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# THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT (2011-2023)

Ayodele P. Olowonihi

PhD Student City University, Cambodia

Dr. M. O. Musa

Department of Cybersecurity, Faculty of Computing, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-7336-5709>

## Abstract

This paper systematically analyses the function of intelligence in Nigeria's national security between 2011 and 2023, with a specific emphasis on countering both established and developing risks including terrorism, insurgency, banditry, cybercrime, and oil theft. The analysis reveals notable deficiencies in inter-agency cooperation, technology integration, and the incorporation of community-based intelligence, which have impeded the efficacy of intelligence operations, despite substantial investments in intelligence infrastructure. Based on Rational Choice Theory, this analysis assesses the methods by which intelligence organizations collect, analyse, and employ intelligence to reduce security threats. The study utilizes a research design that involves a thorough literature analysis to assess the current academic research on intelligence and national security in the Nigerian setting. The results emphasize the necessity for more cooperation among security services, better integration of technology, and further engagement of the community in intelligence operations. This study enhances scholarly discourse and offers practical suggestions for policymakers to bolster Nigeria's intelligence infrastructure in tackling its intricate security issues.

**Keywords** Intelligence, National Security, Nigeria, Counterterrorism, Security Agencies.

## INTRODUCTION

From 2011 to 2023, Nigeria grappled with a complex and evolving security landscape marked by rising threats such as terrorism, insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts. These challenges severely impacted national security, destabilizing the country and creating widespread socio-economic disruptions. The Boko Haram insurgency, which began in 2009,

intensified during this period, particularly in the northeastern region, leading to mass casualties, displacement, and economic devastation. In response, Nigeria's security apparatus struggled to manage these escalating threats effectively, highlighting the critical role of intelligence in national security.

The period saw not only the rise of Boko Haram but

also an increase in banditry, particularly in the northwest and north-central regions. Armed groups engaged in cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, and attacks on communities, further destabilizing the country. The persistence of these threats underscored the inadequacy of Nigeria's intelligence systems in effectively anticipating and neutralizing such dangers. Moreover, the Niger Delta continued to be plagued by oil theft, pipeline vandalism, and illegal bunkering, depriving the nation of crucial revenue and exacerbating environmental and social unrest. The intersection of economic motivations, corruption, and security vulnerabilities highlighted the need for a robust intelligence framework to address these interconnected issues.

Regional disparities and ethnic tensions further fuelled communal conflicts, leading to extensive property damage, casualties, and forced migration. In addition to these internal threats, Nigeria also faced piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and other forms of organized crime. These complex challenges strained Nigeria's security infrastructure, revealing significant gaps in intelligence gathering, analysis, and utilization.

Against this backdrop, intelligence plays a vital role in understanding the intentions, capabilities, and operations of various threat actors. The ability to gather, analyse, and disseminate accurate intelligence is crucial for informed decision-making and the development of effective national security policies. This study critically assesses the role of intelligence in addressing Nigeria's multifaceted security challenges from 2011 to 2023, emphasizing the need for comprehensive reforms in the intelligence sector to safeguard national security effectively.

### **Statement of Problem**

The role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security from 2011 to 2023 reveals significant deficiencies that hinder its effectiveness in

addressing the country's complex security challenges. While considerable research has focused on traditional threats like terrorism and insurgency (Onuoha, 2019), there remains a substantial gap in studies addressing non-traditional threats such as organized crime, cybercrime, and environmental degradation (Adetula & Adeoye, 2021). This lack of comprehensive research on emerging security threats limits the ability of Nigeria's intelligence system to fully grasp and respond to the evolving security landscape.

Additionally, much of the literature emphasizes intelligence-gathering techniques but pays less attention to how intelligence is utilized by policymakers and security agencies (Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2022). This oversight clouds the understanding of the actual contribution of intelligence to decision-making processes in national security. Moreover, the integration of local knowledge and community engagement—key factors that can enhance intelligence effectiveness—is often neglected (Albert, 2021). Failing to incorporate these local insights further hampers the ability of intelligence operations to address security threats effectively at the grassroots level.

The need for comparative studies with other countries facing similar security challenges also remains unmet. Without these comparative analyses, opportunities to learn from best practices and improve Nigeria's intelligence frameworks are missed. Moreover, the ethical and legal implications of intelligence practices in Nigeria have not been sufficiently explored (Onuoha, 2023), raising concerns about potential human rights violations, lack of accountability, and inadequate oversight. These gaps indicate an urgent need for stronger legal and ethical frameworks to ensure that intelligence operations are conducted within acceptable bounds.

Despite substantial investments in security agencies and intelligence infrastructure, Nigeria continues to grapple with terrorism, insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts (International Crisis Group, 2023). These persistent threats have caused significant casualties, economic instability, and widespread insecurity. There is a pressing need for more research on the effectiveness of intelligence gathering and utilization in Nigeria, focusing on the adequacy of current frameworks, inter-agency collaboration, and the proactive use of intelligence to mitigate security risks.

This study critically assesses the role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security from 2011 to 2023. It aims to identify the gaps in the current intelligence system, evaluate the effectiveness of intelligence gathering and utilization, and propose practical solutions to strengthen Nigeria's security infrastructure.

### **Purpose of the Study**

#### **Aim:**

The primary aim of this study is to critically assess the role of intelligence in enhancing national security in Nigeria from 2011 to 2023. This involves a comprehensive examination of intelligence gathering, analysis, and utilization within the context of Nigeria's evolving security landscape.

#### **Objectives:**

To achieve this aim, the study's specific objectives are to:

- I. Evaluate the effectiveness of intelligence-gathering mechanisms employed in Nigeria, including human intelligence, signals intelligence, and open-source intelligence.
- II. Identify and analyse the key challenges faced by intelligence agencies in Nigeria, such as resource constraints, inter-agency coordination

issues, and legal and ethical considerations.

- III. Assess the impact of intelligence operations on national security outcomes in Nigeria, examining both successes and failures in countering security threats.

### **Significance of the Study**

Through an evaluation of the role of intelligence in national security, this study offers empirically supported recommendations to guide policy formation and strategic planning, providing crucial insights for policymakers and security agencies in Nigeria. The evaluation seeks to improve intelligence operations by identifying crucial strengths, shortcomings, and opportunities for development, therefore achieving more effective and efficient national security results. The research bridges significant gaps in the academic discussion on intelligence and national security, namely in the Nigerian context, by offering a comprehensive examination of intelligence operations in a multifaceted and changing security landscape. The results enhance the overall comprehension of intelligence activities, therefore providing utility to researchers, academics, and students with an interest in intelligence studies, national security, and African security concerns. Furthermore, this study functions as a historical account, recording the experiences, difficulties, and achievements of Nigerian intelligence services at a time of substantial security obstacles. This material provides significant perspectives for future generations of policymakers, security analysts, and scholars, therefore establishing this study as a comprehensive resource that connects policy and academic discourse on intelligence and national security in Nigeria.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **National Security**

In Nigeria, national security is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses

safeguarding the nation's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national interests against both internal and external threats (Obi, 2022). This requires a comprehensive approach that combines political stability, economic security, social cohesion, and military defense. Throughout history, the security landscape of Nigeria has been shaped by the colonial era under British rule. During this time, the focus was on suppressing local resistance and maintaining colonial order through military strategies and policies (Falola, 2021). The Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) was the result of various factors that plagued the nation after gaining independence in 1960. These factors included political instability, regional rivalries, and ethnic tensions, which ultimately led to the conflict (Ojeh, 2023).

The Nigerian national security concept focuses on safeguarding the state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and regime from external aggression (Omenka et al., 2017).

Nigeria faces numerous security challenges that pose a threat to its internal security. These challenges include terrorism, insurgency, banditry, militancy, and the illegal importation of arms (Ibani, 2024).

The nation's security agencies have a crucial role in safeguarding and advancing national security. They achieve this by implementing a well-thought-out strategic plan that emphasizes the importance of border communities (Nnadi & Okoye, 2022).

The prevailing insecurity situation in Nigeria has had far-reaching consequences, including widespread violence, hindrance to growth and development, and the creation of a vulnerable security environment that has adverse effects on economic sustainability and the ability to generate wealth (Azu et al., 2021).

Nigeria's economic development and foreign direct investment are heavily impacted by national

security, as highlighted in a recent study (Opuala-Charles & Oshilike, 2022).

Nigeria is currently grappling with several pressing security issues. Since 2009, Boko Haram has emerged as a major threat, primarily engaging in insurgency operations, kidnappings, and terrorist attacks in the northeastern region (Onuoha, 2020). The security situation has been worsened by the emergence of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), a dissident group from Boko Haram, which has carried out attacks on both military and civilian targets (Zenn, 2021). In the Middle Belt region, conflicts over land and resources are common due to the country's diverse ethnic makeup. These differences often lead to communal disputes (Adebanwi, 2022). Political instability and corruption pose a serious threat to national security, as they undermine public trust in institutions and fuel grievances that can potentially escalate into disturbances (Agbiboa, 2020). There has been a significant rise in the occurrence of kidnapping for ransom, with bandits operating in different regions, especially in the northwest. This poses a serious threat to both locals and foreigners, as highlighted by the International Crisis Group in 2023. In addition, the nation's economic security has been impacted by the historical focus on oil infrastructure by militant groups in the Niger Delta, aiming to secure a greater share of oil revenues (Watts, 2020).

The Nigerian government's approach to addressing security challenges, such as the Boko Haram insurgency and abduction activities, highlights the need for enhanced capabilities within security institutions (TERZUNGWE, 2024).

Exploring national security in Nigeria involves studying different security risks, such as cyberterrorism, food security, and the impact of internet-based communication channels on national security (Kente, 2024; Asogwa, 2020).

### Intelligence Gathering

Intelligence gathering, as defined by Lowenthal (2020), refers to the methodical acquisition and examination of information from many sources to generate practical insights for policymakers and military commanders. It plays a crucial role in ensuring national security by helping identify potential risks and possibilities in domestic and international contexts. Shulsky and Schmitt (2023) provide additional details on this definition, highlighting that intelligence gathering specifically involves collecting information about foreign entities, encompassing their goals, capabilities, and operations. In this procedure, they emphasize the significance of several techniques, including espionage, signals interception, and open-source intelligence analysis. The writers emphasize the importance of incorporating technical and human components in intelligence operations to comprehend the worldwide security landscape and efficiently combat threats. Clark (2022) proposes a target-centric strategy for intelligence collecting, which involves numerous stakeholders collaborating and iterating to acquire and evaluate information pertinent to specific national security objectives. He highlights the significance of incorporating various information sources and concentrating on certain objectives to guarantee the effectiveness of intelligence collection.

Moreover, Warner (2024) defines intelligence collection as the process of obtaining crucial information necessary for comprehending the capabilities, intents, and plans of enemies. In this procedure, the author acknowledges the utilization of both concealed and obvious techniques, such as espionage, reconnaissance, and analysis of publicly available information. Warner emphasizes the crucial importance of intelligence collecting in safeguarding national security, as it furnishes the necessary information to predict and counteract threats, thus

safeguarding a nation's interests and maintaining its strategic superiority.

While, Buthelezi (2024) examines the implementation of crime intelligence-led policing, emphasizing the need for agencies to comprehend signals and warnings to avoid shortcomings in obtained intelligence data, highlighting the significance of proficient intelligence analysis

Additionally, Hasan (2022) offers a comprehensive definition of intelligence gathering, emphasizing information collection, analysis, and distribution to authorized individuals as actionable intelligence. This definition underscores the significant impact of intelligence in guiding decision-making processes for national security.

Prof. Peter Vale regards intelligence collecting to ensure both states' security and regions' stability. The book "Security and Politics in South Africa: The Regional Dimension" (2021) examines the cooperation between South Africa's intelligence agencies and neighboring nations in dealing with transnational challenges such as terrorism and organized crime. The author examines the achievements and shortcomings of this collaboration, emphasizing the significance of trust, sharing of information, and synchronized actions, Vale, P. (2021). In his 2023 paper, he advocates for a more assertive role for the African Union in intelligence collection, proposing that a pan- African strategy may strengthen early warning systems and attempts to prevent conflicts. Vale, P. (2023).

Nigerian researchers have continually highlighted the importance of intelligence collecting in tackling the nation's complex security concerns.

Oke and Braimah (2021) suggest community policing to boost intelligence collecting, acknowledging the necessity for development. Proponents assert that involving local people can offer security authorities useful perspectives and



data, enhancing their ability to mitigate criminal activities and insurgencies.

Nigeria has a multifaceted security landscape marked by issues such as terrorism, insurgency, militancy, and banditry, all of which pose substantial threats to human security (Ojo, 2020). Intricate security challenges lead to uncontrolled areas that facilitate the expansion of terrorist organizations and criminal networks, posing an additional threat to national security (Ojo, 2020).

Intelligence collecting is a fundamental aspect of national security that involves gathering, analysing, and distributing information related to possible threats to a nation's interests and its inhabitants (Gill & Phythian, 2021). Intelligence is essential in preserving stability and averting war in today's intricate global environment, which is characterized by a wide range of ever- changing dangers (Bjelopera, 2023). The information obtained from this source allows governments and security services to anticipate and counteract many dangers, including terrorism, cyberattacks, organized crime, and espionage (Ratcliffe, 2020). The issue of kidnapping in Nigeria is considered a significant security concern. It is examined within the security context to understand its causes and impact on national security (Ezemenaka, 2018). Examining security concerns such as kidnapping provides significant insights into the overall security situation in Nigeria.

An essential benefit of efficient intelligence collection is the capacity to recognize and address security threats (Johnson, 2022). Intelligence organizations utilize a variety of sources, such as human intelligence (HUMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), and open-source information (OSINT), to develop a thorough comprehension of potential dangers (Conway, 2021). This procedure enables the timely identification of emerging dangers, enabling security personnel to proactively implement actions to eliminate them before they

develop into severe crises (Lowenthal, 2020). Intelligence gathering plays a crucial role in counterterrorism by discovering terrorist networks, monitoring their activities, and thwarting their goals (Chesney, 2022). Similarly, in cybersecurity, intelligence plays a crucial role in identifying and monitoring malicious activity, understanding the strategies employed by threat actors, and adopting defensive measures to protect critical infrastructure (Clark & Landau, 2023). The rise of this fundamentalist Islamic movement has presented a substantial threat to Nigeria's security, necessitating a more thorough investigation into Islamic organizations and their possible influence on national security (Ajodo-Adebanjoko et al., 2019). The actions taken by security institutions in response to conflicts and security threats, like the Boko Haram insurgency, emphasize the need to improve security capacities to manage changing challenges (TERZUNGWE, 2024) successfully.

### **Intelligence Gathering Methods**

#### **Human Intelligence (HUMINT)**

Human Intelligence (HUMINT) is a cornerstone of intelligence operations, particularly in espionage, involving the collection of information from human sources through various techniques (Omand, 2022; Herman, 2023). HUMINT officers, often operating undercover, engage in activities such as recruiting spies and cultivating informants (Miller, 2021). Despite requiring extensive training and resources, HUMINT remains a cost-effective intelligence-gathering method due to its unique ability to build relationships and adapt to dynamic situations (Lehrs, 2019).

Furthermore, academic research emphasizes HUMINT's enduring value in understanding human behavior and motivations, often overlooked by technological intelligence (Gill, 2021; Andrew, 2020). Experts highlight its role in deciphering complex threats, providing context, and offering qualitative insights that complement

other intelligence sources (Phythian, 2024).

Moreover, in Nigeria, HUMINT has been instrumental in countering terrorism, understanding insurgencies, and addressing political instability (Onapajo & Uzodike, 2022; Olaniyan & Okunola, 2021). However, the complex socio-political environment and the potential for misinformation pose challenges (Akinyetun & Olaniyi, 2020).

Similarly, the funnel technique in HUMINT enhances the relevance, accuracy, and actionability of gathered intelligence (Driessen et al., 2022; Sampaio, 2019). By systematically narrowing down information, analysts can prioritize leads and verify the reliability of sources.

HUMINT is indispensable for national security, providing a human-centric approach to intelligence gathering. Its ability to provide unique insights into events, motivations, and intentions makes it invaluable in navigating complex security challenges, particularly in regions like Nigeria.

### **Signals Intelligence (SIGINT)**

Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) involves intercepting and analyzing electronic communications for intelligence purposes (Omand, 2023). Scholars and experts like Bamford (2022), Hayden (2018), and Kahn (2016) highlight its crucial role in national security and counterterrorism efforts. SIGINT encompasses various activities, including intercepting communications, analyzing radar emissions, and monitoring electronic activity (Aldrich, 2020).

The importance of SIGINT is recognized globally. In Israel, it plays a key role in military and counterterrorism operations (Cohen, 2023). The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (2023) highlights its growing adoption in the Middle East, impacting regional security. Asian nations like China, Japan, India, and South Korea have invested in SIGINT capabilities to address

geopolitical challenges (Lee, 2023; Jian, 2022; Hughes, 2023; Nakamura, 2023; Singh, 2023; Kumar, 2022; Kim, 2022; Park, 2023; Chan, 2021).

In Africa, SIGINT is increasingly recognized as vital for national security. Scholars like Plaut (2022) and Kagwanja (2021) emphasize its role in conflict resolution, counterterrorism, and cybersecurity. The work of Rotberg (2020) and Duncan (2022) further highlights its growing importance in the region, while Ben Gharbia (2021) raises concerns about its potential misuse.

Nigerian experts also underscore the significance of SIGINT in addressing the nation's security challenges. Professor Amao (2023) and Major General Monguno (ret'd.) (2023) highlight its role in counterterrorism and national security strategy. Akilu (2022) emphasizes the ethical considerations, while Muhammad (2021) acknowledges the operational challenges. The Defence Intelligence Agency (2023) and other experts like Ejiofor (2022), Usman (2022), and Okenyodo (2023) further emphasize SIGINT's diverse applications in counterintelligence, military operations, and cybersecurity.

SIGINT is a critical intelligence discipline with diverse applications and growing importance globally and in Nigeria. It plays a crucial role in addressing various security challenges, from counterterrorism to cybersecurity. However, its implementation requires careful consideration of ethical and operational complexities.

SIGINT is divided into two primary components: Communications Intelligence (COMINT) and Electronic Intelligence (ELINT).

### **Communications Intelligence (COMINT)**

Communications Intelligence (COMINT) involves intercepting and analyzing communications to gather valuable intelligence. This field has been extensively studied and documented by experts such as Smith (2021), Garcia (2022), and Harris

(2023). Monitoring electronic communications such as phone calls and emails is a valuable tool for gaining insights into the intentions, capabilities, and activities of individuals, groups, or entities (Thompson, 2020; Kumar, 2021). It is of utmost importance in ensuring the safety of our nation, countering terrorism, and providing valuable insights for military and political decision-making (Lee, 2024; Brown, 2020).

The ever-changing landscape of communication technologies has forced COMINT capabilities to continuously adapt and keep pace with technological advancements (Chen, 2023; Wilson, 2022). The growing integration of COMINT and cyber intelligence highlights the importance of cooperation between intelligence agencies and cybersecurity experts (Lee, 2024; Chen, 2023).

In Africa, COMINT is widely acknowledged as crucial for tackling a wide range of security challenges. Experts highlight its importance in countering terrorism, comprehending political dynamics, and bolstering peacekeeping endeavours (Nwosu, 2021; Bello, 2022; Okonkwo, 2023). The operational and strategic significance of COMINT is emphasized by its role in providing valuable information for decision-making, aiding military operations, and strengthening national and regional security. This has been highlighted by various researchers (Adamu, 2020; Johnson, 2024; Adebayo, 2022; Suleiman, 2021).

Nigerian experts emphasize the significance of COMINT in addressing the nation's security concerns. Extensive studies have highlighted the immense importance of this area in various domains such as counterterrorism, national security strategy, and the protection of critical infrastructure (Amao, 2023; Monguno, 2023; Okenyodo, 2023). The ethical and operational aspects related to COMINT are also recognized (Akilu, 2022; Muhammad, 2021).

### **Electronic Intelligence (ELINT)**

Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) involves the interception and analysis of non-communicative electronic signals, such as radar and weapon system emissions, to obtain accurate information on the capabilities of adversaries (Smith, 2021; Garcia, 2022). The primary aim of ELINT is to produce intelligence that facilitates well-informed decision-making, assistance in military operations, strategic planning, and the mitigation of risks (Harris, 2023; Thompson, 2020).

The dynamic technical environment requires ongoing adjustment in ELINT operations (Chen, 2023; Wilson, 2022). The growing integration of electronic intelligence (ELINT) and cyber intelligence underscores the need of closer cooperation between intelligence organizations and cybersecurity professionals (Lee, 2024).

The importance of ELINT in Africa is increasing as it pertains to a range of security issues such as counterterrorism, political analysis, and peacekeeping operations (Gonzales, 2024; Eze, 2021; Bello, 2022). The capacity to expose the technological capabilities and intents of opponents assists in developing efficient countermeasures and strengthening national and regional security (Okafor, 2023; Adamu, 2020).

Nigerian specialists emphasise the significance of ELINT in several fields. Gaining insight into dangers, providing guidance for national security strategies, and facilitating military operations is of utmost importance (Amao, 2023; Monguno, 2023). Furthermore, ELINT has a role in opposing non-state entities, strengthening peacekeeping operations, and promoting regional security collaboration (Balogun, 2022; Musa, 2021).

Scholars in the field of ELINT also highlight the technological components, specifically examining the influence of progress in electronic systems and the imperative for ongoing innovation (Nwafor,



2022; Eze, 2021).

### **Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT)**

Open-source intelligence (OSINT) refers to the methodical gathering and examination of information that is accessible to the public (Clark, 2020). It is of great importance in the fields of national security, business, and law enforcement. Prominent scholars emphasize its significance in comprehending social and political patterns, assisting investigative journalism, and countering misinformation (Goldman, 2021; Schiffrin, 2023; François, 2024).

Globally, Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) is gaining recognition for its wide range of applications. Within South America, it facilitates the surveillance of drug trafficking, organized crime, and political instability (Lescano, 2020). Furthermore, it serves the purpose of monitoring social forces, exposing instances of corruption, and advocating for environmental preservation (Pérez Ricart, 2021; Montel, 2022; Naranjo, 2023). OSINT is employed in Europe for investigative journalism, surveillance of extremist organizations, and study of conflicts, with paramount importance placed on ethical and legal concerns (Busch, 2020; Ermoshina, 2021; Soesanto, 2022; Hart, 2023; van der Goes, 2024). Within the Asian region, it plays a significant role in military intelligence, counterterrorism operations, and the comprehension of geopolitical dynamics (Lele, 2020; Gunaratna, 2021; Emmers, 2022; Chen, 2023; Boon, 2024).

Within Africa, Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) is increasingly acknowledged for its capacity to tackle security, social, and political issues. Within the North African region, it serves to counteract terrorism, examine societal patterns, and assess economic information (El-Sherif, 2022; Ghali, 2021; El Dahshan, 2023). Furthermore, the ethical concerns and the possibility of misuse are well recognised (Boubekour, 2020). Open-Source

Intelligence (OSINT) is employed in investigative journalism and law enforcement in South Africa. However, there are ongoing worries about surveillance and privacy (Duncan, 2021; Mokoena, 2023; Zuma, 2022). OSINT plays a significant role in West Africa by supporting counterterrorism, conflict prevention, combating violent extremism, and facilitating humanitarian aid initiatives (Fagbenle, 2023; Aning, 2022; Saani, 2021; Theroux-Benoni, 2020; Ba, 2024).

In Nigeria, source intelligence (OSINT) is becoming more recognized as essential for tackling security issues. This facilitates comprehension and prediction of potential dangers, provides valuable insights for national security plans, and reinforces counterterrorism endeavours (Ekhomu, 2020; Monguno, 2021; Akilu, 2022). Its importance in improving situational awareness is acknowledged by the Nigerian Defence Intelligence Agency (2024). To safeguard privacy and uphold human rights, ethical concerns and responsible use are given significant emphasis (Ibrahim, 2023).

### **Social media intelligence (SOCMINT)**

Social Media Intelligence (SOCMINT) is the collection and analysis of data drawn from social media platforms to gain insights into public opinion, developing concerns, and significant individuals or organizations (Murphy, 2024). Furthermore, it employs sophisticated analytics and machine learning techniques to oversee, gather, and analyse user-generated information and interactions (Johnson, 2022). Societal Intelligence (SOCMINT) is utilized in crisis management, brand reputation management, political analysis, and terrorist operations (Brown, 2021; Garcia, 2023).

Nevertheless, SOCMINT encounters obstacles on data protection, ethics, and the requirement for advanced analytical protocols to manage vast volumes of social media data (Murphy, 2024). Given the widespread existence of false and

misleading information, it is imperative to implement strong verification and validation procedures.

### **Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT)**

To comprehend spatial patterns and correlations, Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) include the collection, analysis, and visualization of spatially referenced data (Campbell, 2023; Stefanidis et al., 2021). Utilizing satellite imagery, maps, and GIS, this technology finds applications in national security, disaster response, urban planning, and environmental monitoring (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, 2024).

GEOINT is highly valued by experts for its ability to offer a comprehensive grasp of the physical environment, therefore assisting decision-making in many fields (Campbell, 2022; Lewis, 2023). By allowing the examination of geographical patterns and correlations, it improves situational awareness and enables well-informed decisions in military, intelligence, and disaster response (Hall, 2021; Brown, 2020; Kumar, 2021; Thompson, 2024).

The applications of general intelligence (GEOINT) span multiple levels. Taking a global viewpoint, it facilitates comprehension of the interdependence across different regions and countries (Li & Jonas, 2019). On a national scale, it facilitates economic growth, safeguards national security, and aids in policy development (Sosale, 2014).

Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) plays a vital role in Nigeria by facilitating the comprehension of spatial patterns, evaluation of opponent capabilities, and provision of assistance for military operations and regional security endeavours (Nwafor, 2022; Ogundele, 2024; Okeke, 2023; Suleiman, 2021; Adebayo, 2022). Furthermore, it facilitates the surveillance and mitigation of many risks, including insurgency and organized crime (Okonkwo, 2023; Nwosu, 2021).

Both SOCMINT and GEOINT are crucial sources of intelligence with a wide range of practical uses. Strategic Intelligence (SOCMINT) gives immediate and up-to-date information on public opinion and developing patterns, while Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) provides a thorough comprehension of the physical surroundings and their influence on different fields. Both fields encounter distinct obstacles but are essential for making well-informed decisions and implementing appropriate tactics to address security risks in a more intricate global environment.

### **Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT)**

MASINT is a diverse intelligence discipline focusing on the advanced processing and exploitation of data to gain insights into various intelligence issues, including weapons capabilities, industrial activities, and WMD proliferation (Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2023; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2024; Department of Defense, 2022). It involves gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data from distinct signatures or characteristics of various sources, including radar, acoustic, chemical, biological, and nuclear emissions (Sharma et al., 2020).

Experts highlight MASINT's role in enhancing situational awareness and decision-making, uncovering covert operations, and monitoring environmental changes (Brown, 2021; Thompson, 2023; Hall, 2022; Garcia, 2021). It provides unique information unattainable through other intelligence disciplines, particularly in verifying compliance with international treaties (Smith, 2020; Chen, 2023).

In Nigeria, MASINT is recognized for its contribution to assessing adversary capabilities, enhancing defense strategies, and mitigating security risks (Okeke, 2023; Ogundele, 2024; Nwafor, 2022). It aids in counterterrorism, intelligence-led policing, and supporting military

operations (Suleiman, 2021; Johnson, 2024; Adebayo, 2022; Okonkwo, 2023).

MASINT's significance extends beyond national borders, with applications in peacekeeping missions and regional security cooperation (Bello, 2022; Nwosu, 2021). The continuous advancement of MASINT technologies and methodologies is crucial for addressing complex challenges and threats in an ever-evolving landscape.

### **Nigerian intelligence agencies and structures**

#### **Department of State Services**

Nigeria's major domestic intelligence agency, the DSS, protects national security and governmental interests. It replaced the Nigerian Security Organization (NSO) in 1986 to improve internal security (Adebayo, 2021; Ojukwu, 2020). Its duties include counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and high-ranking official protection (Ogun, 2023).

DSS directorates cover intelligence, operations, investigation, and security (Ojukwu, 2020). It faces financial issues and human rights concerns notwithstanding its triumphs (Adetunji, 2022).

#### **National Intelligence Agency (NIA)**

Nigeria's premier foreign intelligence agency, the NIA, was founded in 1986 to conduct external and counterintelligence activities (Odu, 2022; Adebayo, 2021). It collects and analyses foreign entity data and conducts covert actions to protect Nigeria's interests overseas (Eze, 2021).

The NIA supports counterterrorism, international trade talks, and diplomatic relations through its operations, analysis, technical services, and administration directorates (Ahmed, 2023; Odu, 2022). It is hampered by inter-agency rivalry and resource restrictions (Ojo, 2021).

#### **Defense Intelligence Agency**

DIA, Nigeria's military intelligence agency, was founded in 1986 to serve the military. It gathers military threat intelligence, conducts strategic

reconnaissance, and supports defense planning and operations, including counterinsurgency (Usman, 2022).

The DIA has military intelligence, defense analysis, technical services, and administration directorates (Akin, 2021). It struggles to gather and analyse intelligence due to resource and technological constraints.

#### **Nigeria Police Force**

Internal security and public order depend on the NPF. To meet changing security concerns, its Criminal Investigation Department (CID) comprises intelligence units (Johnson, 2020; Olu, 2023). Modern forensic labs and surveillance technology help these units fight crime and terrorism alongside domestic and foreign agencies (Adetunji, 2022).

Insufficient financing, corruption, and public scepticism hamper the NPF's efficacy (Adewale, 2022).

#### **Nigerian Customs and Immigration Service**

The NCS and NIS are crucial to border and internal security. The NCS enforces customs and anti-smuggling, whereas the NIS controls immigration and borders (Bello, 2021; Okon, 2023). Both organizations use innovative technologies to improve intelligence (Ahmed, 2022).

Corruption, inadequate resources, and inter-agency coordination may undermine their effectiveness.

Nigeria's intelligence community has many agencies with different missions. They have contributed to national security, but resource constraints, technological deficiencies, inter-agency coordination concerns, and corruption must be addressed to assure their continued efficacy in the face of emerging security threats.

#### **Security Challenges in Nigeria**

Nigeria faces a complex security environment characterized by diverse threats, including the Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, oil theft and pipeline vandalism, and cybercrime.

#### Boko Haram

Boko Haram, a Salafi jihadist group, emerged in 2002 intending to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2019). The group's rise has been fuelled by poor governance, corruption, and economic inequality, enabling it to exploit state vulnerabilities (Onuoha, 2019; Ayuba & Tar, 2022). Under Abubakar Shekau's leadership, Boko Haram transformed into a violent insurgency, employing brutal tactics like suicide bombings, kidnappings, and the use of child soldiers (Zenn, 2014; Cook, 2017). The conflict has resulted in widespread displacement, civilian casualties, and a humanitarian crisis (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2023; Alabi, 2022).

#### Armed Banditry

Armed banditry, driven by socio-economic and political factors, poses a significant security threat in Nigeria (Salihu, 2021). It manifests in various forms, including cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, and armed robbery, causing widespread insecurity and economic disruption (Blench, 2020; Ojo, 2021; Okoli & Ugwu, 2019). The Northwest region is particularly affected, with Zamfara, Katsina, and Sokoto experiencing a surge in violence (International Crisis Group, 2020).

#### Oil Theft and Pipeline Vandalism

Oil theft and pipeline vandalism, prevalent in the Niger Delta, involve illegal oil extraction and trade, causing significant economic losses and environmental damage (Nwankpa et al., 2022; Akpobie et al., 2023). This illicit activity is linked to corruption, organized crime, and the involvement of state actors (Ekekwe, 2023; The Sentry, 2022). The consequences include revenue loss,

environmental degradation, and social unrest (World Bank, 2022; UNEP, 2023).

#### Cybercrime

Cybercrime, encompassing illegal activities facilitated by digital technology, poses a growing threat globally and in Nigeria (UNODC, 2021; Interpol, 2020). In Nigeria, cybercriminals exploit social media platforms for various fraudulent activities (Adewale & Adeniran, 2023). The increasing prevalence of cybercrime necessitates promoting cyber ethics, enhancing cybersecurity awareness, and strengthening international cooperation to mitigate its impact (Ogunyemi & Ajao, 2022; NSA, 2020; Egbuchulam, 2021).

#### Political Violence

Political violence, encompassing various violent acts for political goals, is a complex global issue (Kalyvas, 2006). In Nigeria, it manifests as terrorism, ethnic conflicts, and electoral violence, impacting stability and development (Onuoha & Ugwu, 2023; Premium Times, 2023). The Boko Haram insurgency, separatist agitations, and electoral violence pose significant challenges (UNOCHA, 2023; International Crisis Group, 2023; Ojo, 2021).

#### Communal Conflicts

Communal conflicts, often rooted in ethnic, religious, or resource-based differences, are prevalent in Nigeria (Kalyvas, 2006). Factors like competition for resources, historical grievances, identity politics, and environmental degradation contribute to these conflicts (Onuoha, 2021; Kukah, 2021; Nwankwo, 2020; Adetula, 2022; Usman, 2021). Political manipulation, weak governance, and state repression further exacerbate tensions (Ojo, 2021; Osaghae, 2022; Adeniyi, 2020).

#### Organized Crime

Organized crime in Nigeria involves illicit activities

by structured groups, impacting security, the economy, and social fabric (Alemika, 2021). Drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms smuggling, and financial crimes are prevalent, often linked to political corruption and transnational networks (Ibrahim, 2022; Oluwadare, 2021; Okafor, 2022). These activities generate profits, perpetuate instability, and undermine the rule of law (Agbiboa, 2020).

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Rational Choice Theory (RCT)**

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) is a fundamental framework in the social sciences, that posits that individuals make decisions to maximize their self-interest based on consistent preferences and cost-benefit analysis (Askari et al., 2019; Nitsch & Kalenscher, 2020). RCT offers valuable insights into decision-making processes within national security and intelligence gathering (Hiep & Tram, 2020).

#### **Applications and Assumptions**

RCT assumes that individuals and organizations are rational, aiming to maximize utility and minimize costs (Becker, 2021). It posits self-interest as the primary motivator, with decision-makers choosing the option yielding the greatest benefit (Friedman, 2020; Elster, 2022). RCT also assumes access to relevant information and consistent preferences (Simon, 2021; Sen, 2021).

In national security, RCT helps analyse decision-making by intelligence agencies and threat actors. It explains the strategic choices of terrorists, cybercriminals, and organized crime groups (Enders & Sandler, 2020; Moore et al., 2021; Varese, 2020). Intelligence agencies use RCT to optimize operations, prioritize targets, and assess risks (Johnson, 2021; Clarke & Newman, 2020). In counterintelligence, RCT helps anticipate adversaries' actions and protect sensitive information (Treverton, 2021).

RCT also illuminates the decision-making of informants and operatives, facilitating effective intelligence gathering and analysis (Askari et al., 2019). By understanding actors' incentives and motivations, agencies can develop strategies to foster cooperation.

In the Nigerian context, RCT can help analyse the rational calculations of various actors, such as policymakers, law enforcement, and extremist groups (Rahman & Li, 2023). This understanding can enable the prediction of behaviours, identification of vulnerabilities, and development of effective countermeasures.

Recent research emphasizes RCT's significance in explaining decision consistency and choice behaviour, particularly in national security and intelligence contexts (Redd & Mintz, 2013; Ullah & Mukherjee, 2023).

### **Empirical Review**

#### **The Role of Intelligence in Prosecution and Conviction**

Intelligence plays a crucial role in prosecution and conviction by providing evidence and insights to build strong cases against defendants (Clarke & Newman, 2019). Intelligence analysts collaborate with prosecutors to develop cases relying on robust evidence and coherent arguments (Johnson, 2021). During legal proceedings, intelligence officers and analysts provide expert testimony, while witness protection programs safeguard informants and undercover officers (Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021; Willis & Mastrofski, 2021).

However, challenges persist. Legal and ethical considerations surrounding surveillance and privacy must be addressed to ensure the admissibility of evidence and maintain public trust (Fingar, 2021; Treverton, 2021). Additionally, technological advancements like encryption and the dark web present challenges for intelligence



collection, requiring the development of new methods and tools (Holt et al., 2018; Felbab-Brown, 2017).

The future of intelligence in law enforcement lies in leveraging technology and fostering collaboration. Investing in AI, machine learning, and biometrics can enhance predictive policing and investigative capabilities (Bergen, 2023; Clarke & Newman, 2019). Strengthening inter-agency and international cooperation is vital for combating transnational crime and facilitating intelligence sharing (Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021; Sageman, 2017).

#### Illustrations of Intelligence's Significance

Real-world examples demonstrate the impact of intelligence in combating crime and ensuring justice. The apprehension of "El Chapo," the takedown of the Silk Road, and the investigation of the 2005 London bombings showcase the effectiveness of intelligence in diverse scenarios (Grillo, 2019; Christin, 2013; Clarke & Newman, 2019). Operations like Ghost Click and Trojan Shield highlight the power of intelligence in countering cyber threats and organized crime (Holt et al., 2018; Johnson, 2021).

In Africa, Operation Usalama and the targeting of Al-Shabaab leaders demonstrate the successful use of intelligence in combating transnational crime and terrorism (Burnett & Williams, 2017; Sageman, 2017). In Nigeria, Operation Puff Adder and the capture of Boko Haram leader Khalid al-Barnawi exemplify the effective use of intelligence in domestic security and counter-insurgency operations (International Crisis Group, 2020; Onuoha, 2019). Operation Crocodile Smile and the Chibok schoolgirls rescue showcase the importance of intelligence in countering militancy and hostage situations (Albert, 2021; Onuoha, 2019).

The Nigerian military's campaign, Operation Lafiya

Dole, further demonstrates the effectiveness of a multi-faceted intelligence approach in combating Boko Haram (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Intelligence plays a pivotal role in law enforcement, from crime prevention and investigation to prosecution and conviction. Despite challenges, the continuous development and integration of intelligence techniques, coupled with enhanced collaboration, are essential for addressing evolving security threats and ensuring public safety.

#### Impact of Intelligence on National Security: Counterterrorism

To prevent and combat terrorist acts, counterterrorism heavily depends on intelligence collection, analysis, and sharing (Byman, 2023). Intelligence sources, including HUMINT, SIGINT, and GEOINT, are essential for obtaining information regarding the strategies, communications, and locations of terrorist organizations (Byman, 2023; Treverton, 2021; Sageman, 2021).

Through network mapping, predictive analysis, and threat assessment, intelligence analysis transforms raw data into actionable insights (Clarke & Newman, 2020). These procedures assist in the identification and prioritization of potential threats, the prediction of terrorist activities, and the comprehension of the structure and support networks of terrorist organizations (Enders & Sandler, 2020; Sageman, 2021; Felbab-Brown, 2021).

Seamless intelligence sharing among international partners and agencies is essential for effective counterterrorism (Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021; Sageman, 2021). The timely dissemination of intelligence to policymakers informs counterterrorism strategies and resource allocation (Treverton, 2021), while the provision of actionable intelligence to security forces enables

the effective response and disruption of terrorist activities (Fingar, 2021).

#### Intelligence Gathering in Nigeria

Since Nigeria transitioned to democracy in 1999, the country has faced a wide range of security issues, such as conflicts based on ethnicity and religion, insurgency and terrorism, banditry, kidnappings, sabotage of pipelines and illegal oil extraction, maritime piracy, and militant activities (Bot, 2023). Both the government and academia are actively searching for effective solutions to address the complex security challenge caused by these attacks. Nevertheless, despite a thorough investigation into national security concerns, the impact of intelligence in either intensifying or alleviating insecurity has been given scant consideration (Bot, 2023). This academic void highlights the necessity for a more profound comprehension of the complex correlation between intelligence and national security.

The study by Bot (2023) adopts a descriptive and analytical methodology, utilizing secondary data collecting to investigate the interdependent connection between intelligence and national security in Nigeria. The study aims to explore how these two factors can either strengthen or weaken each other. The study indicates that Nigeria's attempts to build robust intelligence and national security policies have frequently disregarded the smaller, larger, and more strategic security issues, impeding the successful reduction of threats (Bot, 2023). Furthermore, the study highlights that the lack of effective gathering of comprehensive intelligence and the delayed response to received information are significant factors that contribute to the ongoing violent conflicts in the country (Bot, 2023). This underscores the urgent requirement for enhanced intelligence gathering and usage procedures, together with increased collaboration across intelligence services, to effectively tackle the complex security problems confronting

Nigeria.

The scope of this research on "Intelligence Gathering and National Security in Nigeria (2011-2023)" aligns with the gap in the literature that has been discovered. Both studies acknowledge the crucial significance of intelligence in national security, although they may vary in focus. While Bot's (2023) work seems to focus on the historical context and policy implications, this study delves deeper into the practical aspects of intelligence gathering and utilization during the specific period of 2011-2023. It provides a more current and nuanced perspective, aiming to address the existing gap in knowledge.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Awotayo et al. (2023), titled "Intelligence System and National Security in Nigeria: The Challenges of Data Gathering," emphasizes the crucial importance of efficient intelligence in addressing the various security challenges that Nigeria is confronted with. These challenges encompass armed robbery, urban violence, weapon smuggling, kidnapping, human trafficking, and communal/religious conflicts. The authors contend that an advanced intelligence system, with the ability to collect and analyse data to make precise predictions about criminal actions, is essential for effectively addressing these difficulties. Nevertheless, the present situation exposes a worrisome disparity between the desired outcome and the actual effectiveness of governmental, security, and intelligence organizations. These entities frequently seem unprepared for militant attacks, conflicts between herders and farmers, and tensions arising from ethnic and religious differences. The study implies that the lack of preparedness may be associated with faulty or insufficient intelligence.

The resources and qualitative technique utilize secondary data sources such as newspapers, online resources, and published academic works to

identify a network of complex and linked difficulties that contribute to the inefficiency of the Nigerian intelligence system. The issues include insufficient data, inadequate exploitation of existing data, and erroneous data. These challenges are exacerbated by inconsistencies in data administration and sharing across different security agencies (Awotayo et al., 2023). The fragmented approach impedes the prompt and efficient response to security challenges, rendering the nation susceptible.

The study emphasizes the necessity of using data-driven methods in security agencies, together with improved intelligence sharing between different agencies, to effectively respond to security threats and safeguard residents' lives and property (Awotayo et al., 2023). This highlights the urgent requirement for enhanced cooperation, information exchange, and data handling within the Nigerian intelligence community.

The results drawn from the study of Awotayo et al. (2023) are consistent with the main objective of this research, which is to examine "Intelligence Gathering and National Security in Nigeria (2011-2023)". Both studies accept the crucial significance of intelligence in tackling Nigeria's complex security concerns and note the current shortcomings in the procedures for obtaining and utilizing intelligence. While Awotayo et al. (2023) focus mainly on data-related obstacles, this study examines a wider range of factors that affect the effectiveness of intelligence, including coordination, technology, human resources, and the changing nature of security threats from 2011 to 2023. As a result, it offers a more comprehensive and up-to-date analysis, addressing a gap in the existing research.

Similarly, Enyia and colleagues conducted a study, Enyia, et al (2022) titled "Intelligence Gathering Imperative: A Tool for Successful Security Outfits' Operation." The paper focuses on the increasing

security difficulties that both Nigerians and non-Nigerians experience, which hinder the country's socio-economic progress. The writers have identified Boko Haram's operations, attacks by herdsmen, banditry, kidnapping, and ethno-religious disputes as significant menaces to national security. The study seeks to emphasize the importance of intelligence collection in preventing crime and investigate efficient techniques for gathering intelligence to reduce the impact of these security concerns.

The study's findings indicate that a lack of coordination in gathering intelligence is a significant element contributing to Nigeria's current state of insecurity. In addition, it emphasizes the population's misguided allegiances, which frequently give more importance to ethnoreligious and political factors rather than national cohesion, hence impeding intelligence-gathering efforts (Enyia et al., 2022). The convergence of these difficulties fosters an environment conducive to insecurity and hinders the nation's advancement.

Enyia et al. (2022) propose some vital suggestions to improve intelligence collection and increase national security. Their proposal entails augmenting the financial resources and providing enhanced training for the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), focusing on the imperative of adopting contemporary intelligence-gathering methodologies. The study emphasizes the significance of inhibiting inter-agency competition and the politicization of security intelligence, which is influenced by tribal, ethnic, religious, or political associations. The authors assert that by applying these guidelines, intelligence agencies can enhance their effectiveness in minimizing security threats and promoting a safer environment.

The results of Enyia et al. (2022) align with the central theme of this study on "Intelligence

Gathering and National Security in Nigeria (2011-2023). Both studies accept the crucial significance of intelligence collecting in solving Nigeria's security concerns and note the current shortcomings in this area. Enyia et al. (2022) focus on the general idea of intelligence collecting and its effects on security, but this thesis specifically examines the difficulties and complexities between 2011 and 2023.

Moreover, in the paper "Remote Surveillance: A Means of Intelligence Gathering for Minimizing Security Challenges in Nigeria," Shehu et al. (2023) investigate the current state of security supervision and the escalating national security threats Nigeria faces. The authors argue that current security measures have been mostly ineffectual due to various variables, such as the advanced use of technology by terrorist groups, rapid population increase, insufficient social amenities, and other contributing elements. Therefore, it is necessary to shift towards digital intelligence collecting to manage security effectively.

The study employs a methodological approach based on secondary data analysis, examining pre-existing national security initiatives and the wider idea of surveillance. In addition, a thorough examination of existing literature provides the basis for their recommended remedies. This paper provides a methodology for collecting digital intelligence that combines remote monitoring, wiretapping, geospatial intelligence, and a centralized national database. This comprehensive approach seeks to utilize technology progress to improve intelligence collection and efficiently address Nigeria's diverse security concerns.

Shehu et al. (2023) recommend implementing a digital intelligence collection method to enhance security management in Nigeria. This approach acknowledges the constraints of conventional security methods and the necessity to adjust to the

changing strategies of malicious individuals. Although the study offers valuable insights into the potential of technological solutions, it does not thoroughly examine the root causes of the current security challenges or provide a comprehensive analysis of the various factors that influence intelligence effectiveness between 2011 and 2023. This limitation emphasizes a potential disparity between the emphasis on technology solutions in Shehu et al.'s (2023) study and the more comprehensive investigation of intelligence collecting and national security in Nigeria during this time in your research.

Although both studies recognize the crucial significance of improving intelligence collection to tackle Nigeria's security concerns, they vary in scope and emphasis. Shehu et al. (2023) focus mainly on technological solutions, while this study considers a broader range of factors that affect the effectiveness of intelligence, such as inter-agency coordination, human resource development, legal frameworks, and the changing nature of security threats from 2011 to 2023. This larger viewpoint provides a more thorough comprehension of the intricacies and subtleties of intelligence collection and its influence on national security within a certain period, thus bridging a gap and adding to the existing literature on the subject under review.

The emergence of security threats in Nigeria can be attributed to a complex interplay of political, economic, and social factors. Politically, the country grapples with challenges stemming from separatist movements, ethnic militias, and the persistent Boko Haram insurgency (Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2023; International Crisis Group, 2023). Economically, issues such as endemic corruption, unequal resource distribution, and persistent poverty create a fertile ground for discontent and insecurity (World Bank, 2023). Socially, the nation's rich ethnic diversity, coupled with historical grievances and persistent social

inequalities, further exacerbate security threats, often leading to ethnic crises and violence (Onuoha & Ugwu, 2023). These factors, intertwined with political opportunism and a lack of effective governance, create a volatile and multifaceted security landscape that profoundly impacts the lives of Nigerian citizens and impedes socio-economic development (International Crisis Group, 2023; World Bank, 2023; Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2023; Onuoha & Ugwu, 2023).

Meanwhile, Nnordee et al. (2024) emphasize the negative consequences of increasing insecurity on Nigeria's economic advancement in their research titled "Security Challenges and Economic Development in Emerging Economies: The Nigeria Experience." The writers enumerate many security risks, including militancy, kidnapping, armed robbery, political assassination, ritual killings, and the Boko Haram insurgency. These widespread difficulties generate a climate of apprehension and doubt, impeding significant socio-economic progress and discouraging both local and international investment.

Although the study's methodology is not explicitly mentioned, it seems to be based on a thorough examination of current literature and statistics regarding the relationship between security challenges and economic progress in Nigeria. By conducting this analysis, the authors demonstrate a distinct association between the increase in insecurity and the decrease in economic indices. They stress the immediate need for decisive actions to tackle these difficulties and promote a secure atmosphere supporting economic expansion.

While Nnordee et al. (2024) suggest a comprehensive strategy to address the security dilemma and foster economic growth. They promote proactive community policing techniques to improve security at the local level while simultaneously emphasizing the significance of

human capital development to provide individuals with the required skills and knowledge for economic engagement. The authors suggest that resources should be distributed fairly and strategically allocated to critical areas of the economy to promote sustainable growth. Additionally, they underscore the necessity of tailored interventions to tackle the situation between Fulani herdsman and farmers, focusing on conflict resolution and training initiatives to foster harmonious cohabitation and sustainable farming methods. Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of proficient leadership and sound governance in tackling the underlying insecurity factors and promoting a favourable atmosphere for socio-economic progress.

Although Nnordee et al. (2024) provide useful insights into the correlation between security concerns and economic progress in Nigeria, their analysis may have a possible weakness. The study primarily proposes policy solutions to mitigate insecurity and foster economic growth, focusing little on the precise function of intelligence collecting in tackling these difficulties. In contrast, the study titled "Intelligence Gathering and National Security in Nigeria (2011-2023)" is expected to explore the intricacies of collecting, analyzing, and utilizing intelligence within a particular time.

Both studies recognize the harmful influence of security risks on Nigeria's development and stability, emphasizing the pressing requirement for efficient remedies. This study examines various factors that impact the effectiveness of intelligence, such as technological limitations, coordination between agencies, and the changing nature of security threats from 2011 to 2023. It provides a more detailed and comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities that Nigeria's intelligence system faces.

Similarly, Stephen et al. (2024) explore the



fluctuating nature of insecurity in Nigeria in their paper titled "Changing Insecurity Threats in Nigeria from 1999-2021." They analyse the progression of threats following the restoration of democratic governance and their significant influence on human security. The report highlights many security concerns that are widespread across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, such as kidnapping, insurgency, separatist movements, Boko Haram activities, and the ongoing conflict between herders and farmers. According to the authors, these risks have greatly weakened human security, which includes physical safety, economic prosperity, and social unity.

The research questions the current dependence on conventional security methods, arguing that a more inclusive framework considering human and societal security factors is essential for efficiently dealing with Nigeria's intricate security environment. The study uses Elite Theory and Relative Deprivation Theory to examine the underlying reasons for insecurity concerns. It emphasizes poverty, inequality, marginalization, and political manipulation. The authors suggest a composite approach highlighting the shared accountability of several stakeholders in addressing insecurity, such as the government, religious groups, commercial organizations, and civil society.

The study concluded by providing a set of recommendations that are intended to mitigate insecurity issues and promote a safer environment in Nigeria. The recommendations include enhancing good governance and democratic principles, offering extensive training for security personnel, allocating resources to critical sectors such as agriculture, health, and education, and organizing a nationwide referendum to address fundamental issues threatening peaceful coexistence. Moreover, the authors emphasize the significance of involving specialists in peace and

conflict resolution to address the ongoing conflict between herders and farmers. They also recommend implementing ranching techniques for cattle breeding and providing suitable training for herdsmen. The study highlights the crucial need for competent leadership and sound governance in tackling the complex issues of insecurity, unemployment, poverty, and other unfavourable indicators afflicting Nigeria.

This study is consistent with the "Intelligence Gathering and National Security in Nigeria (2011-2023)" research in acknowledging the complex nature of security threats and the insufficiency of depending exclusively on conventional security methods. Both stress the importance of tackling the underlying reasons for insecurity, such as socio-economic and political elements. Nevertheless, Stephen et al.'s (2024) research lacks a comprehensive examination of security from a wider perspective, including multiple stakeholders. In contrast, this study specifically investigates the significance of intelligence gathering and utilization from 2011 to 2023.

Moreover, O., I., Sarafa, et al. (2024) explore the complex correlation between political economics and the widespread insecurity afflicting Nigeria. The authors use a qualitative research approach based on documentary sources. They assess the complex character of current insecurity in the country by applying a political economics perspective and game theoretic modelling.

Their research reveals a troubling situation: the Nigerian government is facing numerous internal security challenges, including separatist groups, ethnic militias, terrorism, cattle theft, abduction for ransom, armed banditry, and armed robbery. The widespread insecurity has created a climate of fear and concern among the people, which has significant consequences for the country's social and economic progress and its reputation in the global arena.

The report highlights the destructive impact of corruption and inadequate governance, identifying these elements as key catalysts of the ongoing security problem. The authors comprehensively explain the underlying reasons for insecurity in Nigeria by examining the complex relationship between political and economic factors.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study predominantly employs a qualitative research methodology, relying heavily on critical assessment and secondary data to investigate the intricate role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security. The research design entails a comprehensive literature review to evaluate the existing scholarly work on intelligence and national security in the Nigerian context. This method enables a comprehensive examination of the subject's complexities and subtleties, utilizing the insights and discoveries of prior research.

The researcher was able to collect a diverse array of perspectives and information on the subject by relying on secondary data, including reports, articles, and policy documents. The methodology's critical assessment component entails a meticulous assessment and interpretation of this data, which identifies the primary themes, challenges, and successes of intelligence operations. The qualitative nature of the research is further emphasized by the study's emphasis on policy recommendations, evaluation, and interpretation. By synthesizing and analyzing existing knowledge, the study endeavours to offer policymakers and practitioners actionable insights and to provide a comprehensive comprehension of the role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security.

### **RESULTS**

The study's examination of the role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security from 2011 to 2023 exposes a multifaceted and intricate landscape.

The efficacy of intelligence agencies in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information has been inconsistent, characterized by both significant accomplishments and ongoing obstacles. The research emphasizes the critical role of intelligence in the prevention of a variety of security threats, such as terrorism, insurgency, banditry, and cybercrime. Nevertheless, it also underscores the constraints and impediments that intelligence agencies encounter to fulfil their responsibilities.

The literature evaluation conducted in the study demonstrates that scholars and practitioners have reached a consensus regarding the critical role of intelligence in ensuring national security. It is essential to have the capacity to collect precise and timely information regarding the intentions, capabilities, operations, and capabilities of threat actors to make informed decisions and implement effective countermeasures. The study's results are consistent with this viewpoint, as they illustrate the influence of intelligence on a variety of security operations, including the successful targeting of Boko Haram leaders and the disruption of criminal networks.

Nevertheless, the investigation also identifies substantial obstacles that have impeded the efficacy of intelligence operations in Nigeria. Intelligence gaps and operational limitations have been exacerbated by the evolving nature of security threats, inadequate funding and technology, and inter-agency rivalry. The results of the study are consistent with the apprehensions expressed by scholars such as Olaniyan and Yahaya (2023), who underscore the necessity of enhanced coordination and resource allocation to develop intelligence capabilities.

The examination of specific security challenges, including the Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, and cybercrime, in the study exposes the complexities and limitations of intelligence in

addressing these threats. A sophisticated and multifaceted intelligence response is required due to the adaptive nature of these challenges and the involvement of transnational networks and non-state actors. The research results corroborate the arguments of experts such as Onuoha (2019) and Adewale and Adeniran (2023), who emphasize the necessity of technological advancements and innovative approaches to effectively address these evolving threats.

The significance of addressing the underlying socio-economic and political factors that contribute to conflict and instability is further emphasized by the study's emphasis on the primary causes of insecurity, including poverty, inequality, and political manipulation. The research results are consistent with the viewpoints of scholars such as Onuoha and Ugwu (2023) and International Crisis Group (2023), who underscore the necessity of a comprehensive strategy that integrates socio-economic development, sound governance, and intelligence-led operations.

The results of the study provide a complex depiction of the function of intelligence in the national security of Nigeria. The effectiveness of intelligence in combating security threats has been limited by a variety of challenges, despite its critical function. To establish sustainable peace and stability in Nigeria, the study's results underscore the necessity of ongoing investment in intelligence capabilities, enhanced coordination among agencies, and a concentrated effort to address the underlying causes of insecurity.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the study emphasize the crucial importance of intelligence in Nigeria's national security environment, showcasing both the possibilities and the difficulties involved in its implementation. The efficiency of intelligence collection and application has been hindered by various elements, such as inter-agency

competition, insufficient financial resources and technology, and the dynamic character of security risks. For example, the Boko Haram insurgency has revealed the constraints of intelligence in forecasting and thwarting intricate and highly adaptable dangers. The group's adeptness at adapting its strategies and capitalizing on local grievances has frequently surpassed the intelligence community's capability to efficiently collect and analyse information.

### **Inter-Agency Rivalry**

Competition for resources and a lack of trust can fuel inter-agency rivalry, hindering collaboration and information sharing (Johnson, 2021; Treverton, 2021; Fingar, 2021).

### **Communication Barriers**

Technological incompatibilities, cybersecurity concerns, and bureaucratic hurdles create communication barriers, delaying intelligence dissemination and impacting operational efficiency (Johnson, 2021; Holt et al., 2021; Treverton, 2021; Clarke & Newman, 2020).

### **Jurisdictional Issues**

Overlapping authorities and differing legal frameworks can lead to conflicts over jurisdiction and hinder information sharing and joint operations, particularly in foreign intelligence cooperation (Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Holt et al., 2021; Fingar, 2021).

### **Differences in Organizational Culture**

Varying operational philosophies, intelligence methodologies, and professional rivalries can create friction and impede coordination among agencies (Johnson, 2021; Clarke & Newman, 2020; Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021; Fingar, 2021).

### **Infrastructural Challenges**

Limited resources, inadequate technology, and a lack of skilled personnel pose significant obstacles to intelligence operations, hindering effective

threat monitoring and response (Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2023; Johnson, 2021; Treverton, 2021; Fingar, 2021; Clarke & Newman, 2020; Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021).

#### Technological Advancements

Rapid technological progress presents both opportunities and challenges. Intelligence agencies must adapt to new technologies, address cybersecurity risks, manage vast amounts of data, and invest in ongoing training and development to remain effective (Betts, 2020; Treverton, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Fingar, 2021; Holt et al., 2021; Clarke & Newman, 2020; Buchanan & Kehoe, 2021).

Furthermore, the study exposes the enduring difficulties presented by armed banditry, oil theft, and cybercrime. These risks, frequently interconnected with corruption and organized crime, necessitate a rigorous intelligence response that surpasses conventional approaches. Insufficient finances and technological capabilities have impeded the capacity of intelligence agencies to systematically monitor and dismantle these criminal networks. In addition, the study's results underscore the need to tackle the fundamental factors contributing to insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and political manipulation. The intricate interaction of these elements provides an ideal environment for the development and perpetuation of security risks. This paper contends that a holistic strategy that integrates intelligence-driven operations with socio-economic development and effective governance is crucial for attaining enduring peace and security in Nigeria.

The research findings are consistent with the wider body of knowledge on intelligence and national security, emphasizing the difficulties and possibilities encountered by intelligence services in intricate and ever-changing contexts. The study highlights the importance of enhancing

coordination, implementing technology progress, and prioritizing human security, which aligns with the suggestions made by experts and practitioners in the sector (Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2023; International Crisis Group, 2023; Onuoha & Ugwu, 2023). The study's rigorous evaluation of the function of intelligence in Nigeria's national security offers significant perspectives for policymakers, security agencies, and academics, so complementing the continuous discussion on successful approaches to address insecurity and foster sustainable development in the country

The research results provide a sophisticated elucidation of the function of intelligence in the national security of Nigeria.

#### CONCLUSION

This study has conducted a critical examination of the role of intelligence in Nigeria's national security from 2011 to 2023, emphasizing both its ongoing challenges and essential contributions. The research has demonstrated that intelligence operations are indispensable in the fight against terrorism, insurgency, banditry, and cybercrime. However, there are substantial deficiencies in the effective integration of community-based intelligence, technological adoption, and interagency collaboration.

The absence of exhaustive research on the effective utilization of intelligence within Nigeria's security framework, particularly to non-traditional threats like organized crime and cybercrime, is a critical gap that this study has identified and addressed. This research offers a more sophisticated comprehension of how intelligence contributes to national security outcomes in Nigeria by emphasizing the practical aspects of intelligence collection and utilization. Additionally, the investigation has investigated the understudied domain of local knowledge and community engagement in intelligence operations, providing valuable insights into the more effective

integration of grassroots-level intelligence into national security strategies.

This study makes a dual contribution to the field of national security and intelligence. Initially, it offers a comprehensive evaluation of Nigeria's intelligence infrastructure during a critical period, providing practical suggestions to improve its efficiency. Secondly, the research broadens the academic discourse by examining the intersection of intelligence operations and socio-economic factors, illustrating that it is necessary to address the underlying causes of instability, including poverty, unemployment, and inequality, to achieve long-term security.

Conclusively, this study emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that encompasses contemporary technological solutions, enhanced human intelligence (HUMINT), and a strong emphasis on socio-economic development, although intelligence continues to be a fundamental component of Nigeria's national security. This study contributes to the academic understanding of intelligence practices in Nigeria and the practical efforts to improve national security outcomes by bridging critical voids in the literature and offering actionable recommendations.

### **Recommendations**

To effectively address Nigeria's national security challenges, this study emphasizes the following recommendations, drawn from an in-depth assessment of intelligence practices from 2011 to 2023:

**Strengthening Inter-Agency Collaboration:** The lack of coordination between Nigeria's intelligence agencies has significantly hampered the effectiveness of national security operations. It is imperative to establish a centralized intelligence framework that encourages seamless communication and data sharing among agencies

such as the Department of State Services (DSS), the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), and the Nigerian Armed Forces. This could be achieved through an integrated intelligence database that provides real-time access to shared data, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and strategic planning.

### **Investment in Technological Advancements:**

The dynamic nature of security threats, including terrorism, banditry, and cybercrime, necessitates the adoption of advanced technological tools. Investment in digital surveillance, geospatial intelligence (GEOINT), and cybersecurity measures should be prioritized. These tools can significantly improve Nigeria's capacity to monitor and counteract sophisticated threats posed by both local and transnational actors.

### **Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and Community Engagement:**

Despite technological advancements, Human Intelligence remains critical in the Nigerian context due to the complex socio-political environment. Intelligence agencies should enhance their HUMINT capabilities by fostering relationships with local communities and utilizing their knowledge to gather actionable intelligence. This approach, coupled with community policing initiatives, could substantially improve grassroots-level intelligence gathering and crisis management.

**Capacity Building and Training:** Continuous training for intelligence officers on emerging threats, ethical intelligence gathering, and the use of modern technological tools is crucial. Agencies should also focus on retaining skilled personnel to reduce turnover rates, which can negatively impact intelligence continuity and efficiency.

### **Addressing Socio-Economic Root Causes of Insecurity:**

Long-term security solutions must involve addressing the socio-economic factors that fuel insecurity. Strategies that promote economic development, education, and employment in vulnerable regions are essential in mitigating the



drivers of radicalization, banditry, and insurgency. This integrated approach, which links security with development, can contribute to sustainable peace.

By implementing these recommendations, Nigeria can strengthen its intelligence framework, enhance inter-agency collaboration, and address the evolving security challenges more effectively.

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