

The Role of Newspaper in Fighting Insecurity in Nigeria: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Background and Purpose: Insecurity is a major problem in developing countries, particularly Africa, with Nigeria facing challenges like kidnapping, banditry, militancy, and boko haram, among others, that need to be addressed. Newspapers play a crucial role in helping security agents address these challenges through unbiased reporting.

Objectives: This systematic review aims to examine the extent to which scholars pay attention to the role of print media in addressing insecurity in Nigeria and to explore the growth and development of media and insecurity studies in Nigeria based on the collected data from Scopus and Web of Science.

Methodology: The systematic review was conducted based on the principles of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA). Two databases (Scopus and Web of Science) were searched, and 107 related articles were recorded, out of which 21 met the final review criteria.

Findings: The results show that Nigerian scholars studying print media and insecurity concentrated more on farmer-herder conflicts and the Boko Haram insurgency, while armed banditry, which has become deadlier in recent times, received little attention from the scholars.

Contributions: The study draws attention to newspaper and banditry, an area that print media scholars in Nigeria have mostly ignored.

Conclusion: Based on the study's findings, we concluded that the majority of Nigerian scholars with an interest in print media and insecurity do not often publish their works in outlets indexed in Scopus and Web of Science.

Recommendation: Future research on print media and insecurity should pay more attention to armed banditry, which is now a major problem in the country. Communication scholars in Nigeria should also endeavour to publish their findings in journals indexed with Scopus and Web of Science databases.

Keywords: Banditry, insecurity, newspaper, Nigeria, systematic review

Introduction

The United Nations SDGs Annual Report (2022) reveals that the world is now experiencing major conflicts and insecurity as one-fourth of the global population lives in violence. As of May 2020, about 100 million residents in the world have been forcibly displaced (SDGs Annual Report, 2022). According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), about 3.1 million Nigerians were internally displaced as of June 2022, with most of them scattered in various camps across the 36 states of Nigeria (UNHCR, 2022). Nigeria is one of the countries in the West African Sub-Saharan region with the highest levels of insecurity and homeless people, owing to an increase in kidnapping, cattle rustling, banditry, and oil bunkering (Afolabi, 2022; Husted, 2022; Idahosa, 2016). Today, all the 36 states in Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, have one or more security challenges.

Currently, the menace of insecurity is out of control and without a workable, visible, or permanent solution. Due to the level of security challenges the country is experiencing, Nigerians are increasingly becoming worried and fearful of the unknown at home, on the street, and at their places of work (Adebayo et al., 2018). The security challenges in Nigeria include arm robbery, kidnapping, and ethno-religious crisis, banditry, the herdsmen versus farmers' conflict, Niger Delta militancy, Biafra, and Yoruba nation agitators. Unfortunately, the security agencies' involvement in the fight against insecurity has not yielded any fruitful results (Umar et al., 2021). In addition to the effort made by the security agencies in fighting against insecurity, the mass media generally and the newspapers in particular are expected to play an essential role in efforts to reposition the country's security system and restore peace at all levels. This could be achieved through accurate reporting of insecurity-related incidents in order to reduce the risk of such a problem (Okaiyeto, 2021).

The mass media, according to Dalhatu et al. (2019), is an important stakeholder that helps considerably in the fight against insecurity. In order to reduce the insecurity menace in the country, the security agencies and the media each have a distinct but complementary role to play. Due to their relative advantage over other social groups, the mass media, including newspapers, take the lead in disseminating information about issues of public concern, particularly those pertaining to security challenges (Bertot et al., 2012; Muhammad & Salamatu, 2021). According to Dalhatu et al. (2019), in order to meet the demand for national security, the media must be voracious in coming up with innovative ways to receive, process, and disseminate accurate and valuable information. As a result, the purpose of this study is to provide an overview of the research on the roles of newspapers in fighting insecurity and to gauge the extent to which scholars pay attention in the area of print media and insecurity in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Insecurity is a common phenomenon in today's world. It is a multifaceted and complex term that has generated discussion globally. The concept of insecurity is used interchangeably with words like danger, apprehension, anxiety, and uncertainty (Gustafsson & Krickel-Choi, 2020). Insecurity, according to Bustillo and Velloso (2016), is characterized by persistent risks such as starvation, sickness, a threat, and oppression. Odey (2019), equally describes insecurity as uneasiness about oneself, a lack of confidence, and the state of being vulnerable to danger, a threat, or a lack of safety.

Researchers and security experts have diverse perspectives on insecurity; some link it to how it impacts people's lives and existence, while others link it to how it affects the general development of a particular society and a nation's economic future. For the former, insecurity is seen as a human issue that should be addressed by individual people and governments, while the latter views it as a political issue that needs to be tackled by governments and stakeholders at a higher level (Lott, 2019). The global economic change also highlights the disparity between rich and poor countries in terms of insecurity (O'Neill et al., 2017; Wijkman & Timberlake, 2021). Whereas the developed countries possess all the necessary apparatus to tackle both foreseen and unforeseen security challenges, while the underdeveloped countries are in a defenceless position, leaving behind a poor, downgraded economy and many societal problems (Amusan & Ejoke, 2017; Jetten et al., 2017; Rodrik, 2018). Insecurity is a phenomenon that is currently having a terrible impact on people's lives as well as their psychological states of mind, as a result of their frequent degrading experiences and fear. People who live in an environment of insecurity are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.

We argue in this paper that insecurity in the Nigerian context implies a lingering threat to human life as a result of so many forces like terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herder-farmer conflicts, religious crises, tribal conflicts, political crises, economic crises, and health. For many years, insecurity menace has been a primary focus in social policy debates in Europe and the United States. Currently, the governments of many countries give priority to insecurity, which they put on their top agenda (Inglehart, 2018; Lavenex, 2017; Mišik, 2022). Unfortunately, in developing countries, governments at all levels use security votes to syphon funds from the public treasury (Duke & Basse, 2021; Egbo et al., 2012; Ezeilo et al., 2018). In spite of the fact that overcoming insecurity at all levels can be a challenging and ongoing process, it is crucial for both the individuals concerned and the government to make diligent efforts in this direction.

Insecurity Challenges in Nigeria

Nigeria had witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity since the military took over power from the civilians through a bloody coup in 1966. The military coup and countercoup led to a three-year civil war in the country (Posibi, 2019). Prior to the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970, many insecurity challenges, such as kidnapping, militancy, armed robbery, and banditry, were not known in the country. Following a civil war, arms proliferated in the hands of corrupt civilians who used them for criminal purposes (Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019). In the opinion of Obarisiagbon and Akintoye (2019), due to the civil war, many individuals lost their jobs and had to find other means to survive. Many of these victims engaged in illegal activities like armed robbery and kidnapping.

The pattern of insecurity in Nigeria has been regionalized such that every part of the country has its own nature of insecurity (Princewill, 2023). For instance, many states of northern Nigeria are suffering from kidnapping, banditry, farmer-herder conflict and the Boko Haram insurgency (Nwabueze & Ebeze, 2013; Sambo et al., 2020). Insecurity challenges in the southern part of Nigeria comprise arm robbery, oil bunkering, kidnapping, Niger Delta militancy, Biafra agitators, and an ethno-religious crisis (Igbini, 2020; Princewill, 2023). The Boko Haram rebellion emerged as a fundamental, non-violent religious group led by Mohammed Yusuf in Borno State, in 2002. Seven years later, in 2009, the religious group started horrible violent activities that have so far led to the deaths of many innocent Nigerians (Nwosu & Nwamaka, 2016; Sändig, 2015).

The growing problem of insecurity in Nigeria has also been associated with the government's inability to provide effective policies and safeguard people's welfare based on the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice (Oshita & Ikelegbe, 2019). Nigerian policymakers and other stakeholders, including the media, must collaborate to address insecurity in the country, as no society can thrive economically and socially in the presence of widespread insecurity.

Newspapers' Roles in Fighting Insecurity in Nigeria

Theoretically and empirically, both print and online newspapers are saddled with the responsibilities of educating, enlightening, informing, and entertaining the public (Alasoluyi & Yusuf, 2016). It is the primary duty of the print media to sustain the truth in their publications and to keep informing the people on societal happenings, including security related problems. This function could be accomplished by conducting rigorous investigations as needed to assuage the populace's fear of certain dangers, confusion, and uncertainty. The media should not focus on trending myths and rumours (Othman & Yusoff, 2020). They are always expected to report factual events as they happen.

The print media's surveillance and correlation functions include informing citizens about acts of insecurity by providing useful information that is used in opinion molding and attitude change. This goal is usually attained by establishing an important agenda that will interpret the consequences and implications of negative behaviour that has a tendency to bring insecurity to society (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2020). The increasing use of newspapers and other media outlets to address insecurity in Nigeria is paramount.

The information on insecurity that these communication outlets provide to the public can help reduce the stigma around the dreaded situation and create a more supportive environment for people to express their feelings (Alexandrescu, 2020; Cohen, 2019). Therefore, the present systematic review aims to report how the previous studies in the Scopus and Web of Science paid more attention to the role of print media in fighting security challenges in Nigeria and to investigate the focus of communication scholars on insecurity reportage in Nigeria. To achieve the outlined objectives, the review attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What attention do communication scholars give to the print media and insecurity research in Nigeria?

2. What are the main areas of study for communication scholars covering Nigerian insecurity?

Materials and Methods

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA Framework) was adopted in this review. To ensure transparency in the systematic review process reporting, the PRISMA framework was used in accordance with the best practises for conducting systematic reviews (Hutton et al., 2015; Page et al., 2020). The PRISMA framework involves a chronological methodology for conducting systematic reviews that has to do with the identification, screening, selection of relevant studies, data extraction, and synthesis of results. This framework also emphasises the importance of including a comprehensive search strategy to minimise bias and ensure all relevant studies are included in the review. The exclusion criteria as recommended by Page et al. (2021) were refined and used in this review. The exclusion criteria used include an ineligible study design, a study with an ineligible population, a study with no relevant outcome, and a study that does not focus on insecurity issues. The researchers collected the study's data from Scopus and the Web of Science.

The Search Strategies

The Boolean operators were used to search for relevant articles for inclusion in the review. The Boolean operators, as explained by Scells et al. (2020) and Masrop et al. (2023), including AND, OR, and NOT, were adopted as the strategic search to aid the collection of study samples. The search terms adopted for conducting searches in the two identified databases (Scopus and Web of Science) included: roles OR functions OR impacts OR effects AND newspaper OR media AND fighting OR addressing OR tackling AND insecurity OR "security challenges" AND Nigeria OR "Niger Delta" OR "Northern Nigeria". The above-mentioned search terms were used to search the two databases. The time range for searching the two databases was restricted to 2007–2022. The choice was made due to the fact that the climax of insecurity in Nigeria began with the Niger Delta militants attack in 2007, the Boko Haram insurgency's multiple attacks began in 2009, and widespread kidnapping and banditry occurred from 2009 to 2022 (Aliyu et al., 2015; Muhammed & Oladimeji, 2017; Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019; Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

Included studies, screening and selection

The searches from the two databases generated 107 articles. The two downloaded files from the Scopus and WoS were merged together. Duplicates and non-article documents (n = 6) were removed from 107 studies. Articles with incomplete text (n = 7) were equally removed. We screened the remaining studies by applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria proposed in Page et al. (2021). After the final screening, a total of twenty-one (n = 21) studies met the review inclusion criteria (see Figure 1). In the final screening of the articles, the researchers worked together, and all inconsistencies were resolved through consultation.

Assessment of risk of bias

The final selection of the articles was done using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP). CASP involves checklists of 10 important queries that enable a reviewer(s) to measure the risk of bias and assess the quality of the articles before including them on the final sample for the review (Long et al., 2020; Purssell, 2020). The CASP checklists template permits the recording of queries' answers using "yes," "no," or "can't tell" to enable the reviewers to easily evaluate the articles. Table 1 below shows the CAPS checklist:

Table 1. Checklist for Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP 2018)

No.	Checklist questions
1.	Was there a clear statement of the aims of research?
2.	Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of research?
3.	Was the method appropriate?
4.	Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?
5.	Have ethical problems been considered?
6.	Were the recruiting techniques suitable for the study's objectives?
7.	Is the data analysis thorough enough?
8.	Is there a clear statement of findings?
9.	How valuable is the research?
10.	Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Results and Discussion

Data Selected from the Studies for Systematic Review

Figure 1 shows that 107 articles were generated in the two databases, out of which 99 were found in the Web of Science and 8 were found in Scopus. Finally, 21 articles were selected for the study after removing non-articles and incomplete articles that failed to meet inclusion criteria.

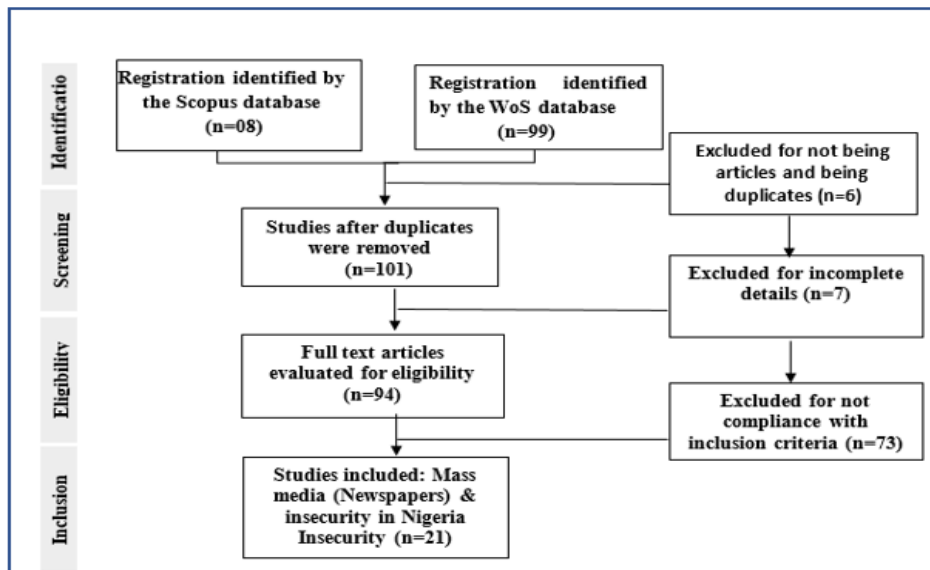


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram in the present study.

The following information were collected regarding the data extraction and categorization: (1) authors’ name and year of publication; (2) the title of studies; (3) methodology used; (4) the type of media used; and (5) focus of the study. The result from the synthesis yielded 21 eligible articles as can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2. Codification of the selected articles that form the basis of the study.

Author’s Name	Year	Article Title	Research Method Used	Type of Media Used	Focus
Ohaja, Edith Ugochi; Eze, Ogemdi Uchenna; Mgboji, Olanrewaju Abosede	2022	Abduction or Elopement? Contrastive Newspaper Framing of the Alleged Abduction of Ese Oruru Saga in Selected Nigerian Dailies	qualitative content analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Boko Haram
Akpojivi, Ufuoma; Aiseng, Kealeboga	2022	Framing of Political Leaders During the Bring Back Our Girls Campaign by the Nigerian Press: A Comparative Study of Guardian and Vanguard Newspapers	Critical discourse analysis	Print & online Newspapers	Boko Haram
Chiluwa, Innocent; Chiluwa, Isioma M	2022	Deadlier than Boko Haram’: Representations of the Nigerian herder-	qualitative frame analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Abduction

		farmer conflict in the local and foreign press			
Silas, Udenze	2021	Media Framing of President Muhammadu Buhari's Human Rights Abuses: A Study of the Punch, Vanguard, the Nation and Daily Trust Newspapers	Content analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Human right abuse
Nwachukwu, Chidiebere A.; Ajaero, Ijeoma Dorathy; Ugwuoke, Joel; Odikpo, Nkiru	2021	Is There Ethnic Othering in Newspapers' Coverage of Farmers/Herders Conflict in Nigeria?	Content analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Farmers-herders conflict
Igwebuike, E. E.	2021	Metaphorical constructions of herding in news reports on Fulani Herdsmen	Metaphorical analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Farmers-herders conflict
Ajakaiye, O.; Nwozor, A.; Ojeka, J.; Aleyomi, B.; Owoeye, G.; Ojeka-John, R.; Okidu, O.	2021	Media, Terrorism Reporting and Lessons in Awareness Sustenance: the Nigerian newspapers' coverage of the Chibok girls' abduction	Content analysis	Print newspaper	Boko Haram insurgencies
Ndinojuo, Ben-Collins; Ihejirika, Walter; Okon, Godwin	2020	Sources of News about Military Operations against Boko Haram Insurgents in Nigeria Newspapers: A Content Analysis Investigation	Content analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Boko Haram insurgencies
Ngozi Akinro	2020	Covering the Boko Haram crisis beyond the nation: Analysis of shifting time and space frames in news reporting	framing analysis	Print & online Newspapers	Boko Haram Insurgencies
Demarest, Leila; Godefroidt, Amelie;	2020	Understanding News Coverage of Religious-based Violence: Empirical	Content Analysis	Online newspaper	Boko Haram Insurgencies

Langer, Arnim		and Theoretical Insights from Media Representations of Boko Haram in Nigeria			
Gever, Celestine Verlumun; Essien, Coleman Fidelis	2019	Newspaper coverage of the herdsmen-farmers conflict in central Tiv Land, Benue State, Nigeria	Content analysis and survey	Print (Newspaper)	Farmers-herders conflict
Mboso, Austine Godwin; Ezeh, Nkiru Comfort	2019	Be Alert and Defend Yourselves: News Framing of Danjuma's Comments about Herdsmen Attacks in Nigeria	Framing analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Herder attack
Gever, Celestine Verlumun	2019	When solution triggers more conflicts: Frames and tone of media coverage of the anti-open grazing law of Benue State, Nigeria	Framing analysis	Print newspaper & electronic media	Herder attack
Hamza, Suleiman Danladi, Pandian, S. & Ramli, Razlini Mohd	2019	The role of traditional leaders in mitigating violence and enhancing peace and harmony in Nigeria	Content Analysis	Newspapers , Journals & Books	General violence
Ette, Mercy; Joe, Sarah	2018	Rival visions of reality': An analysis of the framing of Boko Haram in Nigerian newspapers and Twitter	Framing analysis	Print Newspapers & social media	Boko Haram Insurgencies
Uwazuruike, Confidence	2018	Reporting Boko Haram: Framing the Chibok Schoolgirls' Abduction in the Nigerian Press	Framing analysis	Online newspaper	Boko Haram Insurgencies
Uloho Justin Oberhiri	2018	Insurgency and threat to national security: Examining the new media's propagation of boko haram activities in Nigeria	Content Analysis	Library Documents	Boko Haram Insurgencies

Gever, Celestine Verlumun	2019	When solution triggers more conflicts: Frames and tone of media coverage of the anti-open grazing law of Benue State, Nigeria	critical discourse analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Boko Haram Insurgencies
Ette, Mercy	2016	Condensational symbols in British press coverage of Boko Haram	Analysis of condensational symbols	Online newspaper	Boko Haram insurgencies
Egbunike, N; Olorunnisola, A	2015	Social media and the Occupy Nigeria Protests: Igniting or damping a Harmattan storm?	Content analysis	Print (Newspaper) & Social Media	Youths Protest
Ette, Mercy	2012	Nigeria as a country of interest in terrorism': Newspaper framing of Farouk Abdulmutallab, the underwear bomber	Content analysis	Print (Newspaper)	Suicide attempt

Table 2 shows different areas of emphasis that communication researchers in Nigeria place on media and insecurity. Eleven of the 21 articles concentrated on Boko Haram-related insecurity (Akinro, 2020; Akpojivi & Aiseng, 2022; Ben-Collins et al., 2020; Chiluiwa & Chiluiwa, 2022; Demarest et al., 2020; Ette, 2016; Ette & Joe, 2018; Osisanwo, 2016; Uwazuruike, 2018). Five articles focussed on herders versus farmers conflict (Gever, 2019; Gever & Essien, 2019; Igwebuike, 2021; Mboso & Ezeh, 2019; Nwachukwu et al., 2021). The remaining five articles focused on human rights abuse, protest, violence, abduction, and suicide bombing attacks in the country (Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015; Ette, 2012; Hamza, 2019; Ohaja et al., 2022; Silas & Barth, 2021).

Communication Scholars' Focus on Mass Media and Insecurity in Nigeria

The synthesised studies' have clearly provided an answer to Q1: What attention do communication scholars give to the print media and insecurity research in Nigeria? And Q2: What are the main areas of study for communication scholars covering Nigerian insecurity? Findings revealed that communication scholars in Nigeria pay less attention to print media, newspapers in particular, and insecurity than other study areas with higher Scopus and WoS indexes. Moreover, the findings revealed that other research areas such as radio, television, and the Internet are receiving more attention from communication scholars than print media. Similarly, out of the (n=107) related studies identified in the two databases, only (n=21) studies directly focused on print media and insecurity in Nigeria (Table 2). It has been observed from Figure 2 that eleven of the twenty-one (n=21) articles concentrated on media and Boko Haram-related insecurity (Akinro, 2020; Akpojivi & Aiseng, 2022; Ben-Collins et al., 2020; Chiluiwa & Chiluiwa, 2022; Demarest et al., 2020; Ette, 2016; Ette & Joe, 2018; Osisanwo, 2016;

Uwazuruike, 2018). Five articles focused on the media and herders versus farmers conflict (Gever, 2019; Gever & Essien, 2019; Igwebuik, 2021; Mboso & Ezech, 2019; Nwachukwu et al., 2021). The remaining five articles focused on media and human rights abuse, protest, violence, abduction, and suicide bombing attacks in the country. (Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015; Ette, 2012; Hamza, 2019; Ohaja et al., 2022; Silas & Barth, 2021). However, the limited number of studies on print media and insecurity in Nigeria highlights a gap in the current literature review. The prevalence of articles on print media and Boko Haram-related insecurity issues suggests that communication scholars in Nigeria studied print media and Boko Haram insurgency more than any insecurity issues in the country.

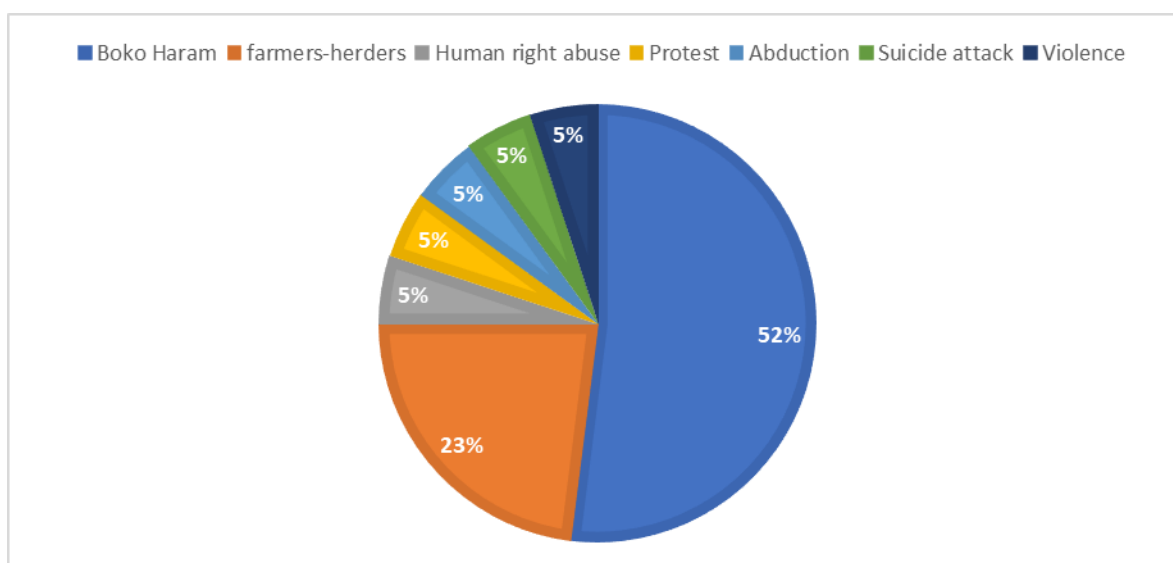


Figure 2. Communication scholars' focus on mass media and insecurity research in Nigeria

Considering insecurity as a scenario of being vulnerable to danger, injury, or anxiety, as suggested by Udoh (2015), the current insecurity in Nigeria goes beyond Boko Haram insurgencies and herders versus farmers conflicts. The major insecurity with higher coverage by the Nigerian mass media today is banditry (Daniel, 2022; Ebije, 2022; Osaji, 2023), yet it has not received considerable attention from the communication scholars in the country considering the studies found in the Web of Science and Scopus. Although Chukwuma Alphonsus et al. (2022) were found to have studied the newspaper and television coverage of banditry in northern Nigeria, there is still a significant gap in the literature when it comes to studies related to print media and banditry in the country. It is significant for media and communication scholars to explore deeper into print media and banditry with a view to providing valuable insight that may contribute to finding solutions to this persistent security challenge.

Growth and Development of Media and Insecurity Research in Nigeria

The vertical blue lines in Figure 3 indicate the growth and development of the print media and the insecurity in Nigeria. It shows the patterns in which the 21 articles directly related to print media and insecurity have been indexed in both Scopus and WoS, between

2007, when the climax of insecurity started raising, to 2022, when the country is experiencing another form of insecurity. Although insecurity issues in Nigeria have existed for a long time prior to 2007, the findings in Figure 3 indicate that communication scholars' research outcomes on media and insecurity in Nigeria started appearing in the two most recognized data bases (Scopus and Web of Science) in 2012, with a research conducted by Ette (2012). Since that time, there has been a decline in academic research on print media and insecurity indexed with the two databases, but the trend changed in 2015 when Egbunike and Olorunnisola (2015) published a new study on the topic. In 2016, two studies on media and security conducted by Ette (2016) and Osisanwo (2016) were found registered in the Scopus and WoS databases.

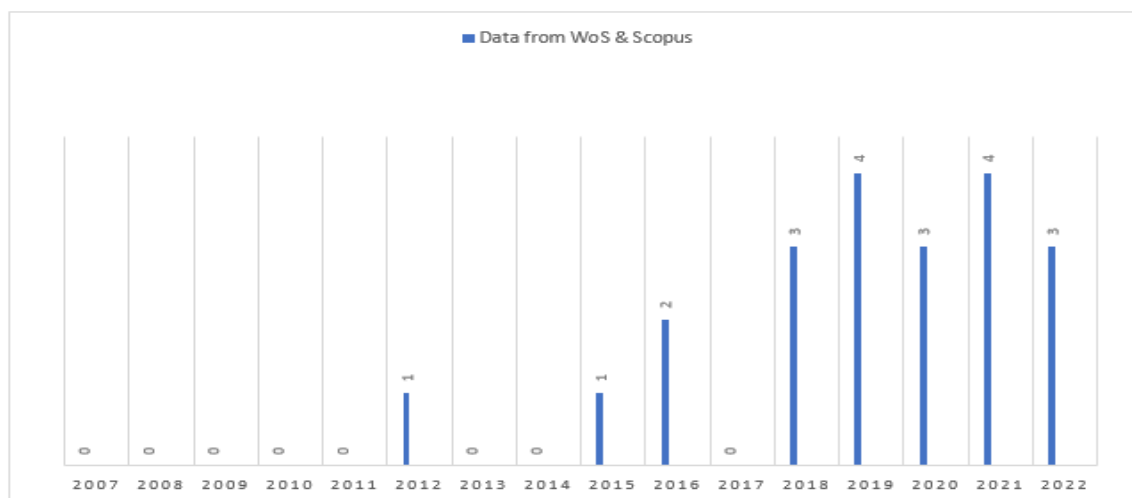


Figure 3. Growth and development of media and insecurity studies in Nigeria, based on the collected data from Scopus and Web of Science.

The review shows that there was an upsurge in academic researches concentrating on print media and insecurity that were registered with Scopus and WoS between 2018 and 2021. Uwazuruike (2018) for example, investigated the news framing in two newspapers in Nigeria (*Vanguard* and *Daily Trust*) about the kidnapping of Chibok students by Boko Haram militia. In the same year, Ette and Joe (2018) investigated the news coverage of the Boko Haram militia in four Nigerian newspapers and on Twitter. Research on print media and insecurity in Nigeria has been conducted in diverse ways by Gever (2019), Hamza (2019) and Demarest et al. (2020).

However, in 2021, four related studies were identified in Scopus and WoS, focusing on print media and insecurity in Nigeria. Igwebuikwe (2021) investigated how four newspapers in Nigeria (*Punch*, *the Guardian*, *The Leadership*, and *the Daily Trust*) metaphorically conceptualised herdsmen's activities in Nigeria. Silas and Barth (2021) examined how the editorials of four newspapers in Nigeria (*Punch*, *the Nation*, *the Daily Trust*, and *Vanguard*) framed the human rights situation in President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. Similarly, Nwachukwu et al. (2021) analysed three newspapers in Nigeria (*the Punch*, *the Sun*, and *Leadership*) with a view to understanding how they report conflict issues between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria. Figure 3 demonstrates another decline in academic research connected to print media and insecurity registered with the Scopus and WoS databases in 2022. Only three studies were found indexed in the two databases, compared to four in 2021.

Conclusions

The review examines the focus of communication scholars on print media and insecurity in Nigeria. It finds more articles related to Boko Haram insurgency and farmer-herder conflict more than any other human insecurity issue registered with Scopus and WoS. The review also highlights the lack of attention given to mass media and armed banditry, which is currently causing widespread violence in Nigeria. Banditry emerged in Nigeria as a result of several conflicts between nomadic herders and farming settlements (Human Rights Watch, 2022; Ojo, 2020). The study equally concludes that majority of Nigerian scholars with interest in print media and insecurity do not often publish their works in the Scopus and Web of Science which are among the top-ranking journal indexing databases.

However, it is important to mention some of the limitations of this systematic review. First, the review is limited to the Nigerian context, and we consider this to be important due to the higher level of human insecurity in Nigeria especially the current level of kidnapping and banditry in Northern Nigeria. Therefore, communication and media scholars should increase their scope to cover other countries that have similar security challenges to Nigeria and other parts of the globe. Secondly, the current review focused largely on print media and human insecurity. Other scholars could broaden the scope by conducting similar reviews in areas related to mass media and food or health security. It is important to note that this review also did not consider any related studies that are not indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. There are other databases that are commonly used in academic research; therefore, it is possible that this review may have missed relevant findings from studies that were indexed in other databases. Therefore, we recommend that future reviews could benefit from considering other databases such as ERIC, PubMed, DOAJ etc.

Similarly, future studies on media and insecurity in Nigeria focus more on comprehensive analyses of the print media and armed banditry, which are now issues in the country as highlighted in the report of Human Rights Watch (2022). We also recommend that other studies be conducted to find out what is actually preventing Nigerian communication scholars from paying attention to print media and human insecurity, while communication scholars with kin interest in media and insecurity should endeavour to publish their findings in Scopus and Web of Science journals due to their quality and ability to boost a scholar's academic status.

Author Contributions: To carry out a systematic review, all four authors were involved in the screening and selection of final samples for the review, and only articles on which they agreed were included. This, of course, strengthens the accuracy of the current study. The four researchers maintained a high level of collaboration. Author (1) wrote the introduction and background of the study. Author (2), with the help of author (3), and author (4) finalised the results and discussion segment. Finally, the four authors read the entire work and reached an agreement on the final version.

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