Igbo Language as a Unifying Tool to Address Challenges Posed By Unknown Gunmen in Southeast Nigeria

Eteng Ikpi Etobe
Department of Sociology
University of Calabar, Nigeria

Emeka Josephat Owan
Department of Criminology and Security Studies
University of Calabar, Nigeria
Email: josephatemeka34@gmail.com

Owan Lucy Aloye
Department of Social Studies and Civic Education
University of Calabar, Nigeria
Email: owanlucy8@gmail.com

Chinwe Nwaudu Udechukwu
Humanities Unit
School of General Studies
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus
&
Department of Linguistics
Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Email: chinwe.udechukwu@unn.edu.ng

Promise Akunna John-Okpa
Department of General Studies
Federal Polytechnic Ukana
Akaw Ibom State, Nigeria
Email: prommyy2k@gmail.com

Dominic Chukwuemeka Onyejegbu
Social Sciences Unit
School of General Studies
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus
Email: onyejegbudominic@gmail.com

Isife, Chima Theresa
Institute for Development Studies
University of Nigeria
Enugu Campus, Nigeria
E- Mail: theresachimaisife@gmail.com

* Ogbuke, Martha Uchenna*
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Enugu State University of Science and Technology,
Agbani
Email: uche.ogbuke@esut.edu.ng
Corresponding author

Nnamdi M. Nwadiogbu
Department of Public Administration
Faculty of Social Sciences
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus
Email: michaelina549@gmail.co

Godfrey Afamnede Oguecho
Department of Religion and Human Relations
Faculty of Arts
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus
Email: ga.oguecho@coou.efu.ng

&

Chukwugozie Donatus Nwoye

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus
Email: cd.nwoye@coou.edu.ng

Abstract

The southeastern region of Nigeria has been grappling with a significant increase in violent activities attributed to unknown gunmen (UGM), resulting in widespread fear, social disruption, and economic decline. This study explores the potential of the Igbo language as a unifying tool to address the complex security challenges posed by UGM. It argues that the Igbo can be instrumental in mobilising collective action against insecurity. Factors such as unemployment, weak governance, erosion of traditional values, and ethnic tensions are identified as key drivers of UGM activities in the region. The study proposes strategies that include utilising the Igbo language for community sensitisation; promoting the revitalisation of traditional governance structures; and encouraging inclusive and effective security measures. By highlighting the power of cultural and linguistic unity, this research offers a pathway for southeastern Nigeria to not only confronts the immediate threat posed by UGM but also to foster long-term peace, stability, and socio-economic recovery. The findings underscore the importance of leveraging local cultural resources, such as language, in addressing complex social challenges and creating a more cohesive, resilient society.

Keywords: *Challenges, Cultural identity, Igbo language, Security, Southeastern Nigeria, Unknown gunmen.*

Introduction

Over the past few years, southeastern Nigeria, one of the six geopolitical zones in the country, has been relentlessly plagued by a surge in violent activities perpetrated by unknown gunmen (UGM). These attacks encompass a range of brutal actions, including beheadings, kidnappings, shootings, armed robberies, and murders. Such heinous acts not only inflict immediate physical harm but also generate profound emotional and psychological trauma among the populace. John (2022) noted that

the persistent threat posed by UGM has destabilized communities, eroding the foundational sense of safety and trust that is essential for societal well-being. Onyekelu (2022) highlights that southeast Nigeria is grappling with a wave of unimaginable terrorist attacks that have severely undermined its socio-economic progress. These attacks disrupt daily life, deter investment, and discourage entrepreneurial activities, thereby stalling economic growth and development (Onyigbuo, 2023). The economic heartbeat of the Igbo people, traditionally vibrant and industrious, has been significantly weakened as businesses shut down, markets decline, and unemployment rises in response to the instability.

The persistent bloodshed and escalating insecurity have become recurring nightmares for the region's residents. Tunde (2021) observes that fear and anguish have become pervasive and deeply ingrained in the everyday experiences of southeasterners. Communities live in a state of constant apprehension, uncertain when the next attack will occur or how it will impact their lives (Yamusa, 2022). This ongoing state of fear has led to widespread psychological distress, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD] (Ottah & Okpoko, 2024), which further diminish the quality of life for many individuals and families. Beyond the immediate physical and psychological impacts, the violence orchestrated by UGM has far-reaching financial implications. According to Brockett et al. (2019), families affected by kidnappings and murders face enormous financial burdens, from ransom payments to medical expenses and loss of income. The destruction of property and infrastructure disrupts local economies, making it difficult for communities to recover and thrive. Additionally, the prevalent insecurity discourages both domestic and foreign investment, stifling economic opportunities and exacerbating poverty levels in the region.

Addressing these numerous challenges requires a comprehensive and culturally sensitive approach. One such approach involves leveraging the unifying power of language to foster collaboration and cooperation among the Igbo people. Yow and Lim (2019) emphasize that solving complex issues requires collective problem-solving efforts rooted in effective communication. They argue that the success of group initiatives largely depends on the ability of its members to communicate seamlessly during the problem-solving process. A task made significantly easier when participants share a common language. The Igbo language, a cornerstone of the region's cultural identity, holds immense potential in addressing the security challenges posed by UGM. Language is not merely a tool for communication but also a means of preserving and

strengthening cultural heritage and fostering unity among individuals. McLeod, Lobel, and Cox (1996) found that linguistic similarities enhance the quality of communication and emotional affiliation among individuals, thereby fostering better teamwork and collaborative problem-solving. In essence, a shared language cultivates a sense of unity and mutual understanding, which are critical for coordinated efforts to combat insecurity.

Similarly, Ross and Raphael (1990) note that the use of a common language facilitates the exchange of ideas and the building of trust, both of which are essential for effective collective action. In the context of southeastern Nigeria, promoting the Igbo language can bridge communication gaps, enhance mutual support, and mobilize community-driven initiatives to counteract the threats posed by UGM. Through the reinforcement of linguistic ties, the Igbo people can create a more cohesive and resilient front against violence, ultimately contributing to the restoration of peace and stability in the region.

Statement of the Problem

Despite numerous government interventions and security measures, southeastern Nigeria continues to experience violent attacks by UGM. Conventional security strategies have not really achieved lasting peace, which necessitates alternative approaches that incorporate cultural and linguistic elements. The erosion of traditional communal values and weak collaboration among residents have further compounded the problem (Collins, 2022). According to Aluko et al. (2023), the heavy reliance on force-based interventions, such as military deployments and aggressive policing has often led to unintended consequences including increased hostility between security forces and local communities. This situation may further alienate residents and reduced the effectiveness of government-led security initiatives.

Additionally, the disintegration of traditional governance structures has weakened the role of community elders and local leaders in conflict resolution (Mustasilta, 2021). This makes it difficult to mediate tensions and foster trust among citizens. Without a strong cultural and linguistic foundation, efforts to unite communities against insecurity will remain fragmented and ineffective. Udochukwu and Uchenna observed that the communication gap between security agencies and local communities has also hindered intelligence-sharing and proactive security responses. According to Blair et al. (2021), the fear of retaliation and lack of trust in

authorities discourage residents from reporting criminal activities which leave law enforcement agencies without crucial information needed to address security threats.

This study examines how the Igbo language can be leveraged as a mechanism for community engagement, intelligence-sharing, and security enhancement in the region. It is believed that when linguistic and cultural ties are strengthened, communities can rebuild trust, improve coordination with security agencies, and develop grassroots security initiatives that align with local values and traditions. The study aims to highlight the potential of language as a powerful tool in fostering unity, resilience, and collective action against insecurity in southeastern Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Identity Theory (SIT), propounded by Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979), which investigates how people's identities are influenced by their affiliation with social groups. SIT provides important information on how group memberships impact behaviours, perspectives, and engagements within and across communities. In this case, the theory helps us understand how the Igbo language helps people in southeastern Nigeria work together and stay united in the face of problems caused by unknown gunmen (UGM). SIT shows how using the Igbo language together can strengthen social identity and unity in the Igbo community, helping them deal with the growing threat of violence from UGMs.

Burke and Stets (2022) suggest that the central concept of SIT involves individuals grouping themselves and others based on common traits like ethnicity, language, or culture. These memberships in groups are a significant aspect of a person's social identity, shaping their actions and feelings towards those who share similarities (in-group members) and those who are seen as different (out-group members). The theory highlights the importance of favouring one's own group and fostering unity and cooperation among members, which results in collaborative actions, group problem solving, and a shared sense of inclusion (Hogg, 2021). In southeastern Nigeria, the Igbo language plays a vital role in shaping social identity, fostering a sense of pride, unity, and mutual support among the Igbo community, especially in response to external threats such as UGM violence.

The application of SIT in this study showcases different ways in which the Igbo language can promote unity and address the UGM crisis.

First, SIT posits that individuals are more likely to cooperate when they share a common identity, which in this case is strengthened through the use of Igbo. The Igbo language can enhance solidarity and encourage southeasterners to work together against insecurity through fostering in-group cohesion. Second, shared identity encourages collective action, motivating individuals to contribute to community security initiatives, such as information sharing, vigilance, and self-defence. Furthermore, promoting Igbo can bridge ethnic and linguistic divisions, reducing tensions and fostering inclusivity. As a unifying language, Igbo helps build trust and collaboration, which are essential for effective responses to UGM violence. Finally, SIT suggests that a collective social identity, bolstered by the use of Igbo, can drive social change, empowering southeasterners to protect their cultural identity and secure their region from the threats posed by UGM.

Methodology

This research is a theoretical article that utilizes current literature, a conceptual examination, and theoretical models to explore the function of language in tackling security issues. Information for this research was gathered from secondary sources, such as journal articles, books, government publications, and policy documents concerning insecurity, social mobilisation, and linguistic cohesion. The study utilizes a qualitative method, concentrating on discourse analysis and thematic interpretation of texts. Through putting together results from previous studies, this study shows important themes and trends that show how the Igbo language could be used to promote unity and safety in southeastern Nigeria.

Study Context and the Emergence of Unknown Gunmen (UGM)

We cannot fully understand UGM in southeastern Nigeria without taking into account the region's historical and political trajectory. Southeastern Nigeria, predominantly inhabited by the Igbo ethnic group, has a storied history marked by economic resilience, cultural richness, and political assertiveness (Udogbo, 2021). However, the region has also faced challenges, including the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970), which left a legacy of marginalisation, economic neglect, and political exclusion (Heerten & Moses, 2014). The resurgence of agitation for self-determination by groups like the Indigenous People of Biafra

(IPOB) and other pro-Biafra movements has further complicated the political landscape. While these groups advocate for the rights and self-determination of southeasterners, the federal government's heavy-handed responses have created an atmosphere of mistrust, repression, and unresolved grievances. These tensions have created a fertile ground for the emergence of UGM, who exploit the region's frustrations to perpetrate violence.

Perceived economic disenfranchisement and widespread poverty have significantly contributed to the rise of UGM. Aliyu and Amadu (2017) observed that southeastern Nigeria, once a hub of industrial and commercial activity, has witnessed the collapse of key industries and infrastructure due to poor governance and neglect. This view is further supported by Elechi et al. (2023), who note that the resulting unemployment crisis, particularly among the youth, has created a pool of disenchanted individuals susceptible to criminal recruitment. Moreover, the region's vibrant informal economy, characterised by markets, small businesses, and trade, has been severely affected by insecurity. Salihu (2023) opined that fear of violence has led to the closure of businesses, disruption of transportation networks, and a decline in investment, further aggravating the socio-economic challenges faced by the region.

The inability of law enforcement agencies to effectively address the security challenges in southeastern Nigeria has emboldened UGM. Igba (2022) also notes that the slow judicial processes and lack of accountability for crimes have created a sense of impunity, enabling UGM to operate with little resistance. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons, often smuggled across porous borders (Odey et al., 2022), has exacerbated the security crisis. The lack of robust arms control measures has made it easier for criminal elements (Aja, 2024; Muoemenam & Okafor, 2022), including UGM, to acquire the firepower needed to carry out their operations. While the motivations of UGM are often linked to economic and political grievances, there are also ideological and identity-based factors at play. UGM have leveraged the rhetoric of liberation and resistance to gain sympathy and support from disenfranchised segments of the population (Akinyetun et al., 2023). This exploitation of identity politics has deepened divisions within communities, making it more difficult to build a unified front against insecurity.

The term "unknown gunmen" gained prominence in southeastern Nigeria around 2019, following a series of coordinated attacks on security personnel, government facilities, and civilians. According to

Nwangwu (2023), these attacks were originally sporadic and uncoordinated, but over time, UGM evolved into a more organised and systematic threat. Their activities often involve the use of guerrilla tactics, such as ambushes and hit-and-run operations, which make it challenging for security forces to apprehend them. While the identities and affiliations of UGM remain elusive, their actions have been linked to broader socio-political and economic issues affecting the region (Out et al., 2022). The ambiguity surrounding their motives and affiliations has further complicated efforts to address the crisis.

Factors Fueling the Emergence of Unknown Gunmen in Southeast Nigeria

1. *Unemployment*

According to Okpala et al. (2023), the prevalence of unemployment and economic inequalities has been a major driver of insecurity in southeastern Nigeria. Each year, universities churn out thousands of graduates who face limited job prospects, leaving many disillusioned and vulnerable to criminal recruitment. The lack of viable economic opportunities creates a fertile ground for UGM to attract disaffected youth who see crime as their only option for survival. The failure of government policies to revive industries and create sustainable jobs has exacerbated this issue. For instance, the continued neglect of key industrial assets, such as textile and automobile manufacturing plants in the region, has deepened economic despair (Nwagbara, 2022). This economic stagnation pushes more individuals, especially the youth, toward criminal activities, including kidnapping, armed robbery, and participation in UGM operations.

2. *Weak governance and corruption*

Ineffective governance and systemic corruption have significantly contributed to the rise of UGM. Resources allocated for security purposes are often mismanaged or embezzled (Azibaraniyar, 2023), leaving security forces under-equipped and ill-prepared to address the challenges posed by UGM. Furthermore, the lack of political will to implement comprehensive security reforms has further emboldened criminal groups (Olujobi, 2023). The erosion of public trust in government institutions also plays a critical role. According to Bardhan

(2023), when citizens perceive the government as inept or indifferent to their plight, they are less likely to cooperate with law enforcement or support state-led security initiatives. This lack of trust creates a vacuum in security governance, which UGM exploits to expand their influence and operations.

3. *Breakdown of traditional values*

Anizoba (2024) argues that traditional Igbo society was built on a foundation of communal values, including mutual respect, accountability, and collective responsibility. These values historically served as a buffer against social vices and crime. However, modernity, economic hardship, and social breakdown have broken down these traditional structures, leaving communities fragmented and less able to deal with security issues (Anizoba, 2024; Ijomah-Reynolds, 202450). The decline of communal values has also weakened the role of traditional leaders and community elders, who once served as mediators and conflict resolvers. Without these cultural pillars, communities are less equipped to address internal disputes, making them more susceptible to external threats such as UGM.

4. *Ethnic and political tensions*

Ethnic and political grievances have further complicated the security landscape in southeastern Nigeria. According to Owoeye (2022) and Akabuiro (2024), many southeasterners feel marginalized by the federal government, citing a lack of president of Igbo extraction and unequal resource allocation. These perceptions of injustice have fuelled resentment and mistrust, creating fertile ground for insurgent groups and UGM to gain support. Akinyetun et al. (2023) say that UGM uses racial and political differences to further their own goals, often by saying that their actions are a way of fighting against what they see as oppression. This exploitation not only deepens divisions within communities but also makes it harder for the government to address the root causes of insecurity effectively.

5. *Proliferation of small arms and light weapons*

The widespread availability of small arms and light weapons has made it easier for UGM to carry out their activities. Decades of poor border controls and ineffective arms control policies have allowed illegal weapons to flood the region (Nkatomba & Kabari, 2021). This provides UGM with the firepower needed to challenge security forces and terrorize communities. The proliferation of arms exacerbates violence and undermines efforts to restore peace and stability in the southeast.

The Role of Igbo Language in Tackling UGM Challenges

The Igbo language has the potential to serve as a powerful unifying tool in southeastern Nigeria's efforts to combat the threat posed by unknown gunmen (UGM). As a shared linguistic and cultural heritage, the Igbo language fosters a sense of identity, belonging, and mutual understanding among southeasterners. This cultural cohesion is essential for mobilizing collective action and addressing the insecurity that has plagued the region. We can actualize this through the following methods.

Strengthening collaboration through shared identity

The Igbo language plays a critical role in creating a sense of shared identity and emotional connection among its speakers. Research by McLeod, Lobel, and Cox (1996), and Kozlowski et al. (2006) demonstrates that ethnically and linguistically homogeneous groups develop stronger emotional bonds, which enhance teamwork and collaborative problem-solving. For southeastern Nigeria, this means that the widespread use of the Igbo language can unite fragmented communities, encouraging them to work together to counter the challenges posed by UGM. This shared identity can provide a solid foundation for community-driven security initiatives, fostering trust and reducing barriers to cooperation.

Bridging communication gaps

In a linguistically diverse nation like Nigeria, communication barriers often hinder effective collaboration in addressing national security issues (Tomec & Gričar, 2024). The federal government's multi-ethnic and multi-lingual composition sometimes results in disjointed and ineffective

responses to crises. Curşeu and Plutt (2013) argue that linguistic diversity, while culturally enriching, can impede interpersonal connections and create conflicts that undermine collective efforts. By prioritizing the Igbo language in southeastern Nigeria, communities can overcome these communication gaps by promoting clarity, mutual understanding, and cohesion in their responses to insecurity.

Mobilizing grassroots efforts

Language is not merely a tool for communication but also a medium for rallying support and disseminating vital information (Khramchenko, 2024; Abdulai et al., 2023). In the Igbo language, local leaders, civil society organisations, and community groups can effectively convey messages about security measures, conflict resolution strategies, and communal vigilance. This grassroots mobilisation can empower residents to take proactive steps towards safeguarding their communities, such as forming neighbourhood watch groups, reporting suspicious activities, and advocating for government intervention.

Reviving cultural values and resilience

The Igbo language is deeply intertwined with the region's traditional values, including community solidarity, accountability, and mutual respect. Reinvigorating these values through language can help restore the social fabric of southeastern communities. This will help to foster resilience against the divisive tactics employed by UGM. Language-based cultural initiatives, such as storytelling, proverbs, and communal dialogue sessions, can strengthen communal bonds, promote a culture of peace, and encourage collective problem-solving.

The Way Forward: Strategies for Addressing UGM through Language and Community Action

Unknown gunmen (UGM) are a big problem in southeastern Nigeria. To solve the problem, we need a wide range of solutions that combine the Igbo people's cultural and linguistic strengths with larger community-based projects. The following strategies outline actionable steps for leveraging the Igbo language as a tool for fostering unity, communication, and collaboration in addressing this crisis:

1. *Promoting Igbo language as a medium for community dialogue*: Encouraging the widespread use of Igbo in community meetings, town halls, and conflict resolution forums can enhance communication and foster mutual understanding. Traditional leaders, religious institutions, and local governments should take the lead in organizing regular dialogue sessions where community members can voice their concerns, propose solutions, and collectively strategize security measures. These discussions, conducted in Igbo, would not only improve accessibility but also strengthen cultural identity and unity.

2. *Integration of language in security sensitization campaigns*: The use of Igbo in public awareness campaigns about security risks and preventive measures can make such efforts more relatable and impactful. Community-based organizations and local media outlets should collaborate to produce educational materials, including radio broadcasts, posters, and social media content in Igbo. These campaigns could focus on encouraging vigilance, reporting suspicious activities, and fostering a culture of mutual care and responsibility.

3. *Enhancing traditional institutions and practices*: Traditional Igbo institutions, such as Ụmụnna (kinship groups) and Igwe's cabinets, should further be enhanced to play an active role in community security. These structures, which are deeply rooted in Igbo culture and language, can serve as platforms for monitoring activities, mediating disputes, and promoting social cohesion. Incorporating the Igbo language into these processes can effectively engage the community and foster trust.

4. *Leveraging language in conflict de-escalation*: The Igbo language can be a powerful tool for mediating conflicts and de-escalating tensions between communities or individuals. Trained mediators fluent in Igbo can be deployed to intervene in disputes and foster dialogue by emphasizing shared values and collective interests. This approach can help mitigate the spread of violence and promote peaceful coexistence.

5. *Enhancing security collaboration through cultural education*: Introducing programs that emphasize Igbo culture, language, and values in schools and community centres can help rebuild a sense of pride and responsibility among youth. These programs can include storytelling,

119

proverbs, and traditional conflict resolution methods that highlight the importance of unity and community welfare. Educated in these principles, younger generations may be less likely to engage in criminal activities and more inclined to participate in security initiatives.

6. *Strengthening partnerships with government and NGOs*: Southeastern states should collaborate with non-governmental organisations, security agencies, and cultural associations to design security frameworks that incorporate the Igbo language as a unifying tool. Such partnerships could focus on training community-based security personnel who are fluent in Igbo and familiar with local dynamics, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in combating UGM activities.

The Igbo language is more than a medium of communication; it is a vessel of cultural pride and a potential catalyst for regional security. Stakeholders, including traditional leaders, policymakers, educators, and civil society organisations, must recognise and harness this potential. Through the integration of the Igbo language into security strategies, as well as fostering a culture of unity and resilience, southeastern Nigeria can chart a path toward peace and prosperity.

Conclusion

The growing threat of insecurity in southeastern Nigeria, driven by the actions of unknown gunmen (UGM), is a major risk to the area's social, economic, and cultural structure. This research has examined how the Igbo language can serve as a unifying force in tackling this issue, highlighting its ability to enhance communication, promote cooperation, and restore community relationships. The Igbo language, which is closely connected to the culture and beliefs of the people from the southeast, has enormous potential to be used as a tool for encouraging united efforts, fostering trust, and aiding in resolving conflicts. Various factors such as lack of job opportunities, inadequate governance, declining traditional beliefs, and ethnic as well as political conflicts contribute to the complex obstacles presented by UGM. To tackle these challenges, a comprehensive strategy that involves the community and draws on the cultural strengths of the Igbo people is necessary. Southeastern Nigeria can effectively combat insecurity by reviving traditional institutions,

incorporating language into security awareness efforts, and promoting shared accountability—all using the Igbo language.

In the end, the effectiveness of any intervention depends on the involvement of all key players, such as traditional leaders, policymakers, civil society groups, and local communities. Renewing efforts to promote unity through the use of the Igbo language can help combat the current UGM threat and also set the stage for long-lasting development and peace in the area. The Igbo saying "Igwe bụ ike" (unity is strength) emphasises the importance of unity in southeastern Nigeria to address security concerns and create a strong and successful community.

References

Abdulai, M., Ibrahim, H., & Anas, A. L. (2023). The role of indigenous communication systems for rural development in the Tolon District of Ghana. *Research in Globalization*, *6*, 100128.

Aborisade, R. A., & Fayemi, J. A. (2018). Police corruption in Nigeria: a perspective on its nature and control. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies, 18*(2), 246-262

Aja, U. A. (2024). Merchants of terror: Proliferation of small arms and light weapons and human security challenges in Nigeria. *African Security Review, 33*(1), 49-63.

Akabuiro, D. (2024). Inequitable Distribution of Natural Resources and Self-Determination Under International Law: Nigeria and Cameroon With Lessons From Norway. *Available at SSRN 4961606.*

Akinyetun, T. S., Ebonine, V. C., Ambrose, I. O. (2023). Unknown gunmen and insecurity in Nigeria: Dancing on the brink of state fragility. *Security and Defence Quarterly, 42*(2), 16 34. https://doi.org/10.35467/sdq/163462

Aliyu, A. A., & Amadu, L. (2017). Urbanization, cities, and health: The challenges to Nigeria - A review. *Annals of African medicine*, *16*(4), 149–158. https://doi.org/10.4103/aam.aam_1_17

Aluko, A. J., Apeloko, O. D., Chukwudi, C. E., & Paimo, O. T. (2023). Deradicalisation of Boko Haram Insurgents and Bandits: A Soft-power Approach in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Reinnassance*, 191-213.

Anizoba, E. C. (2024). A Philosophical Reading of Justice and Its Resistance to Social Change among the Igbo of Nigeria. *Comparative Sociology*, *23*(3), 405-432.

Azibaraniyar, O. (2023). An overview of financial mismanagement and financial institutions in Nigeria. *FUO Journal of Management Sciences, 7*(Special), 153-161.

Bardhan, P. (2022). *A world of insecurity: Democratic disenchantment in rich and poor countries.* Harvard University Press.

Blair, G., Weinstein, J. M., Christia, F., Arias, E., Badran, E., Blair, R. A., ... & Wilke, A. M. (2021). Community policing does not build citizen trust in police or reduce crime in the Global South. Science, 374(6571), eabd3446.

Brockett, P. L., Golden, L. L., Zaparolli, S., & Lum, J. M. (2019). Kidnap and ransom insurance: A strategically useful, often undiscussed, marketplace tool for international operations. Risk Management and Insurance Review, 22, 421–440. https://doi.org/10.1111/rmir.12134

Burke, P. J., & Stets, J. E. (2022). *Identity theory: Revised and expanded.* Oxford University Press.

Collins, A. (Ed.). (2022). *Contemporary security studies.* Oxford university press.

Curşeu, P. L., & Pluut, H. (2013). Student groups as learning entities: the effect of group diversity and teamwork quality on groups' cognitive complexity. *Stud High Educ,* 38(1), 87-103. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.565122

Elechi, F. A., Etea, E. A., & Mbanusi, E. C. (2023). Governance, security and economic cooperation in the southeast geo-political zone, Nigeria. *South east Journal of Political Science, 9*(1).

Heerten, L., & Moses, A. D. (2014). The Nigeria–Biafra war: postcolonial conflict and the question of genocide. *Journal of Genocide Research, 16*(23), 169-203. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2014.936700

Hogg, M. A. (2021). Self-uncertainty and group identification: Consequences for social identity, group behavior, intergroup relations, and society. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 64, pp. 263-316). Academic Press.

Igba, S. A. (2022). *Exploring the Role of Political Ethnicity on Police use of Force in Nigeria: A Civil Society Perspective* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria (South Africa)).

Ijomah-Reynolds, N. (2024). *What Happened to Their Voices? The Influence of Igbo Women's Groups on Governance and Community Development in Southeast Nigeria* (Doctoral dissertation, Robert Morris University).

John, O. K. (2022). *The threat of insurgency to peace and security in west Africa: Nigeria in perspective* (Doctoral dissertation, School of International and Area Studies, GOA University).

Khramchenko, D. S. (2024). The Role of Language in Professional Discourse: Insights From Political, Legal, Media, and Academic Contexts. *Professional Discourse & Communication*, *6*(1), 7-11.

Kozlowski, S. W. J., & Ilgen, D. R. (2006). Enhancing the Effectiveness of Work Groups and Teams. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 7*(3), 77-124. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1529-1006.2006.00030.x

McLeod, P. L., Lobel, S. A., & Cox, T. H. (1996). Ethnic diversity and creativity in small groups. *Small Group Res*, 27(2):248–264. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496496272003

Muoemenam, C. C., & Okafor, U. C. (2022). National Security and the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria, 2010-2022. *Zik Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, *5*(1).

Mustasilta, K. (2021). The implications of traditional authority contest for local-level stability–Evidence from South Africa. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *38*(4), 457-480.

Nkatomba, E., & Kabari, J. B. (2021). An Assessment of Arms Proliferation and Control Mechanisms in Nigeria, 2010-2020. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, *4*(11), 93-103.

Nwagbara, U. (2022). *The struggles of post-independence Nigeria: Missed opportunities and a continuing crisis*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Nwangwu, C. (2023). Neo-Biafra Separatist Agitations, State Repression and Insecurity in South-East, Nigeria. *Society, 60*, 40–53. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-022-00782-0

Odey, S., Bassey, S., Ikhwan, A., & Santyaningtyas, A. (2022). Small Arms and Light Weapons Smuggling and Boko Haram Challenge To Nigerian Security: a Case Study of the Benin-Nigerian Porous Border. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, *8*(3), 378-398.

Okpala, E. F., Manning, L., & Baines, R. N. (2023). Socio-economic drivers of poverty and food insecurity: Nigeria a case study. *Food Reviews International*, *39*(6), 3444-3454.

Olujobi, O. J. (2023). Nigeria's upstream petroleum industry anti-corruption legal framework: the necessity for overhauling and enrichment. *Journal of money laundering control*, *26*(7), 1-27.

Onyekelu, A. C. (2022). Insecurity and crime: a threat to south-east of Nigeria deeply rooted in unknown gunmen. *IGWEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities,* 8(3), 146-   156.

Onyigbuo, S. U., Jude, S., & Chuke, I. (2023). Insecurity and private sector development in Nigeria: an exploratory study. *Available at SSRN 4670951*.

Ottah, I., & Okpoko, C. C. (2024). Mass Media, Communication Policy and National Security. *ESUT Journal of Social Sciences*, *9*(1).

Otu, A.O., Nwangwu, C., Mbah, P.O., Ezugworie, C., Nwokedi, M., & Nnadi, S.O. 2022. Elections, hate speech and national integration in Nigeria. *African Renaissance*, *19* (1), 197–223.

Owoeye, D. (2022). Problem of Secession cum Separatism in Nigeria: The Pre-Democracy and Democratic Marginalization of the Igbos. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, *10*, 62-75.

Ross, J. A., & Raphael, D. (1990). Communication and problem solving achievement incorporative learning groups. *J Curric Stud* 22(2):149–164. https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027900220204

Salihu, H. (2023). *Successes and failures of industrial policies in Nigeria: the cases of the cement, textiles, and iron and steel industries* (Doctoral dissertation, SOAS University of London).

Tajfel, H, & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In: Austin W G, Worchel S (eds.) *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Brooks-Cole, Monterey, CA

Tomec, T., & Gričar, S. (2024). Risk language barriers in a globalized world: insights from female managers from Slovenia. *Strategic Management-International Journal of Strategic Management and Decision Support Systems in Strategic Management*, *29*(2).

Tuned, O. (2021, November 18). November 6 and the epidemic of bloodletting. *This Day* Newspaper. Retrieved from https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/10/10/november-6-and-the-epidemic-of- bloodletting/

Udochukwu, I. S., & Uchenna, N. J. (2024). Dissecting the Effect and Challenges of Intelligence Coordination as Method of Effective Counter-Insurgence in Nigeria. *GSJ*, *12*(10).

Udogbo, S. T. (2021). *An exploration of the Ogoni people's resistance in Nigeria: a participatory action research approach*. National University of Ireland, Maynooth (Ireland).

Yamusa, P. M. (2022). The Root Causes of the Upsurge in Farmer-Herder Conflict Case Study on Middle-Belt Nigeria. *Unpublished MA Thesis, Neat East University*.

Yow, W. Q., & Lim, T. Z. M. (2019). Sharing the same languages helps us work better together. *Palgrave Communications,* 5, 1-9.