

Content Analysis As A Tool for Data Gathering in Areas of Insurgencies and Self-determination Agitations: *An Assessment of North-east and South-east Regions of Nigeria (2015-2020)*

Osaretin Idahosa Ph.D

Department of Political Science,

Faculty of Social Sciences,

University of Benin,

Benin City, Nigeria.

E-Mail Address: osaretin.idahosa@uniben.edu Tel. No.: +2348066400829

and

Igbinerediauwa Rome Omoregie M.Sc.

Department of Political Science,

Faculty of Social Sciences,

University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

E-Mail Address: igbinerediauwa.omoregie@uniben.edu Tel. +2347031639424

Abstract

This study applies content analysis to assess the insurgency dynamics in North-East and South-East regions of Nigeria during the period between 2015 and 2020. Insurgencies, which pose significant threats to national security and development, require robust analytical frameworks to dissect their root causes, manifestations and societal impacts. The research focuses on comparing the North-East (plagued by Boko Haram insurgencies) with the South-East (characterized by agitations and emerging separatist movements led by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)). This methodology emphasizes identifying patterns, trends and narratives that shape public perception and policy responses to insurgencies. Also, the study explores the role of print media in framing insurgency issues and investigates whether regional differences influence how insurgencies are reported and addressed. Key findings in this study reveal divergent approaches to insurgency management and reporting between the two regions, underscored by historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. The North-East insurgency gained more media attention with much emphasis on displacement and humanitarian crisis. The region's insurgency was however discovered to be heavily militarized, with a focus on counter-terrorism efforts, while the South-East unrest has less media attention as no much reportage on the region's unrest was presented under the period under review. The study concludes that content analysis is an effective tool for deriving insights from diverse data sources, offering nuanced perspectives that aid policymakers in developing context-sensitive interventions. It therefore recommends that academic discourse on insurgency management that could enrich the understanding of the country's unique security challenges is highly desirable

Key Words: Agitation, Indigenous, Insurgency, Perception, Security

Introduction

Researching social phenomena in conflict-ridden zones is a huge challenge. Thus, gathering data for social research in these areas of conflict can be life-threatening. However, content analysis as a research method seeks to overcome the hurdles that could be a potential impediment to social researchers. This method is a close examination and interpretation of the various forms of media, such as written texts, audio recordings and visual media that give invaluable insights into the dynamics of conflicts. Additionally, content analysis is a useful tool for researchers who may have limited time, and effort to devote to their research.

Social researchers can systematically analyze the data obtained from archival records, documents and the mass media. Letters, diaries, newspaper articles, minutes of meetings, live reportage, films and television shows and radio programs can all be analyzed using content analysis. Thus, it is a method of data analysis and observation. Instead of observing people's behaviour directly, a social researcher gets copies of communication that people have produced and inquires about the records. It is this content of communication that serves as the basis of inference. In content analysis, the researcher can inquire "who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect" (Laswell, 1948). Holsti (1968), defines, content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages". That is, with content analysis, a social researcher researching in a hostile territory will not have to wait for the conflict to be over before gathering data to analyze for conclusion; inferences can be made from communication on print from the zone being researched.

Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in Nigeria in 1999, the nation has encountered various forms of violent conflict across various regions of the country. The North-east region of the country is currently entangled in the Boko Haram insurgency, while the North-west contends with banditry and attacks by unidentified gunmen. The North-central region has experienced crisis ranging from religious to farmer herder conflict that has resulted to massive killings and displacement of people, the Niger Delta has dealt with militancy and oil-related conflicts, and the South-east is currently involved in a secessionist struggle led by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group (Ero, 2015). These security challenges have led to significant social and economic unrest, posing a grave threat to the safety and wellbeing of the Nigerian people. Conducting research in these conflict areas can be extremely challenging. Traditional academic reasoning suggests that chronic insecurity makes it impossible to gather reliable data, often leading to the postponement of research until the conflict either subsides or ends. However, content analysis offers a valuable solution to conduct research in such conflict zones regions by analyzing recorded communications from the involved parties (Idahosa and Emeka, 2015).

Nigeria has encountered significant internal security challenges over the past few decades, including the North-east insurgency led by Boko Haram and the South-east secessionist struggle spearheaded by groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) (Onuoha, 2014; Abada, Omeh, & Okoye, 2020). While these conflicts have received national and international attention, there is a gap in scholarly research that thoroughly compares the motivations, drivers, tactics and impacts of the North-east insurgency and the South-east secessionist struggle. Previous studies have mainly focused on each conflict in isolation, which limits our comprehension of the broader dynamics and interconnectedness between these two distinct but interrelated security threats. As a result, this research aims to address this research gap by conducting a comparative analysis of the North-east insurgency and the South-east secessionist struggle. To effectively do this, the study shall be guided by the following questions;

1. What patterns and biases can be identified in the tone and thematic focus of media coverage on insurgencies in the North-East versus self-determination agitations in the South-East of Nigeria (2015–2020)?
2. How effectively does content analysis capture the framing strategies of Nigerian newspapers in reporting security challenges and socio-political agitations in the North-East and South-East regions?
3. In what ways do regional contexts influence the media narratives on insurgencies and self-determination movements in the North-East and South-East of Nigeria respectively?

Understanding Content Analysis

Content analysis is an unobtrusive research method that is frequently employed by social researchers to study social behavior without influencing it. Durkheim's analysis of suicide, as argued by Barbbie (2004), provides a perfect example of unobtrusive research. Durkheim did not attempt to influence suicide, which was the variable under study. Similarly, social researchers studying variables in areas of conflict or insurgency often turn to unobtrusive research, which involves minimal direct contact with the subjects under study, thereby avoiding any unintended effects on their behavior. Content analysis is one of the available types of unobtrusive research, which enables the researcher to examine a class of social artifacts, such as written documents, including newspaper editorials. In content analysis, investigators can systematically analyze data obtained from archival records, documents, and the mass media, including letters, diaries, newspaper articles, minutes of meetings, live reportage, films, and television shows and radio programs. According to Nachamias and Nachamias (1996:48), content analysis is "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages" Objectivity is guaranteed in content analysis because researchers carry out their analysis according to explicit rules, which enables different investigators to examine the same messages or documents. Summarily put content analysis is well-suited to the study of communications and to answering the classic question of communication research: "who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect?" (Lasswell, 1948:65). More explicitly, a content analysis enables a researcher to analyze messages to test hypotheses about characteristics of the text, what inspired the message, or the effect of communication (Nachamias and Nachamias, 1996). Wood (2013:112), briefly captured content analysis as "Counting what can be seen; use counting and categories for basic analyses and insights on speech, text, or screen".

Procedures of Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method that involves the systematic examination of written, visual, or audio content. This method is used to analyze qualitative data by identifying patterns, themes, or categories in the data.

The Takeoff Point

The takeoff point is usually the aim of the study voyage, which actually determines the structure of the study undertaken and sets its boundaries (Downe-Wambolt, 1992). Undertaking a content analysis starts by defining a clear aim to shape the study design and scope. It is crucial to focus on a specific and novel research question. A broad aim can lead to superficial analysis, hindering in-depth exploration. Even with ample data, a broad aim can pose challenges in achieving the intended research depth (Bengtsson, 2016). This usually comes in research questions prompting hypothetical responses that can help the researcher avoid the risk of engaging in pointless 'word crunching' rather than purposeful analysis (Insch, Moore, and Murphy, 1997). In getting this done, existing theory and literature becomes the lead.

Sampling and Unitizing

To provide sufficient and confident answers to the research questions raised, a relevant sample size based on the needed information is necessary. That is, sampling involves identifying and selecting the appropriate material that can provide answers to the questions raised. For instance, a political scientist that is interested in the Public Opinion towards the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the Babangida Regime would have to decide the source of the needed information. 'Will the needed information be gotten from print media or archival records of government?' The decision of the scientist based on the required information will lead to the selected unit of analysis. The unit of analysis in content analysis is the basic text unit that is categorized. Before coding can be done, text must be broken down into these units. How these units are defined can affect coding decisions and the ability to compare results with other studies. Therefore, choosing the unit for coding is a critical decision. In qualitative content

analysis, themes are typically used as the unit of analysis instead of traditional linguistic units like words or sentences. A theme can be a single word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, or even a whole document. By using themes as the coding unit, researchers focus on capturing the expression of ideas in the text. This allows researchers to assign a code to any text segment that represents a single theme or relevant issue related to their research questions (Babbie, 2010).

Choice of Data Collection Method

According to Downe-Wambolt (1992), all written texts can be used for content analysis without any specific rules to follow. However, the depth of analysis largely depends on the chosen data collection methods. Thus, selecting the most appropriate approach to gather and analyze data from different sources of texts, images, or videos is a crucial decision for researchers. They can choose between quantitative content analysis, which focuses on numerical data and patterns, or qualitative content analysis, which emphasizes understanding meanings and contexts. Factors such as research questions, objectives, and the nature of content being analyzed must be considered while selecting the data collection method. Other factors such as availability of data, level of detail required, and resources and time available must also be taken into account. Ultimately, the selected data collection method should align with the research goals and provide reliable insights into the content being examined (Nachmias, and Nachmias, 1996).

Perspectives on Content Analysis.

The literature review delves into various perspectives on the use of concepts, procedures, and interpretation in content analysis. Despite differences in presentation, researchers generally outline the process using distinct stages or within continuous text. The sequencing of analytical steps and the researcher's approach to data examination and conceptualization can vary. Bengtsson (2016), identified four primary stages for data analysis using content analysis in research voyage. He listed as follow, decontextualization, recontextualization, categorization, and compilation; this is captured in figure 1. It is essential to iterate each stage multiple times to ensure analysis quality and credibility. Manifest and latent analysis do not require distinct stages, but a transparent table outlining the progression from raw data to outcomes is crucial for analysis quality. During analysis, human errors, such as interpretive mistakes and personal biases, might occur due to fatigue. Researchers must maintain process quality by ensuring validity and reliability throughout the study to produce rigorous and dependable results. Validity implies that findings accurately represent the phenomena studied, while reliability ensures consistent results upon study replication. To enhance validity, it is recommended that at least two researchers independently conduct the analysis, compare results, and reach consensus. This approach constitutes one form of triangulation. Employing varied sources or data-collection methods is another means of triangulation to validate results in content analysis (Patton, 2002).

Theoretical Discourse

In Bernard Cohen's seminal work, "The Press and Foreign Policy" (1963), he argued that the media's power lies not so much in shaping public opinion, but in determining the issues that the public chooses to care about. Cohen's insight underscores the fact that media organizations play a crucial role in shaping the public agenda, and that the news they choose to cover can have a profound impact on the way people understand and respond to events in the world around them. This paper therefore deployed the Agenda-Setting theory as its theoretical framework to describe and explain media reportage of insecurity in the North East and South East.

As a theory, the Agenda Setting Theory is traceable to Walter Lippmann's 1922 classic, *Public Opinion* where in the first chapter, he establishes the principal connection between world events and the images in the public mind (Lippmann, 1922). Lippmann's idea was later introduced as a communication theory in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, when they developed it as a theory in their 'Chapel Hill Study' on the 1968 on the United States of America presidential election where Democratic sitting President Lyndon B. Johnson was ousted

by Republican challenger Richard Nixon. Their research voyage was to compare what the 100 respondents as their sample size thought were the most important issues of the election with what the local and national media reported as the most important issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The theorists therefore hold that the media dictates public perceptions by influencing what to think about, although not exactly what to think. In essence, the authors in comparing news content with the people's perception, they were able to determine the level to which the media influences the public perceptions. By comparing news content with the public's perceptions, McCombs and Shaw prove the degree to which the media sways public opinion. They found that the media has a significant impact on its audience by shaping their thoughts and beliefs, rather than reflecting them. In other words, if a news item is covered repeatedly and prominently, it is perceived as more important by the audience (Berger, 2001).

The Agenda-Setting Theory demonstrates how media coverage influences public attention by prioritizing certain issues over others, shaping not only what the audience thinks about but also how they perceive these issues. Applied to the research on media reportage of insurgencies and self-determination agitations in Nigeria's North-East and South-East regions (2015–2020), this theory highlights the disparities in coverage and tone. Media outlets focus heavily on the North-East, emphasizing insurgency-related themes with a mix of urgency and resilience, while the South-East predominantly receives negative coverage centered on self-determination movements like IPOB activism. This framing reinforces regional biases, shapes public opinion, and potentially informs policy responses. Thus, Agenda-Setting Theory underscores the critical role of content analysis in exposing media-driven perceptions and fostering balanced reporting.

UNDERSTANDING THE NORTH-EAST INSURGENCY AND THE SOUTH-EAST INSECURITY

For many decades, Nigeria has been plagued by widespread insecurity, particularly in the northern and southern regions of the country. This insecurity is deeply rooted in the country's complex history, with various economic, cultural, religious, and ethnic factors contributing to its complexity over time. Despite efforts to address the issue, the situation remains a major challenge for the government and citizens alike, with many people living in fear of violence and instability.

1. The Boko Haram Insurgency in North-East Nigeria

The North East region of Nigeria has been severely affected by the Boko Haram insurgency, which originated from a religious complex established by Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri, Borno State. Although the exact date of formation is a matter of debate among scholars, literature suggests that the sect gained popularity around 2002. Yusuf's teachings aimed to promote Islam and enforce Sharia law in Northern Nigeria, which attracted disaffected young people and unemployed graduates who were frustrated with the region's socioeconomic backwardness caused by poor governance and corruption. These were majorly people with similar grievances that participated in the Maitatsine riots in northeast Nigeria in 1980. Yusuf encouraged his followers to protest and withdraw from society and politics, condemning northern Muslims for participating in what he believed to be an illegitimate state. The locals and eventually, the government started to identify the group with the name Boko Haram because of its anti-western focus (Forest, 2017). Series of defiance to public order and violent confrontations with the Nigeria Police Force led to the arrest of the group leader and some of the group members, who were paraded in humiliating fashion outside the police stations. While in police custody, Yusuf, along with his father-in-law Baa Fugu and other sect members were extra-judiciary executed on 30th July 2009 outside the police station in Maiduguri. A development that the police initially claimed as an intense gun battle with officers on duty, but video clips that surfaced after showed that they were executed in cold blood (Nnochiri, 2011). Since the death of its leader the non-violent domestic group underwent a rapid transformation into a transnational terrorist organization. This transformation was marked by a series of attacks on various transnational identities and institutions, such as the United Nations office in Abuja on August 26, 2011.

Additionally, the group carried out extensive military operations in neighbouring West African countries, including Cameroun, Chad, and Niger (Fessy, 2015; Okoro, 2020).

According to a recent report by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Boko Haram and its splinter group, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), accounted for 66% of all violent deaths in Nigeria in 2024 (Azeez, 2025). Their sustained violent activities represent a serious threat not only to residents in conflict-affected states of Northeastern Nigeria but also to neighboring communities in the Lake Chad Basin region. The groups' effective integration of religious extremism with advanced military capabilities has resulted in elevated fatality rates and significant achievements in executing terrorist operations. For example, data from SBM Intelligence indicate that, in Borno State alone, 515 fatalities were recorded between January and March 2025 as a consequence of terrorist attacks, armed robberies, banditry, and incidents involving abductions, gang clashes, and military interventions (Amos, 2025).

The Institute for Economic & Peace (2015) reported that in 2014, the Boko Haram sect was recorded as the most feared sect worldwide because of its destructive nature. The sect was reported to be responsible for a recorded 6,644 deaths, with an estimated 14 deaths per attack. It is worth noting that this figure only represents the recorded deaths, and the actual number of fatalities may have been even higher. The group was active in northern Cameroon and Niger between 2013 and 2014, using these areas for logistics and weapon supply in their operations within the border towns in the four States (Seignobos, 2015). Its operation in Nigeria into Cameroun, Chad and Niger, where it recruited, re-armed and carried out its terrorist activities haven declared a total acceptance to the Islamic State and subsequently referred to itself as Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) (Oputu and Lilley, 2015), has seen it metamorphosed into transnational terror. Tar and Mustapha (2017) located the easy and quick trans-nationalization of the sect within historical and geographical contexts. Following the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, Africa was partitioned, resulting in the division of ethnic groups and the emergence of common languages spoken across countries such as Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. This created an environment that facilitated the rapid spread of The Sect, as it was able to take advantage of the shared language and cultural similarities to easily gain followers across the region. The Boko Haram group's success in recruiting members in these countries is also linked to the shared cultural and ethnic ties that exist among different tribes in the region. This recruitment is further fueled by weak governance, which is primarily caused by corruption, democratic regression, issues of legitimacy, and widespread violations of human rights. The inequality and underdevelopment prevalent in many rural northern regions leave them vulnerable to exploitation by extremist groups like Boko Haram. Additionally, the frequent transfer of power in the region has been a long-standing concern. Between 1960 and 2022, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger collectively experienced twenty-five successful coups d'état, leading to the military overthrow of democratically elected civilian governments. The recent "coup epidemic" in the region was sparked by military coups in Mali in 2020 and 2021, which resulted in the current interim government under a military junta. Similar events have occurred in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger (Oxfam Briefing Paper, 2019).

The violent actions of Boko Haram in the North East of Nigeria have had far-reaching and devastating impacts on both military and civilian facilities, causing a significant humanitarian crisis. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the violent attacks carried out by the group have had a devastating impact on the people of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states in Nigeria. The attacks have directly affected around 6 million individuals, with women and children bearing the brunt of the violence. Since 2013, the number of displaced persons has continued to rise, and many individuals from communities within the group's stronghold have fled as refugees to neighbouring communities within the lake. Since May 2013, more than 60,000 Nigerians have fled their homes and sought refuge in neighbouring countries, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This mass displacement of people is a result of the ongoing insurgency in those affected areas, which has forced many families to abandon their homes and seek safety elsewhere. As conflicts and crises force people to leave their homes, many refugees find

themselves fleeing without even the most basic necessities, such as food and water. This not only puts an immense amount of pressure on the limited resources available to host communities, but it also exacerbates the already dire humanitarian crisis in the region, leaving vulnerable individuals and families without the means to survive.

2. The South-East Insecurity

The merger of northern and southern Nigeria in 1914 resulted in a diverse society with variations in language, tribe, religion, race, and region. Since gaining independence in 1960 and becoming a republic in 1963, achieving national integration has been crucial for the development and prosperity of Nigeria. However, the amalgamation of the north and south by the British government posed a significant challenge for the Nigerian people, as the various groups forced into statehood struggled to merge seamlessly. To promote national development, the groups, along with colonial masters, made several efforts during the pre-independence era, notable in this period were the 1945 national conference and the 1950 regional conference (Jacob Nwobi and Igboji, 2020), to find common ground. In the post-independence era, the 2014 National Conference under President Goodluck Jonathan aimed to achieve national cooperation in Nigeria's heterogeneous state. Despite the Nigerian state's various attempts, however, it is evident that many of the agreements discussed or reached were not implemented or adhered to.

Following Nigeria's independence in 1960, the country has had to contend with numerous challenges in its quest to build a united nation. These obstacles have mainly arisen due to factors such as ethnicity, regionalism, ethno-religious conflicts, political instability, military coups, and a civil war spawned by minority secession. Regrettably, these factors have impeded Nigeria's growth and national development. The emergence of groups advocating for secession, including MEND, OPC, MASSOB, and ZBM - the latter two of which led to the formation of IPOB - has further complicated matters regarding national unity. Despite these challenges, both military and civilian governments have endeavoured to promote national integration. The return to democracy in 1999 where President Olusegun Obasanjo emerged as the president of the country, which actually signaled the beginning of the fourth republic, witnessed the introduction of policies to promote national unity, such as the federal character principle, rotational presidency, and power-sharing system, to foster unity. These policies proved successful in reducing tensions at the time. However, continuous efforts are required to maintain national unity. The relaxation of policies promoting national integration by successive regimes led to a resurgence of secessionist groups such as IPOB, which poses a potential threat to Nigeria's unity (Nwangwu, 2023).

In 2012, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was formed under the leadership of Nnamdi Kanu with the aim of achieving independence for the Biafra state. Through the London-based Radio Biafra station, which Kanu established in 2009 (Omeje, 2005), IPOB was able to attract a growing number of unhappy youths in southeastern Nigeria. Kanu, who served as the Director of Radio Biafra, used the internet-based radio to spread pro-Biafran messages and gain support from members within and outside Nigeria (Abada, Omeh, & Okoye, 2020). Initially a non-violent group, IPOB favored a confrontational approach over a conciliatory one as they seek to balance the generational power imbalance and ultimately, secure an exit of the Igbo ethnic group into an alternative political and administrative arrangement (Onuoha, 2014). Although IPOB advocates for the secessionist agenda, there were however internal disagreements over operational strategy. Some members favored a confrontational approach that resulted in direct clashes with federal security forces (Abada, Omeh, & Okoye, 2020). However, in response to the state's harsh repression of the neo-Biafra separatist movement, particularly following the initiation of Operation Python Dance II in September 2017, the group's leadership reconsidered this tactic amid escalating threats of violent reprisal (Ujumadu, 2017; Nwangwu, 2023).

Following the arrest and incarceration of Nnamdi Kanu in October 2015, where he was charged with sedition, ethnic incitement, terrorism, and treasonable felony, a series of protests, marches and gatherings by IPOB members and supporters followed. Many of these protests were planned to coincide with Kanu's court appearances and these resulted in a lot of human rights abuse by the security forces. Notable among these violations was the 2016 Biafra

Remembrance Day which doubles as the 49th anniversary of the declaration of Biafra, it was widely reported by credible media outlets and human rights campaigners that the security forces shot at the people who were celebrating the Remembrance Day at different locations, particularly at Asaba, Nkpor and Onitsha (Amnesty International, 2016; Mayah, 2016). Notwithstanding, the group became more popular because of its growing penetrative and mobilization reach through its 'community evangelism' and other forms of civil disobedience. Realizing the damages this could cause to national unity, the regime of President Mohamed Buhari authorized the deployment of the military under the codename, Operation Python Dance II, also known as Egwu Eke II in the Igbo Language in the South East to help combat the rising insecurity accessioned by separatist struggle. This development however exacerbated the human rights abuse as there were reported cases of military men subjecting the youth to inhuman treatment and other forms of abuse (Ayo-Aderele and Ikokwu, 2017; Ilozue, 2018). The repressive behaviour of the Operation Python Dance II in the South-East was quickly followed by the proscription of the IPOB and its designation as a terrorist organization (Nwangwu, 2023). The Court would however grant Nnamdi Kanu bail in 2017, but disappeared after an army invasion at his family home in Afaraukwu, Umuahia in October of that year. Subsequently, his bail was revoked by federal high court in Abuja on March, 2019 and an order of his re-arrest was pronounced by the judge. Kanu was therefore re-arrested on the 27th June, 2021 the Nigeria security operatives in Kenya and brought to the country and was subsequently arraigned at the federal high court Abuja on the count of terrorism, treasonable felony and unlawful possession of firearms among others (Saidu, 2023). The creation of the Eastern Security Network (ESN) as paramilitary wing by IPOB led to a dramatic change of the group's separatist strategy from a non-violent mode to an armed struggle. In August 9th, 2021, the Sit-at-home order was declared by the IPOB separatist for the demand of the release of their arrested leader, Nnamdi Kanu. The illegitimate order from a non-state actor was to restrict movement of people every Monday between the hours of 6am to 6pm. And ever since the arrest of Kanu and the declaration of sit-at-home order, it has been counter accusation between the separatists and the Nigeria security forces on who is responsible for the security that has claimed hundreds of lives in the south east, Nigeria as argued by Nwachukwu (2024).

METHODOLOGY

The adopted research methodology for this study is content analysis. As a research method that is an unobtrusive research technique which detaches the researcher from primarily generating the data just like survey or experimental research methods, the content analysis method places the researcher to just observe what already exists in the form of books, newspaper, speeches, letters, memoirs, diaries, law reports.

The application of the chosen method is therefore discussed under the following sub-headings: Universe, population, Sample, Sampling technique, validity of research instrument, reliability of research instrument, data collection method, data analysis method and coding.

Universe

The universe for this study is the mass media in Nigeria. This was chosen as it an important source of news reportage for the researcher to merely observe what already exists.

Population of Study

The researcher selected print media as the population for this study, encompassing magazines and newspapers (including daily editions and their Saturday and Sunday weekly editions). This population includes both government-owned and privately-owned press, totaling 88 publishing groups. The selection of print media was based on the ease of access, as they are readily available and archived in the University of Benin Library, Ugbowo Campus.

Survey Population

From this population, the study settled for the newspapers as the survey population, from which the sample was chosen. The newspaper was opted for because it guaranteed a higher frequency of observations/response.

Sample

From the survey population of 88 newspapers, we decided to choose a sample size of 3 newspapers: **THE PUNCH**, which began publication in 1973. It has a national circulation as it prides itself as the most widely read newspaper in Nigeria. It is known to be very critical that it was once banned by the Nigeria government in 1994-1996. **THE GUARDIAN**, another newspaper with national circulation that is privately owned and has also suffered Nigeria Government ban in 1994-1996. It started its publication in 1983. The third sample is **THE VANGUARD** that started its publication in 1984; an independent news vendor known for its critical stance toward the authorities (Maringues, 2001).

Sampling Technique

The sample was selected using purposive, also known as judgmental, sampling design. This method involves the researcher using their judgment to select sample members (Babbie, 2010). This approach enabled the selection of content that represents both regions, ensuring that the samples are comparable in terms of themes, issues, and context. This facilitates a more meaningful comparative analysis between the North-East and South-East.

Sample size

From the sampling frame, 6,576 editions of the three newspapers (The Punch, The Guardian and Vanguard) were gotten as the study sampling frame. These 6,576 editions put together are as published on a daily basis during the period of study (that is, January 1st 2015 to December 31st, 2020). To choose a researchable size, the researcher was guided by the purposive sampling method where every 4th edition of the selected Nigerian dailies was chosen. The total gotten using the method was 1,644 editions of the combined three newspapers from 2015 to 2020. That is, each paper has the possibility of having 548 editions selection. A multiplication of this figure by 3, gave the sample size as 1,644.

Observation Unit/Unit of Analysis

From every of these 1,644 editions of the newspapers making up our sample size, we sought for articles on the cover pages of the 1,644 being our sample size with news reportage from the either of the region (North East and South East of Nigeria) on Insurgency, Terrorism, Boko Haram, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Marginalization, Islamization, Insecurity, activism and agitation. Some of the selected sample had news reportage on our chosen unit of analysis, while some did not report on our observation unit on their cover page. The study was able to draw data from 1,628 articles that have reportage on the study chosen unit of analysis.

Analysis of Data

A mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative analyses, was utilized to examine the collected data. The study presented data in a table format using percentage form and thematic analysis to interpret data collected. These data were coded and structured into themes as they affect the objectives of the study to discuss the finding.

Data Presentation

Data collected were coded in:

1. **Date:** The date the event(s) was/were recorded so as to ensure data is anchored in the timeline of events between 2015 and 2020;
2. **Newspaper:** The three dailies selected from the sample frame where the data was gotten that aided the tracking of differences in coverage across media outlets;
3. **Headline:** How the events was captured on the front page of the selected sample size. This headline was what projected the tone and how much attention was given to the region;
4. **Region:** The region that was reported about on the selected front page of the dailies that enabled the tone to be counted and attached to a specific region;

5. **Theme:** From the headlines, themes were generated to aid in data analysis;
6. **Tone:** Three different tones were used to capture the headline. The tones used are 'Positive' (1), if Optimistic or highlighting success (e.g., "*Military Victory*" "*Local Response*"). 'Neutral' (0), if tone of the headline is factual, simply reporting the trial without any emotive or judgmental language. The focus here is on information delivery rather than framing (e.g., "*reports*," "*states*," "*discusses*," or "*Military explains*") 'Negative' (-1), when headlines reflected challenges, crises, failures, or adverse outcomes, particularly when headlines highlight threats, controversies, or setbacks. (e.g., "*attack*," "*fear*," "*killed*," or "*death*");
7. **Keywords:** Significant words or phrases were extracted from the headlines for analysis purposes;
8. **Comments:** From the headlines, researcher's made comments were used to justify the chosen tones and themes for easy analysis.

Table 1: Selected Newspaper Content Analysis Coding Sheet

Date	Newspaper	Headline	Region	Theme	Tone	Keywords	Comments
01/01/2015	Vanguard	Army explains delay in recapturing towns seized by Boko Haram	North East	Government Response	Neutral (0)	Army, recapturing, delay, Boko Haram	Military provides justification for operational delays in reclaiming towns affected by insurgency
07/02/2016	Punch	Boko Haram burns children, kills 86 in Bomu	North East	Insurgency Events	Negative (-1)	Bomu, Boko Haram, children Kills	The headline highlights the severity and brutality of the attack and horrific nature of the Boko Haram sect
20/02/2016	Punch	Witness won't wear mask in court	South East	Judicial Proceedings on IPOB activism	Neutral	Court, won't wear mask	"Witness won't wear mask in court" is addressing the procedural or contextual implications within the legal system.
11/07/2017	The Guardian	MASSOB, Arewa youths Dare FG to re-arrest Kanu	South East	IPOB activism	Neutral (0)	MASSOB, Dares government to re-arrest	It is highlighting the socio-political tension the agitation is bringing
02/11/2018	Punch	Boko Haram hits Bomu IDP's camp, kills eight	North East	Insurgency Events/Humanitarian crisis	Negative (-1)	Boko Haram, Bomu, IDP camp.	It is emphasizing the vulnerability of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in conflict zones and the horrific nature of the sect.
21/08/2019	Punch	Ekweremadu attacked over Operation Python Dance role- IPOB	South East	IPOB activism/ Self determination	Negative (-1)	Operation Python Dance, Attacked	It highlights IPOB's grievances against Ekweremadu, who is perceived as complicit in the controversial military operation <i>Operation Python Dance</i> .
25/08/19	The Guardian	Nnamdi Kanu threatens to arrest President Buhari in Japan	South East	IPOB activism/ Self determination	Negative (-1)	Boko Haram, Counter-terrorism, prevent, new members	It highlights the bold rhetoric of Nnamdi Kanu, reflecting his ongoing agitation for self-determination and his willingness to challenge authority figures on an international stage.
10/11/20	Vanguard	IPOB initiating another civil war	South East	IPOB Activism	Negative (-1)	IPOB, Civil war	This headline reflects the deep-seated tensions between IPOB and the Nigerian government, as well as the polarizing narratives surrounding self-determination movements and therefore underscore the need for careful discourse.
29/11/2020	The Guardian	Buhari mourns as Boko Haram kills over 40 Bomu farmers	North East	Insurgency events	Negative (-1)	Boko Haram, kills, farmers	It highlights the vulnerability of farmers in conflict zones and the devastating impact of Boko Haram's insurgency on local communities.

Source: *Field work (compiled from Punch, Vanguard, and The Guardian newspapers, 2025).*

Table 2: Theme Distribution

S/N	Theme	Punch (Percent)	Vanguard (Percent)	The Guardian (Percent)	TOTAL (Percent)
1.	Counter-insurgency (Government, international or local community response)	103 (20.04%)	92 (18.40%)	109 (21.98%)	304 (20.13%)
2.	Boko Haram Insurgency	201 (39.10 %)	143 (28.60%)	168 (33.87%)	512 (33.91%)
3.	Humanitarian crisis	107 (20.81 %)	113 (22.60%)	109 (21.98%)	329 (21.79%)
4.	IPOB activism	103 (20.03 %)	152 (30.40%)	110 (22.18%)	365 (24.17%)
TOTAL		514 (100%)	500 (100%)	496 (100%)	1,510 (100%)

Source: Field work (compiled from Punch, Vanguard, and The Guardian newspapers, 2025).

An analysis of Table 2 shows that **Boko Haram Insurgency** with 512 mentions (33.91%), as a theme dominates media coverage across all outlets, highlighting the severity and prominence of Boko Haram activities in the period 2015–2020. It reflects the sustained focus on violence in the North-East region and the associated threats to national security. However, **IPOB Activism** as a theme garnered 365 mentions (24.17%), indicating substantial media attention toward self-determination movements and socio-political agitations in the South-East region, notably driven by IPOB. **The humanitarian Crisis** theme had 329 mentions (21.79%), it underscores the devastating humanitarian impact of insurgencies and agitations, including displacement, loss of lives, and socio-economic destabilization. While the **counter-insurgency** accounting for 304 mentions (20.13%), this theme reflects government, international and local community responses aimed at combating insurgencies and addressing security challenges.

Table 3: Region Distribution

Region	Punch (Percent)	Vanguard (Percent)	The Guardian (Percent)	TOTAL (Percent)
North-East	349 (67.89%)	350 (70%)	311 (62.7)	1,010 (66.89)
South-East	165 (32.08%)	150 (30%)	185 (37.3)	500 (33.11)
TOTAL	514	500	496	1,510

Source: Field work (compiled from Punch, Vanguard, and The Guardian newspapers, 2025).

Table 3 reveals that the North-East received significantly higher media coverage across all outlets, with 1,010 mentions (66.89% of the total), compared to the South-East's 500 mentions (33.11%). This suggests a greater focus on insurgency-related events in the North-East, possibly due to the intensity and global attention surrounding Boko Haram and ISWAP activities.

Table 4: Tone Distribution for Region

Region	Tone	Punch	Vanguard	The Guardian
North-East	Positive (+1)	117 (33.52%)	125 (35.71%)	134 (43.09%)
	Neutral (0)	67 (19.20%)	73 (20.86%)	51 (16.40%)
	Negative (-1)	165 (47.28%)	152 (43.43%)	126 (40.51%)
	TOTAL	349 (100%)	350 (100%)	311 (100%)
South-East	Positive (+1)	49 (29.70%)	43 (28.67%)	51 (27.57%)
	Neutral (0)	21 (12.73%)	13 (8.67%)	27 (14.59%)
	Negative (-1)	91 (55.15%)	94 (62.67%)	107 (57.84%)
	TOTAL	165 (100%)	150 (100%)	185 (100%)

Source: Field work (compiled from Punch, Vanguard, and The Guardian newspapers, 2025).

The tone distribution in Table 4 analysis shows that both regions received predominantly negative media coverage, with the South-East (58.4% negative) slightly more negatively portrayed than the North-East (43.86% negative). The North-East had more positive (37.23%) and neutral (18.91%) tones compared to the South-East, where positive (28.6%) and neutral (12.2%) mentions were lower. This indicates a greater focus on successes and balanced reporting in the North-East, while the South-East faced harsher media narratives.

Discussion of Findings

The generated themes were used to discuss the findings of the study in relation to the research questions raised.

RQ1: What patterns and biases can be identified in the tone and thematic focus of media coverage on insurgencies in the North-East versus self-determination agitations in the South-East of Nigeria (2015–2020)?

Boko Haram Insurgency: This theme commands significant attention in the North-East, with negative tones dominating as shown in Table 4 with 47.28% being the highest in the three selected tones. Media outlets often highlight the violence, destruction, and fear instigated by Boko Haram, creating a perception of the region as a conflict epicenter. Reports that dominated the front pages of Newspapers were “Buhari Mourns as Boko Haram kills over 40 farmers”. “Controversy over fresh Boko Haram attack in Baga”, Boko Haram Planning to use livestock as bombers” “Female suicide bomber kills self and 8 others”. These themes are only reported in the North-East region as it is the geographical location of the sect’s activities. However, the **Humanitarian Crisis** theme cuts across both regions but is more heavily reported in the North-East, where the insurgency has led to widespread displacement and severe humanitarian challenges arising from hunger and diseases. Reporting on the South-East’s humanitarian impacts is less frequent and carries a different tone, as it focuses on socio-economic grievances tied to IPOB activism. **IPOB Activism:** This theme is almost exclusively tied to the South-East, with a mix of tones. The dominance of negative coverage reflects the framing of IPOB activities as contentious or security threats. In contrast, this theme has little relevance to North-East media narratives. Response in the theme of **Counter-insurgency, this theme** predominantly aligns with the North-East, as government and international responses to Boko Haram feature heavily in media coverage. Positive tones are more prevalent under this theme, reflecting successes in counter-insurgency operations. Meanwhile, coverage of counter-insurgency efforts in the South-East is limited, suggesting minimal focus on governmental interventions in resolving IPOB agitations. While there are deliberate efforts by the government of Nigeria to rehabilitate repentant Boko Haram members, military might is the only response of the government in the South-East region.

RQ2: How effectively does content analysis capture the framing strategies in Nigerian media narratives on security challenges and socio-political agitations?

Content analysis allows for systematic categorization as it enables researchers to systematically disaggregate media narratives into distinct themes and tones, offering insights into how *insurgency* and *self-determination agitations* are portrayed across various outlets. A comparative assessment of both regions’ security dynamics show that North-East’s insurgency garners more attention, with narratives reflecting urgency, violence, and government responses. The South-East’s self-determination agitations receive less coverage, with heavier reliance on negative tones, showing a framing bias that casts these movements as security threats rather than legitimate political grievances. Through the tone categorization, it is evident that both regions are reported negatively, the South-East faces harsher portrayals (58.40% negative tone) compared to the North-East (43.86%). This suggests that insurgencies are treated with more nuances, while agitations are framed predominantly in a critical context.

QR3: In what ways do regional contexts influence media narratives about insurgencies and self-determination movements in Nigeria?

Regional contexts play a pivotal role in shaping how media narratives around insurgencies and self-determination movements are constructed and reported. By analyzing the **Theme**,

Region, and Tone Distribution tables, what emerged is the Influence of Region-Based Priorities. The region distribution Tables above show that the North-East garners significantly higher media coverage, with 66.89% of the total mentions compared to the South-East's 33.11%. This disparity reflects the urgency associated with the insurgency in the North-East, especially involving Boko Haram. The region's reputation as a conflict hotspot likely drives extensive coverage, focusing on violence, humanitarian crises, and government responses. In contrast, the South-East receives less attention, with coverage predominantly revolving around self-determination agitations, specifically IPOB activism. The lower share of mentions implies that the South-East's issues are perceived as less critical on the national and international stage, thus shaping the media's focus. Comparatively, the tables above demonstrate clear biases influenced by regional contexts. While the North-East's insurgency narratives reflect a balance between urgency, destruction and resilience, incorporate humanitarian and counter-insurgency efforts to contextualize the crisis. The South-East's media framing is dominated by negative tones toward IPOB activism, often sidelining neutral or positive aspects of self-determination agitations. This highlights a narrower perspective shaped by regional dynamics.

Recommendations

To say according to Wilkinson (1990) that "Anyone who claims to have a total solution to terrorism in a democracy is either a fool or a knave" is not to say nothing can be done about insecurity from non-state actors, but to say that since the contending issues between the state and non-state actors is political, then politics can come to the rescue, when media sets the agenda balanced and rightly. The paper therefore recommends:

1. **Balanced media coverage:** Media outlets should strive for balanced coverage of both insurgencies and self-determination agitations by integrating diverse perspectives. For example: In the North-East, reporting should include not only the destructive impacts of insurgencies but also progress in counter-insurgency measures and stories of community resilience. While the South-East narratives around self-determination movements should incorporate constructive elements, such as peaceful dialogues and socio-economic grievances, rather than focusing predominantly on contentious aspects.
2. **Increased Focus on Humanitarian Issues:** Media coverage should emphasize the humanitarian dimensions of crises in both regions, such as displacement, loss of livelihoods, and societal impacts. In the North-East, this involves further highlighting efforts to address the humanitarian fallout of insurgencies. Also in the South-East, attention should be given to the socio-economic impacts of self-determination movements and agitations on affected communities.
3. **Enhanced Use of Content Analysis in Policy Design:** Policymakers, academia and stakeholders should leverage content analysis as a tool to understand regional dynamics, public sentiment, and media framing strategies. This includes: Assessing how insurgencies are portrayed to design region-specific counter-insurgency strategies. Examining how self-determination movements are framed to explore avenues for negotiation and conflict resolution.

Conclusion

The analysis reveals that regional contexts significantly shape media narratives on insurgencies and self-determination agitations in Nigeria. The North-East receives broader, more balanced coverage, with an emphasis on insurgencies like Boko Haram and counter-insurgency efforts, reflecting urgency and resilience. In contrast, the South-East is predominantly framed through negative tones, with IPOB activism portrayed as contentious, sidelining constructive or humanitarian aspects. These disparities highlight the influence of regional dynamics on thematic focus, tone, and the scope of media reporting, underscoring the need for more balanced and inclusive narratives to foster understanding of Nigeria's complex socio-political challenges.

References

- Abada, I. M., Omeh, P. H. & Okoye, I. R. (2020). Separatist Agitation by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and National Question in Nigeria, *Journal of Political Science, Public and International Affairs*, 2 (1), 009-017.
- Adepegba, A. (2018, September 2). As Kanu's Whereabouts Sink into Deeper Controversy. *Punch Newspaper*
- Adesoji, A. 2010. The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic revivalism in Nigeria. *African Spectrum*. 45(2), 95-108.
- Adibe, T. (2017, September 16). Military Declares IPOB Terrorist Organisation. *Daily Trust Newspaper*.
- Ajani J. (2016, November 18) Dialogue is Elusive. *Vanguard*
- Amnesty International (2016). Nigeria: Killing of Unarmed Pro-Biafra supporters by Military must be Urgently Investigated. London: *Amnesty International Analysis of Public Statement in 2012'*, *Perspectives on Terrorism* 7(5): 47-76.
- Ayo-Aderele, A., & Ikokwu, O. (2017, September 12). Soldiers surround Nnamdi Kanu's home, invade NUJ office. *Punch Newspaper*. Retrieved March 2, 2024, from <https://punchng.com/tension-as-soldiers-return-to-umuahia-invade-nuj-office/>
- Azeez, K. (2025, March 18). Boko Haram Responsible for 66% of Violent Deaths in Nigeria – Report. *Guardian Newspaper*. <https://guardian.ng/news/boko-haram-responsible-for-66-of-violent-deaths-in-nigeria-report/>
- Babbie, E. (2010). *The Practice of Social Research*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning
- Bengtsson, M. (2016). How to Plan and Perform a Qualitative Study Using Content Analysis, *NursingPlus Open*, 2, 8-14.
- Campbell J. (2011), *'Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink'*, Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, New York.
- Chijioke, E. (2019, June 18). South-East Governors call for Dialogue to Address Insecurity. *Punch Newspaper*.
- Chothia, F. (2016). "Who are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamist Group?" *BBC News* (November 24, 2016) Retrieved 27th February, 2024 from online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13809501>
- Cohen, B. C. (1963). *The Press and Foreign Policy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Diamond, L. (1988). *Class, Ethnicity, and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic*. Syracuse University Press.
- Downe Wamboldt, B. (1992). Content Analysis: Method, Applications, and Issues. *Health Care for Women International*, 13(3), 313-321.
- Ero, C. (2015, May 16). Nigeria's Insurgency has to be Tackled at the Roots. *Daily Trust Newspaper*.
- Eveslage, B.S., (2013). 'Clarifying Boko Haram's Transnational Intentions, Using Content Analysis of Public Statement in 2012', *Perspectives on Terrorism* 7(5): 47-76.
- Eze, S. (2017, October 13). Operation Python Dance: Military's justification and the backlash. *Punch Newspaper*
- Ezea, S. (2017). Kanu's, Uwazuruike's Travails and Tempo of Biafra struggle. *The Guardian Newspaper*, (16 May, 2017). Retrieved 28th February, 2024 from online at: <https://guardian.ng/politics/kanus-uwazuruikestravails-and-tempo-of-biafra-struggle/>.
- FATF (2019), Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment Guidance, FATF, Paris, Retrieved 10th October, 2024 from online at: www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/methodsandtrends/documents/Terrorist-Financing-Risk-AssessmentGuidance.html
- Fessy, T. (2015). Nigeria's Boko Haram militants attack Chad for the first time. *BBC News* (February 13, 2015). Retrieved 27th February, 2024 from online at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa31453951>
- Forest, J. J. F. (2017). Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 668(1), 204-226.
- Holsti, O. R. (1968). Content Analysis in the Handbook of Social Psychology (eds.). Gardner Lindzey and Eliot Aronson. Reading, Mass Addison.

- Horgan, J. (2005). *The Psychology of Terrorism*. Routledge.
- Hough P. (2008). *Understanding Global Security*. Routledge.
- Ibah, O. (2020, October 10). Human Rights Watch criticizes Nigerian government's response to IPOB protests. *Daily Trust*.
- Idahosa, O., & Emeka, O. (2016). Content Analysis and the Challenges of Measuring Insurgencies in Nigeria: The Case of Boko Haram. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 8(1), 33-47
- Ilozue, C. (2018). Biafra: 180 Lives Lost to 'Operation Python Dance II' – Rights Group. Independent,(7 September 2018). Retrieved 2nd March, 2024 from online at: <https://www.independent.ng/biafra-180-lives-lost-to-operation-python-dance-ii-rights-group/>.
- Insch, G. S., Moore, J. E. and Murphy, L. D. (1997). 'Content Analysis in Leadership Research: Examples, Procedures, and Suggestions for Future use', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 8(1), 1-25.
- Institute for Economic & Peace (2015). Global Terrorism Index 2015: *Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*. Report 36,1-107.
- Jacob U. H., Nwobi I. O. and Igboji C. D. (2020). The Biafran State & the Rise of IPOB: A Crack on Nigeria's National Integration. *Social Sciences*, 9(1), 40-44. doi: 10.11648/j.ss.20200901.15
- Lasswell, H. D. (1948). The Structure and Function of Communication in Society. In L. Bryson (Ed.), *The Communication of Ideas* (pp. 37-51). New York: Harper and Row.
- Macdonald, M. (2003). *Exploring Media Discourse*. London, Arnold.
- Maringues, M. (2001). The Nigerian press: Current state, travails and prospects. In 'K. Amuwo et al. (Eds.), *Nigeria during the Abacha years (1993-1998)*. IFRA-Nigeria. Retrieved 17th January, 2025 from online at: <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.ifra.640>
- Mayah, E. (2016). Special Report: Inside the Massive Extrajudicial Killings in Nigeria's South-East. *Premium Times Newspaper*, (8 June, 2016). Retrieved 2nd March, 2024 from online at: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/204902-special-report-inside-massive-extrajudicial-killingsnigerias-south-east.html>.
- Musa, N. (2015, January 5). Scores Feared Killed in Borno, Yobe Attacks, Military Post Sacked. *Punch Newspaper*.
- Mutum, Ibrahim & Omirin (2020, July 3). How Boko Haram Fighters are Getting Weapons. *Daily Trust Newspaper*.
- Nachmias, C. F. and Nachmias, D. (1996) *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. New York, St Martin's Press.
- Nnachi, E. (2020, December 20). IPOB Debunks Military's Claim of Dislodging ESN Camps in Imo, Abia. *Punch Newspaper*.
- Nnochiri, I. (2011). "Boko Haram: Yusuf had only 4,000 followers in 2009, Army Tells Court." *Vanguard Newspaper (Abuja)*, (December 8, 2011). Retrieved 27th February, 2024 from Online at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/12/boko-haram-yusuf-had-only-4000-followers-in-2009-army-tells-court/>.
- Nwachukwu, F.N. (2024), Security Lapses and the IPOB Sit-at-Home Order in the Southeast NIGERIA: A Critical Appraisal. *British Journal of Library and Information Management* 4(1), 1-10. DOI: 10.52589/BJLIM-3VIYYP7E
- Nwangwu, C. (2021). A breakdown of Biafra Separatism, and Where Kanu Fits into the Picture. *The Conversation*, (18 August, 2021). Retrieved 28th February, 2024 from online at: <https://theconversation.com/a-breakdown-of-biafra-separatism-andwhere-kanu-fits-into-the-picture-166235>.
- Nwangwu, C. (2023) Neo-Biafra Separatist Agitations, State Repression and Insecurity in South-East, Nigeria. *Soc* 60, 40-53. Retrieved 27th February, 2024 from online at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-022-00782-0>
- Okoro, R. (2020). The Political Economy of Terrorism: A Comparative Analysis of Boko Haram and the Islamic State. *Ife Social Sciences Review*, 28(1), 88-104.

- Omeje, K. (2005). "Enyimba Enyi": The Comeback of Igbo Nationalism in Nigeria. *Review of African Political Economy*, 32 (106), 630-636.
- Onuoha, G. (2014). The Politics of 'Hope' and 'Despair': Generational Dimensions to Igbo Nationalism in Post-Civil War Nigeria. *African Sociological Review*, 18 (1), 1-25.
- Oputu, D. and Lilley, K., (2015). 'Boko Haram and Escalating Regional Terror', Retrieved 27th August 2023, from <http://soufangroup.com/tsg-intelbrief-boko-haram-and-escalating-regionalterror>.
- Oxfam Briefing Paper, (2019). Sahel: Fighting Inequality to Respond to Development and Security Challenges. *Oxfam GB for Oxfam International*. Retrieved on 2nd November, 2023 from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel>
- Oyewole, B. (2015, January 1). Insurgency and Buhari's Sharia Admonition. *Guardian Newspaper*.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. Sage Publications.
- Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding Terror Networks*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Saidu, A. N. (2023). Secessionist Movements and the Quest for Restructuring in Nigeria: A Threat to Peace Building and National Security. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 11 (3), 394-402.
- Sanni, K. (2021). "Boko Haram: 350,000 Dead in Nigeria – UN" *Premium Times Newspaper* (February 22, 2021). Retrieved 27th February, 2024 from online at: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/470476-insurgency-has-killed-almost-350000-in-north-east-undp.html?tztc=1>.
- Seignobos, C. (2015). Boko Haram and Lake Chad: An Extension or a Sanctuary? *Afrique Contemporaine*, 255, 89-114.
- Sidq Isa M. Q., Mac-Leva F., Salau A., Aminu H. U. & Yakubu Z. (2020, November 9th). 6 Nigerians Convicted in UAE over 'B/Haram Funding'. *DailyTrust Newspaper*, 1-3.
- Tar U. A. and Mustapha M. (2017). The Emerging Architecture of a Regional Security Complex in the Lake Chad Basin. *Africa Development*, Volume XLII, No. 3: 99-118
- Ugochukwu, F. (2017, September 15). Army Launches Operations to Curb IPOB Activities in the Southeast. *Guardian Newspaper*.
- Ujumadu, V. (2017). Biafra: The other Side of Operation Python Dance. *Vanguard Newspaper*, (16 September, 2017). Retrieved 2nd March, 2024 from online at: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/09/biafra-side-operation-python-dance>.
- Wakili S. (2017, September 20). FG unveils IPOB Finance Headquarters. *DailyTrust Newspaper*, 1-2.
- Wood, J. T. (2013). *Introducing Communication Research: Paths of Inquiry*. Sage Publications.