



## No Referendum, No Election Campaign: How Radio Biafra Internet Broadcasting Mobilized IPOB Worldwide during the 2019 Nigerian Election

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### Abstract

*In the buildup of 2019 general election in Nigeria, there were tensions in the Southeastern part of the country over the clamours for election boycott campaign initiated by the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, requesting that a referendum should hold in the region for the purpose of secession rather than conduct an election in the area. This drew critical attention nationwide and in diaspora as some rose to condemn the call while some supported the move. Few days to the election, the polity was heated up as to whether the Southeasterners will heed the clarion call to boycott the election or not with the IPOB foot soldiers on ground driving the campaign and threatening mayhem to anyone who come out to vote until the “Supreme Leader” of IPOB called off the election boycott 24 hours to the election and there was total compliance and suspension of the campaign in the region. This could not have been possible without the effectiveness of Radio Biafra Internet broadcasting. How this Internet radio station was effective in the mobilization of members of IPOB to drive the “No Referendum, No Election” campaign is the focus of this study. Anchored on Technological Determinism theory, survey method was used to carry out the study with a population of 803,416 and a sample size of 382 listeners in Anambra and Abia States as respondents drawn using Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determination Table. The findings revealed that people were highly exposed to Radio Biafra No Referendum; No Election Campaign through Internet broadcasting on Facebook, Word of Mouth and Radio Biafra Terrestrial Broadcasting and this influenced their attitude toward 2019 election resulting to voter apathy in the area. Based on the findings, the researchers therefore, recommend that Radio Biafra should engage their digital broadcasting for national cohesion and integration rather than preach the message of secession disintegration*

**Keywords:** no referendum, no election, radio biafra, internet broadcasting, nigeria election.

**Paper type:** Research paper

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern technologies are today enhancing and facilitating the communication process activities, as well as help the generation and dissemination of information more efficiently to highly dispersed audience in the world (Asekun-Olarinmoye, Sanusi, Johnson and Oloyede, 2014). Olorede and Oyewole (2013, p.97) claim that:

The catalyst for the transformation of media newsrooms is modern technology. These technologies have further enhanced media credibility, reliability and even affordability and accessibility, as events can be reported as simultaneously as they unfold, with little or no interference and audience's access at a relatively affordable cost. These technologies have also refurbished the obsolete face of media newsrooms; the new sophisticated computers have replaced the old, time-consuming and outdated typewriters, and so on.

In the same vein, Deuze and Dimoudi (2002, p. 103) said, "The new media technologies are perceived to empower people and democratize the relationships between consumers and producers of content. Today, modern communication systems solve this problem with electrical or electromagnetic signals from radio to optical bands (Farsad et al, 2016). There are, however, still many applications where these technologies are not convenient or appropriate. During the mobilization period from January 2013 to September 2014, the Umbrella Movement relied mainly on traditional media such as newspapers and television rather than the Internet (Lin, 2016). It also connects to on-line media logic as a concept which includes the notions of the audience as an active agent in redefining the workings of journalism." Thus, Asekun-Olarinmoye, et al., (2014) aver that the emergence of new technologies particularly the internet and social media have created a variety of opportunities of reaching international audiences. Digital media erode the boundaries between interpersonal communication and processes that previously existed (Anastasia Yuni Widyaningrum, 2021) Although social media started out as a platform where friends and families can connect and socialize, today, sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube, MySpace, Flickr, Netlog, and Slideshare, are connecting broadcast audiences to the newsroom in new and exciting ways that will not only boost the news and event coverage of both local and international broadcast stations but also impact positively on the society.

Today, radio is available across multiple platforms. It can be streamed live online on the Internet or through mobile applications on smartphones as well as

through the Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) system which broadcasts online as well as to specially designed DAB radios (Noone, 2013). Technological advancements in radio have been accelerated in the age of digital technology. Initially, the culture of radio was always linked to the culture of sound, but today new radio content is frequently linked to visual models e.g. text, video, web pages etc (Gazi, Starkey, and Jedrzejewski, 2011).

Gazi, et al (2011) note that digital technologies make it possible to produce and deliver media contents in a wider variety of formats. Distribution is easier, and programming is open to mass consumption by users. Barnard (2000) links the emergence of digital technologies to a new era of convergence in communications, noting a combination of personal and mass communications e.g. telephone, computing and broadcasting across one singular system. It is this ‘convergence of modes’ (Jenkins, 2006), that is the central theme surrounding new mass media consumption today.

Communication through traditional radio, even at broadcast level, follows a linear format. It allows information to be transmitted one-way to people, and the transmitter cannot hear the response of those who listen. As we have previously mentioned, radio has developed into a more interactive medium, with the emergence of new show formats e.g. phone-in shows, where a certain level of participation is created for the listener. Radio plays a very significant role in the development of the rural and urban areas of any society (Asemah et al, 2013). Technological developments have empowered radio to grow and diversify, and now people can interact with stations in more ways than ever before. Gazi et al (2011) note that it is important to question the way people make use of these new interactive modes. New communication technology opens up a new dialogue with the audience, inviting the audience to participate in the creation of content on the air (Gazi et al. 2011).

The term ‘interactivity’ encapsulates all forms of meaningful communication. Gazi et al (2011) say that for interactivity to happen a transaction of information has to occur and be maintained by two active participants “exchanging elements of equal, active and mutual participation” (2011, p.27). In radio, this means listeners

contribute directly to a broadcast. Today, this does not necessarily have to be by speaking on the air. Modes of interactivity are evolving every day, with more interactive tools available to listeners than ever before. Texting, blogs, and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter give the listener instant access to radio shows and their presenters. As Gazi et al (2011) note, radio stations are placing the public centre stage in a lot of programming today, and communication tools like Twitter help put the spotlight on the user, making them the content, and the presenter becomes the curator.

When radio shows operated on a call-in switchboard system, there would be an invitation for the listener to become active participants on a limited level. The properties of radio broadcasting as a possible new mass medium only gradually became evident before 1918 (Andrew Crisell, 2009). This participation can only happen while the show is in progress, affecting the nature and content of the show (Gazi et al, 2011). Meanwhile, online platforms allow these conversations and feedback to occur over an unlimited period. They can even occur outside of the broadcast itself. Presenters may get responses from people who are not actually listening to the show but are following them online on social media sites like Twitter. A pseudo-program is created on the web and runs in parallel to the broadcast program (Gazi et al, 2011, p.34). Gazi et al note that web-generated content like this can become autonomous, as their contribution surpasses limits originally established by the medium.

In Nigeria, one of the foremost internet radios is Radio Biafra which was used by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) used to drive their No Referendum, No Election Campaign in the southeast during the 2019 general election. In the buildup of 2019 general election in Nigeria, there were tensions in the Southeastern part of the country over the clamours for election boycott campaign initiated by the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, requesting that a referendum should hold in the region for the purpose of secession rather than conduct an election in the area. This could not have been possible without the effectiveness of Radio Biafra Internet broadcasting. The IPOB leader utilized the instrumentality of Internet Broadcasting through Radio Biafra Platform to sell this campaign and got the polity heated up as his members were aggressively driving the implementation of the campaign messages until he called it off.

The new Radio Biafra started broadcasting from London on short wave

frequency since 2009 with the help of the then MASSOB members but commenced broadcast in Nigeria in 2013. It started broadcasting in Nigeria as a mobile station, on FM frequency 88.2. It is being received in Enugu, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Nnewi, Abakaliki, Owerri and some other parts in the southeastern region. According to the Director Radio Biafra, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu:

The broadcast in Nigeria, on FM frequency, other than the initial short wave frequency from London, is aimed at giving Igbo and other Nigerians the opportunity to receive the message from the station without much difficulty. It was moribund for about two years but it came back online again on April 13, 2012, following the killing of Igbo people in the North. The station was revived to bring hope, enlightenment and knowledge to the people Igbo aborigines. (Daily Sun, 2013, p.10)

Kanu further explains that the new Radio Biafra was established to promote “the ideology of Biafra which is the freedom, the emancipation of all the Biafra people, which includes all the people bound genetically, culturally and by the same value system” (Daily Sun, 2013).

Osamwonyi and Amenaghawon, (2017) conclude that Nnamdi Kanu’s remark on the commitment of the new Radio Biafra to truth rather than a propaganda machine seems to distinguish the Radio from what it was during the civil war explaining that his expression of the re-emergence of Radio Biafra reveals their determination and commitment to the restoration of the Biafra republic. But Nigerian government, however, has described Radio Biafra as a new network that has become controversial for propagating which was the ideology of the former secessionist Republic of Biafra. Operators of the station are also accused of instigating hate and violence (Premium Times, 2015). The efficacy of technology in aiding the internet broadcasting of Radio Biafra and the its instrumentality to the renewed agitation for the restoration of Biafra Republic especially among the Indigenous People of Biafra who spread the No Referendum, No Election Campaign among listeners in Onitsha and other parts of Southeastern states during the 2019 general election, formed the background to this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Ricaud (2011) believes the Internet offers new opportunities for diversification, segmentation and interactivity in radio, especially stations that are situated in scattered communities or target Diasporas. Stations can use a website to cater to their communities' needs anywhere in the world. It is the structure of their programming and their content that clearly identifies their target community just like Radio Biafra. Olley (2009) explains that radio convergence with digital technologies is now more pronounced and potentially profound in web radio which is the delivery of radio contents directly to individual listeners over the internet. Radio Biafra since its reemergence in 2013 has used internet broadcasting to mobilize member of IPOB and disseminate their ideologies despite the efforts of the government to shut it after tagging it a pirate station. No research has been conducted to evaluate how Radio Biafra has been able to use the instrumentality of the Internet to effectively mobilize IPOB and disseminate the messages of Nnamdi Kanu to create the sentiment for the actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra which played out during the 2019 general election when they canvassed for "No Referendum, No Election" campaign. This is the gap in knowledge this study was designed to fill.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives were formulated to guide the study. To find out if the respondents were exposed to Radio Biafra No Referendum, No Election campaign; To find out the platform through the respondents were exposed to Radio Biafra No Referendum, No Election campaign; To ascertain the reaction of the respondents to Radio BiafraNo Referendum, No Election campaign; To determine if exposure to Radio BiafraNo Referendum, No Election campaign influenced the respondents' attitude toward the 2019 general election.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were designed to help achieve the research objectives: Were the respondents exposed to Radio Biafra No Referendum, No Election campaign?; In what platform were the respondents exposed to Radio BiafraNo Referendum, No Election campaign?; What was the reaction of the respondents to Radio BiafraNo Referendum, No Election campaign?; Did exposure

to Radio Biafra No Referendum, No Election campaign influence the respondents' attitude toward the 2019 general election.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study was anchored on Technological Determinism theory. Marshall McLuhan propounded the technological determinism theory, also known as the medium theory in 1962. The basic assumption of the theory is that technology shapes how individual communicate, relate and interact in the society. It assumes media technology plays a dominant role in the assignment of meaning in the society. Technological Determinism states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another. Technological determinists interpret technology in general and communication technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even the future. Most interpretations of technological determinism share two general ideas: that the development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable path largely beyond cultural or political influence, and that technology, in turn, has "effects" on societies that are inherent, rather than socially conditioned or produced, that society organizes itself to support and further develop a technology once it has been introduced.

According to McLuhan (1960), "communication technology plays such a critical role in the emergence of new social orders and new forms of culture". Explaining the centrality of the theory to this study, Baran and Davis (2012, p. 274) in their discourse of the medium theory said that McLuhan proclaimed that the medium is the message. In other words, new forms of media transform (message) our experience of ourselves and our society, and this influence is ultimately more important than the content that is transmitted in its specific messages- technology determines experience.

The basic assumption of the theory is relevant and applicable to this study as it anchors on the impact of technology (Internet and social media) on the media, and in particular, the broadcast media. These technological innovations have changed the landscape of not only local broadcasting but also international broadcasting. Radio Biafra jettisoned all the legal requirements to have a radio

station in Nigeria through the help of the internet which gives platform for internet broadcast that reaches people all over the world.

### **Radio Biafra Internet Broadcasting and No Referendum, No Election Campaign**

The new Radio Biafra started broadcasting from London on short wave frequency since 2009 with the help of the then MASSOB members but commenced broadcast in Nigeria in 2013. It started broadcasting in Nigeria as a mobile station, on FM frequency 88.2. It is being received in Enugu, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Nnewi, Abakaliki, Owerri and some other parts in the southeastern region. According to the Director Radio Biafra, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu:

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Radio Biafra also known as Voice of Biafra, is a radio station that was originally founded by the government of the Republic of Biafra but is currently operated by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. It is believed to have its first transmission before the Nigeria-Biafra war; the radio station was instrumental in the broadcast of



speeches and propaganda by Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu to the people of the Republic of Biafra (Adibe, 2015; Barnaby, 2000). Based in the United Kingdom, Radio Biafra currently transmits via the internet and shortwave broadcast targeted majorly around Eastern Nigeria. Radio Biafra claims to be broadcasting the ideology of Biafra –"Freedom of the Biafra people" (Udchukwu, 2015).

Radio Biafra combines the platforms of Internet radio and terrestrial radio in broadcasting its ideologies. The internet broadcasting is done on the Radio Biafra website and Facebook page while the terrestrial broadcasting is done on 103.1 FM and 15.6 AM. To the casual listener, few differences exist between Internet radio and terrestrial (AM/FM) radio. Both forms of radio are essentially a non-interactive service where many listeners receive programming from a single broadcaster (Castro, 2007). Castro (2007) explains that as with terrestrial radio, Internet radio consists of a broadcast of audio entertainment comprised of music, news, comedy, and/or sports. Internet radio comes in two formats: terrestrial radio programming rebroadcast on the Internet and audio programming available exclusively online. Internet radio offers many benefits over terrestrial radio such as more diverse playlists, greater exposure for independent artists and a more efficient coststructure. Moreover, unlike terrestrial radio broadcasters who can only reach listeners in a specific geographical region, Internet radio broadcasters can reach anyone in the world with an Internet connection. As a result, Internet radio serves niche markets and offers listeners more diverse programming (DiCola, 2006).

Castro (2007) Internet radio also reduces the inefficiencies found in terrestrial radio. In traditional wireless sensor networks communicating on a single channel data throughput measured at the sink is constrained by the radio capability, interference, and collisions (Yu 2019) Consider the resources needed for radio stations to supply DJs, broadcasting equipment, office space and radio towers. Furthermore, it offers listeners stations with more musical variety. Internet radio takes advantage of the digital economy to provide listeners with mass customization, instead of the mass production of terrestrial radio (Atkinson, 2007). Radio is a broadcast medium, and thus all users coexisting in the same frequency band interfere with each other (Smith 2009). This can be used in developing

countries to realize a cost effective smart grid for integrating the renewable resources and for reducing energy losses (Khan 2014). A radio frequency identification (RFID) system is a special kind of sensor network to identify an object or a person using radio frequency transmission (Xiao et al 2006).

Radio Biafra has been met with mixed reactions. While some critics have criticized the station for "inciting war" through its programmes and "preaching hate messages" against Nigeria which it refers to as a "zoo", an editor for Sahara Reporters wrote in defence of the radio station after he compared Radio Biafra with the British Broadcasting Corporation Hausa service (Onyiorah, 2015). On 14 July 2015, it was reported in the media that the radio station had been jammed because it did not have a broadcast license from the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission. However, the radio station in a swift reaction labelled such claims as "lies" and went on to release its new frequency details to the public. Distribution automation is an increasingly important function in the electricity delivery system (Wu, 2016)

After the successful grounding of the entire South-East during the Sit-At-Home exercise on May 30th Biafra Day, the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, (IPOB) Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, warned that if the Federal Government failed to conduct referendum on Biafra freedom, there would be no election in the entire Southeast during the 2019 general elections. This led to the No Referendum, No Election Campaign on Radio Biafra which was introduced by Kanu (2017). Information and communications technologies (ICTs) are powerful tools for empowerment and income generation in developing countries (Kenny 2008). To provide the recipient of the radio signals to long distances, an advanced optical fiber technology known as Radio over Fiber (RoF) can be utilized faithfully. RoF is technology that modulates the light signal by radio signal and transmit it across a fiber optic link to extend the transmission and wireless access (Saffar 2022).

According to Kanu (2019), affirms that "In 2019, the whole of Biafra land will not vote for any president. There will be no Senator, there will be no House of Reps, there will be no House of Assembly and there will be no Councillorship elections in Biafra land if they fail to call for a referendum." He also said that "Nigerian government should build as many prisons as possible to jail all Biafrans because there is no going back as they were ready to go there unless the federal government gives them Biafra. This campaign was broadcasted in the various platforms of Radio Biafra especially through internet broadcasting on their website

and Facebook page.

Hassan (2018) avers that since Kanu's reappearance, IPOB has renewed calls for supporters to boycott and disrupt the 2019 elections unless the government calls a referendum on independence. He alleges that IPOB activists tried to disrupt the Anambra state governorship elections in November 2017 identifying their tactics to include using hate speech, rumours and threats, texted people with slogans such "If You Vote You Will Die". Hassan (2018) believes that the action, however, was only partially successful and warned that the influence of separatists, however, should not be discounted. Even if activists do not physically inhibit the vote, they may engender voter apathy. He noted that the South-East zone has the lowest number of registered voters in the country (accounting for just 12.04% of the population) and consistently low turnout. In 2015, just 39% of eligible voters turned out (Hassan, 2018).

## **METHODS**

For this study, survey method was adopted to investigate how Radio Biafra Internet Broadcasting was used to mobilize IPOB Worldwide to initiate *No Referendum, No Election* campaign during the 2019 election in Nigeria among listeners in Onitsha metropolis. Survey method was adopted because of its effectiveness in studying a large population.

The population of this study was drawn from listeners of Radio Biafra Onitsha, Anambra State and Aba, Abia State who were exposed to *No Referendum, No Election* campaign on Radio Biafra. The two cities were chosen because of the presence of Biafra apologists in the area considering the fact the cities have been the centre for various protests and arrests. The population of in Onitsha and Aba according to the National Population Census (2006) is 511,000 and 107,488 respectively. Since this population is not a recent one, the researcher adopted the Projected Population Index of 2.28% to get the estimated population of Onitsha which is 663,789 and Aba which is 139, 627. Adding them together, the researcher arrived at 803,416. This is the population which the researcher adopted in the study.

The sample size adopted for the study was 382 using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample determination table. According to the table as designed by Krejcie & Morgan (1970), when a population of a study falls between 75,000 and 9,999, the recommended sample size should be 382 (see appendix I). It is based on this that the researcher arrived at the sample size of 382 adopted for this study. A total of 382 copies of structured questionnaire were distributed to Radio Biafra listeners in Onitsha and Aba. The researcher adopted the Proportionate Allocation Formula in determining the actual copies of the structured questionnaire given to the respondents where Onitsha got 316 and Aba got 66 making it a total of 382 copies of questionnaire. The questionnaire was used as a data-gathering instrument while gathered data were presented in a frequency table.

**Table 1:**  
**Return rate of Questionnaire**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Returned and found usable	360	94
Not usable	15	4
Not Returned	7	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>

Table one shows that the return rate of questionnaire is 94% (n = 360) while the mortality rate is 6% (n = 22). The return rate is higher than the mortality rate. The mortality rate of 6% does not affect the study because it is insignificant compared to the return rate of 94%. Thus, the copies were considered good enough to represent the population. The presentation and analysis of data obtained from the questionnaire were therefore based on the 360 copies that were returned and found usable.

**Research question one**

Were the respondents exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign?

**Table 2:**  
**Respondents' Exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	360	100
No	0	0
Can't Say	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Table two shows the respondents' responses to research question one. Data reveals that all the respondents (100%, n=360) were exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign in Onitsha and Aba metropolises. The implication of data on Table 2 is that there was high exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign in the study areas.

**Research Question Two**

In what platform were the respondents exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign?

**Table 3:**  
**Respondents' Channel of exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Radio Biafra Facebook Broadcasts	200	56
Radio Biafra FM Broadcasts	54	15
Word of Mouth	106	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 shows respondents' responses to research question two. Data reveals that majority of the respondents (56%, n=200) were exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign on Radio Biafra Facebook Broadcasts. Also, 15% (n=54) said they heard it through Radio Biafra FM Broadcasts on 103.1

modulation while 26% (n=106) indicated that they heard about *No Referendum, No Election* campaign from people who were talking about it in their area. The implication of data on Table 3 is that majority of the respondents were exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign through Facebook Live Broadcast followed by Word of mouth and then Radio Biafra FM Broadcast.

### Research question three

What was the reaction of the respondents to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign?

**Table 4:**  
**Respondents Reactions to Radio Biafra, *No Referendum, No Election* campaign**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Willing to Comply	330	91
Not Willing to Comply	20	6
Can't Say	12	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 shows respondents' responses to research question three. Data reveals that majority of the respondents (91%, n=330) were willing to comply with the directives of *No Referendum, No Election* campaign by boycotting the 2019 elections in the Southeast. The implication of data on Table 4 is that Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign was effective among the listeners as they were willing to obey the election boycott the campaign preached.

### Research Question Four

Did exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign influence the respondents' attitude toward the 2019 general election?

**Table 5:**  
**Influence of Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign on Respondents' Attitude toward 2019 Elections**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	340	91
No	12	6
Can't Say	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 shows respondents' responses to research question four. Data reveals that majority of the respondents (91%, n=290) indicated that their attitude toward 2019 election was influenced by Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign as most of them eventually boycotted the election. This may explain why the southeast recorded the lowest vote among other geopolitical zone in Nigeria during the 2019 elections. The implication of data on Table 4 is that exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum; No Election* campaign influenced negatively influenced the listeners to participate in the 2019 election resulting in voter apathy.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Finding from research question one revealed that there was high exposure to Radio Biafra *No Referendum; No Election* campaign by the respondents. This finding justifies the assertion of Bello (2017) who succinctly remarked that Radio Biafra was used in transmitting information about the conditions of the Biafran in Nigeria to fellow Igbo domiciled in Nigeria and abroad. Emphasis was mostly hinged on Igbo marginalization, enslavement, insecurity, and denial of human rights and means of survival by Nigeria, amongst others. The radio station has a strong online presence, as it also transmitted its information to its audience through other social network platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and many more.

Finding also revealed that that majority of the respondents were exposed to Radio Biafra *No Referendum, No Election* campaign through Facebook Live Broadcast followed by Word of mouth and then Radio Biafra FM Broadcast. This supports the assertion of Asekun-Olarinmoye, et al., (2014) who aver that the emergence of new technologies particularly the internet and social media have created a variety of opportunities of reaching international audiences. Although social media started out as a platform where friends and families can connect and socialize, today, sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube, MySpace, Flickr, Netlog, and Slideshare, are connecting broadcast audiences to the newsroom in new and exciting ways that will not only boost the news and event coverage of both local and international broadcast stations but also impact positively on the society. Though traditional activity recognition methods have been

demonstrated to be effective in previous work, they raise some concerns such as privacy, energy consumption and deployment cost (Wang 2016).

Finding also revealed that RadioBiafra No Referendum, No Election campaign was effective among the listeners as they were willing to obey the election boycott the campaign preached. Ojukwu & Nwaorgu (2016) who aver that the Radio Biafra can best be understood as a platform the IPOB group was using to send messages of agitation for self-actualization from the Nigerian state. With its slogan “In defence of freedom,” the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu made numerous statements reiterating the desire of Igbo people both in Nigeria and in Diaspora, for a referendum to decide the fate of Igbo people in their quest towards the actualization of the Republic of Biafra.

Again, finding that exposure to RadioBiafraNo Referendum; No Election campaign negatively influenced the listeners to participate in the 2019 election resulting in voter apathy. This in line with the assertion of Ojukwu and Nwaorgu (2016) who aver that the broadcast of Radio Biafra and the activities of IPOB became so provocative and disturbing that most of it were considered as threats capable of destroying whatsoever is left of Nigerian unity by the Muhammed Buhari led administration and other stakeholders in the country. Again, available records proved that Nnamdi Kanu had actually gone across some countries both in Europe and America to sought for support from Igbo in diaspora concerning preparation for a potential war should the Nigerian government denied IPOB a right to referendum.

## **CONCLUSION**

Radio Biafra no doubt has become a household name in Nigeria and occupies a vantage position in the history of radio broadcast in Nigeria. The media coverage that has followed the arrest and trial of Nnamdi Kanu has drawn global attention to neo-Biafran agitations in Nigeria. The Radio Biafra of the Nigerian civil era was used in promoting the secessionist dream of Ojukwu in the civil war between 1967 and 1970. It, however, went into oblivion with the taking over of the Eastern republic by the Nigerian government in 1970. Its re-emergence in 2012 has therefore thrown up many questions. Its operators have claimed it is not a propaganda station and that they will never tell lies noting that they have sworn to close down any day they tell lies. But authorities have tagged it a propaganda and



pirate station while trying all effort to crack it down. The No Referendum; No Election campaign was one of their campaign to sensitize people towards reclaiming the Sovereign State of Biafra through a referendum. The station has posed an effective means of mobilizing the IPOB members in recent times. Based on the research findings, the researcher made the following recommendations: The management of Radio Biafra should use it to promote history and cultural integration in Igbo land and Nigeria in general. The Management of Radio Biafra should change the themes of their broadcast to reflect national cohesion rather than hatred and violence. The management of radio Biafra should change the negative framing of their broadcasts by adopting languages of peace, love and national unity. Other radio stations in Nigeria should adopt Internet broadcasting as a means of reaching a broader audience for sustainable development.

#### **About the Authors**

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