



RESEARCH ARTICLE

DELUSION OF BOUNDARY DEMARCATION IN IGBOLAND: THE QUESTION OF ETHNIC-BOUNDARY IDENTITY IN NIGERIA, 1960-2019.

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ABSTRACT:

The paper interrogates demarcation of boundaries in Igboland and the broader question of ethnic identity in Nigeria, 1960 to 2019 has been central to the nation's socio-political evolution. Following Nigeria's independence in 1960, the issue of boundary formation and the determination of ethnic identity became pivotal in the political struggles of different ethnic groups, particularly the Igbo. The daunting drawback of Igbo communities in Nigeria is the question of geopolitical area. It is very amazing the overt dereliction of justice in 1976 when the Mamman Nasir Federal Government Boundary Adjustment Commission made frantic effort to cede/demarcate some core Igboland territories into some neighboring states of the south- south geo-polity of Nigeria. The historical complexity of Igbo identity shaped by both internal diversities and external influences has been a key driver of the narrative surrounding ethnicity, regionalism, and national unity. Historical analysis has been employed as the study method. This article delves into the evolution of Igbo ethnic identity, the political significance of boundary demarcation, and the consequences of national cohesion in Nigeria. By examining key events such as the Civil War (1967-70), the reshaping of states, and contemporary challenges, this article argues that the complexities surrounding the boundary and ethnic identity question have often been overlooked, leading to a persistent sense of marginalization and delusion of national unity. The paper concludes thus; the federal government should through her special commissions on boundary waddle into resolving the boundary imbroglios with a view to achieving sustainable development in the study area, and to guarantee peaceful co-existence.

Keywords; Boundary, dispute, adjustment, territory, development, demarcation, dereliction.

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1. 0. INTRODUCTION

The Igbo, one of Nigeria's largest ethnic groups, have long navigated the turbulent waters of ethnic identity and political marginalization. With boundaries that often shifted as a result of colonialism, post-colonial statecraft, and Nigeria's changing political landscape, the process of boundary demarcation within Igboland has mirrored the complexities of defining ethnic identities in the context of a multicultural state. From 1960, the onset of independence, to the contemporary era of 2019, the question of ethnic identity and territorial demarcation in Igboland has been fraught with challenges, misunderstandings, and political maneuverings that have, in many ways, distorted the true essence of Igbo ethnicity. Over the years, the evolution of Igbo identity has been shaped by shifting boundaries, both imposed and self asserted, as well as by deep political and social upheavals, particularly after Nigeria's independence in 1960. The partitioning of Igboland, exacerbated by colonial and post-colonial political decisions, the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), and ongoing struggles for political autonomy have left the question of ethnic identity unresolved. The delineation of boundaries, both geographical and cultural, has thus emerged as a central issue in understanding Igbo identity in modern-day Nigeria.

This article investigates the historical, political, and social forces that have shaped the boundaries of Igboland and the Igbo ethnic identity from 1960 to 2019. Through an examination of state creation, the impact of colonial and post-colonial governance, the Biafran War, and contemporary movements for autonomy, the study explores how these boundaries have been formed and contested. The article also delves into how these demarcations have led to a persistent sense of marginalization and confusion regarding the Igbo's place within Nigeria. By understanding the intricacies of boundary demarcation and its relationship with ethnic identity, we gain a better perspective on the ongoing political discourse and the continuing relevance of ethnic divisions in Nigerian politics.



2.0. Literature Review

The Colonial policy: Unclear Boundaries and Complex Identities

Nigeria's colonial **history** significantly impacted the construction of ethnic boundaries and identities. During the colonial period, British administrators adopted a policy of indirect rule, which often disregarded the complexities of ethnic groupings and socio-political structures. In the case of the Igbo, the boundaries of Igboland were largely defined by colonial expediency, lumping together a variety of culturally distinct groups under a broad Igbo identity. These boundaries often failed to reflect the ethnic and cultural distinctions that existed among Igbo communities, and this blurred the lines between different groups, setting the stage for future disputes.

Post-Independence and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism in Nigeria

The end of colonial rule in 1960 marked a period of growing ethnic nationalism in Nigeria. The creation of regional states, such as the Eastern Region where the majority of Igbo people resided, failed to completely satisfy and sustain the desires for political and cultural liberalization among the Igbo. The centralization of power in the hands of a few ethnic groups, notably the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba, led to a feeling of alienation among the Igbo, who felt increasingly marginalized in the newly nascent independent Nigeria. This alienation culminated in the events that led to the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), also known as the Biafran War, which was largely a response to the Igbo's perceived marginalization and subjugation in an environment they fought to be free from external suppression.

The Civil War: A Crisis of Identity and Territory

The Nigerian Civil War was a turning point in the discussion of ethnic identity and boundaries. In 1967, the Igbo, under the leadership of Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, declared the secession of the Eastern Region from Nigeria, naming it the Republic of Biafra. This move was both a



response to ethnic violence, particularly the massacre of Igbo people in the northern regions, and an assertion of an independent Igbo identity. The war's aftermath left the Igbo community deeply scarred and further divided along community lines. The Politics of Identity and the Creation of New Boundaries

The Nigerian Civil War was a crucial turning point in the history of boundary demarcation and ethnic identity in Igboland. The war was sparked by tensions over the political future of the Igbo, who felt politically isolated and disenfranchised. As the war unfolded, territorial boundaries were drawn along ethnic lines, with the Nigerian government and the Biafran secessionists controlling different regions. The war itself resulted in widespread destruction, loss of life, and a further entrenchment of ethnic divisions within Nigeria. The Politics of Identity and the Creation of New Boundaries

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At the end of the war, the Nigerian government implemented measures to reintegrate the southeastern region into the country. However, the failure to address the grievances of the Igbo and other ethnic groups within the region led to a continued sense of injustice. Post-war restructuring, which involved the creation of new states within Nigeria, was seen by many as an attempt to divide and weaken the political power of the Igbo. The creation of Imo, Anambra, and other states within the southeastern region fractured the Igbo identity even further, as the communities that had once shared common cultural practices and political affiliations were now divided by administrative boundaries.



While these new states allowed for more localized governance, they did little to resolve the deep-seated issues of economic underdevelopment, political alienation, and lack of representation that the Igbo faced. The sense of boundary confusion persisted, as new administrative borders were created without a genuine consideration of the Igbo's cultural and political cohesion. At the end of the war, the Nigerian government implemented measures to reintegrate the southeastern region into the country. However, the failure to address the grievances of the Igbo and other ethnic groups within the region led to a continued sense of injustice. Post-war restructuring, which involved the creation of new states within Nigeria, was seen by many as an attempt to divide and weaken the political power of the Igbo. The creation of Imo, Anambra, and other states within the southeastern region fractured the Igbo identity even further, as the communities that had once shared common cultural practices and political affiliations were now divided by administrative boundaries.

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4.0.DISCOURSES

4.1. Political Economy of Boundary Demarcation: State Creation and Resource control and Distribution

In Nigeria, the politics of state creation have had significant implications for the demarcation of ethnic boundaries. The creation of states within Nigeria was often a response to the demands of various ethnic groups, who sought greater political freedom and control over resources. The Igbo, particularly in the post-civil war period, continued to demand fair representation and equitable distribution of national resources. However, the creation of states in the southeastern region of Nigeria did not necessarily reflect the Igbo desire for political autonomy, but rather the



Nigerian state's attempt to diffuse ethnic tensions by fragmenting larger ethnic territories into smaller administrative units.

The introduction of new states within the Igbo-speaking region, such as Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Abia, and Ebonyi, has also sparked debates and arguments about the economic and political benefits of these administrative divisions. While some argue that state creation in Igboland has enabled greater local governance, others believe it has fragmented the Igbo nation, making it more difficult to address collective grievances and seek unified political action within the region. Additionally, the allocation of resources among these states remains a contentious issue, with many Igbo feeling that their region continues to receive inadequate attention and support from the federal government led administration .

Despite these administrative trends, the Igbo continue to experience a sense of political and economic marginalization, exacerbating the feeling that boundary demarcation has been less about fostering unity and more about maintaining control. The MammanNasir federal government Boundary Adjustment Commission 1976, worsened the situation through its recommendations and implementation of the Report. The historical distribution of resources, particularly oil revenues in the Niger Delta, has also become a source of tension between the Igbo and other ethnic groups, with some arguing that the Igbo are shortchanged in the sharing of the nation's wealth.

4.2. Resurgence of Biafran Irredentism: The Modern-Day Struggle for Identity

Perhaps one of the most striking developments in the debate over Igbo ethnic identity and boundary demarcation is the resurgence of Biafran nationalism in the 21st century. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), led by Nnamdi Kanu, has become the most visible group advocating for the secession of southeastern Nigeria from the rest of the country. IPOB's call for the restoration of Biafra has its roots in the emotional and political legacy of the Nigerian Civil War, during which millions of Igbo people were killed and displaced. The desire for Biafran



independence is not merely about territorial separation but also a quest for self-determination and recognition of the Igbo as an equal partner in the Nigerian federation.

The resurgence of Biafran nationalism underscores a persistent dissatisfaction with the way ethnic identity has been managed in Nigeria. For many Igbos, Biafra represents not only a political ideal but also an assertion of cultural pride and historical resilience. IPOB's demand for a Biafran state is rooted in a deep sense of injustice, perceived historical wrongs, and an enduring sense of Igbo distinctiveness that continues to clash with the broader Nigerian state.

However, this movement has also sparked significant controversy, with critics arguing that the pursuit of secession could destabilize Nigeria and further entrench ethnic divisions. The Nigerian government has responded harshly to the Biafran calls, with arrests and violent confrontations between IPOB members and security forces. The presence of the Biafran flag in the region, as well as other symbols of independence, remains a flashpoint for national discourse on ethnic identity, unity, and territoriality.

Place of the Nigerian State: Federalism, Centralization, and the Marginalization of the Igbo people. A crucial aspect of the discussion surrounding ethnic identity and boundary demarcation in Igboland is the nature of Nigeria's federal system. Nigeria's federal structure, which was originally designed to accommodate its diverse ethnic groups, has often been criticized for fostering political centralization rather than decentralization. The concentration of power in the federal government has led to what many perceive as the political and economic marginalization of the southeastern region, where the majority of the Igbo live.

The Igbo, as so called minority group in a federal system dominated by the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba, have consistently expressed dissatisfaction with their treatment in the context of federal governance and character. This sense of marginalization is most apparent in issues of political appointments, the allocation of resources, and the distribution of infrastructure projects. Despite being one of the most economically viable, active and innovative ethnic groups in Nigeria, the



Igbo continue to feel politically sidelined and humiliated, with their regions underdeveloped and economically disadvantaged till date.

The centralization of power, coupled with a lack of true federalism, has led many Igbo people to question the feasibility of national unity. In the eyes of many, the restructuring of Nigeria to ensure a more equitable distribution of power and resources has become synonymous with the restoration of the Igbo's rightful place within the federation. The battle for a more inclusive, decentralized Nigeria is intricately linked to the question of Igbo identity and the continuing struggle for equitable territorial representation.

4.3. Consequences of Diasporic Identities on Igbo Boundary Demarcation

Another crucial aspect of Igbo ethnic identity in the post-independence period is the role of the Igbo diaspora. The Igbo, who have long been recognized as one of the most mobile ethnic groups in Nigeria, have a substantial presence in various parts of the world, particularly in the United States, the United Kingdom, and other parts of Africa. The existence of a global Igbo community has influenced perceptions of what it means to be "Igbo" and has contributed to the expansion of the Igbo identity beyond the geographic confines of southeastern Nigeria.

In recent years, the Igbo diaspora has played an important role in advocating for the Igbo's political and cultural rights within Nigeria. They have used international platforms to draw attention to issues of marginalization, state oppression, and the continued agitation for Biafran independence. Additionally, the diaspora has become a critical source of financial support for initiatives within Igboland, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, education, healthcare and other spheres of life. However, the emergence of a diasporic Igbo identity also complicates the issue of boundary demarcation. As the diaspora grows, the notion of an "authentic" Igbo identity becomes increasingly diffuse, challenging the boundaries that have traditionally defined Igboland. The Igbo diaspora often engages in global advocacy for Biafran freedom.



Language and Culture as factors in Defining Igbo Ethnic Identity

Language and culture play a fundamental role in shaping ethnic identity, particularly for the Igbo people. The Igbo language, with its numerous dialects, has long been a symbol of unity and a marker of Igbo identity, despite internal diversities. The complexities of Igbo identity are often expressed in linguistic variations across regions, which include differences in accent, vocabulary, and expressions. However, these regional differences are often overlooked when discussing the broader concept of Igbo ethnicity in the context of boundary demarcation.

Culturally, the Igbo share common values, traditions, and social structures that have been passed down for generations, even as their geographic boundaries have shifted. Practices such as communal living, respect for elders, and the significance of traditional institutions like the "Igbo village meeting" (the Umu Ada or Igwe), have remained pillars of Igbo society. Nevertheless, the challenge in demarcating boundaries is that the cultural markers that traditionally defined the Igbo identity are often diluted when political boundaries are imposed.

The widespread adoption of English, the official language of Nigeria, further complicates the matter. In both urban and rural areas, English has become the lingua franca, while local languages, including Igbo, are often relegated to the background, especially in state and national political discourse. This language shift has both eroded cultural homogeneity and introduced new challenges to the creation of a cohesive Igbo identity. Moreover, the disintegration of Igbo culture into fragmented dialects poses another challenge to a unified Igbo self-concept, further clouding the clarity of ethnic boundaries.

Military and Political Influence in Shaping Boundaries and Identity

The military regimes that ruled Nigeria for much of the late 20th century had a significant impact on the demarcation of boundaries in Igboland and the construction of ethnic identities. Following the Civil War, Nigeria's military governments, under leaders like General Yakubu Gowon



(1966-1975), General Olusegun Obasanjo (1976-1979), and later military rulers, often employed boundary redrawing as a political tool. These redrawn boundaries, with little consultation with local populations, frequently disregarded ethnic histories and traditional territories in favor of consolidating power or appeasing rival political groups.

For example, the military regimes implemented various state creations, which impacted the Igbo ethnic group by dividing traditional Igbo territories into multiple states with different political leaderships. The subsequent establishment of the 1999 Constitution, which enshrined federalism, only reinforced these divides without addressing the underlying issue of ethnic autonomy. Although some of the new states provided economic and political benefits, the Igbo often felt that their ethnic identity and the region's political cohesion were undermined by an overarching military regime that imposed top-down decisions.

In this regard, military rule in Nigeria not only impacted the physical boundaries of ethnic groups but also played a key role in shaping the political consciousness of the Igbo. The experience of militarization, political exclusion, and state marginalization further cemented the sense of historical and contemporary injustice within Igbo communities, fueling movements for greater political autonomy or even secession.

Education and Media in Shaping Igbo Identity

In post-colonial Nigeria, education and media have played crucial roles in both reinforcing and challenging the perception of ethnic identity. From an early age, Nigerian school curricula often presented a national narrative that marginalized the significance of ethnic identities in favor of fostering a pan-Nigerian identity. The Igbo, like other ethnic groups, were encouraged to embrace a unified Nigerian identity, but this nationalistic rhetoric frequently ignored the deep-seated ethnic tensions and historical injustices experienced by groups such as the Igbo.



The media, on the other hand, has both reflected and shaped Igbo identity over time. In the years following the Civil War, Nigerian media outlets were often reluctant to engage with Biafran issues, and the Igbo were portrayed as a group that had "lost" their struggle for secession. However, with the advent of the internet and social media platforms, the Igbo have been able to reassert their identity on a global stage. Activist movements, such as IPOB, have utilized social media to spread their message, gain international support, and engage with the broader diaspora. Through these platforms, the Igbo have been able to engage in debates about the future of their ethnicity and territorial integrity, allowing for a more nuanced conversation about the boundaries of Igbo identity. Yet, despite the expanded reach of Igbo voices in the media, the boundaries of their identity are still contested and often obscured by the complexities of Nigeria's larger political context.

Ethnic Nationalism Debate: Integration or Separation?

A central debate within the Igbo community revolves around whether the group should seek greater integration within Nigeria or pursue a path of separation and independence. This question has been influenced by both historical experiences and contemporary political dynamics. The proponents of greater integration argue that Nigeria's diversity, if managed properly, could provide an opportunity for the Igbo and other ethnic groups to thrive in a united country. For many, the focus is on restructuring the Nigerian state to create a more decentralized federal system, with equal political representation and fair distribution of resources. Supporters of this view believe that a more inclusive, egalitarian Nigeria would offer a pathway to overcoming the historical alienation and marginalization experienced by the Igbo. On the other hand, proponents of separation, such as those advocating for Biafran independence, view Nigeria's structure as inherently flawed and irredeemable. For these individuals, the pain and trauma of the Civil War, the lingering feelings of betrayal, and the continued exclusion of the Igbo from the political mainstream have made the dream of a united Nigeria seem unattainable. They argue that true



peace and progress for the Igbo can only be achieved through self-determination and the establishment of an independent state.

This debate is not only a political question but also an emotional and cultural one. The idea of separation touches on the Igbo's historical narrative, their sense of self-preservation, and their desire to be recognized as a distinct people with unique cultural practices, values, and beliefs. The boundaries that define modern-day Igboland can be traced back to colonial Nigeria. The British colonial administration, in its efforts to streamline governance, created administrative divisions that did not necessarily align with the cultural and social realities of the ethnic groups inhabiting the region. The British made little effort to accommodate the nuances of ethnic identities in the south-eastern region of Nigeria, where the Igbo are predominantly found.

Before colonialism, the Igbo lived in a decentralized, village-based system with no fixed territorial boundaries, and their traditional political structures were characterized by a system of egalitarian village assemblies, councils, and other local governance institutions. The colonial imposition of boundaries, however, began to homogenize these distinct groups under a single administrative entity. The Eastern Region, which was primarily composed of Igbo communities, was created by the British in the 1930s to facilitate governance, but this region did not account for the various subgroups within the Igbo ethnic group.

Moreover, colonial administrators constructed ethnic categories that often did not reflect the ethnic realities of indigenous peoples. The Igbo, for instance, were categorized as a singular ethnic group, despite their wide variations in language, customs, and local governance systems. These artificial boundaries and ethnic categories set the stage for future confusion and division, as the Nigerian state continued to impose boundaries that did not reflect the complex ethnic mosaic of the southeastern region.

Post-Independence Nigeria: Struggles Over Political Representation and Resource Allocation Upon gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria adopted a federal structure with a focus



on accommodating the major ethnic groups through regionalism. Nigeria was initially divided into four regions: the Northern, Western, Eastern, and Southern Regions. The Eastern Region was predominantly Igbo, but it also included other ethnic groups such as the Ibibio, Efik, and Ijaw. This multi-ethnic composition led to tensions within the region, with different subgroups vying for political and economic power.

The marginalization of the Igbo, particularly after the military coups of 1966, exacerbated tensions. After the massacre of Igbos in northern Nigeria and the secessionist movement that culminated in the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), the relationship between the Igbo and the federal government became strained. The establishment of new boundaries during and after the war did not resolve these tensions. Instead, the reorganization of Nigeria's political and administrative structure led to further fragmentation of Igbo territories.

In 1967, in the aftermath of the Nigerian military coup and the resulting ethnic violence, the Igbo declared the independence of Biafra, a new republic that sought to form a separate Igbo state. This secessionist movement, led by Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, was driven by a desire to protect the Igbo people from further persecution. The civil war, however, resulted in the defeat of Biafra, and the Eastern Region was reincorporated into Nigeria. Despite this, the Igbo continued to struggle with a sense of political and economic marginalization within the Nigerian state.

The Politics of State Creation: Fragmenting Igbo Identity

The creation of states within Nigeria, particularly in Igboland, further complicated the question of ethnic identity. Although the establishment of states was intended to address regional and ethnic grievances, it had the unintended consequence of diluting the political power of the Igbo as a unified group. As the country continued to expand its federal structure, new states were formed, with smaller administrative units that did not always reflect the historical or cultural reality of the Igbo.



For example, the creation of states such as Ebonyi in 1996 and the later creation of Abia and other southeastern states led to a fragmentation of the Igbo region into smaller political entities. These new divisions sometimes further divided Igbo communities that had previously shared common cultural and economic practices. The sense of shared identity, based on common language, customs, and heritage, was undermined by the political manipulation of ethnic boundaries.

The creation of states within Nigeria has often been driven by political considerations, with the federal government seeking to appease various ethnic groups or dilute regional power. This process of "ethnic engineering" has often ignored the social and cultural realities of ethnic communities, leading to the marginalization of groups like the Igbo. The Igbo continue to feel that their political autonomy and cultural identity are constrained by the boundaries created by Nigeria's political leaders.

The Rise of Biafran Nationalism: Revisiting the Question of Ethnic Identity

In the 21st century, the rise of Biafran nationalism has reignited the debate over ethnic identity and territorial boundaries in Igboland. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), led by Nnamdi Kanu, has become one of the most prominent organizations advocating for the secession of southeastern Nigeria and the restoration of the Biafran state. The movement has gained significant traction both within Nigeria and among the Igbo diaspora, who view Biafra as a symbol of resistance against political marginalization and economic inequality.

The resurgence of Biafran nationalism has brought the issue of Igbo ethnic identity and territorial boundaries to the forefront of Nigerian politics. Supporters of IPOB argue that the Igbo continue to be marginalized within Nigeria and that only an independent Biafra can offer the Igbo true political autonomy and self-determination. However, this call for secession has met with fierce opposition from the Nigerian government, which views the Biafran movement as a threat to national unity.



The debate over Biafra has also highlighted the complexities of ethnic identity in Igboland. While some argue for the restoration of a separate Igbo state, others see the path to greater political representation and cultural preservation as one of restructuring Nigeria to give more power to regional governments. For the Igbo, the question is no longer just one of territorial boundaries but of cultural recognition, economic justice, and the ability to self-govern without the interference of a centralized federal system.

The Politics of Restructuring: A Path to Unity or Fragmentation?

The question of ethnic identity in Nigeria, and particularly in Igboland, has led to widespread calls for the restructuring of the country's political system. Many see restructuring as a way to address the political and economic challenges facing ethnic minorities, including the Igbo. The debate over restructuring Nigeria's federal system often centers on whether the country should adopt a more decentralized structure, with greater autonomy for regional governments, or whether a more centralized system should be maintained.

Supporters of restructuring argue that a more decentralized system would allow the Igbo and other ethnic groups to have greater control over their resources and political destinies. They argue that restructuring would provide a platform for resolving ethnic tensions and ensuring that the Igbo are given fair representation within the Nigerian state. However, opponents of restructuring fear that it could lead to the fragmentation of Nigeria, exacerbating existing ethnic divisions and potentially opening the door to further secessionist movements.

For the Igbo, the restructuring debate is a critical one, as it represents a chance to redefine the political boundaries that have constrained their autonomy. Whether through restructuring Nigeria or through secession, the question of Igbo identity remains tied to the larger issue of political inclusion and self-determination.



The post-colonial period in Nigeria saw the continuation of the territorial and political challenges that had been created during colonialism. With the emergence of a new independent state, the political landscape in Nigeria shifted significantly, affecting the Igbo ethnic group. The arbitrary boundary demarcation, as implemented by colonial powers, was perpetuated and intensified in the post-independence period, resulting in the fragmentation of the Igbo. This fragmentation has given rise to an ongoing struggle for political recognition, autonomy, and the preservation of ethnic identity.

5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion:

The delusion of boundary demarcation in Igboland lies in the assumption that geographical lines and state divisions can resolve the deeper issues of identity, political autonomy, and social justice that have plagued the Igbo for decades. From colonial boundaries to post-independence state creation, the artificial divisions of Igbo territories have done little to address the Igbo's historical and contemporary grievances. The political and cultural fragmentation caused by boundary demarcation continues to fuel the debate over Igbo identity and territorial autonomy. As the Igbo people continue to navigate the complexities of national politics, the question of whether to pursue greater integration within Nigeria or seek an independent Biafra remains unresolved.

Ultimately, the issue of boundary demarcation in Igboland highlights the ongoing struggle for the recognition and empowerment of the Igbo people within Nigeria. Whether through the restoration of Biafra or the restructuring of Nigeria's political system, the Igbo will continue to assert their cultural, political, and territorial identity in the face of a history of marginalization. The delusion of boundary demarcation is the belief that territorial lines can contain the complexities of ethnicity and identity; the truth is that these boundaries are fluid, shaped by historical forces and the evolving aspirations of the people who inhabit them.



5.2. Recommendations

The issue of boundary demarcation in Igboland, like in many other climes in Nigeria, is vital for political, administrative, and developmental strands. The federal government's responsibility in demarcating boundaries involves ensuring fair representation, resource allocation, and maintaining cordial relationships among the various dyads in Nigeria. These suggestions can go a long way in promoting unity among the Nigerian states and communities in addressing boundary demarcation;

Engage Stakeholders in the process; It's important for the federal government to involve local leaders, traditional rulers and community representatives in the boundary demarcation process. This ensures that the historical and cultural factors that shape Igbo communities are taken into task and that the demarcation is embraced by the people.

Integration of Development plans; the federal government should as a matter of facts tie boundary demarcation to development plans for the region. This ensures that the demarcation process doesn't just serve administrative views but also contributes to the equitable distribution of resources and infrastructural development.

Promote Awareness and Education; public awareness about the boundary demarcation process and it's benefits is paramount to societal progress. This will promote and help reduce resistance, perception of marginalization, and misunderstandings, especially if the process is perceived as fair and transparent.

Encourage Inter-State Cooperation; There are often disaffections between and among neighboring states in terms of boundary lines. The federal government should as a matter of urgency facilitate dialogue and cooperation between and among the states that share borders with Igboland, ensuring peaceful resolutions to potential conflicts.



Clear and Transparent criteria; the process of boundary demarcation should be based on clear, consistent, and transparent process. Historical boundaries, geographic features and population distribution should be the guiding principle. Avoiding arbitrary decisions that favours one group over another is important for peaceful co-existence among the members of the society.

Legal Framework and Legitimacy; the legal framework surrounding boundary demarcation must be flexible and respected. It's crucial that the demarcation process is carried out in sequence with the constitution and existing legal backings. Boundary disputes should be resolve in an overt process carried out by people with integrity.

Through these recommendations, the federal government can help ensure that boundary demarcation in Igboland is conducted in a manner that respects the right of the people, promote peace, and support development.

Competing Interest

The authors declared that no conflicting interest exist in this paper.

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