



# Problem Of secession Cum Separatism In Nigeria: The Pre-Democracy And Democratic Marginalization Of The Igbos

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**ABSTRACT:** *Could the various evidence of marginalization in pre-democracy and democratic era of Nigeria be the major factors that motivated the separatists' agitation by the Biafra cum Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)? Providing an empirical answer to this problematic statement cum question called for this paper. Imperatively, the paper investigated how the evidence of marginalization rooted in Nigeria pre-democracy and democratic regimes partly contributed to the separatist agitation of the group in the specific areas of resource allocations; Federal Government empowerment programmes, key appointments into Government cum political offices, admission into Federal Unity Colleges among others. The paper is descriptive and aligned with qualitative orientations; it employed documented evidence cum secondary sources of data; majorly from Journal articles, media publications and textbooks. The data gathered were content analyzed thematically with logical reasoning while Relative Deprivation Theory cum Frustration Aggression Theoretical analysis of Robert Ted Gurr and Robert K. Merton served as theoretical guides to the study. Among other findings, the study established that the nature of Nigerian democracy characterized by marginalization, inequity and inequality in the allocation of resources has partly contributed to the separatist agitation by the IPOB. Based on this, the paper recommended to the Nigerian Government; an urgent need to address the root causes of the separatist agitation through national dialogue with the group in order to end marginalization of the Igbo dominated areas (particularly, the Southeast-Nigeria). Also, there is need for political restructuring in a way that every geo-political zone will have equal allocation of resources (such as Local Government Councils, States, Federal Government empowerment programme among others) from the Federal Government irrespective of its population. In addition, the Nigerian government should take cognizance of the principle of democracy such as equal representation of all ethnic groups in the country, respect for the rule of law and human rights among others. All these aforementioned served as practical possible solutions on how separatist agitations can be eradicated in Nigerian democracy.*

**Key words:** *Biafra; Democracy; IPOB; Marginalization; Separatism*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Democracy in its true sense is not actually a problem but its practice in Nigeria over the years has questioned democracy as the best form of government as posited by many scholars of thought. In Nigeria, since the return of democracy to Nigeria in 1999, serious challenges have arisen ranging from inability of the ruling elite in Nigeria political system to ensure democratic principles cum hinge on basic tenets of Western democracy. When civil was adopted again in Nigeria in 1999, the expectation was that democracy; with its basic tenets of ideal fairness, freedom, justice, equity, participation and equal representation of all ethnic groups in governance could provide a platform for accommodation that could address the issues of ethnic crises, marginalization and quest for separatist agitation cum secession among other issues besetting Nigerian state which the dominant elites could not resolve before the advent of democracy. However, the opposite has been the case since the inception of democracy in Nigerian; the practice of democracy has evidently showed rather than ensuring peaceful coexistence among the various ethnic groups has otherwise aggravated the quest for separatism.

Nevertheless, the origin of Nigerian democracy can best be traced to the annals of Nigeria as a political entity. The history of Nigeria is traced to settlers trading across the Middle East and Africa at 1100 BC.

Numerous ancient African civilizations settled in the region that is contemporary known as Nigeria, among them are Benin Empire; Kingdom of Nri; Bornu Empire; Hausa State among others while Christianity came into Nigeria in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The 15<sup>th</sup> century was characterized by slave trade; the European slave traders arrived in the region to buy enslaved Africans as part of the Atlantic slave trade which started in the region of modern day Nigeria (ClueBot, 2022). Consequently, Lagos was occupied by British forces in 1851 and officially annexed by Britain in the year 1865 and Nigeria became a British protectorate in 1901. The British arrangement, in what is considered as the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates this lasted until 1960. After experiencing many years of colonial rule, the country became independent on 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1960 in what is considered as the beginning of the first republic in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the first republic ended following the coup d'état of January 1966. Between 1966 and 1979; when civil rule returned, Nigeria was under the military rule. Subsequently, the country's return to democratic rule led to the introduction of Federal constitution that was characterized by multiparty system, separation of powers, and independence of judiciary among other features that served as core principles cum attributes of democracy (Omotoso, 2013: P. 125). However, this was short-lived following the intervention of the military in Nigerian politics on December 31, 1983 and the country continued to experience long military regimes until May 29, 1999 when another democratic/civil rule experience began.

The emergence of modern cum official adoption of democracy as a system of government to be practicing in Nigeria in May, 1999 marked the end of sixteen (16) consecutive years of military rule in the country. Historically, the year marked a watershed in the history of Modern Nigeria; in what was considered to be an 'enduring democracy'. Before the advent of democracy, Nigeria had experienced era of civil and military rule. Since 1999, Nigeria has been practicing democracy uninterruptedly (Enang, 2021). Ordinarily, democracy should among other factors; ensure societal development, inclusion and participation of all citizens in governance, fair representation of all ethnic groups, equality and equity in the process of allocation of resources, freedom and expression and fair trial, accountability and transparency and with maximum respect for Human Rights (Omotoso, 2013). However, the extent to which all ethnic groups in Nigeria and Nigerian citizens; particularly those from the Southern part of the country enjoyed dividends of democracy for the past 22 years (199-2021) is another worrisome issue.

Undoubtedly, the history of Nigerian democracy accompanied with ethnic chauvinism cum marginalization and unhealthy rivalries among the major dominant ethnic groups vis-à-vis politics of decolonization; resulted in the first attempt of Igbo nationalism manifested in the declaration of the Biafra republic in Nigeria in the year 1967. The struggle cum agitation for the Biafra Republic/secession was resolved by Nigerian State after the civil war that lasted for about 3 years with deadly consequences on lives and properties particularly in the south east Nigeria. The Nigeria civil war between 1967 to 1970 ended with the collapse of Biafra in January 1970 as the major issues of the civil war were resolved in favour of Nigeria under the federal military government who declared the war as 'no victor, no vanquished' (Matumara, 2009: P. 54). The resolution of Nigeria's civil war cum the victory of the Nigerian government over the Biafrans resulted in the re-absorption of the defunct Biafra into Nigeria making the quest for Biafra Republic to fail. As observed in Amadiume (2000), the Nigerian Federal Government opened the military action against the South East on the 5th of July 1967. Thus, the Igbo ethnic group was re-absorbed into Nigeria as conquered people cum territory. As observed in Matumara (2009), there was the feeling that marginalization of the Igbo was widely recognized throughout Nigeria and the 1967 quest for secession was significantly premised on the Igbo's belief that the move to independence had an overwhelming popular support in the Eastern Nigeria. Similarly, Adeyemo (2004) observed that there was deliberate marginalization of the Igbo; according to him, Igbo area suffered neglect in the sense of developmental projects and deliberate policies of non-inclusion of the Igbos in the power structure of the country.

Consequently, the recent resurgence and consciousness for the Igbo nationalism; expressed in the demand for secession owing to the nature of democratic practice in Nigeria (Matumara, 2009). The belief was that transition of Nigeria from military to democratic government combined with federal character principle would ensure equal, equitable and fair distribution and allocation of resources among the six geo-political zones of the country. Since the inception of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, the Democratic dividends have not been on the side of the Igbos. Many Federal Government projects have been presumably concentrated in the North, the principles of Federal Character have hardly been considered in the distribution and allocation of resources, unfair treatment to the Southeastern student in the cause of gaining admission into Unity schools and universities, appointment into political offices, Federal Government empowerment programmes among others, particularly since 2015 have been on the increase and consequently, this triggered and re-awakened the quest for secession by the Biafrans from the oppressive democratic political system. Hinging on the foregoing problematic statements cum context, the researchers made an attempt to ascertain how the nature of pre-democracy and democracy in Nigeria have contributed to separatists' agitation and the quest for secession by the Biafra agitators.

## **II. Methodology**

Methodically, the paper is descriptive in typology and aligns with qualitative orientation. It relied on secondary sources of data cum documented evidence. Data gathered were presented using pictorial, tabular and textual tools. Content analysis cum logical reasoning was employed as instruments of analyzing the data while Hans Morgenthau's realist theory of International Relations was employed as a theoretical guide. Theoretically, the paper builds on Relative Deprivation Theory cum Frustration Aggression Theoretical analysis of Robert Ted Gurr and Robert K. Merton in explaining the relationship between Pre-democracy cum Democracy in Nigeria and separatist agitations by the Biafrans as a result of continuous marginalization. Other proponents cum exponent of the theory are; John Dollars, Robert Sears, Claud Welch among others. The central assumption cum idea of the Relative Deprivation Theory rests on the position of Robert Ted Gurr who posits that the tension that develops from discrepancy between what "ought to be" and the "is" of collective satisfaction and this leads men to violence (Salleh, 2013). Similarly, the development of the theory is often attributed to American sociologist; Robert K. Merton, who studied American soldiers during World War II and revealed that soldiers in the Military police were far less, satisfied with their opportunities for promotion. Subsequently, it is on this basis that a British statesman and sociologist Walter Runciman came up with his own assumption of the theory; "a person does not have something; that person knows other people who have the thing; the person want to have the thing; the person believes they have a reasonable chance of getting the thing"

More so, the proponents and exponents of Relative Deprivation theory are of the assumption that; someone is labeled as deprived if he or she is underprivileged in material or immaterial way. Thus, a person will be relatively deprived if he/she feels anger or dissatisfaction because of his or discrimination cum marginalization in relation to the better situated others. In essence, a common assumption of Relative Deprivation theory which made it suitable for this study is the fact that 'the feeling of being disadvantaged, discriminated or marginalized is related to reference group. Thus, this feeling will arise from the comparison of oneself or group to others (Schulze and Kratschmer-Hahn (2014). In essence, Relative Deprivation is a result of disagreement between what people cum group of people want and their value expectations cum capabilities. Thus, people or group of people revolt when there is no other means or hope of realizing their societal value due to severity of frustration cum discontentment. The theory is found relevant because of its enriched capabilities in explicating the relationship between Marginalization in pre-democracy cum democracy in Nigeria and the quest for secession by the Biafra cum IPOB. In relation to the theory, the problem with Nigerian state to hinge on democratic principles cum Federal Character questions have presumably led to the marginalization of the Igbos, thereby causing discontentment and frustration which have resulted to the quest for secession from the perceived unfair and inequity Nigerian Democratic system and consequently, the higher the level or degree of frustrations which emerge from the Marginalization of the Igbos (Southeast-Nigeria), the higher the frustration cum aggression and quest for agitation for separatism.

### **Democracy**

Democracy as a concept has been numerously used in literature cum by scholars. But the major fact about the concept is that there's no general consensus among scholars regarding its definition. Not even, the popularly known definition of Abraham Lincoln of the United States "Government of the people, by the people and for the people" could stand a test of time as it has been criticized for over simplicity and not encompassing the basic tenets cum principles of democracy. Critically, the scholar's definition is commonly used by laymen and secondary school students. Etymologically, Democracy is derived from two Greek words; which are "demos" (the people) and Kratos (rule or power). Combining the two words, the real meaning of democracy is "a rule by the people", culminating into a popular form of government (Enang, 2021). Subsequently, many literature cum western scholars have precisely defined democracy from the perspective of "a rule by the people". In view of Sodaro (2004: P. 31), the prime idea of democracy is for the people to have the right to determine the leaders who govern them and also elect the governing body and hold them accountable for their actions. From the assertion, democracy imposes legal limits on the authority of the government by guaranteeing certain rights and freedoms to the citizens.

In the same line of thought with Abraham Lincoln, Held (2006) conceptualized democracy as rule by the people. This definition seems to be a common element to all usages of the word and claims a long heritage stretching back to the Classical age of Abraham Lincoln. The notion of democracy has evolved over time considerably. The original form of democracy was a direct democracy. The most common form of democracy today is a representative democracy, where the people elect government officials to govern on their behalf such as in a parliamentary or presidential democracy (Tangian, 2020). On a separate ground, scholars have viewed democracy in terms of election cum struggle for power, in this dimension; democracy is majorly about contestation, and competition (Coppedge et al, 2011). Similarly, Schumpeterian cited in the Coppedge et al (2011), was of the same thought when the scholar asserted that democracy is achieved through competition among leadership groups, which vie for the electorate's approval during periodic elections before a broad

electorate. In view of these scholars, Parties and elections are the crucial ingredients in the largely procedural account of the democratic process. The scholars also take cognizance of many other factors which are of great importance towards ensuring cum enforcing the rules of democracy. , Hence, such factors, include liberties of individuals, an active media, a written cum codified constitution, an independent and impartial judiciary. In view of the scholars, all these can be considered as basic principles of democracy in which every democratic state must hinge on.

Buhlmann (2008) identified three key factors that serve as determinants of democracy; they are freedom, equality and control. In view of the scholar, for democracy to exist, a given political system has to guarantee freedom of equality. Secondly, there should be control by the government vis-a-vis control of the government. In essence, freedom is guaranteed only in political systems in which the government is accountable to its citizens; where the rule of law persists, freedom of expression, minority rights among others are guaranteed. In the view of Hallie (1956), democracy is an essentially contested concept. On a different ground, Landman (2007: P.2) perceived the idea that democracy as a form of governance based on some degree of popular sovereignty and collective decision-making. Dahl's (1971) definition suggested the most procedural means of defining or conceptualizing democracy. The scholars described democracy hinging on two distinct dimensions; contestation and participation. Accordingly, contestation encompasses the uncertain peaceful competition necessary for democratic rule, a principle which presumes the legitimacy of some opposition, the right to challenge incumbents, protection of the twin freedoms of expression and association, the existence of free and fair elections, and a consolidated political party system. On the other hand, participation connotes the idea of popular sovereignty, which presumes the protection of the right to vote as well as the existence of universal suffrage.

Liberal scholars have equally identified eight criteria in defining democracy: these encompass the right to vote; the right to be elected; the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes; elections that are free and fair; freedom of association; freedom of expression; alternative sources of information; and institutions that depend on votes and other expressions of preference, Dahl cited in Dalton, Shin and Jou (2007). Like many other democratic theorists, Dahl is largely equating democracy with the institutions and processes of democratic government. In this regard, equal participation of citizens in free and fair elections and the ability of the electorate cum elections to direct the actions of government are the essence cum fundamental reasons of democracy. Going beyond contestation and participation as posited by previous scholars, liberal definition of democracy encompasses institutional dimension that captures the idea of popular sovereignty, and includes notions of accountability, constraint of leaders, representation of citizens, and universal participation.

More so, liberal democracy perceived true democracy in a rights dimension cum approach, which is upheld through the rule of law, and includes civil, political, property, and minority rights. Social definitions of democracy maintain the institutional and rights dimensions found in liberal definitions of democracy but expand the types of rights that ought to be protected, including social and economic rights (Landman, 2007). In essence, Liberal definitions include the full protection of civil, political, property, and minority rights, which are meant to curb the possible negative consequences of democratic governance based on majority rule only. Collier and Levitsky cited in Baviskar and Malone (2004: P. 5) conceptualized democracy as "a procedural minimum usually presumes fully contested elections with full suffrage and the absence of massive fraud, combined with effective guarantees of civil liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and association". This view of scholars focused on 'means': that is, democracy as a set of procedures to ensure that outcomes are fairly reached, but it does not guarantee the achievement of specific outcomes.

### **The trend of Democracy in Nigeria**

Historically, the origin of democracy is traced to Ancient Greek city-state of the fifth century B.C, with Athens as a good example. Back then, Democracy was the opposite of the aristocracy as a form of governance. The modern democracy was developed between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Hence it was used as a system of Government by which political sovereignty is retained by the people and exercised directly by the citizens. Subsequently, based on its development; democracy became a matter of concerns for many and it was defined at Gettysburg Address of the then United States president; Abraham Lincoln as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. This formed the simple foundational and basic definition of democracy and it has been embraced by many western in their literature (Enang 2021). More so, the history of democracy in Nigeria is traced to its attainment and it began with the success of her 1960 independence. After independence and Republican status in 1960 and; Nigerians became the citizens of the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest democratic country in the world respectively. But due to the first military coup that took place in 1966 and the civil war of 1967 that lasted till 1970, it took Nigeria about 8years (1978) to restore her democratic ideal, although the period did not last for long as it ended in 1983 when some military men came into power visa coup d'etat; however promised to return the country to democracy. Nevertheless, Nigeria's modern constitution became official in 1999 after General Abdusalami Abubakar took the power after the death of General Sani Abacha (Scmidt, 2006).



Olusegun Obasanjo became the president of Nigeria and his emergence put an end to the incessant intervention of the military in Nigerian politics after 30 years. The end of the military rule marked the beginning of a new era of regular elections (the elections of 1999 were considered more successful compared to the previous military rulers). Aside regular election, there were return of civil liberties, press freedom and end to arbitrary arrests, ill-treatments and reductions in the level of violations of Human rights which are the core principles of democracy. Subsequently, Nigeria began a campaign against dictatorial (military) leadership that had crippled her economy and tarnished Nigeria's reputation globally. Today, democracy in Nigeria is celebrated annually. In recognition of the restoration of democracy and its sustenance in Nigeria, every 29<sup>th</sup> of May was declared a public holiday by the President Obasanjo's administration. This date was upheld for about 18 years but it now holds every June 12 yearly as declared by President Muhammadu Buhari as the new day of Democracy in Nigeria in honour of the democratic election of MKO Abiola on June 12, 1993 in what has been considered as the most free and fair elections in the annals of Nigeria (Enang 2021). Despite the annual celebration of Democracy in Nigeria, undeniably, the country is yet to overcome her major problems; these revolve around the issue of insecurities, unequal representations in government, ethnic crisis, banditry, kidnappings, terrorism, separatism among others, with damaging and deadly consequences. However, in spite of the annual celebrations of democracy, the country still has many problems to overcome, particularly, the ones that questioned her democratic existence as a country.

### **Separatists' agitations in Nigeria**

Separatist agitation was derived from the word 'separatism' which may be used to encompass different things ranging from a demand by a unit of a federal state (for example, Nigeria) 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. Nevertheless, scholars have defined separatism to mean "desire of some articulate portion of the population in a section of a sovereign state to loosen or break the political bonds which tie the part to the whole" (Badal, 1976). From the assertion of the scholar, the term separatism is used to mean agitation by a district political unit within a polity for enhanced decentralization of authority by the central government so as to guarantee the sub-national unit greater disunity. Many literature cum scholars have conceptualized the separatist agitations from different views. Ekpo and Agorye (2018: P. 36) described the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as "a secessionist movement based in South East Nigeria with the aim of restoring the defunct Biafra, albeit, through peaceful means". The same scholars later maintained that IPOB is an offshoot of the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) with same objectives as IPOB but in a less radical manner. In fact, it was the 'weakness' in the modus operandi of MASSOB in pursuing its objectives that paved way for the hysteria of the more radical IPOB as an undisputable champion, fronting the Igbo secession (Ekpo and Agorye, 2018).

Allison (2017) described the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a separatist organization in Nigeria with main aim of restoring independent state of Biafra in the Old Eastern Region of Nigeria, comprising mainly of today's South-East and South-South Regions of Nigeria; and also parts of the Middle Belt states of Nigeria such as Benue State and Kogi State, through an independence referendum. In view of this scholar, the major fundamental objective of IPOB is to attain self independence from Nigerian society and this has been the struggle of its members other years. Similarly, scholars have equally described IPOB based on its objectives cum aims, In view of Ekpo and Agorye (2019: P. 5), the objective of IPOB is to facilitate and advocate the Igbo's right to secession cum self determination meanwhile advocating for the right and fundamental freedom of the remnants of the Biafrans who are scattered in all parts of the world as refugees and people in self-exile. Generally, the agitation for the restoration of Biafra is a product of the failure of the Nigerian government to create a sustainable transitional justice system and equal cum fair distribution of natural resources among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria after the 30 months of Nigeria-Biafra war between 1967 and 1970.

Ikpeze (2000), the marginalization of post-war Igbo nation reflected in political power distribution and control of the allocation of material and other resources at the centre. This manifested in three dimensions; economic strangulation, political bureaucratic emasculation and military neutralization and ostracism all tailored at furthering an objective of keeping the race very weak in the context of power equation relative to the other major groups in the country. As observed in Adeshokan and Mahr (2019), the IPOB had earlier criticized the Nigerian federal government for poor investment, political alienation, inequitable resource distribution, ethnic marginalization and heavy military presence, extra-judicial killings in the South-Eastern, South-South and parts of North-Central regions of the country. In view of these scholars, the quest for secession by the IPOB is due to the prevalent marginalization of the Southeast-Nigeria arousing cum inequitable distribution of resources by the Nigerian Government.

More so, scholars have studied IPOB based on the areas of Nigerian government responses to the activities cum menace of the group. As observed in Ibeanu, Iwuamadi and Nwachukwu (2006), the Nigerian State has utilized violent and excessive police force in order to silence pro-Biafran movements. The scholars

also maintained that police against the group had been prevalent since 2014, first targeting MASSOB and IPOB after its formation. In 2008, MASSOB claimed that about 2,020 of their members had been massacred and extra-judicially killed by the Nigerian state. Consequently, Amnesty International (A I) released a report detailing that countless IPOB protesters were killed between the 29th through 30 May 2016 during a governmental operation wanting to prevent IPOB members marching from Nkpor motor park to a rally. On contrary, the Nigerian army claimed that they were acting in self-defense, and that the death count lies at five instead of fifty. These killings have not been investigated by Nigerian government despite urgings from Amnesty International.

### **A brief history of Biafra cum IPOB**

Kirk-Greene cited in Adangor (2017: P. 3) traced the history of the prevalent current separatist agitations in Nigeria to three (3) critical factors which are; 'ethnic pluralism, fear of domination among different ethnic groups and the divisive practice adopted by the colonial masters'. In essence, the scholar maintained that fear of ethnic domination which was the major factor that motivated for Nigeria's federalism, is in many ways. The effect is manifested in the disparities in demography, landmass, educational cum admission into Federal Unity Schools, social and economic reasons among the various groups in Nigeria. Also, the scholar maintained that the divide-and-rule policy of the colonial masters was dictated by the heterogeneity of the population.

Biafra as a separatist agitation group had previously existed as an Independent multi-ethnic Republic consisting of the Igbo, Ijaw, Efik and Ibibio peoples to name a few and was declared by Lieutenant Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu for three years, 1967 through 1970. The federal government fought hard to preserve the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and did not like the idea of an independent state of Biafra. The result of tensions between Biafra and the federal government resulted in the Nigerian civil war that went on for three years. There were an estimated one to 3.5 million deaths that were heavily civilian casualties caused by starvation and death on the side of Biafra (Campbell, 2017). Consequently, in 1970, the Biafran forces surrendered through the armistice brokered by the defunct OAU

Similarly, the evolution of the Indigenous People of Brafra (IPOB) on quest for separatist agitation had been traced to 2012 when the group was formed by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu who is a British-Nigerian political activist, popularly known for his prominent advocacy of the contemporary Biafran independence movement (BBC News, 2017). He created IPOB after he gained fame from his broadcasts on Radio Biafra, which was established in 2009. This was a radio station from London that broadcast messages that called for "freedom of Biafrans and criticised corruption by Nigeria Government. Radio Biafra brought Nnamdi Kanu to the public scene, as he was previously an unknown figure. Nnamdi Kanu was arrested by the Nigerian security forces on 19 October 2015, on charges of "sedition, ethnic incitement and treasonable felony (Ibeanu, Iwuamadi and Nwachukwu, 2006).

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. This, Ekpo (2018:48) has argued, was a culmination of what he described as "Buharophobia" – the fear of Nigeria's incumbent president, Muhammadu Buhari. The authors had corroborated literature which demonstrated the enduring relationship between Buhari and the Igbo during his military regime (1984-1985) as regards his treatment of Igbo Second Republic political leaders and distribution of developmental projects in relation to other regions and ethnicities.

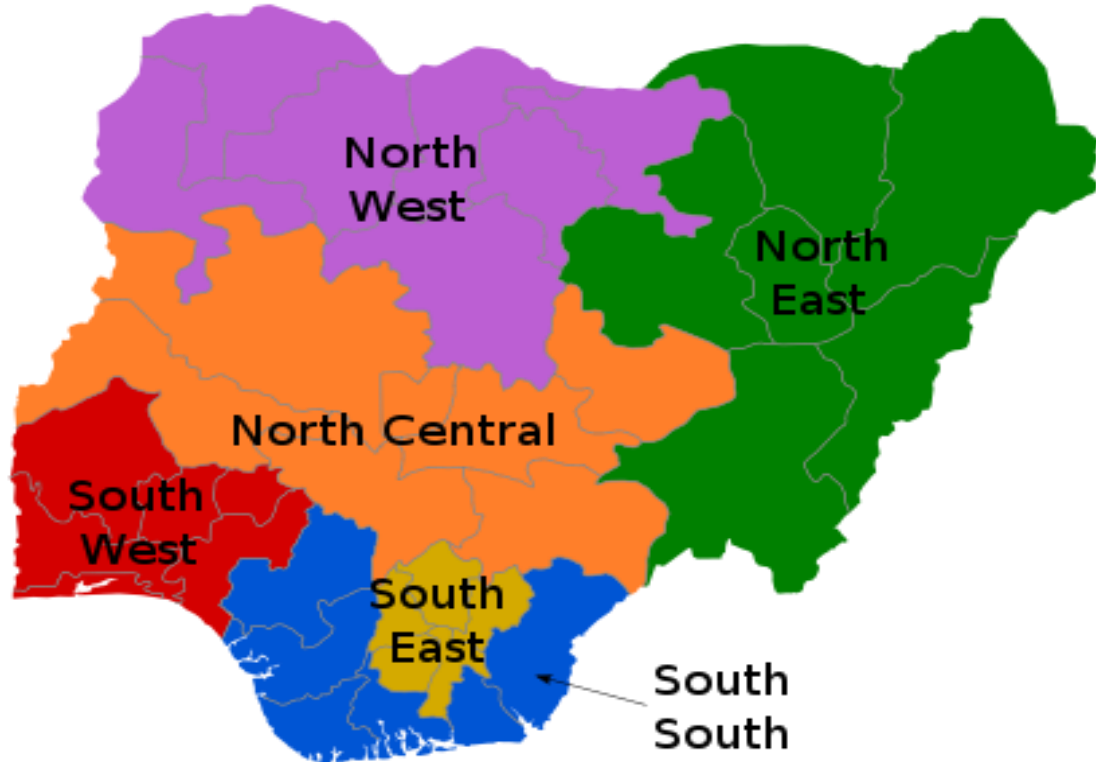
The Federal High Court of Nigeria, in Abuja labelled the IPOB as terrorist organization on 18 September 2017. Consequently, the IPOB fought against this proscription and sought to reverse the court's decision in 2018. However, the group's attempt has ultimately been unsuccessful, and they continue to be declared as terrorist organization under Nigeria's Terrorism Act (Ojoye, 2018). Subsequently, a research by Maya (2006) claimed that Human rights organizations have been keeping records of extrajudicial killings in Biafra. They claim that from August 2015 through February 2016, 170 unarmed civilians were killed and that 400 were arrested, charged or detained without a proper trial

Nnamdi Kanu failed to appear in court since 2017 after he was summoned by Nigerian Government to answer the charges against him. Although, he had been detained without trial for over a year and was arraigned on November 8, 2016 for charges of criminal conspiracy, membership of an illegal organization and intimidation as reported by Onochie and Fehintola (2019). Subsequently, the IPOB leader (Mazi NNAMDI KANU) was granted bail after several public agitations including World Igbo Summit Group in April 2017 because of health concerns that the judge said needed better medical attention outside the prison. Nevertheless, he was not permitted to grant interviews, meeting in groups larger than ten individuals, organizing and attending rallies or social functions. Consequently, NNAMDI Kanu disappeared after September 2017 after a premeditated attack on his home village, Umuahia by the combined forces of the Airforce and Army (Daily Post Staff, 2016; Egwu, 2017). On 29<sup>th</sup> of June, 2021, the Nigerian government announced that Nnamdi Kanu had

been re-arrested; the arrest which many claimed to be extradition cum kidnapping into Nigeria He was subsequently charged to court again and remanded in the custody of the Department of State Services and consequently continued facing trials up till time of writing this paper (January 2022).

**The status of the Igbos before the advent of Democracy in Nigeria (Analysis of Marginalization)**

**FIGURE 1: The Map of Nigeria by Geopolitical Zones**



Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitical\\_zones\\_of\\_Nigeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitical_zones_of_Nigeria)

The Figure 1 shows the map of Nigeria by geopolitical zone. As evident in the picture, the Northern part which consists of the North West, North Central and the North East have the largest share of land mass in Nigeria while the Southern Nigeria, particularly the South East has the lowest portion of land in Nigeria. The North West covers 216,065km square while the entire South South (Niger Delta area) where most of the natural resources in Nigeria are situated possesses less than 7percent of Nigeria’s land mass (Yahaya, 2019). This is equally presented in the table below.

**Table 1: Nigeria’s Land Size in Square Kilometer per Geo-political zone cum all 36 states**

S/N	Name of Geo-Political Zone	List of States per Geo-political zone and land size in Square Kilometer	Geo-political zone by Square Kilometer
1	North Central	Benue (34,059km <sup>2</sup> ), Kogi (29,833km <sup>2</sup> ), Kwara (36,825km <sup>2</sup> ), Nasarawa (27,117km <sup>2</sup> ), Niger (76,363km <sup>2</sup> ), Plateau (30,913km <sup>2</sup> ) and Federal Capital Territory (7,315km <sup>2</sup> )	242,425km <sup>2</sup>
2	North East	Adamawa (36,917km <sup>2</sup> ), Bauchi (45,837km <sup>2</sup> ), Borno (70,898km <sup>2</sup> ), Gombe (18,768km <sup>2</sup> ), Taraba and Yobe (39,762km <sup>2</sup> )	212,182km <sup>2</sup>
3	North West	Jigawa (23,154km <sup>2</sup> ), Kaduna (46,053km <sup>2</sup> ), Kano (20,131km <sup>2</sup> ), Katsina (24,192km <sup>2</sup> ), Kebbi (36,800km <sup>2</sup> ), Sokoto (25,973km <sup>2</sup> ) and Zamfara (39,762km <sup>2</sup> )	216,065km <sup>2</sup>
4	South East (Igbos dominated area)	Abia (6,320km <sup>2</sup> ), Anambra (4841km <sup>2</sup> ), Ebonyi, Enugu (7161km <sup>2</sup> ) and Imo (5530km <sup>2</sup> )	23,852km <sup>2</sup>
5	South-South	Akwa-Ibom (7,081km <sup>2</sup> ), Bayelsa (10,773km <sup>2</sup> ), Cross-River (20,156km <sup>2</sup> ), Delta (17,698km <sup>2</sup> ) Rivers (11,077km <sup>2</sup> ) and Edo (17,802km <sup>2</sup> ).	84,587km <sup>2</sup>
6	South West	Ekiti (6,353km <sup>2</sup> ), Lagos (3345km <sup>2</sup> ), Ogun (16,762km <sup>2</sup> ), Osun (9,251km <sup>2</sup> ), Ondo (15,500km <sup>2</sup> ) and Oyo (28,454km <sup>2</sup> )	79,665

Source: Adapted from Ikenwa (2019).

Table 1 presents Nigeria’s land size in square kilometer per Geo-political zone cum all 36 states in Nigeria. From the table, it is evident that Nigeria’s political structure had for long benefited the North more than

the Southern-Nigeria. The landmass of the entire southern Nigeria, that is Southsouth+SouthEast+SouthWest; all combined together is smaller than the smallest geopolitical zone in the North. In essence, many Nigerians, particularly from the South East and South West have being clamouring for political restructuring or secession from the perceived exploitative political system and this is considered one of the reasons for the long historical struggle for secession by those in the Southeast. Also, from the table, the South-East Nigeria has the lowest landmass in Nigeria; this is an indication that the SouthEasterners cum the Igbos have been marginalized before the era of democratic transition and practices in Nigeria.

**Table 2: The six Geo-political zone in Nigeria and the number of States that make up each of the Geo-political zones**

S/N	Name of Geo-Political Zone	List of States per Geo-political zone	Number of States per Geo-political zone
1	North Central	Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and Federal Capital Territory,	6 states + FCT
2	North East	Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe	6
3	North West	Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara	7
4	<b>South East (Igbos dominated area)</b>	<b>Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo</b>	<b>5</b>
5	South-South	Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Rivers and Edo	6
6	South West	Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo and Oyo	6

Source: adapted from [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitical\\_zones\\_of\\_Nigeria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitical_zones_of_Nigeria)

The table 2 presented the number of States per geo-political zone of Nigeria. Nigeria as an entity is divided in 6 geopolitical zones as presented in the table. From the table, The Igbos dominated cum the South-east region has the lowest number of state compared to all other geopolitical zones. This can also be considered as evidence of marginalization that instigated the separatist movement of the Igbos/Biafrans cum political restructuring by some geo-political zones who felt they have been marginalized structurally.

**Table 3: Distribution of Local Government Councils per Geo-Political zone**

S/N	Geo-Political Zone	List of States and Numbers of Local Government	Total Number of Local Government Per Geo-Political Zone
1	North Central	Benue 22, Kogi 20, Kwara 16, Niger 24, Nasarawa 13, Plateau 17 and FCT 6	22+20+16+24+13+17+6= <b>118</b>
2	North East	Adamawa 22, Bauchi 20, Borno 27, Gombe 11, Taraba 16 and Yobe 17	22+20+27+11+16+17= <b>113</b>
3	North West	Jigawa 27, Kaduna 23, Kano 44, Katsina 34, Kebbi 22, Sokoto 22 and Zamfara 14	27+23+44+34+22+22+14= <b>186</b>
4	<b>South-East (Igbos dominated area)</b>	<b>Abia 17, Anambra 21, Ebonyi 13, Enugu 17 and Imo 27</b>	<b>17+21+13+17+27=95</b>
5	South South	Akwa-Ibom 31, Bayelsa 9, Cross-River 18, Rivers 23, Delta 25 and Edo 19	31+9+18+23+25+19= <b>125</b>
6	South West	Ekiti 6, Lagos 20, Ogun 19, Osun 30, Ondo 18 and Oyo 34	16+20+19+30+18+34= <b>137</b>

Source: adapted from [www.clgf.org.uk/nigeria](http://www.clgf.org.uk/nigeria)

Table 3 demonstrates cum presents the Local Government Council in Nigeria based on geo-political zones. Again, from the data presented in the table, it is evident that the Igbos dominated area of the Southeast Nigeria has been marginalized; while 186 Local Government councils were established in the North-west Nigeria, only 95 were established in the Southeast Nigeria, this is about half of the Northwest. Consequently, this has resulted to demands by some states in the Southern region for creation of more Local Governments within their entities. In essence, this is an evidence of marginalization that must have contributed to the development of Biafrans separatist groups in the past and present.

**Table 4: Pre-democracy Chronological list of Past Presidents and Heads of State in Nigeria**

S/N	NAME	PERIOD OF SERVICE	GEO-POLITICAL ZONE
1	Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa	1960-1966	North East (Bauchi State)
2	Chief Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe	1963-1966	South East (Anambra State)
3	Major Gen. John Aguiyi Ironsi	JAN. 1966-JUNE 1966	South East (Abia State)
4	Gen. Yakubu Gowon	1966-1975	North Central (Plateau State)
5	Gen. Murtala Mohammed	1975-1975	North West (Kano State)
6	Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	1976-1979	South West (Ogun State)
7	Shehu Shagari	1979-1983	North West (Sokoto State)
8	Major Gen. Muhammadu Buhari	1983-1985	North West (Katsina State)



9	Gen. Ibrahim Babangida	1985-1993	North Central (Niger State)
10	Chief Ernest Adekunle Shonekan	August 1993-Nov. 1993	South West (Lagos State)
11	Gen. Sani Abacha	1993-1998	North West (Kano State)
12	Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar	1998-1999	North Central (Niger State)

**Source:** adapted from the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (Website).

The table 4 demonstrated the past heads of state cum presidents in Nigeria before the advent of Nigerian democracy in 1999. The year reviewed in the table covered 1960-1999; 39years pro-democracy rule. Out of 39years, the Igbos/Southeast ruled for just three (3) years only (1963-1966) which is the lowest rule by any geo-political zone in the annals of Nigeria. In essence, the position of power in Nigeria did not favour the Southeast. It is expected to be rotated across all the six (6) geo-political zones of Nigeria. Consequently, the Igbos/Southeast feels cheated when Power comes more from other geo-political zones compared to them. This must have contributed to the rise of Biafrans separatist before the advent of democracy in Nigeria.

The foregoing analysis depicts the status of the Biafrans cum Igbo dominated geo-political zone (Southeast) in the resource allocation in Nigeria before the era of democracy. From the foregoing presentation and analysis of data; the researcher found out that exploitative relationship between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Southeast region vis-à-vis marginalization of the Igbos dominated region in the allocation of resources was majorly responsible for the separatist agitation of the Biafrans before the advent of democracy in the country. Imperatively, it was revealed that inequitable distribution of resources such as power rotations, Local Government Councils, number of States across the regions, land mass per geo-political zone among others are factors responsible for the separatist agitation of the Biafrans in Nigeria before the advent of democracy in the country.

#### **The status of the Igbos during democracy in Nigeria (Analysis of Marginalization)**

**Table 5: Service Chiefs appointed by the Federal Government from 2015 to 2019**

S/N	Name of Appointee	Office/Position	Geo-political zone/State
1	Major-General T.Y Buratai	Chief of Army Staff	North East (Borno State)
2	Air Vice Marshal Sadique Abubakar	Chief of Air Staff	North East (Bauchi State)
3	Major-General Babagana Monguno (rtd.)	National Security Adviser	North East (Borno state)
4	Rear Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas	Chief of Naval Staff	South South (Cross Rivers State)
5	Major-General Abayomi Gabriel Olonishakin	Chief of Defence Staff	South West (Ekiti State)
6	Air Vice Marshal Monday Riku Morgan	Chief of Defence Intelligence	North Central (Benue State)

**Source:** Adapted from Usman (2015)

Table 5 presents the list of Service Chiefs appointed by Nigerian government between 2015 and 2019. From the table, none of the appointed Service Chiefs is from the Southeast Nigeria but majorly from the North. Meanwhile based on the principles of equity and federal character put in place by the Nigerian democratic government, since the number of appointments is six (6) and Nigeria's geo-political zones is divided into six, it is expected that the resource (appointment) should be shared equally, and one per geo-political zone. In essence, this evidence of marginalization must have been one of the reasons for the increased tensions by the IPOB towards exiting themselves from the Nigeria's democratic system that does not fairly take them into consideration in the allocation of values.

**Table 6: President Muhammad Buhari's first appointments into Political offices 2015-2019**

S/N	NAME OF APPOINTEE	OFFICE/POSITION	GEO-POLITICAL ZONE/ STATE OF ORIGIN
1	Ahmed Idris	Accountant General of the Federation	North West (Kano Satte)
2	Femi Adesina	Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity	South West (Osun State)
3	Paul Boroh	Special Adviser, Niger Delta Amnesty Office	South South (Bayelsa State)
4	Lt. Col. Ababukar Lawal	Aide de Camp to the President	North West (Kano State)
5	Lawal Daura	Director General, State Security Services (SSS)	North West (Katsina State)
6	Baba Haruna Jauro	Acting Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration, Safety and Security Agency (NIMASA)	North East (Yobe State)
7	Garba Shehu	Senior Special Assistant, Media and Publicity	North West (Kano State)
8	Amina Zakari	Acting Chairperson, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)	North West (Jigawa State)
9	Umaru Dambatta	Executive Vice Chairman/ Executive officer, Nigerian Communication Commission	North West (Kano State)
10	Lawal Abdullahi Kazaure	State Chief of Protocol /Special Assistant to the President on Presidential Matters	North West (Jigawa State)
11	Habibu Abdulahi	Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority	North West (Kano State)

		(NPA)	
12	Muhammed Kari	Commissioner for Insurance and Chief Executive of the National Insurance Commission	North West (State not verified)
13	Babatunde Fowler	Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS)	South West (Lagos State)
14	Hameed Ibrahim Ali	Comptroller-General, Nigerian Customs Service	North West (Kaduna State)
15	Modesai Baba Ladan	Director, Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR)	North West (Kano State)
16	Aliyu Gasau	Director-General, Budget Office of the Federation	North West (Zamfara State)
17	Kure Martin Abeshi	Comptroller-General, Nigerian Immigration Service	North Central (Nasarawa State)
18	Suleiman Kawu	Senior Special Assistant on National Assembly (National House of Representatives) Matters	North West (Kano State)
19	Late Abba Kyari	Chief of Staff to the President	North East (Borno State)
20	Ita Enang	Senior Special Assistant on National Assembly (Senate House) Matters	South South (Akwa Ibom State)
21	Babachir David Lawal	Secretary to Government of the Federation	North East (Adamawa State)
22	Emmanuel Kachikwu	Group Managing Director, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)	South South (Delta State)

Source: Adapted from Alumona, Azom and Iloh (N.D).

The table 6 illustrated the President Muhammadu Buhari's first appointment into political offices from 2015 to 2019. From the table, it is obvious that out 22 political appointees, none of them is from the Igbo dominated geo-political zone or from the South East Nigeria. It is expected that out of 22 political appointments, supposedly hinged on Federal Character principles, at least, a minimum of 3 appointments were to be allocated to the South East which is an exception on the list. By, implication, this is an obvious marginalization of the Biafrans cum IPOB; because all other regions benefited from the appointment except the Southeast. In essence, the failure of the Nigerian democratic government to fairly and equitably allocate national values cum resources has resulted in the quick consciousness of the Igbos in seceding from the perceived oppressive political system.

**Table 7: Ministerial appointments in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019**

	Portofolio/Ministries	Name of appointees	Geo-political zone cum State of the Appointees
1	Minister of Labour and Employment	Chris Ngige	Anambra State, <b>South-east</b>
2	Minister of Solid Minerals	Kayode Fayemi	Ekiti State, <b>South-west</b>
3	Minister of Transportation	Rotimi Amaechi	Rivers State, <b>South-south</b>
4	Minister of Power, Works and Housing	Babatunde Fashola	Lagos State, <b>South-west</b>
5	Minister of Interior	Abdulrahman Dambazau	Kano State, <b>North-west</b>
6	Minister of Women Affairs	Aisha Alhassan	Taraba State, <b>North-East</b>
7	Minister of Science and Technology	Ogbonaya Onu	Ebonyi State, <b>South-east</b>
8	Minister of Finance	Kemi Adeosun	Ogun State, <b>South-west</b>
9	Minister of Justice and Attorney General.	Abubakar Malami	Kebbi State, <b>North-central</b>
10	Minister of State, Aviation	Sen. Hadi Sirika	Katsina, <b>North-West</b>
11	Minister of Communication	Barr. Adebayo Shittu	Oyo State, <b>South-west</b>
12	Minister of Water Resources	Suleiman Adamu	Jigawa State, <b>North-West</b>
13	Minister for Youth and Sports	Solomon Dalong	Plateau, <b>North-Central</b>
14	Minister of State, Petroleum	Ibe Kachikwu	Delta State, <b>South-south</b>
15	Minister of State, Health	Osagie Ehanire	Edo State, <b>South-south</b>
16	Minister of Agriculture	Audu Ogheh	Benue State, <b>South-south</b>
17	Minister of Budget and National Planning	Udou do Udoma	Akwa Ibom State, <b>South-south</b>
18	Minister of Information	Lai Mohammed	Kwara State, <b>North-central</b>
19	Minister of Environment	Amina Mohammed	Gombe State, <b>North-East</b>
20	Minister of State, Environment	Ibrahim Usman Jibril	Gombe State, <b>North-East</b>
21	Minister of State, Foreign Affairs	Hajia Khadija Ibrahim	Yobe State, <b>North-central</b>
22	Minister of State, Niger Delta	Cladius Omoleye Daramola	Ondo State, <b>South-west</b>
23	Minister of State, Education	Prof. Anthony Onwuka	Imo State, <b>South-east</b>
24	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Geoffrey Onyema	Enugu State, <b>South-east</b>
25	Minister of Defence	Dan Ali	Zamfara State, <b>North-West</b>
26	Minister of State, Labour and Employment	Barr. James Ocholi	Kogi State, <b>North-central</b>
27	Minister of State Budget and National Planning	Zainab Ahmed	Kaduna State, <b>North-West</b>
28	Minister of Trade, Investment and Industry	Okechukwu Enelamah	Abia State, <b>South-east</b>
29	Minister of Federal Capital Territory	Muhammadu Bello	Adamawa State, <b>North-East</b>
30	Minister of State, Power	Mustapha Baba Shehuri	Borno State, <b>North-east</b>

31	Minister of State, Trade and Investment	Aisha Abubakar	Sokoto State, <b>North-West</b>
32	Minister of State, Agriculture	Heineken Lokpobiri	Bayelsa State, <b>South-south</b>
33	Minister of Education	Adamu Adamu	Bauchi State, <b>North-East</b>
34	Minister of Health	Isaac Adewole	Osun State, <b>South-west</b>
35	Minister of State, Solid Minerals	Abubakar Bawa Bwari	Niger State, <b>North-Central</b>
36	Minister of Niger Delta	Pastor Usani Uguru	Cross River, <b>South South</b>
37	Minister of Petroleum	Muhammadu Buhari	Katsina State, <b>North-West</b>

Source: Vanguard News (2015).

The table 7 illustrated the ministerial appointments by the Nigerian Federal Government into the various ministries. From the table, it is evident that appointments were distributed to all the six-geo-political zones; supposedly distributed based on equity; out of 37 appointments, at least 6 is expected to be allocated to the South East region but unfortunately, due to the trend of marginalization of the Biafrans, only 5 were allocated to the region. This is an evidence of marginalization of the Igbo.

**Table 8: Number of NPOWER Programme Beneficiaries per Geo-political zone/state**

S/N	North Central	
	State	Number of Beneficiaries
1	Benue	18,000
2	Kogi	12,211
3	Kwara	13,154
4	Nasarawa	12,504
5	Niger	12,776
6	Plateau	11,700
7	F.C.T, Abuja	14,116
	<b>Total</b>	<b>94,461</b>
	<b>North East</b>	
8	Adamawa	11,620
9	Bauchi	13,075
10	Borno	12,766
11	Gombe	10,909
12	Taraba	10,914
13	Yobe	11,296
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70,580</b>
	<b>North West</b>	
14	Jigawa	11,365
15	Kaduna	18,000
16	Kano	18,002
17	Katsina	13,313
18	Kebbi	10,559
19	Sokoto	10,903
20	Zamfara	10,560
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92,702</b>
	<b>Southeast (Biafrans dominated region)</b>	
21	Abia	11,285
22	Anambra	14,116
23	Ebonyi	10,561
24	Enugu	16,542
25	Imo	12,392
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64,896</b>

<b>South South</b>		
26	Akwa-Ibom	12,278
27	Bayelsa	10,561
28	Cross Rivers	11,012
29	Delta	17,810
30	Edo	12,340
31	Rivers	17,987
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81,988</b>
<b>South West</b>		
32	Ekiti	10,563
33	Lagos	17,998
34	Ogun	15,563
35	Ondo	13,460
36	Osun	17,999
37	Oyo	18,001
	<b>Total</b>	<b>93,584</b>
	<b>Sum Total</b>	<b>498,211</b>

Source: adapted from NPOWER Discussion Group

The table 8 demonstrated the allocation of Npower programme beneficiaries across the 6 geo-political zones in Nigeria. From the table it is evident that the South-East region (dominated by the Igbo) had the lowest (64,896) beneficiaries from the Federal Government empowerment cum poverty alleviation programme among the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. In essence, this is one of the evidence of marginalization of the Biafran/Igbo by the Nigerian government that must have triggered their claims and agitation for secession in recent time.

**Table 9: Cut-off Marks for Admission into Federal Unity Schools for all States in Nigeria**

S/N	State	Male Student	Female Student
<b>North Central</b>			
1	Benue	111	111
2	Kogi	119	119
3	Kwara	123	123
4	Nasarawa	58	58
5	Niger	93	93
6	Plateau	97	97
7	F.C.T, Abuja	90	90
<b>North East</b>			
8	Adamawa	62	62
9	Bauchi	35	35
10	Borno	45	45
11	Gombe	58	58
12	Taraba	3	11
13	Yobe	2	27
<b>North West</b>			
14	Jigawa	44	44
15	Kaduna	91	91
16	Kano	67	67
17	Katsina	60	60
18	Kebbi	9	20
19	Sokoto	9	13
20	Zamfara	4	2
<b>Southeast (Biafran dominated area)</b>			
21	Abia	130	130
22	Anambra	139	139
23	Ebonyi	112	112
24	Enugu	134	134
25	Imo	138	138
<b>SouthSouth</b>			



26	Akwa-Ibom	123	123
27	Bayelsa	72	72
28	Cross Rivers	97	97
29	Delta	131	131
30	Edo	127	127
31	Rivers	118	118
	<b>South West</b>		
32	Ekiti	119	110
33	Lagos	133	133
34	Ogun	131	131
35	Ondo	126	126
36	Osun	127	127
37	Oyo	127	127

Source: Adapted from Odunsi (2017).

The table 9 presented the Cut-off mark for admission into Federal Unity schools in Nigeria. From the table, it is evident that that the students from the Southern-Nigeria were being placed on high score compared to the Northern-Nigeria as demonstrated in the table. In the North East and the North West, a student can be allowed to enter into Federal Government Unity School with as low as 2 marks while the lowest minimum in the South East for any student to enter in the same school in South East is 112. In essence many children from the Northern Nigerian would have more access to western cum formal education while indirectly depriving those from the South, particularly, the South East the same opportunity; this is an indicator of marginalization of the Igbo. In a nutshell, the problem of separatism by the Biafrans in Nigeria is still prevalent despite the practice of democracy in the country. Consequently, the various evidence of marginalization in Nigerian democracy has contributed to the continuous agitation for separatism by the group cum the Igbos.

### **III. Conclusion**

The main focus of this study is to ascertain how democracy in Nigeria has contributed to the Separatist agitations of the Biafra. From the presentation and analysis of data, it is evident that the nature of Nigerian democracy vis-à-vis marginalization of the Southeast Nigeria has reawakened the separatist movement by the group. On this basis, an urgent solution is needed. Thus, the nature of Nigerian democracy has partly contributed to the separatist agitations of Biafra in recent time.

### **Recommendations**

Based on findings, the paper made the following recommendations;

- ❖ As a matter of urgency; there is need for Nigerian Federal Government to address the root causes of the separatist agitation through national dialogue with the group in order to end marginalization of the Southeast-Nigerian (The Igbos cum Biafrans dominated area).
- ❖ More so, there is need for political restructuring in a way that every geo-political zone will have equal allocation of resources (such as Local Governemnt Councils, States, Federal Government empowerment programme among others) from the Federal Government irrespective of its population.
- ❖ In addition, the Nigerian federal government should take cognizance of the principle of democracy such as equal representation of all ethnic groups in the country, respect for the rule of law and human rights among others.

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