively, while Anambra is at about 15% poverty level. With about N4trillion budgeted and spent in four years from 2015-2019, across these five South- Eastern states, it leaves one with imaginations and shock about the kind of political economy of retrogression instituted, that has successfully taken the region about twenty years backwards within the short space of five years¹⁸.

Consequentially, to economic decline a statement released days after the arrest of Kanu in 2021 in Kenya and extradition to Nigeria by the Media and Publicity Secretary of the IPOB, Emma Powerful, had declared total shutdown every Monday in the region as well as any other day Kanu would appear in court until he is unconditionally released¹⁵. However, leaders of the region, expressed their discomfort lamenting that the order would occlude the economy and the wellbeing of the people, and appealed for its review. On behest those who put out the directive quickly reviewed it, requesting the people to continue with normalcy of business on Mondays but insistently must observe a sit-at-home any day Kanu would appear in court as a mark of solidarity. Thus, economic and social activities have remained low every Monday in the Southeast region and any other day splinter agitation groups declare as sit-at-home in the region, as it is, there are weeks that schools, markets, banks and offices open for just twice or three times in the zone against what is obtainable in other parts of the country¹⁵. With a situation like this, the economy of this region is dwindling and the survival of the people is hanging on a thread as they appear to have accepted the situation as part of their sacrifice for the restoration of Biafra republic. Insecurity and sit-at-home protests in the South-East have led to massive economic losses

estimated at almost N4 trillion in two years, Businesses in the South-East generate between N5.46 billion to N31.39 billion daily, losing approximately five days in a month from October 2020 (24 months) means that about 120 days have been lost, which takes the number of lost earnings on only sit-at-home days to between N655.38 billion and N3.77 trillion¹⁹. These losses can be traced to specific factors including loss of between four and five working days per week, job losses due to cutbacks by business owners in response to the reduced working hours and other lost opportunities, loss of clients and customers who find alternatives because of the unstable business environment in the South-East; and increased cost of service delivery because of extra logistical costs. These economic and political calamities stand as a treat to the already dwindling progress of Nigeria's future.

4.2.3 Results based on research question three: What is the impact of Biafran agitation on the national security of Nigeria?

National security challenges have been a topic of debate as security of the nation is in jeopardy, the ongoing movement for Biafra as its impact on regional and national security. The rising ability of extreme separatists to gather prospective demonstrators might fuel armed bloodshed and exacerbate the region's already high levels of insecurity. Since the late 1990s, security issues have been exacerbated by an increase in abduction and other types of armed banditry, as well as a more chronic low-level conflict between vigilante and criminal networks. In the early 2000s, vigilante violence became common in the area, with the Bakassi Boys, the most notable militant vigilante organisation, operating in major commercial hubs²⁰.

The burgeoning separatist agitation in the South East has the potential to significantly exacerbate the security situation in the area by giving a platform for prospective criminals to join the protestors and quickly transition from being Biafra protesters to armed robbers. Anecdotal information suggests that some pro-Biafra protestors are former members of the Bakassi Boys and other armed organisations who are bused from one region to the next to conduct the rallies. Without a permanent source of income, these demonstrators might pose severe dangers to regional security²¹.

A number of settlements in the southeast have been the victim of continuous assaults by herders. Herders from the north invaded Nimbo, a border town in Enugu state, killing 200 people across seven communities in 2016. These invaders are believed to be Fulani herdsmen. It has subsequently been reported that suspected Fulani herdsmen have carried out coordinated assaults in many states in the south and southeast, including Ebonyi, Abia, Imo, and Anambra²².

Furthermore, Nnamdi Kanu founded the Eastern Security Network (ESN) on December 12, 2020, as a direct result of the aforementioned, justifying this as a reaction to the inability of the Nigerian government and security forces to ensure the protection of citizens and property in the area²³. In addition, one may argue that the widespread nature of banditry and abduction casts doubt on the government's commitment to upholding citizens' rights and freedoms in Nigeria. Significantly, on May 7, 2021, 10 persons, including police officers and several students, were kidnapped by unknown gunmen in the southeast²⁴. These difficulties have facilitated ongoing violent conflicts between ESN members and security agents in the area, which have resulted in the breaking into jails and the burning of police stations throughout the region, particularly in the states of Imo, Anambra, and Abia²⁵.

One of the participants Mr Chinkata Obadaiah addressed the impending security challenges that may arise from the agitation for the region and Nigeria.

The agitation was critical to educate the Igbo man about his status and place in this nation but the idea and methods used by the Biafra movement is about to spark another civil war in the nation. The manner the agitation is packaged and conveying their messages is intensely irritating and is threatening peace of the nation, I would only advise the younger generation to interrogate the elders about the past war before agreeing to fight in another''²⁶.

This lays emphasis on the necessity of historical conversance, it is of importance that the younger generations acquire some substantial knowledge about the past in order to make informed decisions about the future.

As narrated by elder Ankor Moses a survivor of the Biafran war explained that,

In war, the opponent is usually the target, life as I remember was extremely hard and difficult, the bitterness of life due to hardship, the experience of war should never be a desirable concept because it is a nasty, non-conducive and extreme that no one should wish for, war is a force it is not done out of happiness and a smile on the face. The consequence of war damages both the citizens and the government and the country as a whole ranging from misplaced and displaced crowds, to many people losing their lives, properties, many families were separated as people ran to other regions for safety with no idea of food, safety or direction but you clearly didn't have a choice''¹¹.

The past two years have been dreadful, given the region's rise of violence and security uncertainties, said a recent policy brief by Civil Society Legislative Advocacy. About 254 people were killed in 63 incidents recorded in the first five months of 2021, Ebonyi State topped the incident table with 101 fatalities, followed by Imo with 60 casualties, Anambra recorded 37 losses while Abia had 33 deaths, Enugu completed the table with the least casualty figure of 22 deaths¹⁹. The Nigerian police had alleged to have arrested eight separatists suspected of killing six people last month in the country's troubled southeast, four policemen were killed on April 21 2023, in the Ngor-Okpala district of Imo state, as well as two civilians who were hit by stray rounds. The police statement identified four men aged 44 to 43 were arrested, a move that opened the way to the arrest

of four other IPOB members, who were seized at their hideout after a shootout²⁷. The suspects who all confessed to be members of IPOB under the Eastern Security Network consortium to terrorizing the good people of Imo state and had a hand in the recent killing of four police officers and two civilians, said on the press release from the state police. Several wounded identified separatists have been reported by the police to have escaped, and arms and ammunition were found on the premises²⁷. The armed forces have been battling a 14-year long jihadist insurgency in the northeast and heavily armed bandit militias in northwest and central states. Attacks blamed on IPOB have seen dozens of police officers killed in the last two years in southeastern Nigeria just one of several security crises. Local government offices and electoral agency buildings have also been targeted. However, IPOB as disaffirmed any responsibility to these attacks²⁷.

As one of the respondents Mrs. Janet Nwagwu clearly stated that

"The longing for Biafra is at the core of many Igbo men, but never via war or any kind of violence, the experience of war was a nightmare which should not be repeated. Everything necessary should be done to ensure the war does not happen again, there is the faith that one day God would release the Igbos from their marginalization"²⁸.

According to this participant, there is no need for violence in attaining their Biafran ambition. This anxiety was cultivated by the people's lack of willpower and drive to seize what they desired, even though it was obvious that the composition of the nation was skewed and that they were not well located in the nation. This is consistent with previous findings in other research, which showed that by May 1967, it was clear that most easterners became frontiers for independence over any other sort of connection with the rest of Nigerians, but that this would be difficult to accomplish²⁹.

4.2.4 Results based on research question 4: What are the Implications of Biafran agitation on Nigeria's foreign image?

The image of any given country, locally or internationally, can be measured by the following varying factors: National Development Index, extent of state and human security, military strength, demographic factors, territorial size, political stability, quality of leadership and followership, and national behavior. However, Nigeria had not been among the first ten most populous countries in the world in 1950, occupied the seventh position in 2020. The United Nations World Population Prospect, had projected Nigeria to replace the United States as the third most populous country in the year 2100, pushing the United States to the fourth position. With this protrusion, Nigeria's international image is expected to be bright and positive, especially bearing in mind the likelihood of Nigeria becoming a bigger market economy when the population rises³⁰.

The conundrum of Nigeria's foreign image can be examined from two perspectives in particular, the severe famine caused by Nigeria's government (federal military government, FMG) blockade of the self-declared secessionist Republic of Biafra in the country's east caused by the Nigeria-Biafra conflict, which fought between 1967 and 1970, grabbed headlines across the world. Journalists and academics in the public eye were compelled to enlist public support in the face of the catastrophe, which also sparked a significant international relief effort to feed hungry civilians, which put leaders and stateswomen from the big nations to the UN to the test³¹. The global effect of the Biafran war distinguished it as a turning point in the postcolonial world order due to its estimated one to three million deaths, implications for secessionist movements and political stability in Africa, it played the role as a testing ground for modern humanitarianism^{32,31}. Scholars actively published on the numerous topics brought up by the struggle during the 1970s, frequently drawing comparisons between it and the brutal but successful secession of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) from Pakistan in 1971³³.

The Nigerian civil war made global impact in relevance to the study of genocide, first indication was the utilization of famine as a tactic to ensure surrendering, some died as a result of the fighting but most from hunger and disease after the Nigerian government imposed a land and sea blockade that resulted in famine, as food was cut off from the 13 million inhabitants of Biafra, hunger first took hold in the region in September of 1967, and for three years Biafrans were deliberately starved to death, at the height of the war, an estimated 10,000 people (including 6,000 children) died from starvation every day^{34,35}. Contentions surrounding Biafra ideated accusations of genocide, which goaded arguments over the global definition of the concept, although this was the case subsequently the war was omitted by two leading authorities, Leo Kuper and Robert Melson, who were studying Africa at the time, effectively eliminated the battle from the list of twentieth-century genocides, the lack of content on the topic was not considered an accident³⁶.

As reported by lord Ritchie-Calder, to the United Kingdom parliament in 1968 on what measures would be taken through the international agencies to avoid famine and other disastrous consequences likely to follow the Biafran War, enlisted were international assistance received from the airlift of the International Committee of the Red Cross flying to Biafra from Fernando Po averaging 43½ tons a night of supplements for those suffering from protein deficiency, the airlift operated by the Church Relief Agencies out of Sao Tome averaged about 57 tons each night, Berlin airlift transported 8,000 tons of supplies a day, strives by UNICEF, the United Nations international Children's Fund, had helped to provide inoculations against measles epidemic in southern Nigeria, concluding that these efforts were good but not enough³⁷. Lord Ritchie-Calder addressed the parliament saying,

“It is advancing remorselessly and ruthlessly towards a holocaust like the Punic women throwing their babies into the fires of burning Carthage, a holocaust of proportions such as the world has never witnessed. And I use the word “witnessed” advisedly: because while perhaps even worse famines have happened in the past, they were not seen by a watching world, by Governments and peoples who, if they do not act, are accessories before the fact. Therefore, I ask: what are the Government doing through the international agencies to avert the disastrous consequences of an already disastrous war?”³⁷.

The cynosure of contention emphasizes the period of 1970s as the breakthrough decade for human rights and humanitarianism, with global and widespread concern over visual aspect of the conflicts. Images of malnourished children in the breakaway Republic of Biafra which dominated headlines for months, garnered immense attention by contemporaries all around the world in the summer of 1968. Scholars believe the Biafran crisis ushered in a new era of human calamity covered by modern media, the conflict was the first postcolonial one to spark a global upsurge in humanitarian concern³⁸. Amongst nations that took sides in the war, only France, Gabon, Tanzania and Ivory Coast openly backed Biafra, which at that time covered present day south east and parts of south south Nigerian states. Controversially the French assistance to Biafra as it fought to break away from Nigeria between 1967 and 1970 was not in defense of Biafra’s secession movement although it had a humanitarian appeal³⁹. It will be rather difficult for Biafra to gather more support the second time around especially if the oil producing powerhouses decide not to be part of Biafra.

Mauricheau-Beaupre, French secretary general for African and Malagasy Affairs iterated

“France supported Biafra because of the oil and Emergency Response Action Plan, but not the Ibo revolution, French support was merely given to a handful of Biafra bourgeoisie in return for oil”³⁹.

Furthermore, as the increasing hope for Biafra became less attainable, the French minister had ruled out the possibility of a guerilla war in the region, addressing the lack thereof popular support in the region. Making it more visible that said support was based on the European country's desire to have access to the region's oil, this recently declassified war time memos was compiled by the U.S. Central Investigation Agency, CIA³⁹. Subsequently to the recent upsurge in the agitation for Biafra by October 2020, multiple UN Special Rapporteurs argued that the proscription of IPOB was an infringement on Biafra supporters' right to association and political expression. Even so, pro-Biafra sentiment is larger than and should be seen as distinct from IPOB and its leader Nnamdi Kanu⁴⁰. The world organization declared genocide an international crime in 1946 in response to the Nazi slaughter of the Jews, even though it took the organization years to prosecute perpetrators, the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust in light of Biafra were to establish international conventions to stop similar crimes in the present and the future.

The second perspective aligns with recent events in particular Nigeria, under the President Muhammadu Buhari administration, characterized by many as democracy becoming dictatorship within the existing presidential system. Unfortunately, this is due to the manner of supposed abduction of agitators for self-determination, the responses and extrajudicial killings toward several protest over the years putting a dent on Nigeria's international image. Admittedly, the President Muhammadu Buhari administration, has not taken lightly and entertained any idea of disassembling of Nigeria on the grounds of non-constitutionality. Relying on the celebration of President Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria is indivisible and indissoluble, this is justified by the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, as amended. The abduction of Nnamdi Kanu, with a British passport, in Kenya, had raised a diplomatic row between Nigeria and the United Kingdom, as well as between Kenya and the United Kingdom. This propped further questions to event that

the Government of Nigeria had arrested and abducted a non-Nigerian on the territory of another sovereign State without any international warrant of arrest, implying if the international responsibility of Nigeria was not necessarily questioned while addressing the abduction³⁰.

As highlighted it is evident that the thought process and counter agenda of the government in handling the Biafran agenda is particularly ambiguous, in the sense that there is nothing like indivisibility or indissolubility of any nation or nation-state in global politics. As decisions made by a set of people for the general public can indeed stand the test of time until another set of people pinpoint the inadequacies of the status quo, for purposes of restructuring, it is rather unsettling and undemocratic to anchor an agenda that a decision cannot be altered or should only be altered on the basis of a constitutional provision that is contested, Democracy in antecedency is an instrument of dialogue, not a catalyst for dictatorship³⁰.

IPOB had of recent went further into slamming the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States for immense silence following the detention of its leader, Nnamdi Kanu⁴¹. Subsequently IPOB expressed the unfortunate health condition of its leader deteriorating in government custody while the international community is watching in silence despite the UN and Nigerian court ordering his release. This has led them to believe that it an alleged conspiracy the group made their stance in a statement signed by the group's media and publicity secretary, Emma Powerful⁴¹.

“We the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) led by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu expressed our displeasure on the silence of United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU) and ECOWAS as Nigeria grossly disobeys local and international laws regarding the unconditional release of our leader. We are saddened as the International Community watches in silence as the health of the leader deteriorates in the solitary confinement dungeon of the Nigeria government where he has been held illegally and unlawfully against all UN and Nigeria Court Orders for almost 2 years. We believe that the Nigerian government wants our leader to die in detention. It is also possible that DSS has given him a slow-acting poison, which is why his health keeps deteriorating to eventually kill him. In what we consider a conspiracy to kill our leader, the Nigeria Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court refused to entertain an appeal from Mazi Nnamdi KanuU's lawyers over

his deteriorating health. Instead, the Apex Court gave a wicked long adjournment of 4 months to an innocent man that Appeal Court Justices have discharged and acquitted. In all these human rights and court abuses, there seems to be a conspiratory silence among international organizations and her affiliate Human Right Organizations. As the health of our leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu continues to deteriorate and the Nigerian government refuses to obey lawful orders and the world maintains this criminal silence, IPOB will do all within our power to ensure that our leader does not die in detention.”’⁴¹.

Furthermore, a coalition of 52 northern groups as early back in 2020, had made calls on the global community to intervene in persuading the Nigerian government and United Nations to facilitate the final actualization of the Biafran dream by the Igbo⁴². The spokesperson of CNG, Abdul-Azeez Suleiman, raised the views in a communiqué after an emergency meeting in Abuja, essentially this came as a reaction to what they described as empty and of no effect “threats and promises” by President Muhammadu Buhari, the CNG said “between December 2020 and April 2021, over 970 students were abducted from their schools in the northern part of Nigeria with a substantial number still in captivity and some violently executed”⁴². According to him, Northern Nigeria has never experienced the present level of exposure to criminals and bandits under the régime of Buhari.

“The CNG hereby resolves to call on our friends and the international community, the UK especially, to understand that our bilateral friendship is guided by the principles of sovereignty, promotion of peace and the standards that guide legitimate interference. Hence, their intervention, exclamations and actions should not be drawn to discountenance the effort of the Nigerian state to protect citizens from violence and terror. We finally wish to renew our request for the global community’s intervention in persuading Nigerian authorities and the United Nations to facilitate the final actualization of the Biafran dream by the Igbo. The world should keep in mind that by far, a destabilized Nigeria will certainly threaten the peace and security of the entire sub-Saharan Africa. In the South, gangs of armed IPOB militia, violent secessionists and an assortment of militant groups appear to sense a huge vacuum in the capacity and political will by the Federal Government to challenge them, which they exploit with disastrous consequences on the nation’s security assets and specifically on northern communities and individuals living as minorities in the South while the presidency wallows in deflecting the issue. It is now taking a more ominous and repulsive form and context with an open declaration of violence and anarchy against other parts of Nigeria and the Nigerian State”’⁴².

With all the calls for intervention by the international community by both IPOB , CNG, and other bereaved groups draws attention to the international image of the country and the nations inability to mediate its internal issues.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The respondents being interviewed had a good understanding of Biafra agitation and the role that marginalization has played in the development of the Biafran agenda. Basic government assistance for people living in South Eastern Nigeria is discussed, the marginalization and suffering of the Igbo people before, during, and after the conflict with Nigeria are documented by the population's exposure to the Biafra movement and reaction. Their reaction demonstrated that the Biafra agenda has successfully cultivated the desire for agitation, if not to create a separate state, then at least to guarantee a better position in contrast to what is attained in the nation at the present time. The responses show that the majority of the persons surveyed believe the Igbos in Nigeria are being sidelined as a consequence of their exposure to the Biafra movement and first-hand experiences in the country. Although the people have been made aware of the Biafran movement on ethnic marginalization against the Igbo people of the South-East, they have not been persuaded to adopt violence as a method of accomplishing the Biafran ideal.

The unity of the Nigeria as a nation has been threatened for over thirty years, which ethnic and religious crisis are the main causes of disunity in the country. It is not unusual for some groups in nation-states with a diversity of cultures and ethnicities to harbor independence aspirations. This may be the reason Scottish separatist still exists in the United Kingdom today, despite Scotland having been a part of it for nearly 300 years, in Canada, where Quebec separatist has existed since

the 1890s, the same is true, even though the American Civil War was won and lost 150 years ago, some Americans, especially those from the South, continue to fly the confederate flag^{43,44,45}.

Furthermore, findings suggest the indication of a transfer of moral weight from a two-group perspective from the people on the issue, it is necessary to analyze the clear difference of opinion between the elderly and the new generation of Igbos. The younger generation blame the old for their current predicament in the nation, whilst the seniors blame the Igbos' continued marginalization on the younger generation's desire of money, which they (the elders) claim is responsible for any other tribe's lack of faith in the Igbos, as this was supported by the respondents, saying that other tribes pursue collective interests more than the Igbos, which is what has led to the Igbos' marginalization. The truth is that individuals believe in the terminology of exclusion, but their perspectives on the continuance of that marginalization varies⁴⁶. The aforementioned results supported the social exchange theory's postulation that human behaviors on topics conveyed in the media are the consequence of planned behavioral change weighed against the comparative benefit of the action to be performed as instructed by the media message⁴⁷.

However, discussants accepted their exposure to the agitation, it's mannerism and understood the language used by the agitators to communicate with the people about Biafra, iterating that "Radio Biafra is a station for the Igbos created for the liberation of the people of this area, "we listen to them and what they are saying is the truth, and Nigerians detest the truth," said one of the respondent which alluded that respondent visited harked materials on the Biafra movement on a regular basis. This study supports the ideas of proponents of the instrumentalism hypothesis, which claims that when individuals are exposed to a specific media channel, they are more inclined to trust and accept the information delivered via the channel as the truth over time. Furthermore, the

widespread exposure to radio Biafra demonstrates radio's universality as a means of information distribution^{2,47}.

The great amount of contact noticed among the people demonstrated the station's strong dedication to taking what they want. This conclusion is consistent with prior research who believe that self-determination is something you take, not something a government grants you. Unfortunately, the message exposes the people to many things as their brains and thoughts get more contemplative on what they want to do in response to the message received from the station, already, the station and its host have presented the message of the necessity for independence from Nigeria to the people, but the people are more concerned with what they stand to gain or lose by carrying out the radio Biafra script. People in general desired that Biafra might be attained, but not in the manner that the Biafra movement is pressing for.

The discussants addressed one component of the agitation which entertained extreme use of subversive language when addressing government officials, and personages from other tribes, in order to avert a future breakout of conflict, the use of profane language in the Biafra movement was advised against. This idea is impendent on the fact that the use of subversive language will only make the rift in reality between the Igbos and other Nigerians worse and make it even harder to gain support. Nigeria appears to lack the ability to resolve disputes between various factions in the nation definitively. This has the effect of making many groups appear to have institutionalized hurtful memories or a sense of injustice, which they express informally as "marginalization." The idea that only organizations with the power to hold the state to ransom will have their concerns addressed has grown as a result of the failure to definitively resolve group grievances⁴⁸. The isolation and marginalization of the Igbo ethnic nationalities in the political, social and economic

arrangement in the nation in today Nigeria has further raise doubts and questions marks as regard their place in Nigeria has a group of people, hence these unabated agitation for self-rule and nation from the Nigerian state. Hence, feelings of marginalization and deprivation nursed by people of the South East region occasioned by the high spate of poverty in the region has fueled the called secession for another country, other than Nigeria⁴⁹.

The heterogeneity of the Nigerian state can be used as a tool to promote national integration, but the current style of governance poses a serious threat to the peace and stability of the country, giving pro-Biafra secessionists more ammunition in their fight for independence. At the national level, periodic agitation for Biafra has the potential to exacerbate existing security difficulties, Nigeria is one of the nations in the world with the highest levels of violence and insecurity, according to many global indexes. Nigeria's security concerns emerge in a variety of ways, but the most alarming type of insecurity is intercommunal, political, and sectarian violence, as previously stated, the Igbo population, mostly in Northern Nigeria, is frequently the target of these recurring assaults, creating a strong feeling of disaffection among the Igbo that might be exploited by Biafra separatists⁵⁰.

As inter-communal violence involving the Igbo continues, Biafra separatists may use such assaults to rally support, strengthen their activities, and undertake revenge attacks. Given that Nigeria's security services have shown incapable of averting inter-communal violence, pushing state governments to consider alternative security measures, the participation of Biafra separatists is not out of the question. The impending consequences of the agitation on the Nigerian demographic has resulted in tension and fear of being mobbed, especially for non-Igbos the option to travel to or live in the south east region is questionable as safety is not guaranteed. By extension

the agitation has led to massive loss of lives and properties, lack of peaceful coexistence and as overstretched the security apparatus of the Nigerian state. While the actions of pro-Biafra movements grow and spread, the security authorities' ability to manage the movement in a peaceful and professional way may deteriorate. There is significant evidence that Nigerian authorities used disproportionate force to repress separatist movements, including deaths, detention, and harassment. MASSOB said in May 2008 that the government had murdered 2,020 of its members since 1999⁵¹. Amnesty International recently released a report detailing how Nigerian security forces killed at least 40 unarmed people and injured more than 50 others in an operation conducted between May 29 and 30, 2016, ostensibly to prevent an IPOB march ahead of Biafra commemoration events in Onitsha, Anambra State⁵². Events like the Onitsha killings raise serious concerns about Nigeria's ability to uphold its international human rights obligations, which include, among other things, the protection of the right to peaceful assembly and association, the right to free expression, and the requirement that law enforcement officials use nonviolent means whenever possible. The handling of the pro-Biafra movement, as well as other examples of human rights crimes committed by Nigerian security forces, has badly harmed Nigeria's human rights reputation⁵³.

The increase of the operations of radical-separatist organisations such as MASSOB and IPOB has a cultural component that includes a further breakdown of traditional patterns of intergenerational contact. Since the 1970s, elite-led groups founded by the elderly generation have championed the Igbo cause, advocating for more mainstream inclusivism. With the growth of radical-separatist organisations since 1999, traditional kinds of cultural and intergenerational ties are being reconfigured⁵⁴. Furthermore, as observed by from submissions from the interviews and existing literature it is evident that the new generations of Igbos do not rely on mainstream groups, such as

Ohaneze-Ndi-Igbo and Aka Ikenga, as the dominating voice that speaks for the whole group. Radical youth groups like as MASSOB and Ipob have reinvented and questioned some traditional norms of power and authority that are vested in elite-led Igbo organizations such as the Ohanaeze-Ndi-Igbo

This phenomenon contributes to the wider Nigerian environment, in which youth-led organizations, revolts, and agitations are presently playing an important part in Nigeria's political process, with far-reaching ramifications for the exercise of power and authority, social cohesion, and peace building. One immediate result of this trend might be increased fragmentation of Igbo society, making consensus building on a variety of problems exceedingly difficult, the breakdown in patterns of conduct and systems of power in the family demonstrates the fragmentation of Igbo society, many family's perspectives on the best method to address the Igbo problem are increasingly divided along generational lines. While many in the elder generation would want to treat the Igbo problem in a non-confrontational manner, many young people are tempted to take a more drastic approach, this intergenerational conflict pattern is likely to worsen in the near future, causing societal cohesiveness to break down.

Amy Chua, a Yale Law Professor, examined the ethnic conflict brought on by disproportionate economic or political influence held by market dominant minorities, identifying market dominant minority as ethnic groups who frequently control a disproportionate percentage of the local economy, typically in a way that turns the majority's resentment and jealousy against them⁵⁵. According to Chua, in the context of liberal democracy, tension and tensions are inevitable in the interaction between the economic dominant minority and the poor majority. The Igbos under this microscope can be identified as a market dominant minority⁵⁵. The Igbos would be the second-

largest ethnic group in almost every region of Nigeria, after the natives. Because of Chua's concept of market-dominant minorities and the notion that many Igbo traders lack natural humility and diplomatic skills, the general public has a negative opinion of this minority. This feeling of not being wanted in Nigeria is what motivates many supporters of the Biafra agitators.

The question of power distribution among the many regional and ethnic elite factions, as well as access to federal infrastructure and privileges, lies at the heart of the numerous separatist movements, as observed from information's gotten, it is a pertinent factor as to why some Igbos have lost hope in Nigeria and would rather exclude itself from the country. The issue of power sharing and the concentration of politics at the top is rather draining as all regions are granted the ability to look after their territory however, it is still subject to decisions from the top with the complains of collapsing economies lack of infrastructure and basic human requirements are still in high numbers as the grassroots political sector is seemingly a joke. Understandingly the main cause of agitations over power is the idea that an Igbo man has not been in charge or considered for the presidency or any substantial leading role in the political ladder, and all chances to even contest for these positions is rather futile.

Some claim that the Igbos, who make up a sizable portion of the population, are angry that despite being a significant ethnic group in the nation, they have never produced a president of Nigeria who is of Igbo descent. Giving the Igbos the presidency of the nation will, in their opinion, be the cure for Biafra agitation⁵⁶. It will be oversimplified to believe that having a president of Igbo descent will be enough to put an end to the agitations for Biafra on its own, even though there will be a hurrah impact among the Igbos, the agitation for Biafra is unlikely to be put down by an Igbo president acting alone.

As obtained from the president-general of the Ohanaeze who implied that the

‘Ndigbo regard an Igbo presidency as a national priority, implying that it will be more reasonable and logical for Ndigbo to have its first turn in occupying the office of the presidency before any other zone in the country goes for a second turn’⁵⁷.

Notwithstanding the outcome the group repeatedly maintained that the Igbo’s will remain in Nigeria but do show considerable sympathy and support for Ipob and their agitation for Biafra⁵⁷. However, this idea was not nursed by IPOB, who repeatedly insist for a Biafra republic not Igbo presidency as obtained that a faction of IPOB, led by a Nigerian-american citizen Simon Ekpa had threatened to disrupt elections in the south-east, maintaining that the Igbo presidency cannot assuage the quest for Biafra. This was iterated also by Emma Powerful, spokesperson of Mr Kanu’s IPOB faction after the group was accused of backing Mr Obis presidential bid.

“IPOB is not interested in Igbo president or a Nigeria president from Biafra extraction. The Igbo people rallying behind Peter Obi are not IPOB members because IPOB doesn’t want the contraption called Nigeria to continue to exist and we must break away from Nigeria enterprise irrespective of whether Peter Obi or anyone from the Biafran geographic space is contesting in the Nigerian farce of an election’⁵⁷.

Furthermore, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) had re-echoed the imploring need of agitating for sovereign State of Biafra following the outcome of the presidential election and the controversies surrounding the exercise. As enunciated by IPOB’s spokesperson, describing the election as

“a total disappointment and injustice meted to the Igbo, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu and IPOB have always maintained that Nigeria is irredeemable but some people choose to live in delusion. Once again, we have been vindicated. We, in IPOB, do not hold anything against one Nigeria advocates’⁵⁸.

Since the announcement of results, from the just concluded presidential elections, there had been speculations of alleged plots to disrupt the swearing in ceremony from official and unofficial quarters, the Police however, warned aggrieved groups or individuals not to contravene but follow due process in seeking indemnification as the law enforcement agencies will not hesitate to repress any confrontation or act of insecurity⁵⁹. This warning was largely directed to the opposition party's army of youthful supporters, as highlighted several groups had expressed dismay towards the presidential inauguration asking the federal government to hold off until the courts had ruled in the cases contending the results of the election as announced by INEC. Under the auspices of the Igbo Patriotic Forum, Igbo leaders had cautioned against the swearing-in of the then president-elect Tinubu before the apex court's judgment, saying it might be an invitation to anarchy if done. The Igbo leaders advised that the judiciary be allowed to conclude hearing on the presidential election petitions before swearing in a new president. The forum made this known at a press conference presided over by its chairman, Chief Simon Okeke, condemning what he called "delayed tactics employed by the presidential election petitions tribunal"⁵⁹. Following this event, it is evident that the agitation for Biafra might be taking another momentum in years to come if not addressed.

The issues of marginalization clamored by those agitating for Biafra is not considered an exaggeration, as the Nigerian state is ridiculed with vices that can stunt the growth of any society. Its uneven distribution of wealth, lack of basic infrastructure, health care, good roads, employment opportunities for all its citizens alarmingly so, it seems that the Igbo people are just experiencing these issues at a larger scale since the system was not in their favor from the beginning. It is evident that even with the unending policy summations and semi structures present it is rather difficult to implement them as was intended, making policy suggestion might not be the answer if the implementation process is rigged. However, these issues have been persistent before the civil

war and years after creating this blockade and feelings of bitterness and rage especially between the Igbo's and other ethnicity. It is of no relevance that Nigeria keeps adopting stunted ideas that do not mirror the heterogeneity of its nation, it is overdue on addressing these archival problems and coming up with implementable strategies that will fix the menace if war must be avoided, keeping in mind that every decision must have representation and must service every facet of its society.

To address the question is quite evident there's division on the topic of Biafra, it is deciphered that the Igbo's have their reservations for not having fate in the Nigerian political system regardless of if they produce the next president, the fear that it would never happen, fear that if it does happen the said individual cannot will the fate of the entire Ibo land all alone, fear that the powers that may be will continue to create strategic stumbling block to prevent the Igbo man from advancing in all ramification under the Nigerian umbrella. Some other factors being that IPOB, is adamant on their quest for a revolution and are not backing down anytime soon until offered a referendum, this sounds juicy to some factions who are putting their fate in the Biafran agenda that freedom awaits but will being free from Nigeria guarantee equality, fairness and freedom from micro marginalization in the new Biafran republic, as it said there will always be a new majority and minority it's a construct of any society. However, it's understandable that those in support of IPOB are probably just operating under fear of the unknown, thoughts of withstanding numerous years of sidelining and unwarranted marginalization from the construct called Nigeria as fueled this unending fight for self-governance.

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

This chapter presents summations from the study, with specific concentration on significant details, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The study was generally guided by the interest in determining possible outcomes of the Biafra agitation, its impingement on Nigeria as a country as well as the purpose of the agitators in the midst of Nigeria's already existing political and economic vicissitude. The study lays emphasis on the implication of Biafran agitation on Nigeria, necessary suggestions for further studies are presented in this chapter to aid subsequent researches that may be conducted in this area of focus.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This thesis attempts to highlight the factors that might cause and have caused agitations, particularly those related to positions in Nigeria's political system, in order to achieve a peaceful coexistence among all Nigerians, regardless of where you are from, be it North or South, Muslim or Christian, minority or majority ethnic nationality. The essay also brings out the core reason for the new Biafra agitation among the people of South-East geopolitical region. The region seems to be excluded in the political equation since zoning of political positions were truncated which made the North to go away with four top positions, while the South with two positions and this has created immense tension in the South-East leading to protests by the youth from the region and an agitation for the creation of Biafra State out of the Nigerian State.

There are five chapters in this work. The first chapter covers the study's background detailing the generational evolvement of the Biafran agitators and Nigerian government, the problem statement,

to guide the study four research objectives and questions were proposed, the research methodology, significance of the study, the study's scope, the definition of terminology, and the endnote.

The second chapter presents literature review of related literature to provided background for the study. Specifically, the chapter covers conceptual review, historical perspectives in Biafra Agitation, Biafran war victimization, the reasons for Biafra agitation, Igbo elites and Pro-Biafra Agitation; self-determination and political stability, manifestations of agitation in the world, theoretical framework supporting the study was reviewed and they are Primordialism theory and Instrumentalism theory, gap in literature and ended with endnote.

The third chapter focused on methodology, employing a qualitative, historical, and descriptive approach, as well as secondary data gathered from articles in scholarly databases, journals, books, newspapers, magazines, and so on that are relevant and related to the study's objectives., it presents the Research Design, Population of the Study, Description of the Research instruments, the descriptive method of analysis was used.

The fourth chapter presents Data gotten from the interviews on the Biafran agitation, origin and causes for the resurrection of the call for a Biafran independence, as well as implications of Biafra agitation on Nigeria.

The fifth chapter provides summary, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Conclusion

The respondents interviewed felicitously aligned their views of Biafran agitation and the role that marginalization has played in the corollary of the Biafran agenda. The colloquy of this study centers the lack of basal provision for people living in South Eastern Nigeria, the maltreatment and marginalization of the Igbo people by accentuating the periods before, during, and after the discordance with Nigeria, this vividly documented by the respondent's divulgence of the Biafra movement. The cultivated desire for agitation is anchored by rallying of the Biafra agenda, with the perceived hope of creating a separate independent state, or at least provide some surety for a better position in disparity to what is being offered in the nation at the present time. The responses show that the majority of the persons interviewed believed the Igbos in Nigeria are being sidelined, detailing first-hand experiences of their exposure to the Biafra movement and spiraling consequences in the country. Although the people have cognitive awareness of the ethnic marginalization against the Igbo people of the South-East, they have not been persuaded to adopt violence as a method of accomplishing the Biafran ideal.

The Biafran agitation continuation ultimately lays a rudimental graph for the deterioration of Nigeria's national security, considering the already challenged security scenarios with the likes of Boko haram, as observed from the study continuous unrest has been present in the country from the period of 2015 till date from Biafran combatants and the security agencies leading to quantum deaths. Concurrently Biafran agitation has associated itself with ethnic incitement. Understandably so, since secessionist groupings require a shared historical link of suffering for points of validation, the Biafran scenario ultimately relies on ethnic triggery as a mechanism to foster disaster. The findings of study showed that utmost importance must be employed on objective, purposeful, and engaged campaigns by groups agitating or seeking self-determination when pitching their points. They must identify proper ways to engage the people, by seeking secession an already established

order is bound to change, for the people to buy into the idea of secession sensitization is needed for identifying the importance of such radicality and what they stand to gain when they do. Another parameter is the engagement in open dialogue with the parent states as seen with Scottish separatist this can procure support from those who averagely will not support their course, while utilizing the importance of media both social and conventional, its directives must be done within the amplitude of the law and cannot be orchestrated to cause injury and wage war of words with any individual or group, violence could only do so much, permanent problem solving alternatives without necessarily engaging in any physical exchange is needed.

Finding from the study show that the Biafran agitators require autonomy and inclusivity in all spheres of Nigeria's political, economic, social and developmental road map. They desire to be seen and heard in critical matters of the state, following the findings and reliable literature it is evident that vital positions have been moved passed the Igbos, economic development have been stunted, the remittance in the area has been on the decline with unemployment skyrocketing leading to organized criminality. This impending calamity can further disorient the international perception of the country, continuous agitations may put Nigeria in an uncomfortable position as foreign entity, as study have shown that Nigerian government on several occasion as bridge it's human right obligations. Peaceful protest, Peaceful sensitization walks and peaceful demonstrations without resulting to any form of violence is another take home for the Pro Biafran movement, utilizing strong commitment, organization, and engagements that will prevent skirmishes with the instrument of state coercion. The findings from the study shows the Nigerian government lacks a sense of self-awareness, considering the history of the civil war and post war settlement alone could be enough for the Igbo extraction to feel marginalized as consecutive administrations have failed to properly reintegrate the Igbos into the larger Nigerian system. The

Nigerian government as a matter of importance should avoid using the instrument of state coercion to inflict injury on individuals engaged in lawful civil disobedience as this is not a reliable formula.

The major claim made in this study is that, despite the challenges they face in the current Nigerian system, Igbo people have done well for themselves with a strong sense of community and resilience. Through their collective resiliency, the Igbo people of post-war Nigeria have accomplished great feats. These accomplishments have already distinguished them. Therefore, the study argues that Igbo people should be aware of their resilient communal spirit and put it into reality in all sectors of their existence rather than pursuing a separate country from Nigeria by increasing, their relevance in the affairs of the nation.

Government policies and actions, both deliberately and unknowingly, have contributed to the Biafran uprising through direct and indirect discrimination that is visible in Nigeria's South-East and Southern regions. With the latest demands for a referendum on the Biafran question, it has now assumed a new dimension. If the government had followed "basic" standards, such as the granting of equal rights through real inclusivity of growth and justice within the nation, the difficulties of separatist movement in Nigeria would not have been a significant concern. The challenges brought forth in this essay are not limited to Nigeria, but their combined impact is exceptional in scope. They also cover a wide range of topics that have attracted international attention, Nigeria is currently thought to be in a vulnerable position, nevertheless. This fragility highlights the central government's inadequacy or incapacity to effectively rule a large portion of its territory, as well as the under-provision of public services, extensive corruption, criminal activity, refugees, forcible population displacement, and significant economic downturn. All

around Nigeria, the aforementioned issues are noticeable. However, depending on how the state is run, the fragility of the state might be lessened.

5.3 Recommendations

The following suggestions have been made in light of the study's findings and conclusion:

1. The problem of zoning/rotation of the presidency should be settled by negotiations between the Federal Government and all of Nigeria's geopolitical zones. This would give equal opportunity to all the geopolitical zones to have equal participation and representation in governance at all levels.
2. To work with pro-Biafra organizations and develop a strategy for ending the agitation for Biafra, the Nigerian government should establish a high-level Peace and Reconciliation Commission.
3. Nigeria should adopt real inclusive political institutions.
4. Abuse of power should be readdressed within the legislative framework. To aid in the reconciliation process, Nigerian authorities should refrain from threatening to use force against pro-Biafra protesters, apply force with utmost restraint and only in extreme situations, and prosecute violent protesters according to the due process of law. The Nigerian government should set up an independent commission of inquiry to look into claims of unlawful killings and other violations of Biafra supporters' human rights in an open, thorough, and unbiased manner.

5. Nigeria's development partners should provide specialized financing and technical support to activities aimed at enhancing the economic climate in the South East and resolving the complaints of pro-Biafra organizations.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study ultimately reveals reasons, public opinion as well as the consequences of the recurrent agitation for Biafra, the results of this investigation will help pin point reoccurring events that may serve as ticking bombs to extreme conflicts that may slowly lead to war and providing suggestions that will enhance peace building and development, sustain socio-political and economic structures in Nigeria and safeguard her National Security.

5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

This study was based mostly on the concept of Biafra agitation as regards its implications on Nigeria thereby analyzing the impact of agitations on the perspective of Nigeria as a country. As such, every finding and conclusion were focused on the aspect of Nigeria in relation to Biafra agitations and the study was conducted with the aim of finding out the effects of such agitations in general. Therefore, the following have been recommended for further studies:

1. A theory of transformative history education within the broader field of peace education or conflict resolution should be generated using the research's findings. This will help close the gap between transformative learning in general and the teaching and learning of the history of a violent past in particular.

2. Further studies should be conducted on transformative history education in various countries and contexts in order to confirm whether collaboration and violence reduction could be added to the general list of transformative learning outcomes.

3. Additional studies are needed on the subject using other methodologies to ascertain results based on data collected from other geopolitical regions of Nigeria as well as from students in a formal classroom teaching intervention. This is necessary to determine if Biafra agitations have been adopted by the younger generation as the option to coexistence.

4. The research findings presented above interprets the importance of research, public policy, national reconciliation and peacebuilding. Thus, further studies should be conducted to enlighten people about the Biafra agitation and the implications it has for Nigeria's national progress and peace.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

The researcher asked questions to ascertain certain responses regarding Biafra agitation with emphasis on the cause of the agitation, process and medium utilized to agitate and the impact of the agitation on Nigeria as well as the international image of the country. The interviews focused on questions under listed.

Survey 2022

S/N	Interview Questions
1	How can you describe the Biafra agitation?
2	What are the reasons you think have led to the agitation for Biafra separation?
3	Do you think that the recent Biafra agitation can have effects on the political stability of Nigeria?
4	Do you think that the recent Biafra agitation is a threat on the national security of Nigeria?
5	What is your opinion regarding the wrongly applied quota system adopted in Nigerian political agenda?
6	Are you comfortable with the zoning and rotation method for the office of presidency?
7	Do you think that Igbos are going through marginalization and discrimination in Nigeria?
8	What are your views on the arrests and detention of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu in respect to the Biafra agitation?
9	Do you think the recent agitation for Biafra is just a bargaining chip for personal interest and benefits among the Igbos?
10	What are the obvious and hidden implications of Biafra agitation on the foreign image of Nigeria?

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Publication

Biafran Agitation: Analysis and Implications for Nigeria, ABUAD Journal of Social and Management Sciences 4(1), 92- 104, 2023.

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This is to certify that this thesis written by Imaobong Okon BASSEY with the matric number LCU/PG/001816 in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Environment, Management and Social Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan and is in full compliance with the approved University format and style.

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