



Media representation of insurgency through film: An audience analysis of the Nollywood movie “voiceless”

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Abstract

Film has a significant role not only for entertainment but more importantly, it preserves events and challenge existing norms and systems of practice in the society. This work examines the critical role of the media in representing insurgency which has given rise to the state of insecurity in Nigeria especially in the Northern part of the country. The movie “Voiceless” was analyzed to aid in further understanding of insurgency and the role which the media plays in its portrayal. This study was anchored on framing theory. This study was designed as a qualitative study and adopted Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as its method of data collection, to easily determine the perception of the audience. Sixteen participants were involved in this study in which the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria were duly represented. The FGD was held in three sections until the questions related to the topic were exhausted. The FGD adopted online format using the zoom application due to covid-19 restrictions. Findings from the study show that bad leadership/government, ethnicity, incompetence of the media personnel has given rise to the problem of insurgency in Nigeria. The discussion amongst the FGD participants helped to proffer solutions to the impending problem of insurgency. This study, therefore, recommends that public opinion regarding this topic should be considered by the government and the stakeholders in the Nigeria media industry.

Keywords: insurgency, film, voiceless, insecurity, ethnicity

Introduction

This study gives an overview of what insurgency is all about, and how it is represented by the media in the Nollywood movie ‘VOICELESS’. This study, however, focuses on how the media represents insurgency in movies, given that the media can be an agent of both positive and negative change.

According to the Oxford dictionary, an insurgency may be defined as “an active revolt or uprising”. Insurgency may also be seen as a movement within a country dedicated to overthrowing the government. An insurgency is a violent, armed rebellion against authority when those taking part of it are not recognized as ‘unlawful combatants’.

As a concept, the nature of insurgency is ambiguous, insurgency can arise as a result of corruption, nepotism, ethnic consciousness, mediocracy, marginalization, extreme social deprivation and religious extremism.

In Nigeria, there are most cases of insurgency in the north which is as a result of most of the aforementioned causes of insurgency which can be seen in the movie ‘VOICELESS’, where insurgent groups are strongly against education, owing to the fact that it goes against their ethnicity and religion, and they seek to get their lost ethnicity back by putting a stop to female child education. This they want to achieve by kidnapping these girls from school and forcing them to embrace their life purpose according to their culture, which is to get married at a very young age and bear children.

Looking at the movie ‘VOICELESS’, the boys are not left unscathed as they are also forced to carry guns and kill at a very young age all in the name of recruiting more insurgents to put an end to their cultural imperialism.

However, the new media has transformed society in the sense that it has afforded opportunities to the less privileged and less advantaged people to express themselves freely, just as seen in the movie where the relatives of the kidnapped girls voiced out their afflictions to the government and appealed that they bring back the girls safely, through the TV media crew. As stated earlier 'the media can be an agent of both positive and negative change', in as much as the media lends voices to the people who were initially voiceless, it also creates a means for insurgent groups to disseminate ideas far more quickly than before and to a wider audience, thereby creating security unrest in the society. The development of the age of mass media and communication has had a profound impact on the ways in which insurgency operates. Classical Maoist insurgency prescribes that the people and their support are the most important factor in initiating an effective anti-government insurgency (Katzenbach, 1995) [32].

The advent of this new media space and its growing pains in use and exploitation has become a major determinant factor in the success or failure of insurgency in the modern age (Rid, T. 2007) [52].

Modern media had expanded a conflict's center of gravity from a small northern region to an elected democracy's population mostly in the northern part of Nigeria. This maturity of communication between disparate parts of the world also allowed for Diasporas to have a more significant impact in insurgency (O'Neill *et al.*, 2005).

Statement of Problem

The advent of media has in so many ways influenced insurgency not just in Nigeria but also globally. The introduction of the media has been both an advantage and also a disadvantage to the society. The insurgents have used the media to instill fear in so many by putting out the barbaric acts they commit for the public to see. Though people have been enlightened by what's going on in the country, many have hijacked the media for their own selfish purpose. Boko Haram are the major insurgents facing the country. Chukwurah, Eme and Ogbeje (2015) [1] have argued that the activities of the Boko Haram in particular has created the impression that Nigeria is safe haven for terrorist organizations and by implication brought dishonor and dented the image of the country. The effect of Boko Haram can clearly be seen in the movie "VOICELESS" where fathers, mothers and children are being slaughtered on a daily bases, women and young girls are being raped, Education and every form of social gatherings ceased for the fear of being attacked by the insurgents of all these problems bedeviling the nation, socio-economic development and image abroad, religious extremism of the Islamic jihadist movement with its extreme form, terrorism in the form of Boko Haram and ISWAP on the other hand, and banditry, Fulani herdsmen attacks and other forms of attacks from criminal gangs on the other hand have been identified as the most frightening challenges confronting the country presently. This informs the impression that the nation is at war with itself and nothing more (Amalu, 2015) [5]. Is film then a conveyor of change or more harm.

Objective of the Study

1. To examine how the media through film gives insurgents the chance to circulate their information and communicate with the public.

2. To examine the challenges caused by insurgency through film.
3. To provide means in which these challenges caused by insurgency in the Country could be addressed to provide lasting solutions.

Research Questions

1. Do insurgents communicate and circulate their information through film?
2. What are the challenges caused by insurgency in Nigeria?
3. What are the factors that could address and provide lasting solutions to the challenges caused by insurgency in the country?

Empirical Review

In recent times, insurgency has attracted lots of interpretations, some of which are closely related and some which have completely distinct interpretation from scholars, analysts and security experts all over the world because of its regular occurrences and sophistication adopted by those that championed its cause as a mean to register their grievances either against government policies or marginalization, as well as in pursuit of selfish interests or of religious ideologies or beliefs (Zarrow, 2005, p.73) [60].

Essentially also, several extant literatures on insurgency revealed that insurgency also refers to as internal political violence is beset with a lot of conceptual confusion largely due to a lack of consensus on what the term actually, stands for. There is also the problem of its indiscriminate usage and the use of some terms interchangeably with the concept such as revolution, insurrection, guerrilla warfare, unconventional warfare, irregular warfare, armed struggle, internal war, rebellion, liberation war, conflict and terrorism (Laqueur, 2007, p. 240) [35].

Notwithstanding, these distinctions and descriptions by scholars and theorists did not deny the concept acceptable or workable academic conceptual frameworks that have provided us with insights as to what the concept portends. Although, the mirage of conceptual difficulties has made it very difficult for us to have generally accepted definition of the term insurgency but there are workable and acceptable definitions of the concept in recent studies. In the affirmative, (Moore, 2007, p.2) opines that the term insurgency has been used interchangeably, though, not completely correctly with the term's warfare, unconventional warfare, revolutionary and even terrorism. Furthermore, he argued that the interchangeability of concepts in attempts to provide a concise definition of the concept insurgency is understandable, given the diverse nature and trend to which insurgency is being used as a means to register one's disaffections toward government policies and programs or in pursuit of selfish and religious beliefs. Abdu and Shehu (2019) see insurgency as a rebellion against a constituted authority either in the pursuit of political goal or for selfish interest. Abolurin (2011) [3] cited in (Abdu and Shehu, 2019, p.10) described insurgency as a revolution, revolt, rebellion, riot and mutiny. By implication, those carryout rebellious acts are insurgent groups involved in insurgency. Most people have also used the term terrorism to describe the term insurgency. But this description is not usually correct about insurgency. Though it can only be regard as such only when it has gone extreme with the use arms and other forms of sophistication. In this respect, Curtas and Liolio cited in

(Amalu, 2015, p.36) ^[5] argued that insurgency is not terrorism, subversion, guerrilla war, conventional war, revolution, coup d'état, although some insurgent groups have adopted some of these methods in the achievement of their goals.

Hassan (2014) in an elaborate manner argued that the misconstruction of the term insurgency with the term terrorism is not completely wrong because terrorism has become the main commonly adopted strategy by the insurgents. Since terrorism is associated with a certain kind of violent action carried out by individuals and group of individuals rather than by the states and with events which take place in peace time rather than as part of conventional war, it could be construed as insurgency. As a strategy of insurgency, terrorism involves the adoption of some methods to achieve its goals which include bombing, guerrilla warfare, kidnapping and abduction. This simply means that insurgent groups or movements often use terrorism to pursue political goals or particular objective.

Hassan (2014) argued that insurgency can be seen as political struggle and necessarily not a military struggle, therefore, not amenable to a purely military solution without resorting to a level of brutality unacceptable to the contemporary global environment. Galula, D. (2017) ^[20] define insurgency as "a protracted struggle conducted methodologically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives which often times or extreme cases lead to overthrow of existing order". The US Department of Defense (DOD 2007) cited in (Ukpong-Umo, 2016, p.11) defined insurgency as an organized movement which its aim is to overthrow a constituted authority or government through the use of subversion or armed conflict.

Conceptual Review

Insurgency as a Process of Communication: The Role of Propaganda

Since ancient times, propaganda has proved to be a seminal weapon in the battle for hearts and minds. Successful insurgents use communication mediums to construct and disseminate information in a way that manages the relevant audiences' opinion and behavior in their favor. It can simultaneously inform, inspire and manipulate the populace as well as delegitimize and demoralize the enemy. Propaganda is also an instrument that tends to favor the insurgent over the ruling power. The government cannot afford to degrade its credibility in the areas it governs and so avoids crafting overtly misleading messages in favor of media censorship, which is a draining process in terms of time and effort (Marighella, 2002) ^[10]. In contrast, the insurgent group free from such responsibility enjoys greater creative freedom when formulating its revolutionary propagandistic messages (Galula, 2004) ^[19]. Propaganda tends to carry many negative connotations, but it can be a tool for progressive political and social change. The rise of Christianity, like all other great religions, was characterized by the skillful utilization of propagandistic techniques. The "sign of the fish", a symbol consisting of two intersecting arcs was painted on walls, carved into bark, and drawn in the sand by the early followers of Christianity (Jowett *et al.*, 2006) ^[31]. The conscious decision to speak in parables when addressing the crowds allowed Jesus to paint vivid and memorable illustrations that, while simple and comprehensible, carried powerful spiritual and moral meaning, which resonated widely amongst the poor, weak and illiterate, and ultimately

proved capable of subverting the established order (Herzog, 2004).

Terrorism as Communication

Terrorism is an extreme and highly effective form of communication with the power to influence the attitudes and behavior of various audiences. Moreover, it does not require sophisticated weaponry or many recruits, nor must it produce large material and human destruction to have a powerful political and psychological effect. Hence, it is not surprising that terrorism has proved to be an essential feature of almost every modern insurgent campaign. The origins of the systematic utilization of terroristic acts as a form of communication can be traced to the concept of "propaganda by the deed" first developed by Carlos Pisacane, and advocated by the likes of Malatesta, Cafiero and other anarchists of late nineteenth century Europe (Laqueur, 2007) ^[36]. Alone, conventional mediums of propaganda, mainly the written word and direct contact, were perceived as insufficient to fully deliver the anarchist cause to the masses and stimulate them into social revolution (Fleming, 2008). In contrast, the act of violence, whether it was the assassination of heads of state and prominent political and business figures, or the bombing of cafes, opera houses, theaters and other places where the "bourgeoisie" congregated, could provoke the state into indiscriminate retaliation. In theory, the anarchist could then capture the attention of the press and the sympathy of the working classes, mobilizing the latter against the instrument of their oppression and exploitation (Bolt, 2012) ^[13].

Often unable to identify the actual perpetrators the state fulfilled their expectations by responding with a heavy hand and arresting anyone affiliated with the anarchist movement, regardless of their stance on violence (Jenson, 2013). The Spanish government's reaction to the Corpus Christi bombing was particularly cruel. Hundreds of suspected anarchist sympathizers were incarcerated in Montjuic fortress where they were victims of torture (Jenson, 2013). Yet, propaganda by the deed failed. In most cases, the authorities introduced draconian legislation which curbed freedom of speech, assembly and association. Moreover, political and economic elites invested in the existing state of affairs monopolized the channels of mass communication, thereby controlling the narrative and silencing the anarchists' calls for popular insurrection (Bolt, 2012) ^[13]. At the Soummam Conference in September 1956 the FLN first formally advocated the use of terrorism as a mode of struggle (Horne, 2007). The FLN's heavy reliance on a campaign of assassinations and bombings during the Battle of Algiers is, at the most fundamental level, a reflection of its military weakness (Moran, 2008) ^[43]. Yet, like the anarchist attacks they provoked the state into launching a total war against the organization. A war that ultimately involved repressive measures against civilians. Attacks on the wiefs-noires were usually followed with brutal reprisals against the indigenous population, in which security forces either actively participated in, or stood by in passivity (Horne, 2007). With the aim of isolating the insurgents from the population, the French embarked on a disastrous policy of resettlement in the rural areas that only bore poverty, starvation and discontent. During the course of the Battle of Algiers it is estimated thirty to forty per cent of the male population of the Casbah were victim to illegal arrest and interrogation by the 10th Para Division, which was notorious for its systematic use of

torture (Moran, 2008) ^[43].

Though the French's illiberal response appeared effective in the short-term, extracting sufficient intelligence to break the FLN network and apprehend some of its top leadership, its methods served to erode what little legitimacy it could claim amongst Algiers' Muslims. In pure military terms the French paras had won the Battle of Algiers but at the expense of radicalizing the population and, thus, losing any hope for a negotiated peace settlement. The FLN leadership's ingenuity was to also recognize that their struggle for independence was not confined to Algeria's borders. The terror they employed and the reprisals they induced at home, served to internationalize the conflict on an unprecedented level. As the media reported the scale of FLN attacks and their casualties, audiences in metropolitan France that were once either ambivalent, undecided, or even adamantly in favor of a French Algeria, began to increasingly question their presence. Journalistic reports and revelations of the army's atrocities served to distance the weary public from the settlers and the military and fueled anti-war protest (Horne, 2007).

British and North American audiences also became aware of the conflict and, to the detriment of the French, sympathetic to the Algerian struggle for independence (Beckett, 2001) ^[12]. The violent acts transmitted various messages to these multiple constituencies but, mainly, that the war would be protracted and would involve the degradation of French values as well as economic resources. The insurgents relied on the domestic French and international audiences to then pressure decision makers into an eventual withdrawal from Algeria. The French still maintained the capabilities to fight but they had lost the political will. Similarly, Palestinian insurgents understood the futility of an asymmetric war against Israel, and that after the outcome of the Six Day War they could no longer rely on their Arab neighbors to fulfill their aspirations. If it were to make any headway, the Palestinian resistance would need to open a new battlefield and mobilize its own community. The international terror campaign by the constituent factions of the Palestinian Liberation Organization between 1968 and 1973 followed this logic.

The series of high-profile attacks on civilians, shocked audiences around the globe and were naturally followed by Western condemnation. However, attention quickly moved to the insurgents' motivations: the realities of Israeli occupation, the conditions of Palestinian refugees and their right to return, which had been for long ignored, were now in Discussion. On the thirteenth of November 1974, Yasser Arafat was invited to address the United Nations General Assembly on the Palestinian question. He did so to a standing ovation. Like the Anarchists and the FLN, the PLO used the violent act to generate a media spectacle, to shock, educate, persuade and mobilize audiences. Only, the communication tools of their time allowed them to do so to greater effect. The 1972 Munich hostage crisis alone was broadcast to an estimated 900 million television viewers around the world (Hoffman, 2006) ^[27].

Indeed, the insurgents targeted the Olympic event for the amount of media coverage it attracted, but they may have also considered the international theatre's symbolic power. The Olympics was a celebration of statehood as well as sport, a status their nation was excluded from. In this age of accelerated globalization, of rapid advancement in media and transportation technologies, terror became a potent act of strategic communication, and consequently a valuable

insurrectionary weapon. The images of the attacks were cable of transmitting messages to audiences in Israel, the Arab World and the West, but most importantly to the global Palestinian Diaspora.

The violent deeds carried specific meanings of statelessness, desperation and prosecution, which resonated with the community's shared historical memories, narratives and grievances, and arousing a unified Palestinian consciousness (Bolt, 2012) ^[13]. Its effect was to stimulate many into action. Thousands of Palestinians responded to Munich by volunteering to join the PLO's militant ranks (Hoffman, 2006) ^[27]. Equally important are the many more exposed to the violent act that would subscribe to the PLO's revolutionary doctrine and ideals, embracing it as the legitimate representative of their people.

Mass media, crime fighting and security in Nigeria

The point has been made that the mass media are crucial in the achievement of society-wide objectives, be it in the area of social, health, infrastructural, political, educational or security development. The mass media constitute one of the most important institutions of socialization and in fact, the major cultural industry responsible for the distribution of ideas in the Nigerian society (Pate, 2011) ^[48]. Other institutions of socialization such as the church, family, educational institutions, political establishments etc. basically play reinforcement roles to the mass media by performing their separate functions in the society. This shows that the mass media impact on the society and determine dominant perceptions, values and attitude. How then can this all-powerful position of the mass media in the society be utilized in mobilizing against acts of insecurity in Nigeria?

The surveillance and correlation functions of the media are at the core of mobilization against acts of insecurity. The surveillance role says the media provide information to the society which is used in opinion molding and attitude adoption. The correlation role says the media relate news and various happenings in the society to the individuals' life and environment. This is done through interpretation and explanation of the implications of happenings on the life and environment of the masses, including implications of acts that breed insecurity on the society. It is expected that through effective information, the society would gradually turn against such acts.

Osadolor (2001) cited in Orhewere and Kur (2004) ^[49] writes that the most critical role of the media should be in helping to prevent or at least attenuate the severity of conflicts. Publicity is critical in exposing and checking vices. As Joseph Pulitzer, the legendary journalist and creator of the Pulitzer prizes for excellence in journalism had said, "publicity may not be the only thing that is needed but it is the one thing without which all other agencies will fail" (cited in Olayede, 2011, p. 64). Several programs for creating awareness on crime with a view to discouraging acts of insecurity exist in the media. Such crime specific programs such as Police Diary on Radio Nigeria, Eagle on Radio sponsored on Radio Nigeria by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), several pages of newspapers dedicated to crime stories including non-crime specific pages that carry stories, political awareness radio and television programs which sometimes sensitize the public against crime, the various jungles and promotional messages against violence regularly running on most television and radio station; these are among the efforts being made by the media towards the utilization of publicity

in sensitizing against acts that breed insecurity. That acts of insecurity have continued does not mean that these efforts are meaningless. Raising awareness is essential in making the society uncomfortable for such acts to thrive.

The need for emphasis on conflict and terrorism reporting in the interest of the public, is essential. The media have been accused of contributing in worsening the state of insecurity and conflicts in Nigeria due to reportage primarily aimed at maximizing profit and increasing audience base. After an analysis of media coverage of diversity and conflict issues by various scholars, Pate (2011) ^[48] listed out common practices adopted by the media which tend to contribute negatively to crises situations as follows – selective reporting of prejudicial stereotypes about groups and individuals, reporting inter group conflicts out of their fundamental sociological, economic, political and other contexts, shallow and episodic coverage, total blackout on some groups, individuals or community, use of inflammatory, misleading and sensational headlines to attract sales, publishing inflammatory statements against some people or groups as letters to the editor, attributing statements by individuals to groups making generalized statements not supported facts etc. These are activities which the media need to desist from to make meaningful impact in combating insecurity in Nigeria; otherwise they (mass media) will continue to be seen as fueling insecurity.

The mass media need to allot specific air time and space to reports on terrorism, kidnapping and other forms of crime capable of breeding insecurity. This is a way of emphasizing the negative impact of such acts on the society. The allotment of specific airtime and space to reporting terrorism, including sponsorship of reporters to embark on independent investigations of terrorist acts in the country were among the suggestions made by journalists in a study on how to combat terrorism through mass media strategies (Udoudo and Diriyai, 2012). This will provide the needed reinforcement of the negative impact of such crimes on the society. Just as Pulitzer (cited in Oloyede 2011, p. 64) observes “*get all these things (acts of terrorism and other acts of insecurity) out in the open, describe them, ridicule them in the press and sooner or later, public opinion will sweep them away*”. This could be a gradual but effective process.

Citizen’s journalism could play a vital role in the utilization of the mass media to combat insecurity in Nigeria. Citizen’s journalism which is also known as public, participatory, civic or street journalism consists of active participation of members of the public in news gathering and dissemination. It has variously been defined as members of the public playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information (2007), a wide range of activities in which everyday people contribute Glaser information or commentary about news (, Oyedepo and Usaini, 2012); secular process of passing information.

The mass media should be utilized by ordinary citizens in exposing crime and sensitizing the public against acts of terror. The pertinence of citizens journalism in combating crime was played out in the brutal murder of four students of the University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORTH) at Aluu, a community in Rivers State Nigeria. The recording of the clubbing and burning to death of the four boys was uploaded on the internet and in a few seconds the story went viral. The mass media further spread the story especially from the angle of the public outcry generated by the recorded murder. Cable News Network (CNN) has i-report program where citizens

journalists provide reports that conventional journalists could not get. Citizen’s journalism makes everyone a reporter. The 2009 presidential election in Iran underscored the pertinence of citizens journalism where virtually every Iranian that had a handset became a reporter and sent stories and pictures of the postelection violence across to the world through conventional media such as CNN, BBC FOX News etc. This was after President Ahmadinejad had banned foreign media from operating in the country and also attempted to block internet access in the country (Nwabueze, 2009).

The ordinary citizen can also contribute in exposing acts of insecurity through the numerous phone-in programs on radio and television, the internet media, especially social media and online versions of conventional media. The various ways the mass media could be effectively adopted in combating insecurity as explained here, require commitment on the part of media workers. Both the public and mass media workers should play complimentary roles as partners in this regard.

Theoretical Review

This discourse is anchored on the framing theory. The framing theory suggests that how an issue is presented to the audience (called “the frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. The framing theory states that the media are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way, it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting, because it does not only tell the audience what to think about, but also how to think about that issue. From this approach, framing can be defined as a process in which some aspects of reality are selected, and given greater emphasis or importance, so that the problem is defined, its causes are diagnosed, moral judgments are suggested and appropriate solutions and actions are proposed (Entman, 1993).

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research method and focus group discussion was used to get data. The movie voiceless was watched by a total of sixteen people, after which the focus group was held. There were three sessions of the focus group, until all answers were exhausted.

Sampling Procedure

A total of sixteen people (16) were randomly picked for this study, having met with the demographic and geographic criteria to partake in the FGD.

Research Findings and Analysis

The interactive sessions with the groups yielded quite interesting views, opinions and thoughts. The participants were aware of the problem of insurgency facing the country and its link with the media. The replies and reactions from the respondents led to the findings made in this section in accordance with the research questions:

How do insurgents gain access to the media to communicate and circulate their information?

From the findings, I discovered that as a result of incompetence and a desire to sell more fictions than reality, the movie producer and director focused on promotion of most portrayals that celebrates terrorists ego. According to Pate, 2011 ^[48] “The media have been accused of contributing in worsening the state of insecurity and conflicts in Nigeria due to reportage primarily aimed at maximizing profit and

increasing audience base". From the findings, this can no longer be seen as an accusation but a stated fact.

Participant 14: *Some of the media houses today prioritize making profit than upholding standard. They tend to give out news that would fetch them money and sell out their names. You'll also see them categorizing some information as relevant and important while some are seen as irrelevant because those ones don't in any way increase the media presence of their sponsors. Makes me wonder the faith of the public in 10years to come, we would undoubtedly be fed with rubbish. "The most critical role of the media should be helping to prevent the severity of conflicts" (Osadolor, 2001) and (Orhervere and kur, 2004), this implies that the media personnel should seek to promote equity and tranquility in the nation, they should be mindful of what they circulate and avoid propaganda which can escalate any existing issue. This however, is in accordance with what Galula, 2004^[19] stated that "propaganda tends to carry negative connotations". Marighella, 2002^[40] also stated that "propaganda is also an instrument that tends to favour the insurgents over the ruling power", this I do not totally agree with because not only the insurgent groups make use of propaganda, it is glaringly obvious to all that even the government uses propaganda as a tool. Therefore, the media personnel should not allow themselves to be used in carrying out this tool.*

Participant 11: *In addition to that, I think the issue of propaganda is also a challenge facing the government. Both true and untrue stories are being linked to the government. Even the problem of saboteurs among government officials are a challenge to the government in handling this problem. As they can make the efforts of the government seem vain. The respondents made mention that the media seemed to be bought over by the government and they have allowed this said government control all their affairs.*

Participant 15: *We won't deny the fact that there's some truth in your assertion but let's not also forget that there'll always be bad apples amongst the good ones and these bad apples are the problem we have. They allow the government to influence and control their affairs. Most of these media houses don't even hide it anymore, they make it so obvious by giving news in favor of some group of persons like the government officials, politicians, name them. Then any information that is not in the favor of these people, they end up altering it or discarding it completely. This statement is in accordance with Bolt (2012)^[13] "moreover, political and economic elites invested in the existing state of affairs monopolized the channels of mass communication, thereby, controlling the narrative and silencing the anarchists' calls for popular insurrection". This negative activity is what the media need to desist from in order to make meaningful impact in combating insecurity in Nigeria, otherwise they (media) will continue to be seen as fueling insecurity.*

What are the challenges caused by insurgency in Nigeria?

The challenges caused by insurgency in Nigeria is numerous to be mentioned. One major challenge is the reduction in the country's economy, insurgency has inflated drastic changes in the economy. It has also driven away most foreign investors and has left us in serious debt. This problem has escalated the prices of things and caused inflation in the

country.

Participant 11: *Well, it is no longer news to us that Insurgency has affected many sectors of the economy of this country. The prices of things are on the increase and have caused inflation. The standard of living has increased, making it difficult to survive. With the way things are going we might not actually die from Insurgency but from hunger.*

Participant 4: *I want to list the sectors that has been affected by insurgency and they are;*

1. *The Agricultural sector: some states that are known for food production in this country has been hit by insurgents and farmers are now afraid to go to their farms. I mean who would go to the farm is the middle of warfare.*
2. *This has really affected production tremendously.*
3. *Health sector: The health of the people is paramount and during insurgency, hospitals are destroyed, medical personnel killed or kidnapped, drugs stole just as we saw in the beginning of the movie. People die on a daily basis because they can't receive proper medical care. Some hospitals are now short of staff.*
4. *Educational sector: As we all know; the schools are the first target of every insurgent group. Both the students and teachers are being injured, killed or either abducted or school facilities destroyed. Since time won't permit me to go further, let me give room for another person to speak.*

Another challenge is the reduction in population as a result of increase in death rate and loss of properties.

Participant 6: *I believe destruction of lives and property is the major effect of insurgency before anything else. When we turn on our TV, we hear of people being killed and slaughtered on a daily, either there in the North or on the highways. This same news is also seen on social media. Open your phone and you will be greeted with a gruesome scene of killings and slaughtering of people. This has sadly become the other of the day. Many Bread winners are being killed, families separated and government seems to be doing nothing about putting these barbaric acts to an end. It is disheartening I must say.*

According to Aslem(2001)^[9] who noted that "the causative factors in this insurgency is still very much visible during the crises in the Niger Delta region, namely, extreme poverty in the midst of extreme affluence, degradation of the human living environment to the levels requiring concerted humanitarian intervention, discriminatory public policies resulting in political alienation of the human population, unsustainable extractive economies, and finally, the absence of environmental remediation policies and activities". These problems noted here are true and have been verified in the course of this study. Another challenge caused by insurgency in Nigeria is ethnic and religious segregation. The problem of insurgency does not only revolve around government but also around religion and ethnicity. Insurgency has further bruised the relationship between the various ethnic groups in the country. It fueled the quest for separation amongst ethnic and religious groups as no one wants to be caught in a crossfire caused by a particular ethnic group.

Participant 7: *Honestly, I think at this point, separation of the state is the best approach, they should just divide the country. To your tents oh! Israel. Anyone that fails to comply to this will totally be on their own, that's all I have to say. Thank you.*

Participant 11: *I must say, I agree with this separation because the problem of this country has gone beyond control, I don't think any control measure can be done to remedy this situation except for separating the states.*

Participant 7: *I still think it is better to separate the states. Everyone should work on which government suits them better after the separation.*

What are the factors that could address and provide lasting solutions to the challenges caused by insurgency in the country?

To tackle the issue of insurgency, the factors which are responsible for it should be addressed. First of all, the problem of religious conflict where the religious leaders seem to have neglected their duties and decided to pursue politics. Religious crisis has been in existence for a very long time and seems to have gone beyond control. Until our religious leaders in all part of the country come together and honestly decide to carry out their duties and leave politics for the government and work towards strengthening our religions, only then, can the religious crisis be fixed. According to Oyeweso. S.(1992) ^[50], "more than anything else, the religious gap between the Christians and Muslims in the country is not narrowing, rather there has been a rise in the levels of distrust, mutual suspicion and antagonism and that might be making inroads into the political class". The problem of ethnic crisis should also be addressed and fixed. According to St. Jorre. J (1972) ^[56], "the problem facing one of the major ethnic group which is Biafra, has made the minority tribes which constitutes four states; Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, and Bayelsa (Ijaws, Ibibios, Ogojas, Efiks and others) insists that they have nothing to do with it and since the onset of the civil war, there has been and still continues to be a deep-seated distrust between the minority and the Igbos, and none of the two sides seems to be making effort to assuage the other". This problem of ethnic crisis has given rise in segregation of states and tribes and need to be tackled to further prevent the birth of new crisis. The challenge of incompetence from the media is another issue that needs to be addressed. Since the negative activities of the media personnel's have been brought to the limelight and notice of the public, they (media) should take action to see that this problem is corrected and brought to an end. Citizens Journalism could play a vital role in the utilization of the media to combat insecurity in Nigeria. According to Salawu, (2012) "the mass media should be utilized by ordinary citizens in exposing crime and sensitizing the public against act of terror". The various ways the mass media could be effectively adopted in combating insecurity and insurgency as explained here, requires commitment on the part of the media personnel. Both the public and media personnel should play complimentary roles as partners in this regard.

Participant 2: *Another role of the media is to make sure that they use their position to fight against insurgency. They should use their power to aid the government in*

abating insurgency.

With everything being said, the best solution the respondents came up with is the total reformation of the country. According to Aslem, (2001) ^[9] "a resurgence of the threat of insurgency will likely re-emerge, either as a response to similar threats elsewhere in Nigeria or where there is lapse in the policy thrust to remedy the imbalances which caused the insurgency in the first place". Since it is looking impossible to remedy, I suggest that total reformation of the country should be considered.

Participant 14: *I also think the reformation of the country is more acceptable than the separation of states, because if we were to separate, the corrupt officials are going with us too. They will still be in power, so what benefit is it to us?*

Participant 1: *In all honesty, I would prefer to go with the idea of reformation. Separation wouldn't be easy, in fact, it is close to impossible, the possibility of it means another war and no one would want to experience war again believe me. In this case, reformation is our best option.*

Participant 1: *We can only stand a chance if the reformation we talked about is taken into consideration and pulled off.*

Participant 5: *Yes, we do stand a chance after the corrupt officials are removed from office and replaced with trustworthy ones.*

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

Summary

The study revealed that the media are giving a wide range of coverage and attention to the security challenges of insurgencies and terrorism that have threatened/are still threatening the continued existence of Nigeria. That means they are performing their statutory roles of providing the needful information for the survival of individuals in the Nigerian state. This is in line with the observation of Hess & Kalb (2003) who emphasized that the media should never be in business of burying bad news, although some amount of decency and good judgment should be expected but it's saddening how the media are failing in their duties.

The issue of insurgency continues to broaden as a result of the following problems:

1. Bad leadership/Government

It is totally obnoxious that the governments who are our leaders have refused to accept the obvious fact that they play a major part in the country's predicament of insurgency. Not only is the government responsible for this including our ethnic leaders and religious leaders whom are expected to establish peace, unity and harmony among the people are actually failing in this aspect. Some of the government's officials are actually diverting this problem to their own personal advantage. Insurgency has escalated to the point where the government alone cannot fight it or handle the situation. Truth is the insecurity in the country has also affected so many sectors of the economy and if not abated any time soon, the drastic effect will be much on every citizen of the country.

2. Ethnicity

Funny how this turned out to be a challenge that gave room to insurgency. Nigeria is no doubt a big country with vast cultures and ethnic groups. While some are considered majority others are considered minority and most times, not all ethnic groups are being represented. Those considered minorities can decide to team up and form a group against the majorities. Things like this can easily start up an uprising against the government. According to Oyeweso. S. (1992)^[50] “the primary cause of the Nigeria-Biafra war was interreligious hegemony and the problem of the consequential control of economic resources”. The democracy we practice seems not to favor all. Our vast culture was meant to bring us together and make the country more beautiful but it turned out to be tearing us apart. Most of the insurgent groups are from the northern part of the country and due to the insecurity there, it's has made it difficult and unsafe for people to travel down there for different purposes and it's bringing about segregation among the people.

3. Incompetent film makers and Regulatory Bodies

This is also one of the problems that continues to give rise to insurgency. The mass communicators and movie makers are failing in their statutory roles of providing the needful information for the survival of individuals in the Nigerian state. They have also seemed to allow the government to control their affairs and influence their decision making. In some sectors of the media houses where incompetent people are allowed to operate due to their relationship with some higher officials create more room for misconduct and making the media to lack credibility in their information. The appropriate regulatory bodies should scrutinize movies, bar if they have to, before it is released for public consumption. Hence, this complex situation tends to embolden or encourage insurgent groups, particularly Boko Haram sect(s) to perpetrate more nefarious activities.

Conclusion

This study is based on the media representation of insurgency through film: an audience analysis of the movie ‘voiceless’. It tried to bridge the gap between the theory used in this study and the people's experience. The media and the general public must rise to the challenge of combating rising insecurity in the nation by embarking on communication-based approaches that would effectively stigmatize such acts in the society. Through the research conducted, it is seen that the chance of eradicating insurgency is low and has gone beyond control. The best approach in combating insurgency in the country is through reformation of the country.

Recommendations

1. Film makers, script writers and everyone who puts resources to make a movie possible, should understand the sensitivity of insurgency and avoid being overly fictitious.
2. The journalists are urged to engage in responsible journalism committed towards discouraging the acts of insecurity in the nation, the public should step-up the use of citizens or civic journalism through the mass media as a way of complementing media workers' role in exposing and combating insecurity.
3. Appropriate bodies should take it upon themselves to educate viewers of movies like voiceless. They need

proper orientation to guide their interpretations and understand that the victims especially go through more than what we see in the media.

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