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**Spatial Variations of Insurgency Activities in Some Selected States
of North Eastern Nigeria**



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Spatial Variations of Insurgency Activities in Some Selected States of North Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: Government across the globe has been battling with various forms of insurgency activities which have resulted in loss of million lives and displacement of people. This insurgency activities range from kidnapping, suicide bombing, attacks on security and individuals. Nigeria is faced with this deadly insurgency activities perpetrated by Boko Haram which has affected the North eastern Nigeria. It is against this background that the present study examines the spatial variation of insurgency activities in some selected states of North eastern Nigeria.

Methodology: The paper utilizes secondary data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), printed materials, newspaper records, and journals. Purposive sampling was adopted in the selection of the study area. The analysis and the variation were done with ArcGIS.

Results: The result indicates that Borno state experienced the highest insurgency activities in all the years considered. The insurgency showed an increasing rate of 38 occurrences per year during the period of study. The R-square statistic shows that the model as fitted explained 58% variability in frequency of insurgency activities in the study area.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study therefore recommended that GIS should be utilized in the analysis of insurgency activities by security agencies so that spatial and temporal variations can be easily detected between geographical areas.

Keywords: *spatial, Variation, insurgency, north east, Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION

One of the major functions of any Government in the world is to guaranty the security of lives and property of its populace. Others may include its sovereignty, territorial integrity, stabilizing the socio-economic as well as the political situation within its geographical space. The protection of this geographical space is being affected by various forms of insurgency. Insurgency involves “the unlawful use of threat, use of force, or violence by a person (at an instance of a group agenda) or organized group against people or governments, often for ideological or political reasons” (Awake, 2008). This insurgency activities range from kidnapping, suicide bombing, attacks on security and individuals. Those involved in this form of activities fights government forces to achieve their political aim, so as to exercise a viable system of power over the populace, making it impossible for the legitimate government to administer its territory and people. Their activities therefore, are designed to weaken government control and legitimacy.

Insurgency therefore is seen as a strategy adopted by groups used to attain their political objectives through conventional means. It is often characterized by battle space avoidance because they think they are weak against the conventional military force of the country. Thus, they focus on those areas where they can operate.

Nigeria has been battling with an islaminc extremist group called Boko Haram known as the (Islamic State of West Africa). Its mission and agenda have been stated to be: “The Eradication of Western Ideology in Nigeria and the realization of Sharia Law in the Country”. The sect was found to have emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan whom considers anything western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic as such shouldn't be practiced. It was further found to believe that western education is the cause of exposure of the people, corruption, inequality and injustice bedeviling the society which must be stopped no matter the cause (Akubor, 2011; Bamigbose, 2011; Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). However, the stance of Boko Haram on Western education to be hypocritical as most of their activities reveal that the sect is not completely focused with regard to Western education and technology, in view of the modern technological resources it employs in the conduct of its deadly activities, it must have close affinity with those whose educational attainment is very high (Sani, 2011).

The activities of this deadly group came into glare of publicity in 2002 when it first operated in Kanama, Yobe state and also in Gwoza, Borno state (Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013). However, history has traced its origin to 1995 when it operated as ‘*Sahaba*’ Islamic association (Sani, 2011), which they operated as a non-violent organization. It is on record that it incorporated violence as its “weapon of martyrdom (Nwozor, 2013) when some of its members were killed in July 2009 and the death of its leader, Muhammad Yusuf, in the police custody under a questionable circumstance (Bamigbose, 2011; Sani, 2011; Nwozor, 2013; UNPD, 2017). Since then, the sect’s dastardly attacks become intensified,

Geospatial technologies and other related systems can therefore be used for detection, monitoring, tracking, and exploration of insurgency (Cutter, et al., 2003). Hitherto, GPS and remote sensing has been applied in environmental protection and sustainable development where the technology has assisted in environmental monitoring for quite some time. The technology can also be adopted in determining potential insurgency sites by examining complex seemingly unrelated criteria and displaying them in a graphical layered, spatial interface or map for better appreciation. Maps are the most efficient and effective means of communicating spatial information of the world to people. They reveal spatial relations and patterns, and offer the user an overview of the distribution of a particular phenomenon (Andrew & Flint, 2010).

Besides, GIS uses geography and computer-generated maps as an interface for integrating and accessing massive amounts of location-based information (Jiawei, 2003). GIS has been applied widely in the mapping of insurgency hot spots, security monitoring, and crime scenario predicting (Donald, 2004). However, Ferreira, et al., (2012) opined that GIS allows security personnel to plan effectively for emergency response, determine mitigation priorities, analyze historical events, and predict future events. GIS can therefore be used by security agencies to provide mapping solutions for insurgency and crime analysis, insurgency tracking, traffic safety, community policing, Intranet/Internet mapping, and numerous other tasks.

A visual analytical system was proposed by Wang et al. (2008) that focuses on depicting one of the most fundamental concepts in investigative analysis, the five W's (who, what, where, when, and why) to better enable investigators in understanding insurgency activities. With the descriptive approach, an investigator can interactively explore insurgency activities efficiently and discover reasons of attacks (why) by identifying patterns temporally (when), geo-spatially (where), between multiple insurgency groups (who), and across different methods or modes of attacks (what). It is against this background that the present paper analysed the spatial variation of insurgency activities in some selected states of North eastern Nigeria with a view of developing a decision support system. To achieve this, the paper shows the spatial spread variation of insurgency activities; shows the trend of the insurgency in each of the states, and lastly provide recommendation for further studies.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study area

This study covers the geographical area of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states located between Latitudes $06^{\circ}00'00''\text{N}$ and $14^{\circ}00'00''\text{N}$ of the Equator and Longitudes $10^{\circ}00'00''\text{E}$ and $14^{\circ}00'00''\text{E}$ of the Greenwich Meridian as shown in Figure 1.1. The precise interest of the paper was on insurgency activities by the Boko Haram from 2009-2017. The States were selected for the study based on the fact that most of the insurgency activities that occurred within the north eastern Nigeria are in the states. The study employed simple descriptive statistics and maps in the analysis.

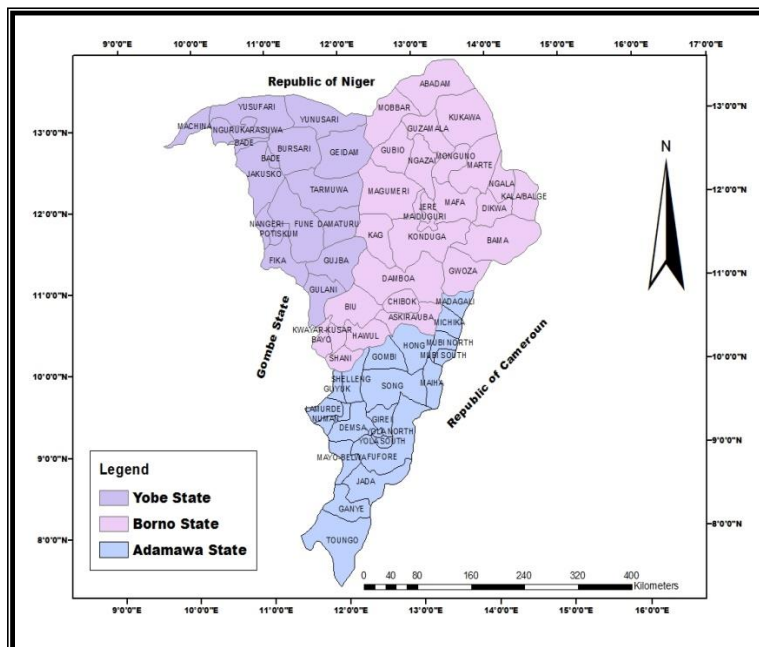


Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing the Study Area

Source: Department of Geography, NDA, Kaduna, 2019

Material and Methods:

Purposive sampling was adopted in the selection of the study area. This was as a result of the high incidence of insurgency activities. Secondary data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) 2018 version was utilized in the study. The data collected from ACLED for the study was Sorted in MS Excel to display only events from 2009-2017 with the “Attack Type” code as “Boko Haram Attack Insurgency.” The insurgency data was aggregated into yearly: January-December for all the years considered from 2009-2017. The data provide information on event characteristics, including locations, dates, attack types, and responsible groups.

The spatial data considered are names of Local Government Areas (LGAs) where insurgency activities occurred and the number recorded within the period considered in the study. These served as the geometry and attribute data. The incidence of insurgency activities on a state basis from 2009-2017 were analyzed to show the spatial variation for each as well as comparism was made using chropleth mapping and graph.

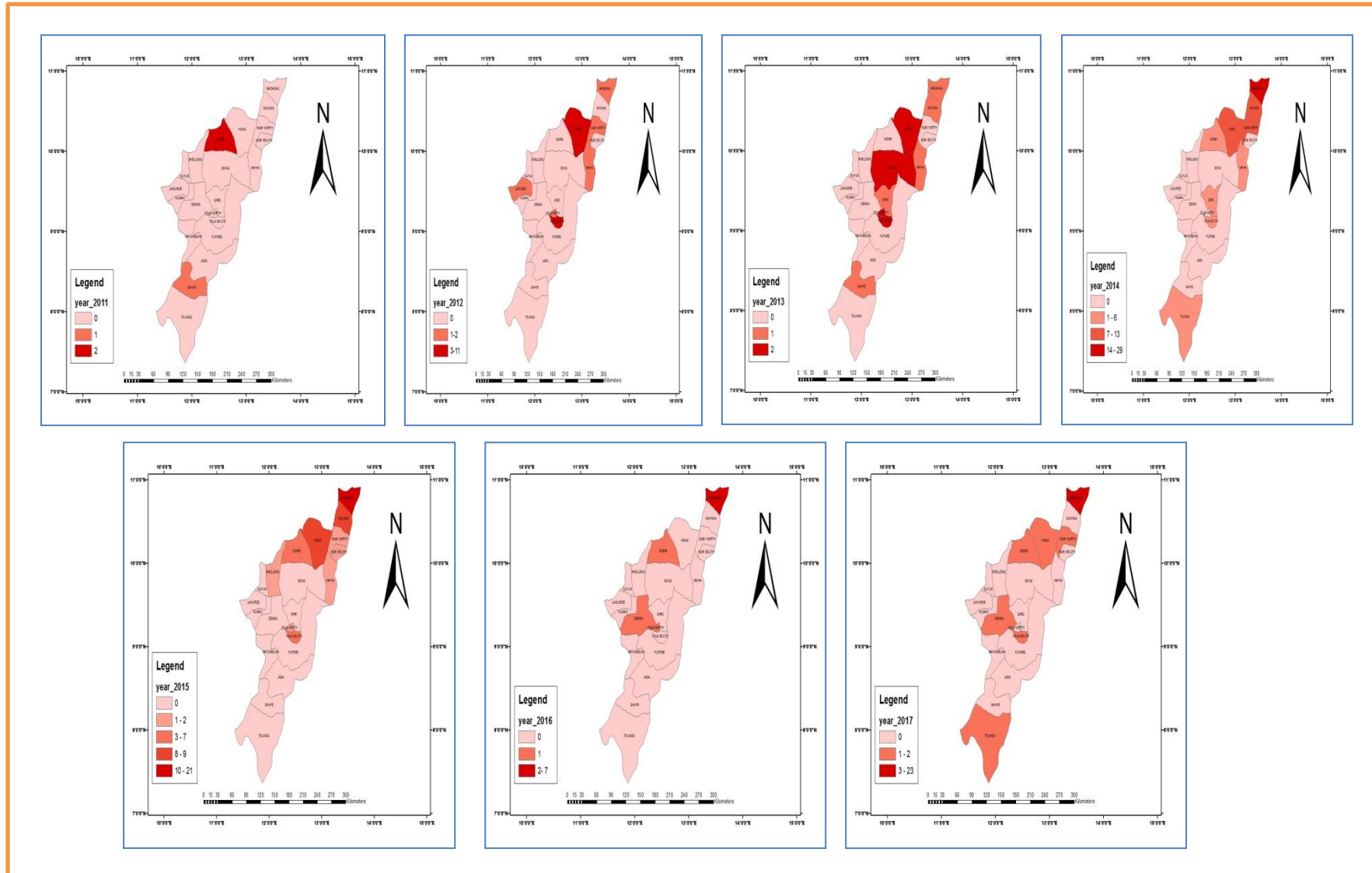
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Spatial pattern of Insurgency Activities

Annual analysis was embarked on the states considered to show the spatial pattern of insurgency from 2009-2017. This was done in order to detect the various patterns that existed in the states considered so that adequate measures could be taken to counter the spread of insurgency activities in the area.

Adamawa State

The frequency of insurgency activities was utilized to analyze the spatial pattern of insurgency activities in Adamawa State from 2009-2017 as depicted in Figure 1.2. The Northeastern part of the state experienced the highest insurgency activities in 2014 that ranges between 10-23 incidence. These are in places that include Hong, Madagali, and Michika. The lowest insurgency activities were in the central to the southern part of the state with between 0-3 incidence. These are in settlement like Numan, Demsa, Jada, Gieri, and Lamurde among others. The state exhibited the same spatial pattern throughout the period of the study with the exception of 2009 and 2010 which had no incidence of insurgency. However, the spatial distribution of insurgency in the state from the lowest to the highest varies from year to year. The high rate of insurgency activities within the Northeastern part of the state is attributed to its closeness to the border, which gave the insurgents easy escape route. These regions at that time (2013-2015) were under the control of insurgents which increases the incidence of insurgency activities. This indicates that areas in the Northeastern part of Adamawa State will experience more effects of insurgency like loss of lives and displacement of people than other parts of the state. The year 2016 and 2017 witnessed a low incidence in Adamawa State as a result of the movement of the Service Chief to the Northeastern Nigeria, coupled with the several Anti insurgency operations that took place during this period. Even with the decline in insurgency in several other places, Madagali, Michika, and Hong still experienced high incidence. The computed insurgency pattern of Adamawa also agrees with the earlier study which revealed that insurgency activities in Adamawa State were mostly concentrated in the border towns (Ani, 2014).



Borno State

The result revealed a concentration of the insurgency activities in the central part of Borno State as shown in Figure 1.3 (a-i). Maiduguri remains an important hub for insurgency activities throughout the entire study period as this area was regarded as the home of insurgency with between 8-413 incidence of insurgency activities. The insurgency at the earlier stage was characterized by robbery and violence against those who were not in line with their ideology. The spatial distribution of insurgency increases every year from 2009 to 2015 with the central part of the state experiencing the highest insurgency throughout this period. For example, Maiduguri, Gwoza, Kunduga and Bama have the highest incidence ranging between 5-420 attacks. The high rate of insurgency experienced in these areas was as a result of the presence of hideouts, understanding religion knowledge, and porosity of the borders. The result was similar to the earlier study of Sadau, (2017) who pointed out that Maiduguri, Konduga and Bama were faced with high activities of insurgency. The year 2016 and 2017 revealed a different pattern of low insurgency activities from what was observed in other years in Borno State. The change in the pattern of insurgency during this period was attributed to the high security personnel deployed in the State, movement of the high command to Borno State, and the establishment of more security units; thus leaving the insurgents in uncoordinated attacks in the area. As a matter of fact, the deployment of more troops to the state pushes the insurgents towards the border areas (Danbazau, 2016).

From the spatial pattern of insurgency activities in Borno State, the pattern of its occurrence was a non-random pattern and was influenced by the element of insurgent actions. The result revealed a progression and a shift from the central part to the south eastern part of the State with Gwoza, Bama, and Damboa forming a cluster of the activities.

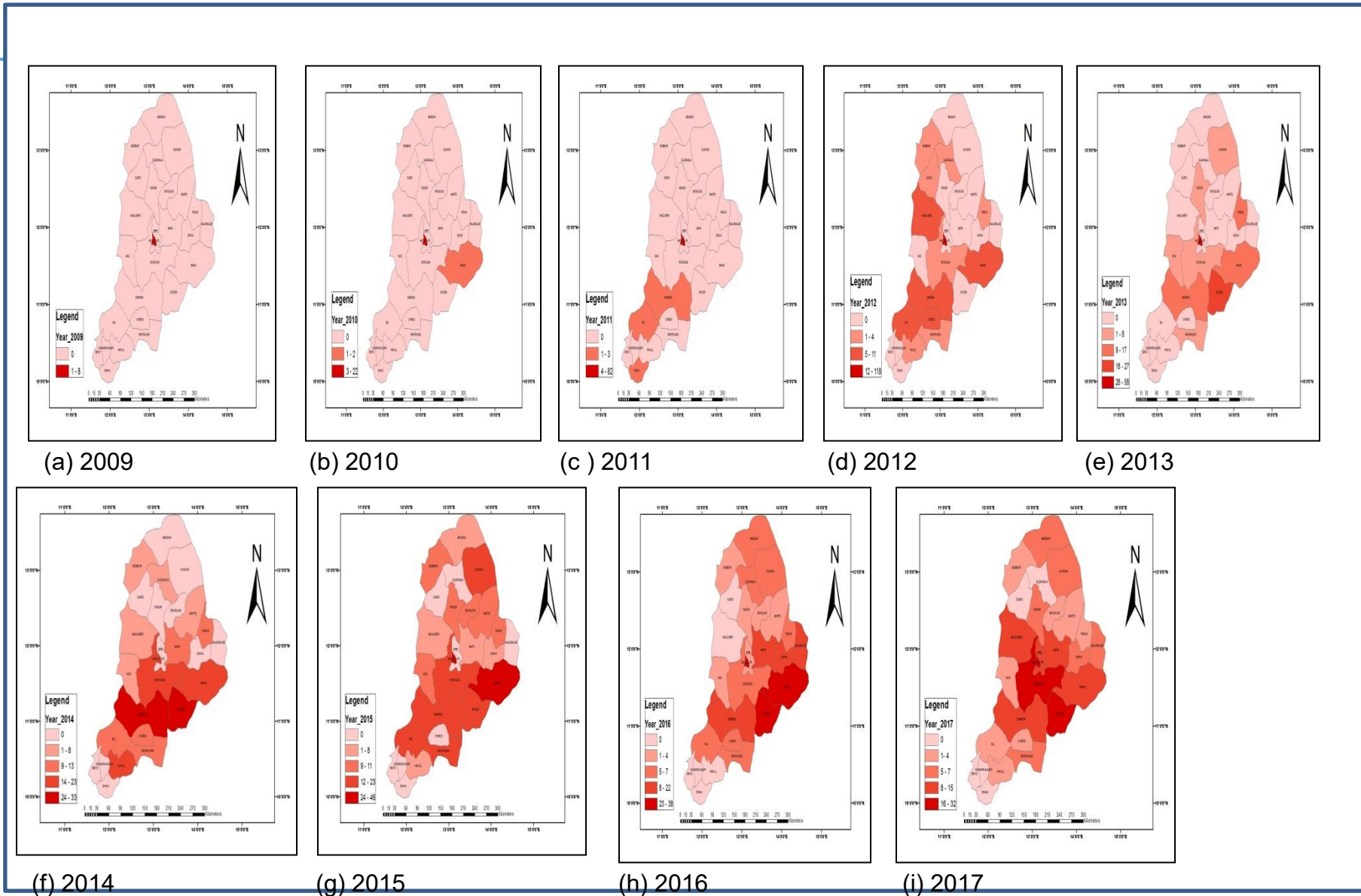


Figure 3

Yobe State

The result revealed a focus of insurgency in the Southern part of the state throughout the study period in Damaturu, Gujba, Potiskum, and Fune with between 5-72 incidence of insurgency, while the lowest was in the Northern part of the state that ranges between 2-16 insurgency incidence (Figure 1.4). The spatial distribution of insurgency varies from year to year. For example, year 2012 witnessed the highest insurgency attacks 79. This might not be unconnected to the fact that there was insufficient information about their hideouts and their activities in the area. The lowest insurgency was experienced in 2010 with about four incidence. The result agrees with the findings of Sadau, (2017) who pointed out that most of the insurgency in Yobe State was concentrated in Damaturu, Potiskum, and Gujba. The decrease in the frequency of insurgency from 2015 was associated with the deployment of more security personnel by the Muhammed Buhari administration to fight the insurgents. This greatly reduced the level of its occurrence in 2016 and 2017. Areas that experienced the incidence were very few, and even those affected were minimal in terms of its frequency compared to the year 2011-2015. The analysis of the spatial pattern of insurgency activities in Yobe State revealed a cluster pattern. The shift of the pattern from the central part to the southern part of the state was as a result of security presence in the counter insurgency activities.

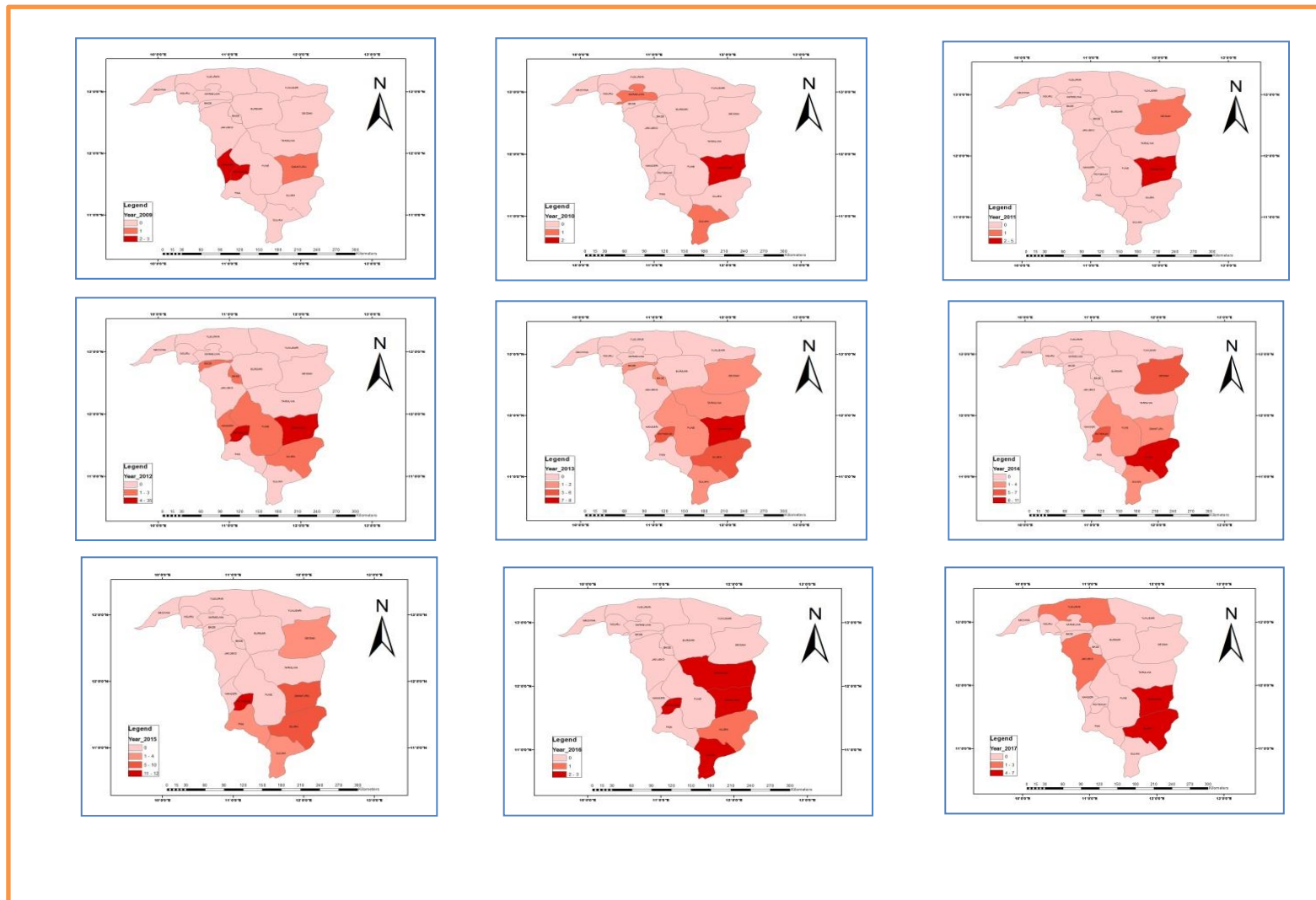


Figure 4

Differences in the Incidence of Insurgency Activities in the Study Area

The result in the variation of insurgency in the study area shows that Borno state experienced the highest insurgency activities in all the years considered. The states recorded the highest incidence in 2015 with over 300 incidence. This was as a result of the numerous hideout located within the state and its proximity to the border areas which allow for easy planning, recruiting, and execution of insurgency activities. A point of interest is 85% of the total incidence of insurgency activities in the area. 2011 to 2015 which recorded a tremendous increase of insurgency activities.

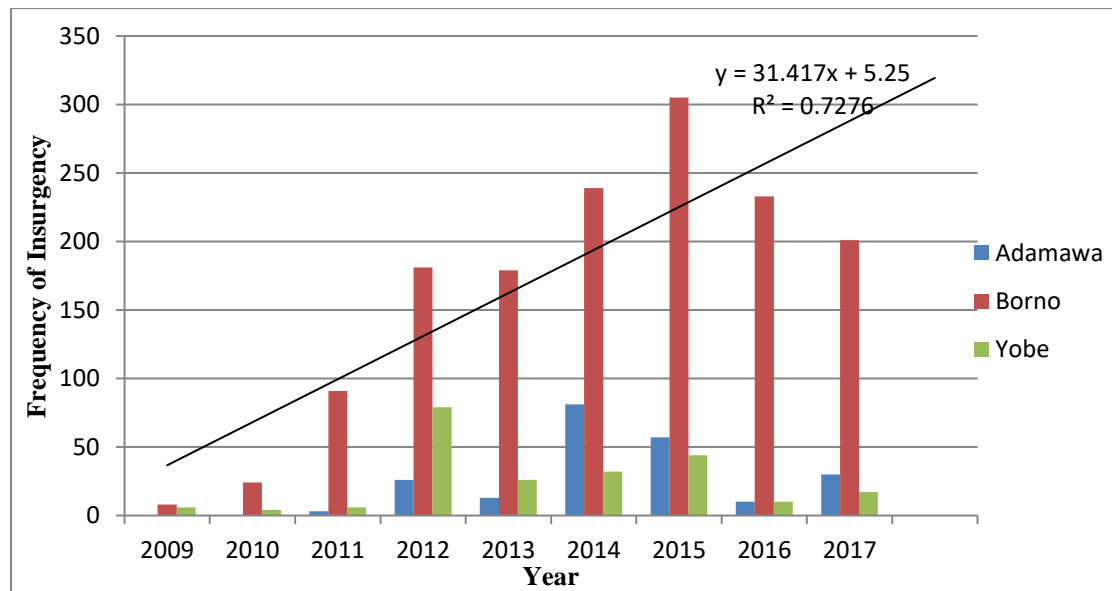


Figure 5: Variation in the Insurgency Activities

Source: Author’s Computation, 2018

Conclusion and recommendation

From the study, the researcher has been able to show the spatial spread of insurgency in each of the states considered and that Borno state had the highest incidence of insurgency activities. The insurgency increases at the rate of 38 occurrences per year during the period of study. The R-square statistic shows that the model as fitted explained 58% variability in frequency of insurgency activities in the study area. The study therefore recommended that adequate security measures should be employed in tackling the insurgency activities.

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