APPLICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MEDIA IN CURBING INSECURITY IN THE NIGER DELTA REGION

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Abstract

That study investigates the application of Artificial intelligence and media to curb insecurity in Niger Delta, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to: identify the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region; identify how Artificial Intelligence could be used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta and examine the benefits of media and AI in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta. The study was hinged on the Development Media Theory. It adopted a survey research design with a total population of 30, 000,000 with Taro Yamane sample size determination formula to arrive at 400. The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique and used questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The results of the study revealed that radio, television and social media are the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region; the extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very high and the peace, arrest/prosecution of criminals and economic development are the benefits derived from the use of media and Artificial Intelligence in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta. The study recommends that; Newspapers, magazines and other forms of print media should be adopted to check insecurity in Niger Delta since they contain more detailed information and there should be orientations and re-orientations about the benefits and role of media and AI in curbing insecurity.

Keywords: Application, Artificial Intelligence, Media, Insecurity and Niger Delta.

Introduction

Over the years, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity leading to national security threats which has been major issues in government and some regions in the country. Various government institutions including the Senate have insisted on the increment of budgets for the security and defense sectors to address the current insecurity in Nigeria. Jimor et al. (2021) report that there have been issues of insurgency, banditry, herd men, and kidnappings and there is a need to declare war against insurgency, banditry, kidnappings and other crimes. In Niger Delta, there have been several reports of insecurity like kidnap, raping, paedophiles, serial killing, and ritual killings among others.

A day hardly passes without any inkling of insecurity reports in Nigeria especially in the Niger Delta regions. Within the last two months, nothing less than 300 persons, including men, women, youths and children have been killed and used for ritual purposes (Olase, 2022). Thousands of innocent Nigerians (male and female) across all ages have been killed and their body parts served as money ritual sacrifices (Usman, 2017; Sailhu, & Abdulaziz, 2019). The Niger Delta is a coastal area of Nigeria with nine states, including Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Rivers and Ondo. These States are oil-rich states and have recorded different security challenges.

On August 21st 2017, Ifeanyi Dike, a 200-level student of the University of Port Harcourt was

arrested in Jos, Plateau state for the alleged raping and killing of eight–a year–old girl and cutting off some parts of her body for ritual purposes. On 19th September 2019, the Nigerian Police arrested and convicted Gracious David-West for serial killings. *The Guardian* newspapers reported that from July to September 2019 not less than 15 women were killed in Port Harcourt by Gracious David-West. *Daily Post* newspaper of 20th November 2021 reported that Kenneth Sylvanous and herbalist, Chijioke Ogbonna were arrested for allegedly killing Peter Destiny, a 9-year-old girl in Isiokpo community, Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State for a money ritual. Also, *Vanguard* newspaper reports on 20th March 2022, showed that Nigerian Police Operatives nabbed a 24-year-old man, from the Sarako community in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State for allegedly killing Barisi Leede of Bomu for ritual purposes. According to the Police report on 13th June 2023, a criminal gang leader, Wordi Onuigwe who has been kidnapping and killing people along the Emohua axis of the East-West road and three other members were killed by the police.

Also, on March 2024, 14 military officers were gruesomely murdered by some irate youths in the Okuama community of Delta State during a peace mission. The stories of insecurity in the Niger Delta have become recurring and detrimental to the development of the states.

Although, the Federal government has embarked on the criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011 and installation of Computer-based Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) in some parts of the country (Nsude, 2022). Furthermore, the government has enhanced surveillance in all parts of the country, especially in the Northeast with intensified surveillance and patrol activities along the Abuja–Kaduna road as well as investigation of criminal-related offences and heightening of physical security measures in the country. (Angbulu, 2021). The government is also strengthening security agencies through the provision of security facilities, the development and broadcast of security tips in the mass media. These measures are targeted at deterring or disrupting potential attacks (Angbulu, 2021) and can be referred to as Artificial intelligence.

The war against insurgency in Nigeria is increasingly getting more difficult to win. This is because insurgencies are ultimately in competition over information rather than territory ideology (Meserole, 2018). However, the deployment of Artificial intelligence (AI) in the fight against insecurity in Nigeria could be of strategic importance in winning the war. AI technology could, for example, facilitate autonomous operations, lead to more informed military decision-making, and increase the speed and scale of military action (CRS Report, 2020). The Artificial intelligence instruments properly positioned in strategic points in our society especially areas that seems more isolated and can be monitored by security agencies right in the comfort of their offices and where need be; raise alarm for rapid response teams of the security agency to swing into immediate rescue actions.

Peaceful leaving is one of the fundamental principles of human co-existence. Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended provides that the mass media should be responsible and accountable to the people. Such responsibility and accountability include peace communication or surveillance in our environment. The surveillance role of the media no doubt is the cardinal in promoting accountability, good governance and security of the people as well as their resources. The surveillance function or role of the media presupposes that the media are the eyes and ears of the public. The media provide information and alert their heterogeneous audiences of changes that take place around them. According to Agbo and Chukwuma (2017), the media constantly survey the environment and convey salient issues or mediated messages to the audience to reduce uncertainties and consequently rationally react to security situations. The media in discharging their surveillance functions often scout around the environment and bring news of insecurity and dangers that are threats or inimical to national stability, development, threats to the welfare as well as scandals to the nation especially in the Niger Delta Region.

Despite the information through the media and the AI provided to combat insecurity in Niger Delta, there is still an increase in the operations of see pirates, ritual killers, kidnappers, and rapists as well as artisanal oil refining leading to

death, destruction of property, aquatic lives and resulted in hunger and food insecurity. The study investigates the use of Artificial intelligence and media to curb insecurity in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Our nation is grappling with many security challenges in recent time and this appears to have hampered the economy and national development. There have been reports of Boko Haram, Herdsmen, banditry, armed robbery kidnapping and ritual killings in different parts of Nigeria. Prominent among the reports of insecurity in Nigeria especially Niger Delta is the ritual killings, kidnapping and artisanal refining. No day passes in any part of the states in the Niger Delta without any case of kidnapping, raping, artisanal refining and ritual killing. Sometimes, victims are kidnapped and taken to an unknown destination. In some cases, some parts of the body like the tongue, breast, liver, heart, eyes, ear, etc are taken away. The activities of these illegal refiners, kidnappers and ritualists have made some motorists avoid routes in Niger Delta State.

The quest to make quick money, acquire political power and protection may have resulted in this deadly act in Niger Delta. The mass media, the newspapers, magazines, radio, and television sensationalized these reports of insecurity, leading to public discourse after exposure. The security agencies also adopt sophisticated facilities known as Artificial Intelligence to tackle this insecurity menace. These media reports and AI evoke feelings of the audience and the public, thus, giving empathy, sympathy and human interest associated with such reports. It was alleged that the activities of criminals in the Niger Delta contributed to the relocation of some oil companies operating in the Region to Abuja and Lagos. Not only that the activities of these criminals lead to the destruction of oil facilities and poor infrastructural development of the region. It is on this premise the study examined the use of Artificial intelligence and media to curb insecurity in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives guide the study

1. Identify how Artificial Intelligence could be used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta;

2. Identify the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region;

3. Examine the benefits of media and AI in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta.

Literature Review

Use of Media, AI and Insecurity in Niger Delta

Insecurity is uncertainty or anxiety about oneself (lack of confidence) or it is the state of being open to danger or threat; or lack of protection (Oxford Languages [OL], 2022). Insecurity is a global phenomenon. The African continent has faced several security challenges right from the end of European colonization in the early 1960s (Issaka, 2010). In Nigeria, the feeling of insecurity; uncertainty and lack of protection from kidnappers, bandits and terrorists has put every citizen on the edge. The state of insecurity in the country has negatively impacted the economic growth of macroeconomic variables among others such as; direct foreign Investment, increase in the rate of unemployment, increase in food insecurity, and reduction of GDP Per Capita (Okore and Anthony, 2022). All these macroeconomic variables will continue to worsen if insecurity and terrorism are not timely and properly addressed because potential investors will attraction to invest in an unstable and high-risk environment. Nigeria has witnessed in the past few years unprecedented security challenges prompting huge annual security budgetary allocations; nothing seems to be working as insecurity gets frighteningly worsened and sophisticated by the day.

Security is vital to the co-existence socioeconomic development and sustainability of any nation, community etc. Currently, militancy, Boko Haram, crisis, Fulani Herdsmen, cow herders, local farmers' clashes and the heightening wave of kidnappers sum up the current state of security in Niger Delta, Nigeria (Okwor, 2022). Poor data management techniques on the part of government agencies have stalled various government efforts targeted towards changing the status quo. Leaked strategies and poor speed of data gathering and processing have been prevalent as shown by several failed or near miss-intervention security missions (Akwor, 2022).

It is believed that the mainstream media such as; newspapers, radio and television among others function as platforms for mobilization and have the potential to change audience behaviour (especially through its knowledge provision, sensitization focus, general dissemination of information and reactions/feedback). It also helps in the policy and decision-making process of the public sphere in combating Security threats (Ojiakor, Iheanachor, Didia, Nkwam-Uwaoma & Didia (2019).

Empirical Review

Nsude (2022) investigated artificial intelligence (AI), media and security challenges in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and discovered that the application of AI technologies in the fight against Boko Haram and Herdsmen insurgency in Nigeria impacted the lives of Nigerian residents. This has also led to significant changes in the strategies, organization, priorities and allocated resources of the Nigerian national security community.

In another development, Umar, Ibrahim and Nasir (2021) studied the intelligent approach to fighting crime and insecurity in Nigeria and found that synchronization of national database, SIM card security and ownership, facial recognition surveillance cameras, plat number recognition, voice recognition, social media policing were some of the identified technologies used for the effective reduction and controlling of insecurity and crime in Nigeria. Akwor (2022) examined Artificial Intelligence as a tool for combating insecurity in Nigeria and found that Artificial Intelligence has shown increasing promise concerning information gathering and analysis. They revealed that Artificial Intelligence optimizes time and source leakage of laid down strategies, factors that are plaguing the Nigeria security agencies.

In a similar vein, Nwankpa (2021), studied Nigerian newspaper coverage of terror of militants in the wake of the Niger Delta crisis. Content analysis was employed to investigate how four Nigerian newspapers (*This-Day, The Guardian, The Vanguard* and *The Sun)* covered the terror tactics adopted by these militants in pursuit of their cause. The results revealed that a group not formally designated as terrorists can commit acts of terror on such a horrific scale for which terrorist organizations are known. The

quest for money is the major reason for tourism. Also, Mustapha, Emmanuel and Danjuma (2023) studied the conceptualization of technology tools framework for combating insecurity in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The results revealed that surveillance cameras such as Closed Circuits, Television (CCTV) or intercepts of information transmitted electronically such as the use of internet traffic or phone calls are some of the artificial intelligence used to combat insecurity. The study further revealed that other artificial intelligence includes human intelligence agents or the use of Ground Surveillance Radar (GSR) or Radar System Robots known as dromes or Unnamed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) also called Remotely Piloted vehicles (RPVS) and postal interference.

Erunke (2017) examined kidnapping and insecurity in Nigeria. The findings revealed that kidnapping and insecurity are not just cost-consuming but can divert valuable energy required to develop the nation by both the government and the citizens. The paper is summed up with valuable suggestions which include open dialogue, re-organization and re-orientation of the state security apparatus via high-tech training, retraining and adoption of Artificial Intelligence. In another study, Owojor, Fasuan, Ilori and Matanmi (2020) investigated the effectiveness of Nigeria's counterterrorism efforts and the variation in Boko Haram Terrorism Trajectory and found that Nigeria's counterterrorism techniques, measures and campaigns have not been effective to the extent that Boko – Haram sect has remained resilient. Chukwuma, Obiokafor and Amuglu (2021) examined the strategies to curb corruption and the problem of insecurity in Nigeria. The study adopted a research design and the results revealed that strict adherence to ICT policies and adoption coupled with good formulation and communication of same, are the major impacts for curbing corruption and insecurity issues

Jatong and Anthony (2023) researched the role of media, science and technology in curtailing insecurity and corruption practices in Nigeria and found that the media therefore can be quite instrumental in the dissemination of information and discoveries in science and technology, that can be adapted to fight terrorism and corruption to the pursuit of the security of lives, property, national interests

and the actualization of positive social development and economic transformation. Omejie and Aruma (2021), studied literacy programmes as a strategy for curbing kidnaps and ritual killings in the Etche local government area of Rivers State and found that the role of safe neighbourhood literacy in achieving peace for sustainable development in Rivers State is helping people to be guards over their neighbours, empowering individuals with the skill of identifying criminals in neighbourhood. The study further revealed that it helps to maintain peace in the community, reduction of criminal tendencies in people, promoting good relationships between the community and the law enforcement agents.

Oyebude (2022) also investigated the deployment of communication and digital technology for handling insecurity and environmental challenges in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey and the results of the study showed that the deployment of communication and digital technologies is very essential for the handling of security in Nigeria. It found that communication and digital technology can be deployed through the development of machine learning models, virtual simulation, media literacy, data integration and safety excellence service delivery in the security sector.

Theoretical Framework
Development media Theory

Development media theory was propounded by McQuail in 1987. The theory according to Omego and Nwachukwu (2013) was between developed and developing countries. The underlying fact behind establishing the theory was that there cannot be development without communication. Asemah, Nwammuo and Nkwom-Uwaoma (2017) argue that the media undertook the role of carrying out positive development programmes, accepting restrictions and instructions from the state. The media subordinate themselves to political, economic, social, cultural and security needs, hence, the stress on the development of communication development journalism. The media can do this by functioning as government instruments for achieving the security of lives and property of its citizens, growth, development and national sovereignty. The theory understands communication (media) as an agent of development and social change in any given society. Thus, the theory postulates that communication be used to complement the government's efforts by carrying out programmes that lead to security change. The media in the developing countries of the world should, therefore, be immersed in the development issues in the country. They are expected to complement the government policy. According to McQuail (2005), the media should carry out positive development tasks in line with national development.

Messages or information about the security of citizens appear on various channels of communication especially radio, television, magazines, newspapers and social media among other communication channels. The idea for this is to bring positive change, development and re-orientation of the Niger Delta residents and Nigerians since they are critical stakeholders and leaders of tomorrow. It is the responsibility of communication industries to disseminate insecurity information capable of changing the attitude of Nigerian citizens and charge the government to improve development processes. Folarin, (2002) explains that media are given the responsibilities which make them socially responsible to the people to gather and disseminate information about their social well-being including the security of lives and property.

Methodology
The study adopted a survey research design. The justification for this was to seek the opinions of Niger Delta residents on the application of Artificial Intelligence and media in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta. The population of the study is 30, 000, 000 being the residents of Niger Delta (http://www.stakeholdersdemocracy.org,org).
The population is considered due to the rising insecurity especially, kidnapping, herdsmen, ritual killings, deaths and artisanal refining in the Niger Delta region. The study employed the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula to arrive at 400 and used a multi-stage sampling technique. Niger Delta residents were divided into nine states. Two states were purposely selected, Rivers State and Delta due to the high rate of insecurity in these States. However, ten Local Government Areas five for each of the States were selected. Senatorial

Zones; Rivers East, Rivers South and Rivers West. Out of these 10 LGAs, 50 wards were selected. The 50 wards selected have a total of 1,723 units, out of which 200 units were selected. Since it is not easy to obtain the exact population of the street contained in each unit selected in the government areas as they contributed to the population of Rivers State residents, the researchers used a systematic sampling technique; by dividing the sample size 400 by 200 units selected in the wards of the various local government areas selected which gives a total of two persons. Two persons were selected per unit in the selected wards of the local government areas. Therefore, two copies of the questionnaire were administered to each of the units in an interval of five households of the units in every ward and local government area.

Nonetheless, questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. There are 14 items on the instrument, items 1, 2,3, 4 and 5 used to address research question 1 which sought to identify the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta, this addresses research question one. Also, items 6, 7, 8, and 9 investigated how Artificial Intelligence could be used to curb insecurity in Niger Delta, these answer question two while items; 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 examine the benefits of media and AI use in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta and these address research question 3 of the study. The Weighted Mean Score (WMS) was adopted as the method of data analysis. implication of using the Weighted Mean Score is to either agree or disagree with respondents' responses. If the result is 2.5 (i.e. 4+3+2+1 divided by 4) then it is accepted. That is, any response that measures 2.5 or higher is accepted while scores below 2.5 are rejected.

Data Presentation
Objectives:

Table 4.1: How Artificial Intelligence could be used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta

Identify how Artificial Intelligence could be used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta					WMS

The extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very high						Accepted
The extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is high						Accepted
The extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is low						Rejected
The extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very low						Accepted

The data in 4.1. showed that the extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very high

Table 4.2. The commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region

The commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region	SA	A	D	SD	DECISION
Radio is the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region					Accepted
Television is the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region				1088	Accepted
The magazine is the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region				999	Rejected
Newspaper is the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region					Rejected

			Decision
Social media is the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region	3	1084	Accepted

The data in 4.2 indicated that the radio, television and social media are the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region.

Table 4.3.

The benefits of media and AI in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta

The benefits of media and AI in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta					**WMS**
Peace is the benefit derived from the use of media and AI in curbing insecurity					8
Economic development is the benefits derived from the use of media and AI in curbing insecurity					7
Arrests and prosecutions of the militants and kidnappers are the benefits derived from the use of media and AI in curbing insecurity					9
infrastructural development is the benefits derived from the use of media and AI in curbing insecurity					10

The data in Table 4.3 indicated that the peace, arrest/prosecution of criminals and economic development are the benefits derived from the use of media and Artificial Intelligence in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta.

Results and Discussion
Research one: To what extent has Artificial Intelligence been used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta?

The study discovered that the extent artificial intelligence is used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very high. This is related to the study conducted by Nsude (2022) and others. Nsude (2022) discovered that the application of AI technologies in the fight against Boko Haram and Herdsmen insurgency in Nigeria impacted the lives of Nigerian residents. This has also led to significant changes in the strategies, organisation, priorities and allocated resources of the Nigerian national security community (Nsude, 2022). The results of Mustapha et al (2023) also revealed that surveillance cameras such as Closed Circuits, Television(CCTV) or intercepting of information transmitted electronically such as the use of internet traffic or phone calls are some of the artificial intelligence used to combat insecurity. Chukwuma, et al. (2021) revealed that strict adherence to ICT policies and adoption coupled with good formulation and communication of the same, are the major impacts for curbing corruption and insecurity problems

The finding however contradicts the findings of Owojor et al (2020); Owojor et al (2020) investigated the effectiveness of Nigeria's counterterrorism efforts and the variation in Boko Haram Terrorism Trajectory and found that Nigeria's counterterrorism techniques, measures and campaigns have not been effective to the extent that Boko – Haram sect has remained resilient.

Research two: What are the media channels used in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta region

That study investigated the applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Media to curb insecurity in Niger Delta, Nigeria and found that radio, television and social media are the commonly used media in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta region. The finding is similar to the findings of another study. For instance, the media such as newspapers, radio, and television function as platforms for mobilization and have the potential to change audience behaviour (especially through its knowledge provision, sensitization focus, general dissemination of information and reactions/feedback that help combat crimes). It also helps in the policy and decision-making process of the public sphere in combating Security threats (Ojiakor et al.

2019). The media are quite instrumental in the dissemination of information and discoveries in science and technology that can be adopted to fight terrorism and corruption to the pursuit of the security of lives, property, national interests and the actualization of positive social development and economic transformation (Jatong & Anthony 2023).

Nevertheless, Omejie and Aruma (2021) found that the role of safe neighbourhood literacy in achieving peace for sustainable development in Rivers State is helping people to be guards over their neighbours, empowering individuals with the skill of identifying criminals in the neighbourhood. The media help to maintain peace in the community, reduction of criminal tendencies in people, promoting good relationships between the community and the law enforcement agents (Omejie & Aruma, 2021). The deployment of communication and digital technologies is very essential for the handling of security in Nigeria. It found that communication and digital technology can be deployed through the development of marching learning models, virtual simulation, media literacy, data integration and safety excellence service delivery in the security sector (Oyebude, 2022).

Research three: What are the benefits of media and AI in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta?

The result also revealed that peace, arrest/prosecution of criminals and economic development are the benefits derived from the use of media and Artificial Intelligence in curbing insecurity in the Niger Delta. The finding is similar to the finding of Umar et al. (2021) and others. Umar et al. (2021) found that the use of AI helps in the synchronization of national databases, SIM card security and ownership, facial recognition surveillance cameras, plat number recognition, voice recognition, and social media policing were some of the identified technologies used for the effective reduction and controlling of insecurity and crime in Nigeria. Also, Artificial Intelligence optimizes the time and source leakage of laid down strategies, factors that are plaguing Nigerian security agencies (Akwor, 2021).

The findings agree with the Development Media theory used in the study. The underlying fact behind establishing the theory was that there cannot be development without communication. Asemah et al (2017) argue that the media undertook the role of carrying out positive development programmes, accepting restrictions and instructions from the state. The media subordinate themselves to political, economic, social, cultural and security needs, hence, the stress on the development of communication development journalism.

Conclusion/Recommendations

That study investigated the applications of Artificial intelligence and media to curb insecurity in Niger Delta, Nigeria and concluded that media channels such as radio, television and social media are adequately used in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta region. The extent of the use of artificial intelligence in curbing insecurity in Niger Delta is very high and the benefits of the residents of Niger Delta derived from the use of media and Artificial Intelligence include peace, arrest/prosecution of criminals and economic development in the Niger Delta region. It therefor recommended that:

1. Newspaper, magazine and other forms of print media should be adopted for insecurity in Niger Delta since they contain information in details.
2. There should be continue exposure and use to Artificial Intelligence in curbing insecurity.
3. There should orientations and re-orientations about the benefits and role of media and AI in curbing insecurity.

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