The predatory character of post-colonial states, and African's way of providing plausible solutions to national questions have remained a nightmare. This is evident on the manner regions or better still, ethnic groups that found themselves lost in the scheme of things. Thus, calling for self-belonging and inclusion by groups and cleavages is a direct link to restructuring, accommodating the excluded minority and forging ahead for peace and stability. In Nigeria, the scenario is very crystal clear on how successive political regimes had failed to come up with lasting solutions to national questions. Thus, paper examined the link between separatist agitations by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and its implication on the existence of Nigeria State. It also interrogated on how the use of inflammatory statements by the IPOB exacerbated ethnic disharmony, and the extent of state repression undermined IPOB separatist agenda in Nigeria. Methodologically, the paper appropriated documentary method, and data were ostensibly generated through secondary sources of data collection and analyzed in content. The theoretical framework of analysis for the study was adequately anchored on the frustration-aggression hypothesis. The paper discovered as findings that the use of inflammatory statements by the IPOB exacerbated ethnic rancour mainly between the Igbo tribe and their Hausa counterpart. It was also noted that state repression failed to undermine their separatist movement and agenda. Based on these findings, the paper recommended among others that the Nigeria government should adopt dialogue and other diplomatic means rather than coercion.

Keywords: Separatist, Agitation, IPOB, Inflammatory statement, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria’s history is laced with several challenges arising from unresolved national questions which revolve around sensitive national issues like group marginalization, revenue allocation, politicization of religion, ethnic militancy, terrorism and corruption. But, one of the major manifestations of some of these unresolved problems is the emergence of groups demanding for self-determination and political independence such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), in the South-East. According to Awofeso (2017), the threats of separatist agitations and secessionist movements are not entirely new to Nigerian political space, they have been a regular feature of Nigerian politics, but the dimension they have assumed today is not unconnected to the national question. That is to say that they continued to serve as a veritable tool in the hands of the agitators for the expression of discontents with the Nigerian state, and a platform for demanding adequate political accommodation (Alumona, Azom & Iloh, 2017).

Fundamentally, the term separatist agitation or separatism may be used to connotes different things ranging from a demand by a unit of a federal state for greater regional autonomy or loosening of political control by the centre to outright secession of a federating unit by way of declaring its own political independence. That is to say that the term ‘separatism’ is generally used in its narrow sense to denote agitation by a distinct political unit within a polity for enhanced decentralization of authority by the central government so as to guarantee the sub-national unit greater autonomy in specified activities. Taking a stance on the discourse, Ibeanu, Orji, and Iwuamdi (2016), conceptualized separatist agitation as interactions between collective victimization and inclusion of a specific
group within a larger entity. They proposed that during periods of high collective victimization and low socio-political inclusion there is always increased separatist agitation and vice versa. That is to say, separatist agitation is always spurred whenever a certain group collectively feels marginalized, lax or economically disenfranchised within a given polity. It is important to note that separatist agitation dates back to the British colonial administration. It was Tamuno (1970), that traced the agitations for secession in the entity called Nigeria today to 1914. He noted that from Ahmadu Bello’s account, the North would have preferred a separate political future, instead of being yoked with the South in what the Sardauna of Sokoto termed “the mistake of 1914”. Then, the North, displeased with the amalgamation, threatened to secede from the union. That was the first secessionist attempt in the Nigerian formation.

Sequel to the above, there were plethora of separatist agitations in several parts of Nigeria which occurred in the 1950s, and toward the end of 1953. The Yoruba’s in the west began to make session threats steaming from the contention over the status of Lagos (Awofeso, 2017). However, the first call for secession from the Eastern part of Nigeria which is the interest of this study came from the then Premier of the region, Michael Okpara, who openly threatened to cause a secession of the Eastern region from Nigeria as a result of the circumstances surrounding the federal elections of December 1964. But the main secessionist bid from the East that rocked the entire federation came in 1967 when the Eastern region, under the leadership of Lt. Col. Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, launched a massive attempt to break away from Nigeria. This was in response to the massacre of the Igbo in the North, an aftermath of the counter-coup of July 1966. The wanton killings of the Igbo and the lukewarm response of the central government made the Igbo believe that they were unwanted in the Nigerian federation. However, this led to a protracted civil war were over 1.8million civilians of the Igbo extraction lost their lives. But, since the war ended, the feeling of injustice, marginalization, and persecution had persisted among the Igbo (Ezemenaka & Prouza, 2016; Awofeso, 2017).

Regrettably, since the demise of the 1967 civil war, fundamental issues for which the Igbo went to war in the first place were not addressed. In fact, the situation has worsened with the Igbo greatly marginalized in all spheres such politically, socio-economically, technically and otherwise. These, therefore, have led to resurfaced agitations for the independence of Biafra albeit with much vigor. In recent times, different groups have rekindled the Biafran separatist agitation though, with different methodology but, the central objective and mission remain the same. The re-secession bid began with the Ralph Uwazurike led Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), which popped up in 1999 and declared a non-violent agitation, but it’s popularity soon waned with the leader accused of covertly associating with the Nigerian government. Therefore, this has led to the fractionalization of the group into other movements such as the Ben Onwuka led Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM) and the Nnamdi Kanu led Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), (Amanambu, 2017). However, it was the IPOB that became more popular after it succeeded in mobilizing millions of Igbo youths worldwide. More so, Nnamdi Kanu renewed the separatist agitation on Biafra by reviving the defunct Radio Biafra and making it a platform to educate and sensitize Igbo both at home and in diaspora on the urgency for an independent Biafran state. His approach is the use of incisive and inflammatory statements that appeals to the Igbo but derogates the Nigerian government. Consequently, the renewed separatist agitation has continued to raise national eyebrows particularly as it pertains the indivisibility of the country. The activities of IPOB made separatist agitation to become an overt act in Nigeria. Before then, it was just a verbal threat. Their approach and modus operandi had divergent implications on the Nigerian state and this was attributed to a number of factors such as the country’s heterogeneous ethnic composition, cultural diversity, controversial political and constitutional arrangements among others. Corroborating the view above, Adangor (2017), asserts that separatist tendencies in Nigeria are attributable to the country’s heterogeneous ethnic composition, cultural diversity, vast size, varied administrative practices, etc. Corroborating the views of Tamuno (1970), and Adangor (2017), the prevalence of separatist agitations in Nigeria is directly traceable to three critical factors which are, the divisive practices adopted by the British colonialists, ethnic pluralism and fear of domination amongst the disparate ethnic groups. These factors are inextricably linked and cannot be separated one from the other.

Thus, the focus of this paper is to interrogate the renewed separatist agitation by the IPOB and the implication on what constitutes the totality of the political, cultural, economic, ideological and ethnic factors that make up the nation. That is to say, the study analyzes the overt operations of the IPOB in Nigeria, her approaches and methodology in line with government responses so as to unravel the overall implication on the Nigerian state.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis: Interrogating Sigmund Freud and Yale Group on Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis

There is hardly any valid research that has no theoretical construct. Meanwhile, the essence of theorizing is to explain, reach generalization, predict and control. That is why Bhattacharjee (2012), identifies that theories are explanations of natural or social behaviour, event; a system of constructs (concepts) and propositions (relationships between those constructs) that collectively presents a logical, systematic and coherent explanation of a phenomenon of interest within some assumptions and boundary conditions.
It is on this note that the study adopted the frustration aggression thesis. The thesis/ theory was developed by Dollard, Miller and Mowrer in 1939, and later strengthened and popularized by Berkowitz and Yates (1962). The basic assumptions of the theory are;

- the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the occurrence of frustration
- that antagonistic perceptions arise when a group of people are denied access to opportunities that helps them satisfy their needs, especially basic needs.
- It also maintains that the failure to address the demands or complaints of specific groups within a state; whether religious, ethnic or even political, could give rise to frustration, which could in turn, eventually lead to aggression.
- In other words, the aggressive actions of certain groups within a polity, could be a visible expression of bottled up/ long term frustration, arising due to the inability of the powers that be to address identified problems or complaints of selective discrimination.

Conventionally, the appearance of political underestimation among the Igbo ethnic group, and the resultant impact of IPOB dissident development in Nigeria is better clarified in the light of frustration aggression theory. This system disentangles IPOB rebel development and clarify how political marginalization along ethnic ties results into the quest separatism. Likewise, the absence of equalization in political arrangements of President Mohammadu Buhari has fuelled to IPOB dissident development in Nigeria. By accepting that handling political underestimation issues comprehensively, the state must contemplate proactive measures, the theory encourages to the clarification whether the policies and activities of Nigeria government has added to IPOB nonconformist disturbances in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of extant literatures were done thematically as follows:

- **Inflammatory Statements by IPOB and Ethnic Disharmony in Nigeria**

It was not until after two decades of post-civil war experience that the Nigerian state began to witness new waves of agitation from the South East which was predominantly separatist based. It was a renewed call for a Biafran state, and the overt reasons were not in tandem with that which led to the civil war in the late 1967. More so, the actors that staged managed the former separatist movement in 1967 were not the same with the latter, this speaks volume to the actualization of the struggle. Anchoring on the above, Ojukwu and Nwaorgu (2016, p.6), narrates thus:

Since the return to civil rule in 1999, the Igbos have continually craved for a just society where every ethnic group can compete favourably for political power and where economic resources are equitably distributed through non-violence. Though other splinter groups, radical, pseudo-radical and non-radical have emerged including but not limited to; The Igbo Concerned Citizens, Igbo Elders’ Forum, Igbo Renaissance Movement, MASSOB, BZM (Biafra Zionist Movement), IPOB among others.

From the above, we can deduce that in recent times the present Nigerian administration has continued to hound and short-change the Igbos in the scheme of things causing disharmony, hence, the call for a divided Nigeria. This is as a result of hardship, lack of holistic development in the socio-economic landscape of Nigeria, lack of youth employment, corruption in high offices and economic regression; all these are the reasons for the formation of the different aforementioned separatist groups. But our focus for this study shall be one of the separatist group known as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

In that light, the European Asylum Support Office, EASO (2018), narrates briefly on the origin, organizational structure and activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Accordingly, IPOB is a splinter group that grew out of MASSOB. Thus, it is imperative to note albeit in passing that MASSOB was a brand-new movement created by the end of 1999 to actualize an independent state of Biafra. MASSOB soon split into factions, such as in 2010 the Biafra Zionist Movement or Biafra Zionist Front, and in 2012, the IPOB. The leader of the splinter group IPOB is Nwanekeanya ‘Nnamdi’ Kanu, he is the director of the London-based Radio Biafra who parted from MASSOB. He founded the IPOB in 2014. The internal structure consists of state chapters governed by coordinators, under the leadership of Nnamdi Kanu, and Uche Mefor as deputy leader. Also, a Biafra Security Service has been established and a Customary Government of Indigenous People of Biafra is in place as well. EASO (2018), sheds more light on the activities of the IPOB and also validates the use of inflammatory statements by her leader Nnamdi Kanu, they express that:

IPOB’s activities include ‘distribution of flyers, awareness-raising amongst the population, meetings, marches, and other gatherings (such as prayer meetings).’ Like MASSOB, IPOB claims to be a non-violent organization – which the government contests. However, IPOB’s leader Nnamdi Kanu has repeatedly derogatory statements on President Muhammadu Buhari (describing him as ‘terrorist-in-chief’), and the need to arm the movement: at the World Igbo Congress in 2015, he told the audience: ‘we need guns and we need bullets’ (EASO 2018, p.11).
In corroboration with EASO (2018), the use of inflammatory and incisive statements, coupled with hate speeches and rhetorical comments as a modus operandi, the Swedish Migration Agency SMA (2017), noted that:

IPOB has occasionally resorted to violent rhetorics, not least through the transmissions of Radio Biafra. The occurrence of clashes between security forces and activists, some resulting in casualties on both sides, has also been reported during IPOB arrangements.

Similarly, Owen (2016), also agreed that the first social movement on Biafran separatism to gain public attention after the Nigerian-Biafran Civil war is the non-violent social movement called the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) which was formed by Ralph Uwazuruike, an Indian trained lawyer. On the activities of MASSOB and the breakaway of IPOB further narrated that:

Although the activities of MASSOB led to confrontations with law enforcement officers at different times and the arrest of its leader, it received little attention from the international media and community. Worried that the dream for the independence of Biafra will not be realized through MASSOB, Nnamdi Kanu, a Nigerian-British based in London decided to use the emerging mode of communication, social media, and online radio to drive millions of pro-Biafra independence activists, supporters, and sympathizers to his Biafran cause and created the Indigenous People of Biafra. (Owen 2016, p.6-7)

Taking a similar path, Ojukwu and Nwaorgu (2016), contribute to the discussion on the use of online radio by the IPOBs as a medium for communication in a two-way reception channel comprising both the Igbo home and diaspora and the Nigerian government, they expressed:

The IPOB, with the radio media being its main tool is alleged to have addressed the Federal Republic of Nigeria as a zoo and president Buhari as terrorist, evil and a pedophile in some of its radio messages. However, in a video clip, while addressing some Igbo in Diaspora at the World Igbo Congress in the US, Kanu was seen soliciting for weapons from the audience and boasted that the Biafran passports and sovereign status have been recognized by some powerful countries.

It then implies that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has as its modus operandi, the use of social media and an online radio as a medium of mobilizing millions of Igbo indigenes both at home and in diaspora to support and advance his separatist agenda. But, his style of language in promoting the Biafran agenda is regarded as incisive and inflammatory. Also validating the arguments above, Ekpo (2018) asserts that from 2009, the new Radio Biafra aired online from London, and has drawn millions of Igbo listeners to its nationalist propaganda and also used inflammatory statements to draw the attention of the Nigerian government, he opined thus:

... the director of Radio Biafra and self-proclaimed leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, Mr. Nnamdi Kanu, decided to use provocative rhetoric and expressions, some of which are considered to be hate speech and incitement to violence and war. He continuously aired broadcasts that portrayed Nigeria as a zoo and Nigerians as animals without rationality. The banner of his radio’s Facebook page and website read: “The zoo called Nigeria.” He called for the supply of arms and ammunition to wage war against the northern Hausa-Fulani people if they oppose to the independence of Biafra, stating that this time, Biafra will defeat Nigeria in war (Ekpo 2018, p.34).

Although, the above extract is regarded as incisive, inflammatory and capable of spurring another civil war in the country, the fact still remains that all separatist agitations whether violent or non-violent leads to provocative statements, it is a major indicator of agitations. Hence, it was Ugorji (2017), that gave a succinct implication of the provocative statements of IPOB and its effect on the Nigeria state. Accordingly, the leaders of the Indigenous People of Biafra included horrific images and videos of the Nigeria-Biafra war of 1967 in their messages and propaganda as part of their strategies; thus resurrecting ethnic sentiments among the Igbo, which are all in a bid to propagate their independence. The implication of this propaganda remained thus:

The arousal of these emotions, feelings or strong sentiments tends to cloud and suppress rational national debate on the Biafra issue. As the pro-Biafra independence activists leverage on the affective state of their members, supporters, and sympathizers, they also confront and suppress negative sentiments directed against them by the Hausa-Fulani and others who do not support their movement. An example is the June 6, 2017 eviction notice given to the Igbo who are living in northern Nigeria by a coalition of northern youth groups under the umbrella of Arewa Youth Consultative Forum. The eviction notice enjoins all Igbo residing in all the northern states of Nigeria to move out within three months and asks that all Hausa-Fulani in the eastern states of Nigeria should return to the north. This group openly stated that they will engage in acts of violence against the Igbo who refuse to obey the eviction notice and relocate by October 1, 2017(Ugorji 2017, p.10).

Besides, Ugorji (2017), narrated that the consequences of a renewed Biafran separatist agitation are not just limited to intra-ethnic division as advanced above, it can have other diverse implications such as:
A disruption of the education system due to youth involvement in protests; threats to peace and security within the region which will prevent external or foreign investors from coming to invest in southeastern states as well as preventing tourists from traveling to the southeastern states; economic downturn; emergence of criminal networks that may hijack the non-violent movement for criminal activities; confrontations with the law enforcement that could result in the death of protesters as it happened in late 2015 and 2016; reduction of Hausa-Fulani or Yoruba confidence in a potential Igbo candidate for presidential election in Nigeria which will make the election of an Igbo president of Nigeria more difficult than ever before (Ugorji 2017, p.10).

Corroborating the above, a more recent statement or propaganda also filtered into the public by the Nnamdi Kanu operated radio Biafra antagonizing the office and personality of President Muhammadu Buhari. Worthy to note is that until 2015, the activities of IPOB have been superficial and reduced to the level of online radio(Radio Biafra) tirade and other media frenzy and were largely ignored by the then president, Dr.Goodluck Jonathan's administration. However, the group became more daring, brazen and audacious from 2015 just after President Muhammadu Buhari assumed office, and this according to Ekpo and Agoye (2019), has it that they have caused major security nuisance in the polity. For them, “IPOB had challenged Nigeria's national security to the extreme and had preposterously recruited a militant group it christened Biafra Security Service (BSS) for intelligence gathering”. So it was obvious that IPOB had constituted a major security nuisance but tackling it within the confines of established laws and conventions meant the group was legally untouchable.

- **State Repression and IPOB Separatist Agenda in Nigeria**

There is no argument that the states have always been the custodian of law and order within any polity, as such they are saddled with the responsibility to address insurrections and agitations. On this premise, Cunningham (2003), recognized the role(s) or responsibilities of the State as not limited to maintaining of law and order, but repression when necessary. By way of conceptualization, Anisin (2015), has it that repression takes two sides which is either soft or coercive measures. He argues that repression is a central function of the state and part of its monopoly of violence with the motive of maintaining stability and order. But the crucial question remains that what circumstances or at what point is state action justified concerning social movement activities? However, one of the justifications for the use of state coercion to curb the threats of social movement activists according to Gamson and Meyer (1996), is that separatist agitators sometimes go out of control and resorts to the use of violence which will invariably become a security threat to the state. It is against this that Adigun (2018), posited that the state has been repressive to the neo-Biafra separatist agitations since the beginning of the fourth republic, he narrates that: …the antagonistic attitude of the Nigerian state to neo-Biafra movement and its activities continued in varying forms even when “civilian” Presidents Umar Musa Yar’Adua and Goodluck Jonathan were elected in 2007 and 2011. For example, even though he was largely supported by Igbo, the Jonathan government initially refused to issue certification for a pro-Biafran movie which is based on Chimamanda Adichie’s Half of a Yellow Sun when the movie has been aired at several countries including Toronto International Film Festival in2014 (Adigun 2018, p.139).

This is to say that the Yar’Adua/Jonathan administration adopted the social suppression as one of its tools to curb the activities of the IPOB, yet IPOB intensified her operations and agitations. But, the coming back of an ex-military general changed the cause and nature of state repression. The State moved from a softer repressive method to a more coercive one which involves the militarization of the IPOB; Adigun (2018) confirmed that: The state also deployed its most potent instrument of violence- the military- in her attempts to curb the activities of the activists. Despite the already militarised south-east region where the state had launched “Operation Python Dance I” in the five South-East states in November 2016, the Nigerian military began Operation Python Dance II to “tackle such security problems such as armed bandits, cult clashes, communal clashes, kidnappings, cultism, farmers-herdsmen clashes, and violent secessionist agitations, in the South-East zone of the country” (Adigun 2018, p.145-146).

The above validates that the deployment of troops to suppress the non-violent operations of the IPOB can be viewed as a show of force by the state in curbing its activities. Also, owing to the frequent clashes between the IPOB and security agencies, the Nigerian government declared IPOB a terrorist organization to justify the use of force on IPOB. Suppression was not effective as it made the IPOB leader become famous and popular. In fact, the arrest of Nnamdi Kanu increased tension in Nigeria and in the diaspora. His supporters protested in different states of the federation against his arrest. Consequently, President Buhari’s decision to order the arrest of Mr. Kanu, and the protests that followed the arrest led to a rapid spread of the pro-Biafra independence agitation.

Furthermore, the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) have continued to be tackled in various coercive manners in recent times and its implications in line with extant literature have not been positive towards
quelling the agitations. For instance, Adekunle (2017),
argues that the responses of the Nigerian government to
Biafra have been disappointing. He cites the case of the
leader of IPOB who was made a hero by holding him close
two years of incomprehensible judicial rigmarole and
executive procrastination. He opined that the unlawful
detention and incarceration of Nnamdi Kanu, the IPOB
leader did not silence the agitations and to the chagrins of
the Nigerian government and others, the issue was kept
on the front burner for the entire duration of the
incarceration of the IPOB leader. Unarguably, the
previously little or unknown Nnamdi Kanu and the IPOB
soared into global significance swallowing the popularity of
its rival, the Movement for the Actualization of the
Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB).

More so, the Nigerian government under the leadership of
President Muhammad Buhari in her attempt to curb or suppress the activities of IPOB engaged in the use of propaganda which is the naming of IPOB as a terrorist organization. This can be likened to giving a dog a bad name just to hang it, Ekwueme & Ugwuanyi (2018), posits that the Nigerian government through the Minister of Information and Culture, Mr. Lai Mohammed said that the IPOB was branded terrorist organization for:

stockpiling weapons through funding from foreign
countries, secondly, that the IPOB has lust for
destruction, and its leader, Nnamdi Kanu uses divisive and inciting rhetoric such as: “If they fail to give us Biafra, Somalia will look like a paradise compared to what will happen to that’zoo’ (Nigeria).” “I don’t want peaceful actualization of Biafra”; “We need guns and we need bullets”; “If they don’t give us Biafra, they will die” (cited in Ekwueme & Ugwuanyi 2018, p.3)

More so, the federal government had different reasons for classifying the IPOB as a terrorist organization and one of the major reasons for proscribing a non-violent group such as the IPOB is just to ostracize them and make the society perceived it as an enemy. In another instance on why the IPOB was branded a terrorist organization, Ekwueme & Ugwuanyi (2018), reiterated the position of the military as thus:

“All I know is that IPOB has engaged in terrorist
activities, viz: clashing with the national army and attempting to seize rifles from soldiers, using weapons such as machetes, Molotov cocktails, and sticks, and mounting roadblocks to extort money from people, among others”. Similarly, they captured the statement of the presidential spokesperson, Mr. Garba Shehu, who stated that IPOB members deserved to be labeled terrorists because they have carved out a territory to themselves and have shown the willingness to invade other neighboring states (Ekwueme & Ugwuanyi 2018, p.3)

It is based on the above premise that the Nigerian military
high-command launched Operation Python Dance II and

Exercise Egwu Eke II in the South-East. Justifying these military operations, were owing to the spate of assassinations, even in religious places, attacks on security personnel and theft of weapons, kidnapping, armed banditry, violent agitations by secessionist groups, among other crimes that have recently bedeviled the South East region. In sum, the response to the IPOB activities by the state according to extant literature has rather taken a more coercive measure than any other to suppress the operations of the IPOB. The activities of the IPOB according to diverse scholars have been suppressed with the introduction of the military forces to curb and curtail the operations of the IPOB. Although the State adopted the use of propaganda by naming the IPOB as a terrorist organization to justify the use of force on a non-violent group. However, with the different methods adopted such as the social repressive measures, leadership alienation, massive arrest and unlawful detention of members, extra-judicial killings of IPOB members to the use of propaganda and finally the militarization of IPOB operations, yet, the IPOB is still issuing threats and they are yet to be annihilated.

- IPOB Sit-at-Home Order and Marginalization of the Igbo in Federal Appointments

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) emerged in 2012 with renewed campaigns for an independence of Biafran state. Through its London-based Radio Biafra station, IPOB reaches out to a growing number of disgruntled youths in the southeast and southern zones of the country. Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of IPOB and Director of Radio Biafra, has used the station to transmit pro-Biafran messages to his many supporters and members in and outside Nigeria. Importantly, scores of people, mostly South Easterners frequently tune in to the clandestine radio station Radio Biafra. The station broadcasts messages that constitute incitements to violent acts against the Nigerian state. For example, on 31 August 2015, the day after the military killed two and injured 30 IPOB members in Onitsha, the station aired a message that threatened violent retaliation against the military.

Thus, following his arrest on the 14th of October 2015 in Lagos, and the refusal of Mohammed President Buhari led government to obey the court orders granting him bail won more sympathy to the cause of Biafra violent agitation (Jannah, 2017). The protests in the former Biafra territory saw unprecedented turnout of people causing disruption of economic and socio-political activities. This lead to the declaration of the Sit-at-Home Order in remembrance of lost Biafran gladiators and in solidarity for the release of Nnamdi Kanu. The success of the May Sit-at-Home order emboldened the IPOB leadership to further insist that the government should organize a referendum or there will be no more election in Biafra land area of Nigeria (Onyeji, 2017). The anticipation on the consequences of the IPOB threat has awakened critical issues for the Igbo race, top of which is the marginalization of Igbo’s in the federal
appointment and key offices in Nigeria. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the tables below, help in depicting the justification on the side of Igbo in renewing their unending agitation for their own independent state.

Table 1: Shows Key Federal Appoints of President Muhammadu Buhari in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIONS</th>
<th>OCCUPANTS</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>REGION/ZONES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aide de Camp to President</td>
<td>Lt. Col Abubakar Lawal</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>North-West, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account General to the Federation</td>
<td>Ahmed Idris</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>North-West, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate President</td>
<td>Bukola Saraki</td>
<td>K父ara</td>
<td>North-Central, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspector General of Police</td>
<td>Ibrahim Kpotun Idris</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>North-Central, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Defense</td>
<td>Mansur Muhammad Dan Ali</td>
<td>Zamfara</td>
<td>North-West, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fmr. Director General, Department State Services (DSS)</td>
<td>Lawal Daura</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>North-East, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Security Adviser</td>
<td>Maj. General Babagana Monguno [Rtd]</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>North-East, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Defence Staff</td>
<td>Maj. General Abayomi Ononisakin</td>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>South-West, South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Army Staff</td>
<td>Major General Tukur Buratai</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>North-East, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Department of Petroleum Resources [DPR]</td>
<td>Mordecai Baba Ladan</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>North-West, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary to Government of the Federation (SGF)</td>
<td>Babachir David Lawal</td>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>North-East, North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman, INEC</td>
<td>Mahmood Yakubu</td>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>North-East, North</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the Author, 2019.

From the table above, it is evident that the Buhari led administration which came on board in 2015 have continued to marginalize the Igbo in scheme of things. Worthy to note is that lofty positions in the country are now controlled by the North and other Geo-political zones with exclusion of the South East. Also, the marginalization which is the thorn on the flesh of the Igbo has continued unabated as the zone suffers lost on the numbers of local government that were shared among the various zones of the federation. The table below 2 shows how the south East has been marginalized in the area of local government creation.

Table 2: Showing States and Local Government Area in Nigeria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Geo-political Zones</th>
<th>No. of States</th>
<th>No. of Local Governments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>6 (16.67%)</td>
<td>116 (15.19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>North-East</td>
<td>6 (16.67%)</td>
<td>110 (14.36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>7 (1.44%)</td>
<td>181 (23.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>South-West</td>
<td>6 (16.67%)</td>
<td>138 (18.01%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>South-South</td>
<td>6 (16.67%)</td>
<td>127 (16.58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>5 (13.89%)</td>
<td>94 (12.27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors' compilation, 2019.

The above table shows the number of Geo-political zones, Number of states and Number of local government. The North Central zone has One hundred and sixteen (116), local governments which comprises of Fifteen point one-nine percent (15.19%). Likewise, the North East and North western zones have One hundred ten (110) and One hundred eighty one (181) respectively. These comprised of fourteen point three-six (14.36), and Twenty three point six-nine (23.69) percent respectively. The South west zone have One hundred and thirty eight (138) local governments, which comprised of Eighteen point zero-one (18.01%) percent. Also, the South south zone have One hundred and twenty seven (127) local governments, which comprised of Sixteen point five-eight (16.58%) percent. The South East zone have Nine four local governments (94), out of Seven hundred seventy four (774), that comprised of twelve point two-seven percent of the total.

- Extra Judicial Torture/Killings by Nigerian Security Agencies and IPOB Continuous Observation of the May 30th Biafran Day

The Nigerian state in a bid to clamp down on IPOB’s separatist agenda have engaged the use of its security agencies in an arbitrary manner. The rise in extra judicial torture and executions has become highly alarming, this has led to the torture and possible executions of many IPOB members or pro Biafran supporters. A new report by Amnesty International (2017), revealed how extrajudicial torture and execution by Nigeria security forces, especially the Nigerian Army, has led to the death of at least more than One Hundred and Fifty (150) pro-Biafra protesters across Nigeria’s south-east, between August 2015 and August 2016. The Amnesty International report revealed that during the Biafra Remembrance Day in 2016, IPOB members were killed by the Nigerian Military in their Python dance and crocodile dance operations. Again over a thousand members of the IPOB group and other pro-Biafra supporters who gathered for a rally in Onitsha, Aba...
and other states in the south east each were clamped down by security forces and swooped on their homes and a church where they were sleeping. More so, Amnesty International revealed that:

"On Remembrance Day itself, the security forces shot people in several locations. Amnesty International has not been able to verify the exact number of extrajudicial executions, but estimates that at least 60 people were killed and 70 injured in these two days"

The effect of these were total silence in most streets of the South east particularly in Anambra state. Most of the youths that are not even IPOB members according to Duruji (2017), had to go in doors until the military had gone. However, in the year 2018, the presence of the military at the various scenes did not stop the IPOB members and other Pro-Biafra supporters who took to the streets to protest against the gubernatorial elections of May 30 of the year, and also called for a referendum or no elections. Likewise, alternative to the threats to stop the November 18, 2017 Anambra Governorship Election, the IPOB leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu had earlier posited that unless the Nigerian State calls for a referendum to determine the status of the country, there would be no election in Anambra State. All these validate that state repression against the IPOB operations and activities could not be sustained.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The predatory character of post-colonial states, and African’s way of providing plausible solutions to national questions have remained a nightmare. This is evidenced on the manners regions or better still, ethnic groups who have found themselves lost in the scheme of thing in Nigeria. Thus, calling for self-belonging and inclusion by groups and cleavages is a direct link to restructuring, accommodating the excluded minority and forging ahead for peace and stability. In Nigeria, the scenario is very crystal clear on how successive political regimes had failed to come up with lasting solutions to national questions. The quest by different ethnic nationalists to secede becomes a true manifestation of one region being favoured at the expense of the others.

However, south easterners feel politically and economically marginalized, and the government’s hardline stance is not helping matters. Then Eastern Region had declared itself the Republic of Biafra, sparking a brutal and costly three-year civil war. The country again faces a separatist challenge. More importantly, across the southeast, there is resurgent agitation for an independent Biafra state, and President Muhammadu Buhari’s forceful response to the agitation has been counter-productive, inflaming passions and boosting separatist sentiments. The government needs to change its course and prioritize dialogue over coercion. The starting point of any response is to understand the agitation’s roots. They include political and economic grievances, a deep sense of collective victimization among the Igbo. Based on the backdrop, the paper recommended that the Nigeria government should adopt dialogue and other diplomatic means rather than coercion. In the short term, the government should refrain from further threats of “crushing” the agitation and free unconditionally the hundreds of protestors currently imprisoned. It should also reassure regions will be allocated with resources and developed infrastructural equitable. Efforts should be made to include all states in the scheme of things in order to reduce the feeling of marginalization, exclusion and victimization. The South east should position themselves deliberately in the two most influencial political parties in Nigeria and stop party segregation in other to possess key positions and catch government control in Nigeria.

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