SPATIAL VARIATIONS OF INSURGENCY ACTIVITIES IN SOME SELECTED STATES OF NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA

Mustafa I.A

CARI
Journals

SPATIAL VARIATIONS OF INSURGENCY ACTIVITIES IN SOME SELECTED STATES OF NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA

Mustafa I.A

Department of Geography

Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Kaduna State

Corresponding Authors E-mail: ibroashly@yahoo.com

Abstract

Purpose: *The purpose of the paper is to examine the spatial variation of insurgency activities in some selected states of North eastern Nigeria.*

Methodology: *The methodology of 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 results indicate that Borno state experienced the highest insurgency activities in all the years considered. The insurgency showed an increasing rate of 31 occurrences per year during the period of study. The R-square statistic shows that the model as fitted explained 72% variability in frequency of insurgency activities in the study area.*

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: *The unique contribution of the study is 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 area.*

Keywords: *spatial, variation, insurgency, North eastern 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 therefore involves "the unlawful use of threat, 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 is also 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 islamic extremist group called Boko Haram known as the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP). 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 drastically 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. It 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 pattern of insurgency activities in each of the states; depict the differences in the variations, examined the trend of the insurgency in the selected 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°00′00´N and 14°00′00´N of the Equator and Longitudes 10°00′00´E and 14°00′00´E of the Greenwich Meridian as shown in Figure 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 located in the selected states. The study employed simple descriptive statistics and maps in the anlsysis.
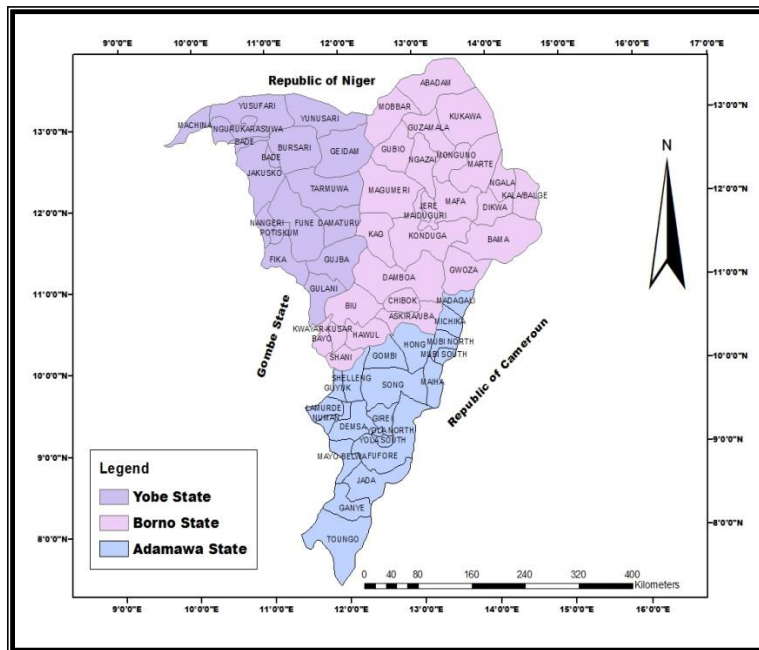

Figure 1:   Map of Nigeria showing the Study Area

Source: GIS Cleric (2021) Adopted from (NASRDA)

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 for the purpose. The data collected from ACLED were 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 include 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 states as well as comparism was made using chropleth mapping and graph.

Result and Discussion

Spatial Pattern of Insurgency Activities

Annual analysis was embarked upon on the states considered to show the spatial pattern of insurgency from 2009-2017. This was done in order to detect and shows 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 2. The North eastern part of the state experienced the highest insurgency activities in 2014 that ranges between 10-23 incidences. 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 incidences. 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 North eastern 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 North eastern 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

4

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).
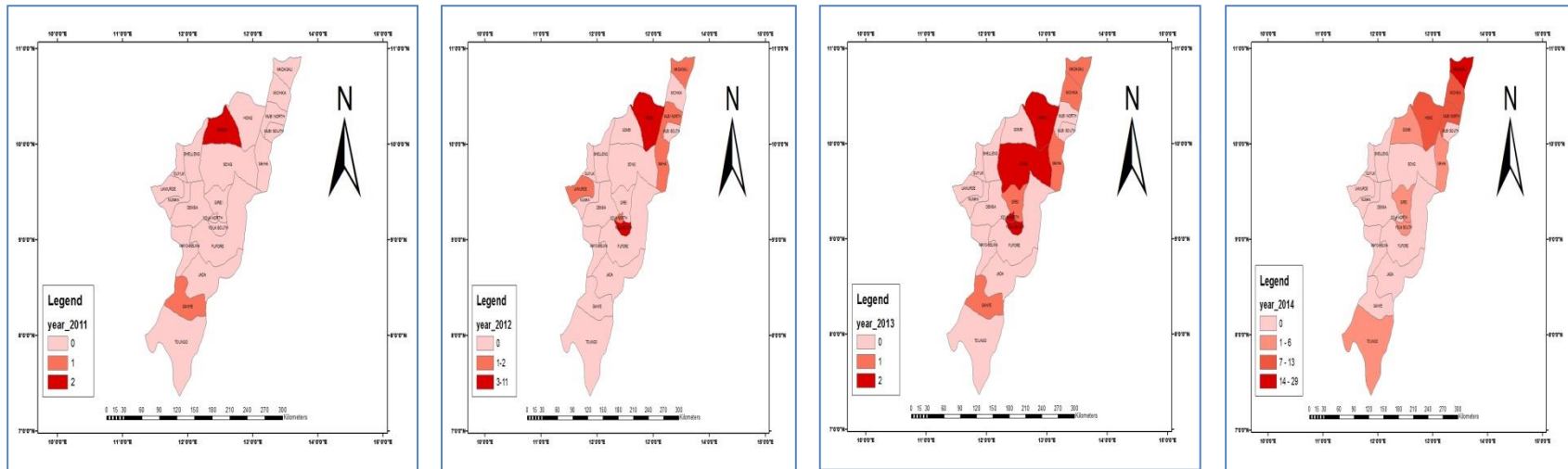
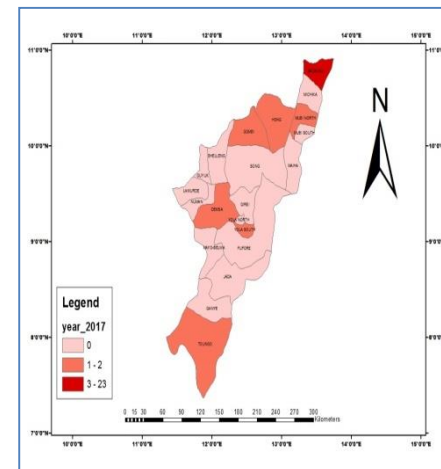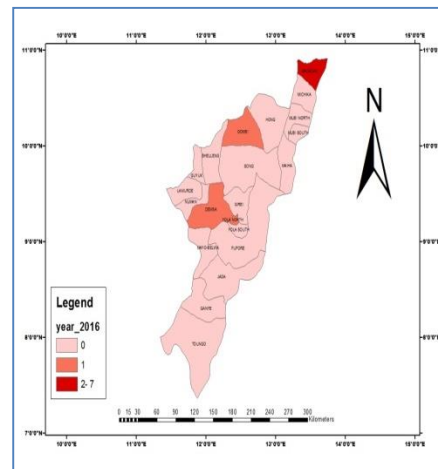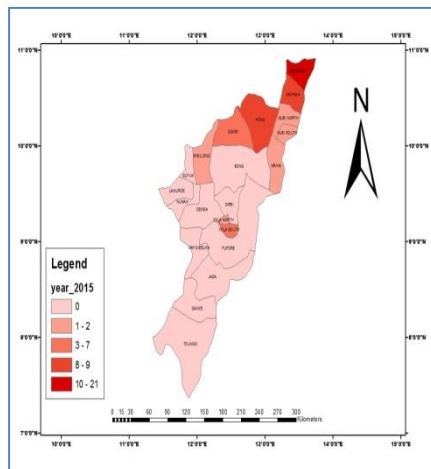(a)   2011   (b) 2012   (c) 2013   (d) 2014

(e) 2015   (f) 2016   (g) 2017

Figure 2: Spatial pattern of insurgency in Adamawa State (2011-2017)

www.carijournals.org

Borno State

The result revealed a concentration of the insurgency activities in the central part of Borno State as shown in Figure 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 incidences 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 distribution of insurgency activities 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 boarders. 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).

The pattern exhibited in Borno state were 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.
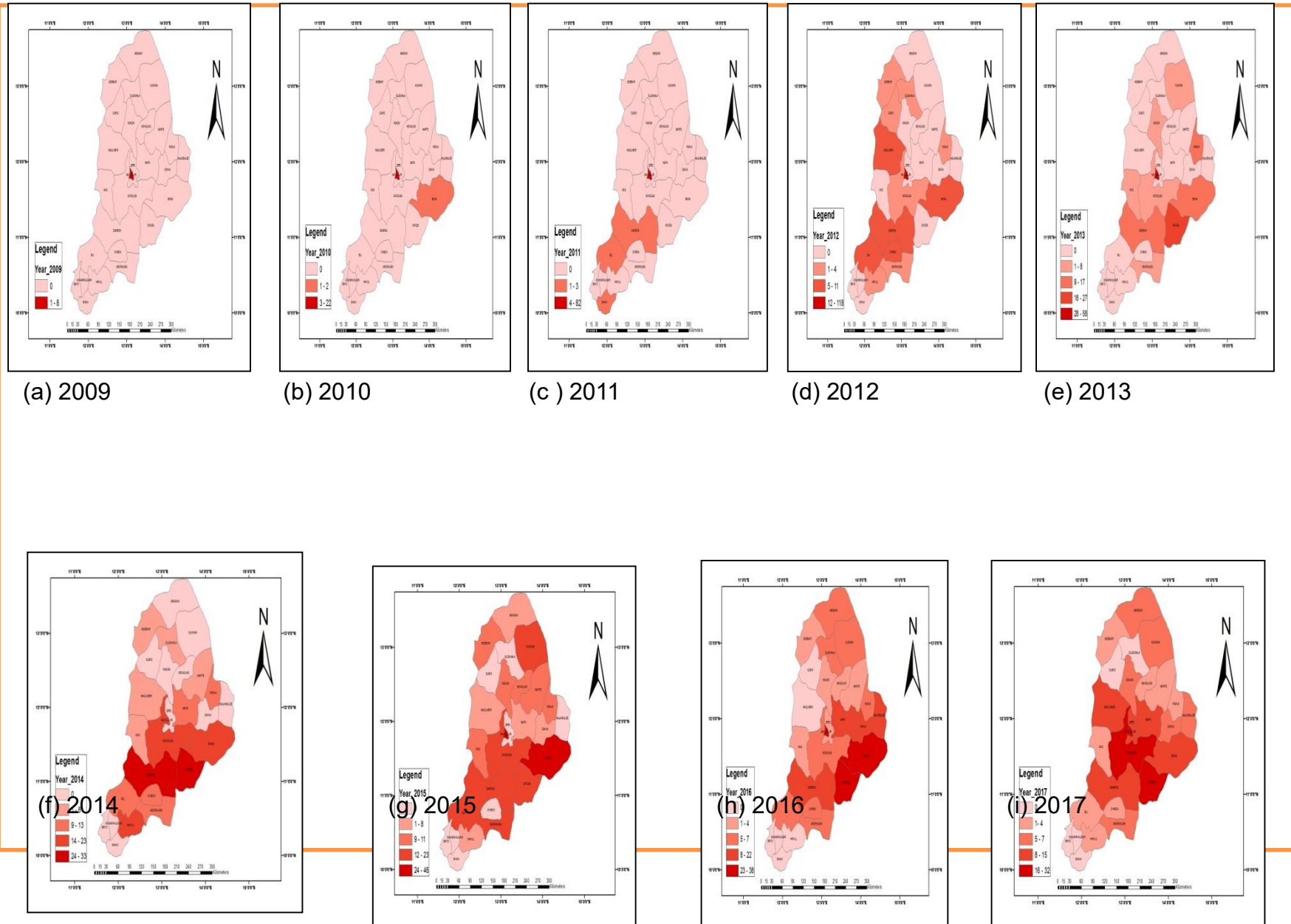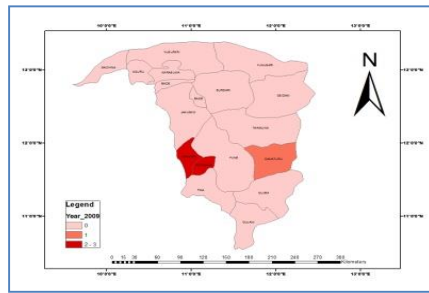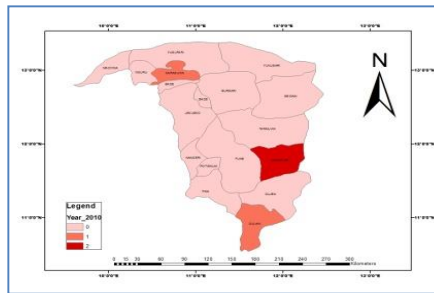
(a) 2009

(b) 2010

(c) 2011

(d) 2012

(e) 2013

(f) 2014

(g) 2015

(h) 2016

(i) 2017

Figure 3: Spatial pattern of insurgency in Borno State (2009-2017)
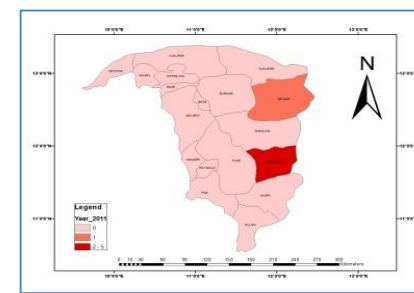
Yobe State

The result revealed a concentration of insurgency in the Southern part of the state throughout the study period in areas like Damaturu, Gujba, Potiskum, and Fune ranging between 5-72 incidences of insurgency, while the lowest were exhibited in the Northern part of the state that ranges between 2-16 insurgency incidences (Figure 4). The spatial distribution of insurgency varies from year to year. For instance, year 2012 witnessed the highest insurgency activities with 79 incidences. This might not be unconnected to the fact that there was insufficient information about their hideouts and their activities in the area. On the other hand, the lowest were experienced in 2010 with about four incidences. 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 years within 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.
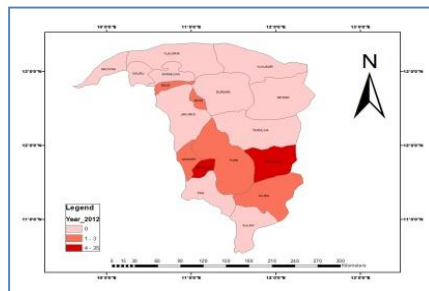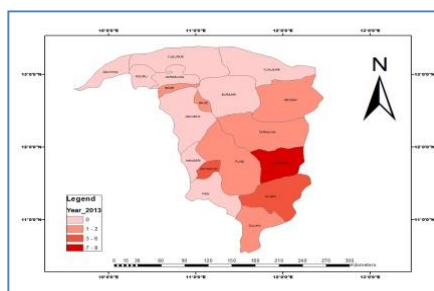
(a)   2009   (b) 2010   (c) 2011
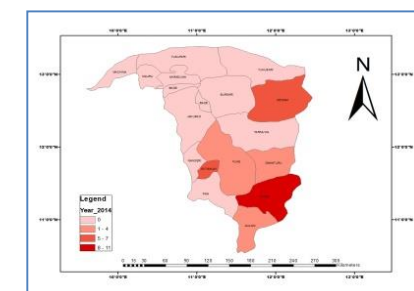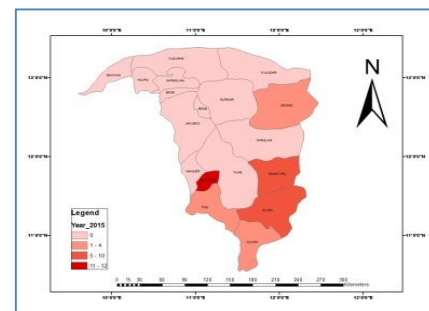
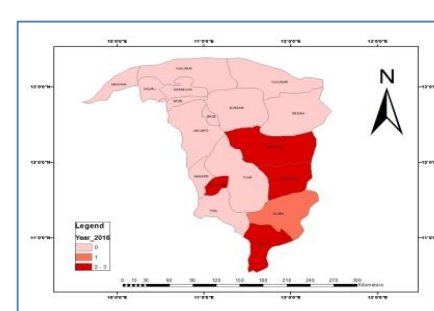(d) 2012   (e) 2013   (f) 2014
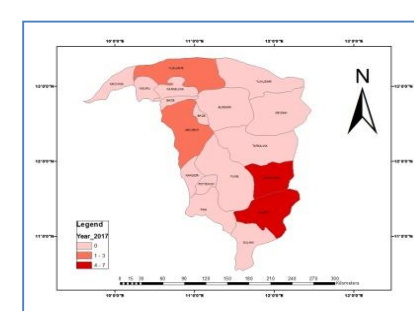
(g) 2015   (h) 2016   (i) 2017

Figure 4: Spatial pattern of insurgency in Yobe state (2009-2017)

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 incidences. 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. Year 2011 to 2015 recorded a tremendous increase of insurgency activities. The trend analysis conducted on the three states considered shows an increasing rate of 31 occurrences of insurgency per year during the period of the study. The R-square statistics indicated that the model as fitted explained 72% variability in frequency of insurgency activities in the selected states as seen in figure 5.
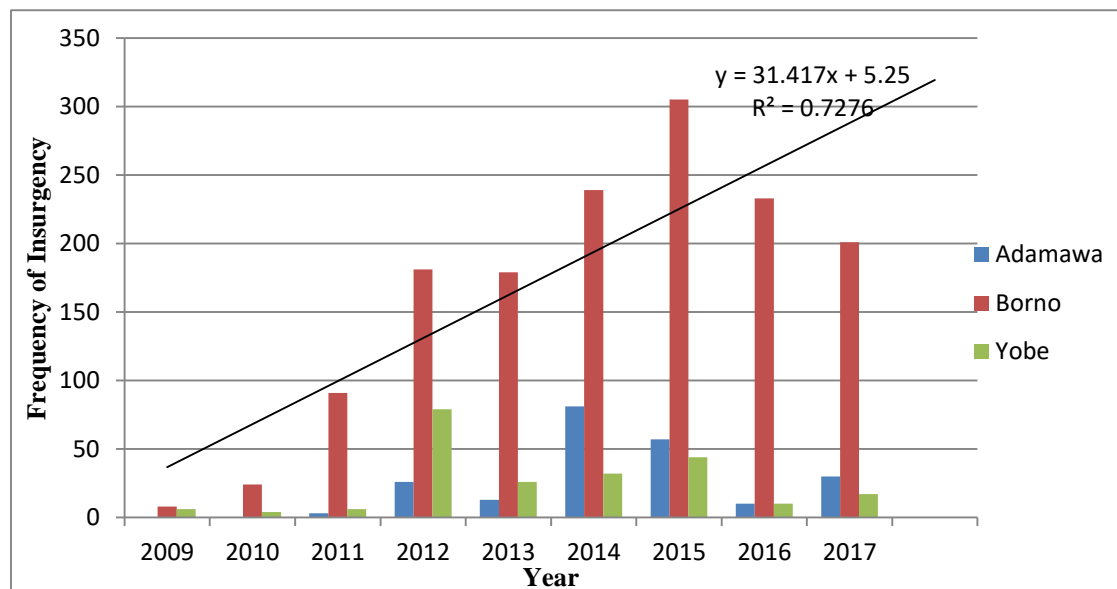

Figure 5. Variation and trend of Insurgency Activities

Conclusion and recommendation

From the study, the researcher have been able to shows the spatial spread of insurgency in each of the states considered and that Borno state had the highest incidence of insurgency activities. The insurgency activity increases at the rate of 31 occurrences per year during the period of study. The R-square statistic shows that the model as fitted explained 72% 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 as well as employing GIS techniques in explaining the variation of insurgency in the near future.

References:-

Akubor, E. O. (2011). Civil unrest in northern Nigeria: Beyond the literal Boko haram, *The Constitution*, 2(4), 71-93.

Andrew D. L. & Flint, C. (2010). The geography of insurgency, *Geography Compass,* 1154–1166.

Awake, F. (2008). When terrorism will end. *Nigeria Watch.* June edition, 1-6.

Bamigbose, J. A. (2011). Boko Haram and Democracy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, *The Constitution*, 11(4), 58-70.

Cutter, S.L., Richardson, D.B. & Wilbanks, T.J. (2003). *The geographical dimensions of terrorism* (New York: Routledge).

Donald, B., Jason, D., & Heidi, H. (2004). Spatial forecast methods for terrorist events in urban environments. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 426–435. 2004.

Ferreira, J, João, P., & Martins, J. (2012). GIS for crime analysis - Geography for predictive models. *The Electronic Journal Information Systems Evaluation,* 15 (1), 36 - 49.

Jiawei, H. (2003). Mining spatiotemporal knowledge: Methodologies and research issues. 2003 KDVis Workshop.

Nwanegbo, C. J. & Odigbo, J. (2013). Security and national development in Nigeria: The threat of Boko haram, *International journal of humanities and social sciences*, 3(4), 285-291.

Sani, S. (2011) Boko haram: History, ideas and revolt, *Journal of Constitutional Development,* 11 (4), 1-16.