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"There is a rage that has been piled up and at some point will explode"

Understanding Peace and Conflict within Nigeria

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"Nigeria was full of inflation, corruption, injustice, murder, armed robbery, maladministration, drug-trafficking, hunger, knavery, dishonesty and plain stupidity... But it still remained a blessed country."

Ken Saro-Wiwa, former leader of the Niger Delta organization Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), in *Prisoners of Jebs* (in Meredith 2011:544)

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how peace and conflict within Nigeria can be understood. This is done by the application of a range of developmental indicators as well as theoretical variables drawn from the field of why insurgencies emerge. This study also includes the role of the Nigerian state in this dynamic. The applied method is a within-case comparison of three cases; the North East: Boko Haram, Niger Delta: MEND and the South West: OPC. Semi-structured informant interviews were done on an eight week field trip to Abuja, capital of Nigeria, in the spring of 2013. This qualitative material provided me with the basis of the empirics on how one can understand the variance and interaction among variables. The outcome of this study suggests that several contextual variables on the country level are performing badly, but that they are insufficient to explain why organized insurgencies emerge. Independent variables, such as levels of education and unemployment correlate with the level of conflict. Intervening variables, such as the salience of religious identity or environmental degradation, must coincide with other variables in order for an organized insurgency to emerge. Conversely, the lack of such setting results in the in-existence of an organized insurgency.

Key words: internal peace, internal conflict, Boko Haram, MEND, Nigeria.
Words: 20 000

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1 Introduction and Background

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is the most populous African country with estimated 170 million inhabitants distributed among 250 ethno-linguistic groups. Muslims dominate the more rural North and Christians the more urban South. Religion in Nigeria is divided into 50 percent Muslims, 40 percent Christians and 10 percent indigenous believers (El-Choueiry et al. 2012). The main ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulanis (29%) mainly living in the North, the Yorubas (21%) in the South West, the Igbos (18%) in the South East and the Ijaws (10%) in the South South/Niger Delta.[1]

Nigeria has been plagued by internal strife for decades, but the trend is that the internal security level has worsened recently. This is noted by a simple longitudinal analysis of foreign policy's indicator "Failed State Index"[2]. Nigeria ranked number 54 (country number 1 being the most failed) with the total score of 84,3 (120 being the most failed) in the year 2005. The country has been stable between 2010 and 2012 at the record low rank of number 14 with the total score of 101,1 in year 2012, after ending up at rank number 16 in 2013 with the score of 100,7. The country is in 2013 bracketed as "alert" – 10 out of 11, where 11 is the worst score. Nigeria performs badly overall, but the three sub-indicators that stands out today (2013) in the index are the social indicator "vengeance-seeking group grievance"[3], scoring 9,8 and the two political and military indicators "security apparatus"[4], scoring 9,5 and "rise of factionalized elites"[5], scoring 9,4 (10 being the most unstable). (Failed States Index Rankings 2013)

Despite this, Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown at over seven percent for seven consecutive years (NBS Economic Outlook 2012). Nigeria's real GDP was 85,582 USD in 2010 and Nigeria is Africa's second largest economy after South Africa. Nigeria's economic growth has, despite high national income, had minimal impact on wealth distribution and the standard of living has not risen particularly since independence in 1960 (Campbell 2011:11). John Campbell, former US Ambassador to Nigeria, sites – inter alia – bad governance, crony capitalism, widespread corruption and underinvestment in agriculture and infrastructure as factors that have led a country rich of natural

[1] See the map "Nigeria's ethnic composition", section 11.1.2.
[2] Failed state index consists in total of twelve different indicators: six political and military indicators, four social indicators, and two economic indicators.
[3] This indicator measures discrimination, powerlessness, ethnic violence, communal violence, sectarian violence, and religious violence.
[4] This indicator measures internal conflict, small arms proliferation, riots and protesters, fatalities from conflict, military coups, rebel activity, militancy, bombings and political prisoners.
[5] This indicator measures power struggles, defectors, flawed elections, and political competition.

resources into impoverishment (Campbell 2011:17). A very heterogeneous society in terms of ethnic and religious diversification adds to the complex picture.

1.1 Purpose of Study and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to suggest how one can understand the dynamics behind peace and conflict within Nigeria by looking at two cases of conflict, the North East and the Niger Delta, and one case of peace, the South West. I will hence identify independent variables that partake in the explanation, and also suggest patterns of how the variables interact in a causal chain. The findings will feed back into (sub-disciplines of) the larger theoretical field of what causes internal peace and conflict. My research question is:

How can the reasons behind peace and conflict within Nigeria be understood?

All the three cases share a similar setting as being within the Nigerian borders, but they show dissimilarity in the outcomes. Some factors could thus be constant between all three cases. Still, it could well be the case that the two conflicts have emerged partly due to different factors ("equifinality" in methodological terms) (George and Bennett 2005:235). It can also be the case that the peaceful southwestern region shows values similar to the two cases of conflict.

A contribution that this study makes is that it integrates a case of peacefulness within a larger problematic setting and gives an understanding to *both* internal peace and conflict. Also, many studies put their main attention on the insurgents, whilst I integrate the role the Nigerian state has in producing the two conflicts within its country.

1.2 North East: Boko Haram

On May 14, 2013, Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan declared state of emergency in the three northeastern states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. He admitted that Islamic extremists "now control some of his nation's villages and towns" (NY Daily News 2013-05-14). On June 18, 2013, Boko Haram declared war against vigilante youths in Borno and Yobe, who allegedly aid the security forces by identifying their members (Premium Times 2013-06-18).

The Islamic sect Boko Haram[6] is the main group fighting the central government. Boko Haram is Hausa language and means "Western education is

[6] The official full name is: "Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad" which translates into "Congregation of Followers of the Prophet involved in the Call to Islam and Religious Struggle".

forbidden". It first emerged in 2003 in Yobe and Borno but declined after security forces dispersed them. It re-emerged in 2006, primarily in Borno, under the leader of Mohammed Yusuf. The main initiating event of Boko Haram happened when several leaders were arrested on 25 July 2009, followed by an attempt of freeing the leaders the next day. Several hundred Boko Haram members attacked the police station where they were held. Clashes between Boko Haram and security forces went on the following four days in Bauchi, Borno, Kano and Yobe states. Yusuf was captured on 30 July 2009 and was later shot dead in custody. In sum, the clashes resulted in 780 bodies buried in mass graves, 29 churches burnt down and 28 police officers killed. (ICG 2010:36)

In recent years, the group has increased its activities primarily in northeastern Nigeria. It wants to establish a "pure" Islamic state in the North of the country[7] by applying a strict interpretation of Shari'a law. The sect rose international media attention when it in August 2011 bombed the United Nations compound in the capital of Abuja, leaving 23 people dead. Since then, bombings and attacks on targets that are perceived to represent the "west" or the corrupt state of Nigeria, such as churches, public schools and security forces have in periods been done almost weekly (Walker 2012:2,6; ICG 2010:36). Although Boko Haram's violent activity reaches much of the North and even beyond, it is mostly carried out in the two northeastern states of Borno and Yobe (acleddata.com/data/Africa). Since the North East is representing the gravity of the violence, I focus my attention on this region.

1.3 Niger Delta: MEND

MEND (the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) is a militant umbrella organization that consists of armed gangs that primarily attack oil fields, pipelines, security forces and also kidnap oil workers. The group was created in 2006 as a reaction to the impoverishment of the local communities in the Niger Delta. This is where 75 percent of Nigeria's petroleum production and exports originates from. The oil accounts for at least 80 percent of the federal revenue and 90 percent of export earnings (Obi and Rustad 2011:4). Federal revenue must not to be confused with the state budget: the oil sector contributes around 15 percent to the GDP (first quarter 2013) (National Bureau of Statistics). Also, 95 percent of the oil is produced by subsidiaries of multinational oil companies on contracts signed by Nigeria's oil Minister under the authorization of the 1969 Petroleum

[7] States where Shari'a is instituted as criminal law are Zamfara, Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kebbi and Yobe. States where Shari'a is instituted partly are Kaduna, Niger and Gombe. (Ostein, 2007; Okpanachi 2011:897).

Act[8]. The people of the Niger Delta are thus not authorized to control the administration of the oil wealth. The harsh situation of the local population is further exacerbated because the oil and gas extraction contaminate the lands and waters and destroys livelihoods such as farming and fishing. (Bøås 2011:115; Obi and Rustad 2011:3; Meredith 2011:544)

MEND's violent activity has declined since 2009 due to an amnesty program which led to the disarmament of thousands of troops. The trend seems to be that the conflict has declined but recent attacks suggest that the group has reconstituted. (El-Choureiry et al 2012:1) I will have reasons to come back to the assessment of the amnesty program. MEND's activity is mainly concentrated to the states Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers.

1.4 South West: OPC

The states included in the geopolitical zone of "South West" are Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti states. The metropolis and coastal city of Lagos has close to 18 million inhabitants (Lagos State Governance), and is also the former capital of Nigeria. In 1991, the political capital moved to Abuja but Lagos is still the economic capital of Nigeria.

This region is one of the most peaceful in Nigeria today. Although, OPC (O'odua People's Congress), a Yoruba advocacy group, was militantly active here mainly between 1999 and 2006. OPC formed in 1995 and a militant wing split in 1999 from its non-violent parent organization. Riots and violence occurred in Lagos city, where police installations were attacked during the post-1999 election period. OPC found the elections unjust and marred with voting irregularities. The militant leader, Gani Adams, was forced into hiding after the riots and has since been captured and released several times. (NCSTRT)

I will not put as much emphasis on the OPC as compared to Boko Haram and MEND. The reason is that OPC is not as violent as the other two organizations. My approach is to treat the South West as the peaceful case, but to not mention OPC would be unfair.

[8] The Decree No. 51/Petroluem Act of 1969 provides that "the entire ownership and control of all petroleum in, under or upon any lands […] shall be invested in the State" and that the federal oil Minister has the sole right to grant oil mining leases to oil companies.

1.5 Material

For the theoretical chapter, I primarily draw upon a range of scholars on different causes of internal conflict and also on Ted Robert Gurr's (2007) theory on how one can analyze why insurgency emerge from communal groups.

The most notable material on methodology within the social sciences that I have used are Patrick Thaddeus Jackson's (2011) book "The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations", "Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences" by George and Bennett (2005), "Metodpraktikan" by Esaiasson et al (2012), "Att fråga och att svara" by Teorell and Svensson (2007), "Case Study Research" by Yin (2007). For the section on interview method, I have complemented the abovementioned with "Intervjumetodik" by Lantz (2007) and "Den Kvalitativa Forskningsintervjun" by Kvale and Brinkmann (2012).

My empirical material are mainly drawn from 20 interviews (over 19 hours of recorded material) I did on an eight week field work in Abuja[9], the capital of Nigeria, in the spring of 2013. I could unfortunately not visit large areas in Nigeria due to the severe security situation because of the conflicts between the state and the insurgents.

Furthermore, I will employ statistical material on development indicators that can be found on the disaggregated – state or regional – level. ACLED (Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset) was very useful since it provides specific and comprehensive information on violent events in developing states since 1997. Statistics on development indicators was drawn from UNDP (United Nations Development Program), National Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank. Falola and Heaton's (2009) "A History of Nigeria" is a thorough examination of the troublesome history of the country. Reports from the ICG (International Crisis Group) were of help to get insights on conflict dynamics. Some media reports were also drawn upon. Falola and Heaton and ICG were used to triangulate much of the interview material in order to reach a fair and reliable description of the situation in Nigeria.

1.6 Definitions

Several factors partake in the understanding of peace and conflict. Below are those that could demand some explanation. How to define concepts are under constant theoretical debate in an "ongoing interpretative battle" (Gerring 1999:359) and universal definitions are seldom found. The below definitions capture core elements of the concepts and are useful with regards to this study.

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[9] My field work was sponsored by a scholarship from Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) called Minor Field Study.

Governance – Governance is defined by the World Bank as the way "power is exercised through a country's economic, political, and social institutions." Good governance is defined by the UNDP as being "among other things participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective, equitable and it promotes the rule of law." (World Bank)

Accountability – Political accountability refers to the "responsibility or obligation of government officials to act in the best interests of society or face consequences. Public officials should be held responsible for their actions." (US Legal)

Impunity – According to the UN, impunity is usually defined as the "failure to punish violations of established norms. It is, in a sense, the act of not being punished, hiding from or escaping punishment either due to circumstances or to the law" (UN 2002).

Corruption – Economic corruption ranges from high level to petty corruption, depending on the amount of money being lost, and it is defined by Transparency International as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain" (Transparency International 2013).

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Understanding Internal Peace and Conflict

My study focuses on how peace and conflict within Nigeria can be understood. I narrow it to the two most violent insurgent organizations in recent times and the most peaceful region, why I get a comprehensive empirical cover. The phenomenon of conflict is multi-causal since several independent variables are partaking in the explanation, why this theoretical field deals with a range of factors. Isolating one explaining variable is seldom applicable within the social sciences. This leads me to an approach of applying several independent variables found within the larger theoretical branch that aim to understand *causes of internal peace and conflict.* I will in this chapter sketch out such applicable factors. In sum, the reasons for presenting a range of factors are because 1) the phenomena is multi-causal and 2) it is a step towards describing the variance between factors and outcomes (see variable scheme, section 2.2).

How can Nigeria be understood, or, what is it a case of? In methodological terms, what theoretical delimitations can be made, or what independent variables or factors should one set focus upon? This question is essential to answer in order to know what theories to apply. First, since this study focuses on causes behind internal peace and conflict, theories are primarily drawn from internal affairs. Second, the answer to what internal aspects are of most relevance gives a clear theoretical focus.

The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carlton University, produces risk assessment reports named "Country Indicators for Foreign Policy". The report on Nigeria lists several key risk indicators that help define what to focus attention on. The indicators are: *history of armed conflict; governance and political instability; militarization; population heterogeneity; demographic stress; economic performance; human development; environmental stress; and international linkages.* (El-Choueiry et al. 2012) The nine indicators provide an overview of the situation and together with an initial overview of the theoretical field of why insurgency emerges, I was able to construct a checklist of independent variables (section 9.1) that could partake in the explanation behind the different outcomes.

2.1.1 The Transitional Phase

Nigeria has in modern times undergone at least two transitions. First, the British colonial rule ended in 1960 and a long period of military dictatorships plagued the

post-independence period. Second, the country went from military to democratic civilian rule in 1999. States in transition from military to civilian rule often have weak and/or nascent political institutions that are unable to accommodate popular participation. Professors Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder states that statistical evidence covering the past two centuries shows states in the transitional phase of democratization are "more aggressive and war prone, not less". "This danger is greatest when states embark on a transition prematurely, when they lack the strong political institutions that are needed to make democracy work". When an old regime breaks down and mass politics begins, the nascent democratic procedures are often subject to manipulation by both rising and declining elites. Turbulence is hard to avoid if not the country inherits strong political institutions that accommodates the democratic transition. (Mansfield and Snyder 2007:161, 163)

> Governing a society that is democratizing is like driving a car while throwing away the steering wheel, stepping on the gas, and fighting over which passenger will be in the driver's seat. (Mansfield and Snyder 2007:169)

What the authors vividly describes is that democratization often takes place in a society with weak central authority, unstable coalitions and high-energy mass politics. Militarism is often promoted since this strengthens the position of the central authority. (Mansfield and Snyder 2007:169) Transitions marred with elite power centralization and marginalization of disempowered groups can cement conflict dynamics such as power asymmetries (see Van Wyk 2007; Lindeman 2008; DFID 2009).

The mobilization of mass support takes place in a highly competitive setting and it is thus difficult for a single elite group to control the transitional outcome. A transitional sequence that could be preferable is if institution building can be made before mass democratization is introduced. (Mansfield and Snyder 2007:171f)

> All too often, however, building the needed institutions has proven exceedingly difficult. Where many citizens are illiterate, per capita income is low, society is ethnically divided, religious sects or other illiberal groups dominate civil society, powerful spoiler fear democracy, nationalist mythmakers control the media, and/or oil revenue makes the state unaccountable to taxpayers, the path to democratization is likely to be neither smooth nor peaceful. (Mansfield and Snyder 2007:173)

Mansfield and Snyder's findings are on high level of abstraction/generality, therefore I will supplement them with specific claims: Ted Robert Gurr's theory on why insurgencies emerge will be applied.

Gurr argues that the trend of more internal conflicts since the end of the Cold War is an indirect consequence of a modernization process. First, postrevolutionary states have been focused on consolidating power which has meant assimilation of minorities and extraction of local resources for the use of the state. The result in practice is often strengthened central power, inability of

other groups to withhold autonomy or to participate meaningfully in the power at the center and group grievances. Second, the utilization of untapped human and natural resources have benefited some at the expense of others. "Ethnoclasses" has become visible as a phenomenon. (2007:135)

The economic incorporation of lands, forests and natural resources into the realm of the state has meant sharp reactions from peoples that are dependent on such resources. Third, an implication of modernization is that people migrate at a larger scale. (Gurr 2007:135) Migrants (both domestic and international) can contribute to economic growth in the new area of living but can also pose a threat since more people have to compete over limited resources. Demographic stress can follow from high population density. Diaspora groups can also indirectly fuel violence by sending support to one or another faction in the conflict. (Gurr 2007:135; El-Choueiry et al. 2012:2)

2.1.2 Governance and Political Instability

Taydas et. al. argues that it is "essential to broaden our understanding of state capacity and shift the dominant approach from being rebel-centric to one that focuses not only on both rebels and the state but also their interactions" (2010:209). An equitable and distributive spending of public revenues that is freed from the scourge of corruption is likely to produce a legitimate social contract (see Murshed & Tadjoeddin 2009; Addison et. al. 2008; Le Billon 2003). Low institutional quality, for example high level of corruption in government, low respect of rule of law and a poor-quality bureaucratic system "can cause states to lose the loyalty and support of their citizens and consequently fall prey to civil war" (Taydas et. al. 2010:196) since institutions can favor certain subgroups instead of the larger population (2010:211f).

> Increasing adherence to the rule of law, reducing corruption and building more efficient bureaucratic and legal systems might mitigate the grievances of the citizens, increase credibility of the government and thereby discourage rebellion. (Taydas et. al. 2010:212)

High income inequality; economic mismanagement and corruptive behavior that benefits the political elite, the military or certain subgroups creates a dynamic more prone to conflict over the distribution of resources. The political elite in a strong state that has vast resources do not necessarily need to be very responsive to the will of the people. Imposing administrative structures, which can be done at a relatively low cost, can favor people unequal with the effect of marginalization. (Gurr 2007:145)

Natural resource rents that are unfairly shared can be a source of grievances and secessionist movements. It is essential to account for both horizontal and vertical inequalities. The former defines the relative inequalities between identity groups that over time can result in ethnic conflicts. The latter defines the relative

inequalities between the elite and the population (Murshed and Tadjoeddin 2009:99f), often measured with the Gini Index.

2.1.3 Heterogeneous Identities

Identity inequality can accelerate a conflict (see Lake and Rothchild 1996), especially when economic and political inequality coincide with ethnic or religious fault lines, and when political channels are not usable to pursue your ethnic rights or interests (1996:43; Gurr 2007:145)

Conflicts between states have since the end of the Cold War largely been replaced by internal conflicts often termed protracted "ethnonational" or "communal" conflicts. (see Connor 1994; Shultz and Dew 2006:30). Contemporary conflicts are often fought between ethnic, religious, linguistic, and national groups within states. It is important to bear in mind that these attributes are only what defines the different groups and cannot be viewed as underlying causes to conflicts. Factors such as discrimination, inequality, corruption and repression are essential in internal conflicts. Groups in divided societies within weak or failing states often turn inwards to their respective identity. This leads to a setting of differentiation, defined by the sociopolitical order and a struggle between the identity groups to control the distribution of state resources (Shultz and Dew 2006:29f,32). State security forces are often fought against:

> Minority groups in such situations come to see differences with their ruling ethnic counterparts as irreconcilable. Discriminatory and repressive state policies often led those groups to resort to violence and warfare. (Shultz and Dew 2006:32)

Gurr also elaborates upon this type of conflict, although using the wider term "communal violence" (Gurr 2007:134).

2.1.4 Why Insurgency Emerge

Gurr provides a theoretical understanding of why groups go from being communal identity groups to emerge as politically motivated rebel groups. He does so by dealing with four general factors. By showing how the factors are activated by the characteristics and circumstances of the communal (or ethnonational) identity groups, an analysis of how to understand why political rebel groups (insurgency will be used interchangeably) emerge can be made. The four main factors, as presented by Gurr, are:

1) the *salience of ethnocultural identity* for members and leaders of the group,
2) the extent to which the group has collective *incentives* for political action,
3) the extent of the group's *capacities* for collective action and

4) the availability of *opportunities* in the group's political environment that increase its chances of attaining group objectives through political action. (Gurr 2007:136).

(1) The logic behind the *first* main factor is that the more salient the ethnocultural (or ethnonational) identity is, the more likely the group is to define their interest in such terms and the easier it is for leaders to mobilize a group for collective action. Whether the demarcation is defined by common descent, experience, language, or belief is not the central point to be made. The demarcation based on identity and the salience and duration of it is central.

> The basic argument is that the salience of ethnocultural identity depends on how much difference it makes in people's lives. If a communal group is treated differently, by denial or privilege, its members will become more self-conscious about their common bonds and interests. Minimize difference, and communal identity becomes less significant as a unifying force. (Gurr 2007:138)

The above citation is a crucial analytic tool that helps one to understand how important identity can be. The comparatively advantaged group will resist communal challenges and the identity of the disadvantageous group is salient because of the invidious distinction (status, economic well-being and access to political power that are maintained by advantaged groups). Leaders of disadvantaged groups often increase the salience of group identity by referring to "historical memories and symbols of victimization". (Gurr 2007:138f; Rouhana and Bar-Tal 1998:761f)

(2) Incentives for political action, the *second* main factor listed above, can be separated into three aspects which are *relative group positions, loss of political autonomy and repression*. The first aspect – relative group positions – is described as "resentment about losses suffered in the past, fear of future losses, and hopes for relative gains" (Gurr 2007: 139). This depends on changing relative positions between the different identity groups among which advantages and disadvantages are distributed. Disadvantages are here defined as "socially derived inequalities in material well-being, political access, or cultural status by comparison with other social groups" (Gurr 2007:139) Discrimination can be seen economically, politically and culturally. If inequalities are upheld by discriminatory policies, the affected minorities have a clear incentive to focus their resentment on those imposing or upholding the discrimination. The second aspect – loss of political autonomy – can inspire a goal of restoration of the previous autonomy. The sense of regaining the right to self-determination is central here. The third aspect – repression – means that force that are used (or perceived to be used) unjust can in the long term provoke an incentive to resist and retaliate. (Gurr 2007:140)

These incentives can spark violent resistance or rebel actions, which in turn can lead to more repression and a more disadvantaged position. What comes into play is a cycle of retaliation, a dynamic that can cement the protractedness of the conflict. (Gurr 2007:140)

(3) The groups' capacities for collective action, the *third* main factor listed above, are defined by the level of cohesion and mobilization of the identity groups. Cohesive groups are held together by a dense network of high interaction. Mobilization refers to the ways in which members are recruited and motivated to take action. A high level of cohesion and mobilization defines the frequency and sustainability of the political action. The sense of collective identity helps mobilization, which is why the framing of a collective identity is essential. A conjunction of shared incentives and a strong sense of group identity is a potent setting for political action. (Gurr 2007:141)

The following four aspects help to define the capacity for collective actions. The logic behind the first, *geographic concentration*, is that rebellion is facilitated by a rural territorial base. Gurr refers to a large-N study (see Monica Duffy Toft 2004) which states that out of 72 ethnic based wars since 1945, 88 percent of the groups are geographically concentrated. This is also confirmed in a study (see Fearon and Laitin 1999) which states that geographic concentration increased the risk of rebellion in all world regions. The risk of rebellion decreases if the group instead is highly dispersed or urban. (Gurr 2007:142)

The second aspect is *preexisting organization*. The logic is that political rebel movements are more easily built if cohesion exists – for example in terms of preexisting features such a common religion, a shared economic situation and a common political situation. (Gurr 2007:142)

The third aspect is *overcoming faction, forging coalitions* which points to the width of an organized rebel coalition. If loyalties can cross-cut small groupings such as clans, tribes, classes and local communities, a more inclusive coalition is built. The features listed above, a common religion, shared economic situation and common political situation have a wide scope in which different clans and classes are incorporated. It is therefore strategic to allude to such a scope of identity, in order to overcome smaller factions and form a larger coalition. (Gurr 2007:142)

The fourth aspect that Gurr presents is *authenticity of leadership*. "Communal leaders are *authentic* if they are seen as representing the most essential values and aspirations of the group and if their actions are thought to be in the common interest" (Gurr 2007:143). Such leaders can more easily than other take control, command loyalties, symbolize the group's identity and articulate the group's interests and demands. (Gurr 2007:143)

(4) The availability of opportunities, the *fourth* factor listed above, can be separated into durable and sudden opportunities. Durable factors such as the character of the state and its resource distribution shape a long-term situation for a disadvantaged group. Sudden shifts in political alliances and policies can imply a situation that groups can take swift advantages of. International support, however durable or sudden, can strengthen the capacities of the groups. (Gurr 2007:144)

In sum, factors such as weak political institutions, economic inequality, marginalization of disempowered groups, poverty and corruption could all play a part in the explanation of internal conflicts - especially when coinciding with identity lines. Gurr's theory gives also an understanding of factors that could be crucial in the explanation of why identity groups rebel. I will use these factors in my analysis (section 5.1) on how to understand the different outcomes within

Nigeria. Knowing how these factors co-vary with the different outcomes is essential to get a fair understanding.

2.2 Comparative Analytic Apparatus

I present my list of variables below (to see how they were selected, see section 3.2.1.). They form a scheme that will describe the *correlations* between the independent and the dependent variable (DV). All cases are posed with the same variables. The cells yet to be filled in will contain the results that I derive from my empirical material. Constant variables (CV) on the country level are describing the overall context in which my three cases are found.

The independent variables (IV) vary between the cases with the different scores "low", "medium" and "high". The number of categories defines parsimony contra richness. Fewer categories lead to more parsimony, where dichotomous categories are on the one extreme. I avoid this by using three categories. The three labels of "low", "medium" and "high" eases the description of variance and a more nuanced analysis is enabled. (See discussion in George and Bennett 2005:85) I describe how I code the independent variable into these operational definitions in Appendix C, section 10.1.

By using three categories I can differentiate between my three cases. For example, unemployment will vary as follows: North East: high, Niger Delta: medium and South West: low. If I were to use only two categories, it would be impossible to separate the cases in such a way. Since a variation in the independent variables is crucial in comparative studies, I find it suitable to use three categories. Likewise, I do not need for example five categories since I can differentiate between my three cases by using three categories.

Variables	CV 1	CV 2	CV 3	CV 4	CV 5	IV 1	IV 2	IV 3	IV 4	IV 5	IV 6	DV (conflict)
Cases												
North East												Yes, High
Niger Delta												Yes, Medium
South West												No, Low

Constant variables:
CV 1 – Bad governance
CV 2 – Weak accountability
CV 3 – Impunity
CV 4 – Corruption
CV 5 – Economic inequality

Independent variables:
IV 1 – Poverty
IV 2 – Non-education
IV 3 – Unemployment

IV 4 – Salience of youth unemployment

Intervening variables:
IV 5 – Salience of religious identity
IV 6 – Salience of environmental degradation

Dependent variable
DV – Conflict

All variables are deliberately constructed so that a low score is preferable.

3 Method

Since my study is a comparative study with few cases, I draw upon both case and comparative study designs. My empirics are mainly extracted from interview material collected between April 17 and June 3, 2013 on a field study in Abuja, why I lay out methodological considerations on interviewing as well as coding of this material (Appendix C, section 10.2). An interview structure (Appendix B) as well as the coding of variables (Appendix C 10.1) is added.

3.1 Theory of Science

Trying to scrutinize an investigation correctly becomes impossible if the researcher does not make some considerations about theory of science, why I here lay out such considerations.

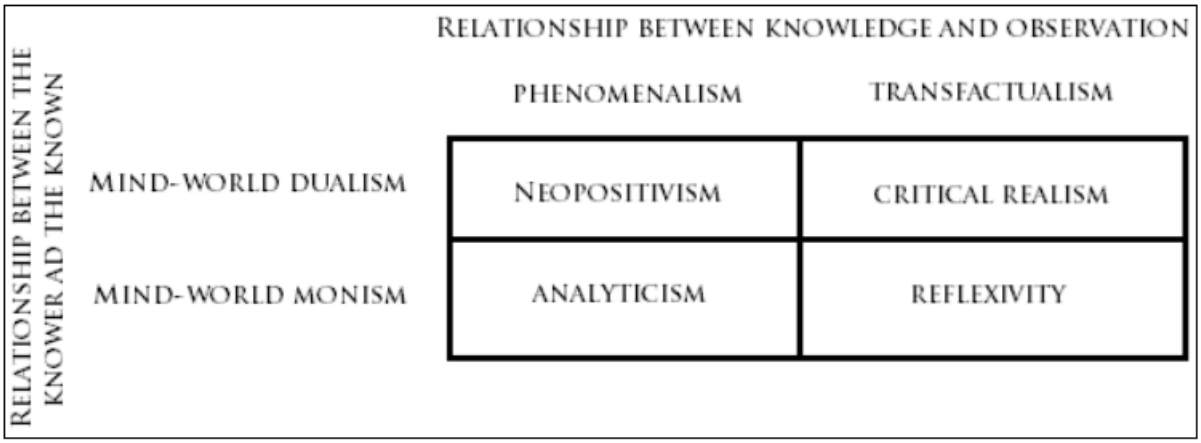
Considering the relationship between the world and the researcher is essential. The debate is about if the researcher and the world is seen as separable (dualism) or inseparable (monism) from each other. This *first* wager "locates and specifies three things: the researcher [subject], the world to be researched [object], and the character of the relationship between them" [dualism or monism]. (Jackson 2011:34) The *mind-world dualism* claims to reach knowledge about a world that exists independent of us, and empirics and theories are easily bridgeable (the researcher is 'recording' the world). Knowledge is speaking about the independent world. *The mind-world monism* sees the speaking about an independent world as nonsensical, since the researcher and the world are dependent of each other. Knowledge comes from a unified mind-world entity. (Jackson 2011:35f)

Another dividing characteristic is between dualism; un-contingent (discovering general laws) and monism; contingent knowledge (the 'truth' is ever to be pending). General and un-contingent laws are seen as objectivism, where the need for intersubjectivity logically is downplayed due to the claim of objectivity. Contingent knowledge is hence based on a more thorough intersubjectivity, because knowledge deduced from premises must be attainable for others. A dividing line is hence between objectivity (dualism) and intersubjectivity (monism) as solutions to the problem of how to attain "common conceptual space". (Jackson 2011:39)

The *second* wager is between phenomenalism and transfactualism. *Phenomenalism* sees the observable as the basis of knowledge. *Transfactualism* goes beyond observable features in order to establish a relationship between them. Thus, correlations are observed using phenomenological methodology; causalities are transfactually constructed to make sense of correlations. The aim of explaining

mechanisms is hence a transfactual undertaking. A dividing line is between if the purpose of the research is to describe the world's phenomena, or if the purpose is to transfactually explain if and how phenomena relate to each other. (Jackson 2011:37)

The two wagers put together forms the below four field matrix (Jackson 2011:37).



Given the brief considerations above, I place my study mainly in the bottom-right cell of the four field matrix. Reflexivity is the combination of monism (contingency) and transfactualism (transfactual explanations). Intersubjectivity is the key to gain contingent understanding of the world since the world is reflected in how we perceive it. Knowledge is regarded as dependent on the considerations the researcher makes (Jackson 2011:159) and my conclusions will inevitably be contingent on my methodological considerations. Intersubjectivity must therefore be thoroughly applied in this study.

Theory is needed since my aim is to explain how we can understand the reasons behind different outcomes. The importance of theory is basically that it is what holds phenomena (independent and dependent variable) together. Theoretical, deductible, claims are therefore needed to transfactually relate phenomena to each other, i.e. to make suggestions on how they could be understood to interact causally. If my study was more inductively focused, it could possibly be found in the "phenomenalism" side of the horizontal axis.

The below four field matrix describes the researcher [subject], the world to be researched [object], and the character of the relationship between them" [dualism or monism]. Only neopositivism claims objectivity and is hence freed from quotation marks [""], whereas the others recognize some degree of subjectivity.

NEOPOSITIVISM S -|- O	CRITICAL REALISM S - "O" | O - M
ANALYTICISM S - "O"	REFLEXIVITY "S" - "O" - "M"

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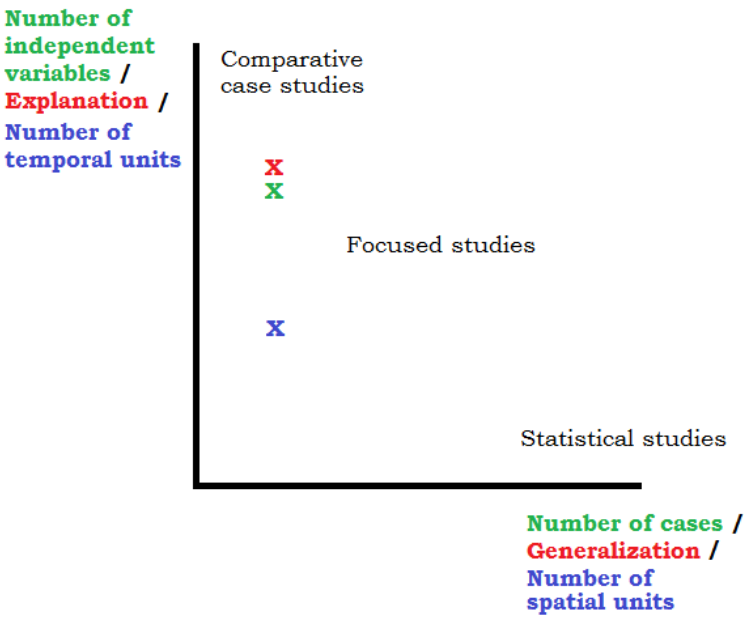
With regards to reflexivity, the subject ("S") is a function of the mind-dependent world ("O"). Since monism is present, empirical claims are expressing values (Jackson 2011:168), dependent on which standpoint the empirical claim stems from. The world ("O") would be more correctly understood if several standpoints partook in the knowledge production ("S"). The mechanisms ("M") at work are standpoints/contexts, if these are not countered with other standpoints, only partial knowledge will be produced.

As a researcher I am dependent on the world and more specifically, the subjective interpretation the informants give to me. This is why I interview a range of different people and also triangulate with other empirical material. I am therefore not dependent on a limited number of standpoints. The knowledge that is produces in this study is also dependent (contingent) on my methodological choices. All dependencies my study relies upon must be clearly stated, why I present the theoretical field and my analytical apparatus, who I interview and how, my methodological choices and how I code the variables (operational definitions) as well as the interview material.

3.2 Design of Study: an Overview

Comparative studies can be differentiated into *comparative case studies, focused studies and statistical studies.* These are differentiated by 1) the balance between the number of factors and the number of cases and 2) the balance between explanation and generalization. (Denk 2002:34f). This can easily be illustrated in a graph that describes the correlation between the balances.



Graph describing the balances between:
1) Number of independent variables and Number of cases,
2) Explanation and Generalization and
3) Number of temporal units and Number of spatial units.

The above graph shows the balance between three core considerations that are essential in the design of a comparative study (see Denk 2002:34f,37). In practice, the researcher has to make limitations. First, one cannot study all independent variables in all cases; second, aiming at both explanation and generalization of a phenomena under investigation would be hard (would require a lot of time and resources); and third, how one chooses between a longitudinal analysis (number of temporal units) or a spatial analysis (number of cases). My study is a "focused study" since it deals with few cases and that one central aspect – the explanation behind the dependent variable – is under investigation (Denk 2002:42)

By looking at the horizontal axis of the graph, my study is limited in the *number of cases* (or *number of spatial units*), and three cases will also limit the possibilities of *generalizing* my results to other cases outside Nigeria (the focus is in fact kept *within* Nigeria). By looking at the vertical axis of the graph, my study can be understood as investigating a relatively high *number of independent variables* which also allows one to pay more attention to the *explanation* (by applying theories that suggests how variables interact). The temporal aspect is basically defined by my aim to understand the reasons behind the current (year 2013) situation in Nigeria in terms of internal peace and conflict. Since reasons behind the current situation can be traced back in history, it hard to situate the blue "X" on the vertical axis at a precise level. In practice, I will mainly deal with the contemporary, post-colonial history of Nigeria with emphasis on recent years up to 2013.

My empirical material consists mainly of more than 19 hours of interview material I gathered in the capital of Abuja. My aim is to thoroughly triangulate with other empirical material such as statistics, media- and academic articles.

In order to be able to analyze, I apply a set of constant and independent variables and the variance among them is used to draw conclusions.

My methodological design in sum:

Design of study

Puzzle	Different outcomes within the same country
Research question	How can the reasons behind peace and conflict within Nigeria be understood?
What phenomena are under investigation?	Internal peace and conflict
What objects are under investigation?	Insurgent/rebel organizations

What cases are under investigation?	North East, Niger Delta, South West
What time period is under investigation?	Contemporary history, post-independence (1960) with an emphasis on recent years up to 2013.
How do I collect my material?	Field study interviews, Disaggregated statistical data on development indicators, Academic reports, Media reports
Analytical categories	Constant variables, Independent variables, Intervening variables, Dependent variable
Describing the variance	Coding procedure of statistical and qualitative interview material
Analysis	Correlation between and interaction (causal chain) among variables, 'Merging' theory and empirics

3.2.1 Considerations on Case Study: the Importance of Variables

George and Bennett propose five tasks to fulfill when conducting case study research. The *first* and most important task is to formulate the *research objectives*. (George and Bennett 2005:69,74) My objective is to suggest how one can understand the reasons behind peace and conflict in my three cases, why the application of theoretical variables on the empirical material is needed. What values my variables gets will show how they *correlate*. Since I collected interview material, this will uncover how they are linked together, and a type of *causal*[10] suggestion can be made.

The *second task* is to *specify the relevant variables* for the investigation. The variables that I will apply in this study are listed in section 2.2. The researcher

[10] I will not be able to make an experiment-type of research due to the almost impossibility of isolating one explaining variable within social sciences. I will not present the exact causes behind peace and conflict, but suggest how one can understand the reasons behind it.

must specify what variables are dependent, independent, intervening and constant. (George and Bennett 2005:79)

First, the *dependent* variable is the level of conflict. Since I have cases with different outcomes, it is reasonable that I find variance in the independent variables that account for that difference in outcome (George and Bennett 2005:80; Esaiasson et al 2012:101ff). Showing the dependent variable in the same categories – low, medium and high – enables both variance and comparability. Comparisons require application of the same variables towards all cases (a "controlled comparison") and since I apply the logic of both equifinality (same outcome) and in-equifinality (different outcome), I can approach the puzzle from both ways (Esaiasson et al 2012:103; George and Bennett 2005:235). Assuming that the two cases of conflict show similar values in a few independent variables, and if at the same time the case with no conflict shows other values in the same few independent variables, the conclusion would be that these independent variables should contain explanatory power.

Second, my *independent* variables are seen in section 2.2. This list was longer before and during I did my field work (see Appendix A, section 9.1) as I wanted to avoid to limit my scope since this could result in important variables gone undetected (Esaiasson et al 2012:220). The empirical material was thus not constrained by a limited set of independent variables. The risk assessment report on Nigeria and a brief overview of the theoretical field on causes of internal conflict provided me with this initial palette of factors that could partake in an explanation. The interview material then guided me to set focus on the most notable issues in Nigeria with regards to my cases and the focus of internal peace and conflict, which is why the checklist of independent variables was reduced. Methodologically speaking, a combination of a deductive and an inductive approach was applied.

The aim of my field research was to collect material useful to answer my overall research question. What I asked the informants depended on their area of expertise and every interview added one piece to the puzzle. Derived from my questions and the answers I got – *what* the interview objects said, *how* they described different aspects (variables) and the *importance* they ascribed to them, I was able to set focus on the most relevant independent variables and also link the independent variables with the dependent variable. I first establish correlations between variables before I discuss how they interact with each other. How the variables relate to each other in a casual chain cannot be known in beforehand. The empirical material will have to define this, or, to use the words of George and Bennett: "…the investigator is more likely to develop sensitive ways of describing variance in the variables after he or she has become familiar with how they vary in the…cases examined" (2005: 84) It is thus important that the researcher is not limited but instead open to new variables that he or she can come across along the field research (2005:99).

The *intervening variables* are those that are very specific to the cases, for example the role of religion in the North East and the environmental degradation in the Niger Delta. See section 2.2.

Constant variables are used in within-case comparisons. These describe the overall Nigerian context in which my cases are found. Constant variables do not contain explanatory power but are of importance since they provide the same context within which the cases differ, something that enables stronger conclusions (more on this in the next section).

The *third task* is to *select cases*. I have selected cases with different outcome on the dependent variable. This strategy enables me to look at both similarity and dissimilarity in the covariation between variables. I have selected cases on the extremes, which is accordance with Esaiasson's recommendation to select cases with *strong variation on the dependent variable* in order to understand the causal relationship correctly (2012:103; Denk 2002:47f). The two conflicts I have selected are the most violent in recent times in Nigeria and both militant organizations have the Nigerian state as the counterpart. The South West is considered as a peaceful area in the sense that it is freed from organized insurgency. Another serious conflict is between indigenous people (native farmers, predominantly Christians of the Berom tribe) and settlers (nomadic pasteuralists, predominantly Muslims of the Hausa tribe) in the middle-belt of the county, in and around the city of Jos, Plateau state. This ethnic-religious conflict is *inter-communal*, hence not having the state as the counterpart. If I were to add the case of the Jos conflict, I would have encountered the problem of comparing cases with different contexts (conflicts *with* and *without* the Nigerian state as the counterpart) and it would hence be difficult to draw any meaningful conclusion other than the cases differ in the independent variables, as in accordance with Esaiasson. A within-case selection of two cases that both have the Nigerian state as the counterpart is meant to lay bare dynamics that involves the role of the state. Certain characteristics should therefore be similar in my two cases of conflict.

The *fourth task* is to describe the variance in the variables (George and Bennett 2005:84f). The reason is that conclusions drawn from comparisons require differentiation among the independent variables. I will use three categories in which I describe the differentiation among the independent variables; low, medium and high. I will present them as relative to each other and not in absolute terms. Also, it would be unrealistic to form the values into absolute terms since some are extracted from qualitative interview material. This is why I also used disaggregated (state or regional-level) statistics to form values on independent variables.

The *fifth task* is to formulate data requirements (also Yin 2007:40,47f). Disaggregated statistics on state or regional level corresponds with my cases and are useful to form values on certain independent variables. Qualitative interview material is useful to understand how variables can relate to each other, as in accordance with Lijphart's definition below.

3.2.2 Considerations on Comparative Study: Within-Case Approach

Arend Lijphart defines the comparative method as a "method of discovering empirical relationships among variables" (1971:683) and the basis of the method

of comparison is straightforward. Comparisons must be *structured* and *focused*. First, it is *structured* when it employs a *standardized data collection* to each case. "This is a way of standardizing data requirements so that comparable data will be obtained from each case." (George and Bennett 2005:86) It is harder to acquire cumulative development of knowledge in *cross*-case approaches since this "involves constructing an explanation for each case singly" (May 2011:236) that could rely on several methodological procedures and data collections and would be found among different contexts. A *within*-case approach with the application of the same variables to all three cases solves this problem. Second, a comparison is *focused* when it investigates a *certain aspect* (the dependent variable) of the cases that are of theoretical relevance under the overall research objective. (George and Bennett 2005:67,69)

A reasonable way to understand reasons behind phenomena is to first present the empirics on how my cases perform on the independent variables and dependent variable, second to establish *correlations* (section 5.1) among the variables and third, to discuss which independent variables accidentally coincide with the dependent variable and which play an integral part in a *causal chain*[11] leading up to different outcomes (section 5.2). My aim is *not* to suggest the exact causes behind the different outcomes, but to suggest how one can understand the reasons behind the different outcomes.

The "controlled comparison", as labeled by George and Bennett (Denk 2002 uses "focused study"), is a study with two or a few cases that resemble the conditions of a scientific experiment which "enables the investigator to make use of experimental logic to draw causal inferences" (2005:151). Causal inference requires the cases to be the same in every respect but one in order to explain the difference in outcome. This is only an ideal methodological situation that is "extremely difficult to find" (2005:152,24) and should only be used as a *theoretical point of reference*. The basic logic for suggesting explanations to phenomena is to look at correlation between variables, whether it is to explain similar or dissimilar outcomes. Since the outcomes are multi-causal, I cannot isolate one explaining variable in an experiment-type of way.

The big advantage of within-case comparisons is that it is possible to come to more secure conclusions since they share the same context (constant variables are shared among all cases), something that is not possible in a cross-case analysis. It is hence easier to control for possible causal factors (Esaiasson et al 2012:108). This resembles a most similar systems design – the idea is that different values on independent variables explain different outcomes. The more the cases are similar, the better possibility it is to explain with those few variables that are dissimilar (Denk 2002:43).

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[11] I deliberately use the term "causal chain" instead of "causal effect". The reason is that my empirics point at a multi-causal situation behind the dependent variable. A clear causal effect would need more of an experimental-type of causality where the researcher can isolate one explaining variable, everything else being the same. Synonyms to "causal chain" are "chain of events" (Esaiasson et. al. 2007:257), "chain of evidence" (May 2011:235) and "causal paths" (George and Bennett 2005:235).

A concept with respect to the explanations of similar outcomes is "equifinality", namely "the fact that different causal explanations often exist for similar outcomes" (George and Bennett 2005:152). This must be taken into account in order not to suggest a misunderstanding of the reasons behind the similar outcomes. Also, my cases that I label similar with internal conflict can of course be different in size and characteristics, something an in-depth investigation – a field research – will reveal.

3.2.3 Reasons for Field Research

In order to understand reasons behind phenomena one must apply theories on the micro level. One must "get closer to the mechanisms or microfoundations behind observed phenomena", something that requires a field research. (George and Bennett 2005:147) Such study takes on an in-depth look at the dynamics behind peace and conflict, or, in a theory of science point of view, it reduces the distance between the subject and the object.

One relevant method to use within a field research is to do interviews, which is considered as one of the most used within the social sciences. (Esaiasson et al 2007:257; Teorell and Svensson 2007:89) Asking the interviewees how they perceive the different aspects (independent variables) and what they attribute to the aspects is crucial in order to get a better understanding. "A fuller understanding can be achieved only by witnessing the context of the event or circumstances to which people refer" (May 2011:158).

One major benefit with field research is that you immerse yourself with the local context and understanding of events and phenomena, which is why I allow my interviewees to speak rather freely and describe the situations in their own terms. I must thus be open-minded in order to attain new contextual insights on the dynamics behind peace and conflict and I must to an extent free myself from preconceived explanations since new insights can bring interesting implications. Tentative explanations could be altered and variables could work in other directions than previously thought.

3.3 Semi-structured Interview

The aim of the research defines the applicable interview structure. There are three broad types of interview structure; the structured, the semi-structured and the unstructured. There is a thus a quantitative-qualitative continuum with regards to structure: if the aim of your study requires quantitative data, you should use the structured technique and conversely, if it requires highly qualitative, in-depth data, you should use the unstructured technique. (May 2011:132)

Since my research aim at gaining an understanding to different outcomes, I need my interviewees to talk more freely and I can therefore not apply the structured interview. The *semi-structured* interview fits neatly with the aim of my

research. By using this technique, I will "allow people to answer more on their own terms than the standardized interview permits, but still provide a greater structure for comparability over that of the [...] unstructured interview". (May 2011:135) An essential feature is that I can ask follow-up questions and also ask, as I do not want factors to go undetected, if there is anything the interviewee wants to add to the picture. This structure enables the informants to clarify and elaborate on the statements they make, which is crucial since the most essential aim is to gain an *understanding* of the reasons to different outcomes (May 2011:134). By also asking the same questions to all cases (for example asking how an independent variable performs in all three cases respectively), comparability is enabled (May 2011:150).

Lastly, my aim of using a mixture of informants is consistent with the fact that "some interviews will provide more useful information than others" (Gerson and Horowitz 2002 in May 2011:136) and that an interview is limited to one person's subjective understanding of the situation. Using a range of different people will provide a broad palette of standpoints that all adds to the understanding of the issue under investigation (May 2011:136).

3.3.1 Informants

Interviews can be distinguished between informant- and respondent interview methods. First, the informant interview method aims at finding witnesses to an event or phenomena that can tell you how certain aspects fit together. The researcher uses informant interviews to get "the best possible depiction of a chain of events"[12] (Esaiasson 2007:257). Different informants give different subjective standpoints that add up to the overall understanding. Esaiasson (2007:300) notes that when using informant interviews, it is more common to change the interview guide dependent on who you interview. Answers given in a former interview lead to more specific and refined questions in the next interview. This is why there was no purpose of asking the same questions to all informants. The interview material should then be checked against other sources (triangulation). (Esaiasson 2007:258) Since I used informant interviews, I cannot produce a standardized interview form. Instead, my checklist of possible independent variables (Appendix B, section 9.1) was my main guiding tool defining my data requirements in the specific interview setting (see Yin 2007:25).

In order to obtain (to what extent possible) unbiased interview material, I use a wide range of people as my informants (see discussion in Esaiasson et al 2012:220). I have interviewed ten Nigerians and ten persons from the international community. They work for Western Embassies, the UN, the EU, local NGOs, local law firms, aid agencies, international newspapers, ministries, policy institutes and in the local service sector. They range from analysts, diplomats, NGO directors and professional academics to workers in the civil

[12] Swedish original translation: "bästa möjliga skildringen av ett händelseförlopp".

society and the service sector. People that work within the international community have an outsider's view on the local situation, whereas Nigerians have an insider's view. What they all have in common is that they have a direct or indirect knowledge on issue areas relevant for my investigation.

In selecting informants, I initially made use of the extensive contact network the Embassy of Sweden provided. Considering what actors might have knowledge about given the issue at hand (Merriam 1994:91), I contacted those who worked within the field of analyzing the state of affairs in Nigeria or could have knowledge about certain relevant aspects (independent variables). The snow-ball method was thereafter used, i.e. that the informants suggested other people relevant to interview (Esaiasson et al 2012:189f).

3.3.2 Interviewing Issues

To give the interview object the possibility to be anonymous is always a prerequisite (May 2011:152) and 16 out of 20 sources wanted anonymity. I did not ask why but a logical reason is that they then were able to speak more freely, especially given the worsened security situation in the country[13]. It is also easier to acquire permission to record the interview under anonymity. *Inter*-codar reliability is hampered since many informants are undisclosed but it is still possible to do if others listen to the recorded material. Having the interviews recorded is a major benefit since I can listen to them several, which strengthens the *intra*-codar reliability. (Esaiasson et al 2012:64) If not a recorder was used, I would inevitably use my own words in the process of reproducing what was said and also miss certain points made by the informants. Trying to write down by hand what is said in an interactional process of an interview would neither be fair to the interview situation nor the material (May 2011:151f), which is why all interviews were recorded.

The security situation in Nigeria restricts the possibility to travel. I did not feel that this implicated much, since most of the international community and a high number of local NGOs are located in the political capital, Abuja. Also, a lot of their personnel that was previously sent out to the conflict zones are now relocated to peaceful areas, many to Abuja. Many of them still cooperate with local field staff or partners still working in the affected areas and internationals have paid visits with the help of security transports (Interview 4,8,9). It is although important to bear in mind that I rely on my informants as I cannot get a first-hand look of the conflict areas. It is especially useful with informants from NGOs since they in fact are *non-governmental* and have their purpose to highlight pressing features within Nigeria.

Inevitably, some interviews provided more useful information than others. No single interview, however revealing, can offer more than limited insights into

[13] Some informants even stated that they personally knew people that had been killed or kidnapped by the militant organizations. It is very understandable that people want anonymity in such a situation.

social processes, why a range of informants were interviewed. Only by comparing a series of interviews can the significance of any one of them be fully understood. And, in the long run, each interview added to the final story. (Gerson and Horowitz 2002:211 in May 2011:136)

A recommendation is to start easy in an interview, for example with questions about some simple facts about the current situation, and then move on to harder or more specific questions. I formulated my questions so that they were easily understood, why questions posed in an academic manner was avoided. (Teorell and Svensson 2007:90) For an example of an average interview, see appendix A, section 9.1.

3.4 Squaring the Circle: How to Code the Data

After the material is obtained, an initial step is to gain a systematic and comparable structure of it. This is basically the procedure of breaking down the data into 1) understandable text segments which can be summarized with certain labeling concepts, key words, categories or variables – and 2) their relation to each other (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:218; Strauss and Corbin 1998:57,66; Lantz 2007:110; Esaiasson et al 2012:214f,224). The selection of relevant segments depends on the aim of the research and its theoretical interests (May 2011:152f; Lantz 2007:107). Since the aim of the research is to understand reasons behind the different outcomes, I find it suitable to ask the question of "what are the most salient *factors* that can be extracted from the data that play a part in the causal chain that leads up the different outcomes?" The most salient factors I have extracted are listed (in their most reduced form) as variables in section 5.1, which is the table that describes the *correlation* between independent variables and outcomes. My aim is therefore to look for *factors* (not "concepts, key words or categories" per se, and also the *interrelation* between them in causal chains. A reproduction of the empirical data (Chapter 4) is necessary before a theoretical analysis can start (Chapter 5).

A challenge I found was that the literature on analyzing qualitative interview material cannot propose any particularly straight forward analytic tools. Instead, authors points to a 'creative process' (Lantz 2007:108), a phase of 'interplay between data and researcher' (Strauss and Corbin 1998:58) or the need of 'immersing oneself in the case, known as soaking and poking' (George and Bennett 2005:89). These diffuse phrases do not become clearer with the following quote: "We believe that although a researcher can try to be as objective as possible, in a practical sense, this is not entirely possible" (Strauss and Corbin 1998:58). This being said, I aim at a high degree of intersubjectivity (and some degree of objectivity) when I form dimensions that mirror the content of the interview material (Lantz 2007:111).

How can I then go about? A problem is that almost every piece of information adds to the understanding, but in order to gain a clear, comparable and systematic understanding, one must extract the most salient components of the text data

without losing the meaning of it (Lantz 2007:110; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:219). Strauss and Corbin writes that the researcher can reduce (and abstract) the material into concepts and in turn relate them to each other. The reason for conceptualizing is to enable theoretical comparability (Strauss and Corbin 1998:66,73,78; May 2011:153). The main unit for comparability in my study is the *independent variables* and the values that differentiate them from each other.

Since I both need to look at correlations and the causal chains, I constantly have to bear in mind not to extract text segments in such a way that it would harm the understanding of the context (Lantz 2007:110). In turn, this is why I would argue that it is appropriate to for me to extract both the (1) variables and (2) how they interact with each other (causal chain). Lantz underscore the balancing act between the abstraction of comprehensible units from the interview material (variables) on the one hand and the complexity and nuances (causal chain) on the other (2007:110).

Lantz explicitly recommends that the interview material should be broken down into text segments (quotations with the source explicitly stated) that can be labeled with a summarizing name (name of the independent variable). This is in accordance with reaching conceptual validity – the consistency between theoretical concepts and operational indicators (Esaiasson et al 2012:58f) – since a breaking down of the material into text segments leads to a meticulous examination. The aim is to deepen the understanding of the sub-units (variables) that together constitutes the whole (causal chain). In order to structure the material further, more questions must be asked towards it; first, what case is talked about?; what issues or aspects are talked about?; are different dimensions (variables) distinguishable? (Lantz 2007:110f; Esaiasson et al 2012:219,223).

For a hands-on description of how I code quotes into (1) variables and (2), the causal chains, i.e. how the variables interact with each other, see Appendix C, subsection 10.2 “Coding the Interview Material”. Lantz explicitly recommend one to construct such a table and the main reason is to achieve intersubjectivity, to show the interpretational steps taken from raw text data to more abstract variables (see Lantz 2007:111-115,116). I will still present some particularly revealing quotations in my empirical chapter.

Once the material is coded, one needs to look for patterns in how people talk about events and phenomena. The researcher moves from *patterns* (text segments), to *analysis* (coding text segments into variables), to *synthesis* (finding out how the variables interact) and finally to *models* (causal chain)[14] (Lantz 2007:119). Examples of patterns and the coding (analysis according to Lantz) are seen in section 10.1 and 10.2. The synthesis is, once the empirics are presented, basically a return to theory in order to see what this has to say about the empirics (the merging of the two, section 5.1). The model I propose is the causal chain (section 5.3) which will also be of discussion. (Lantz 2007:120f) I will then,

[14] My aim is not to develop theoretical models inductively, but yet to relate my analytic findings back to theoretical variables. From that platform, I will suggest how the variables can be understood as interacting to each other in a causal chain.

lastly, reach conclusions how one can understand the cases of peace and conflict within Nigeria.

4 Empirics: Mapping the Data

The aim of this chapter is to provide the empirics needed to eventually present a comparable table that describes how the independent variables and the dependent variable correlate between my cases.

Structural factors underlying to peace and conflict are often statistically measured on the aggregated country level, which describes the overall state of the country. I have been able to collect disaggregated statistics on the state and regional levels, which are used to describe how my cases perform on indicators underlying to peace and conflict.

My disposition is defined by theoretical subsections under which I present the cases in the following order; 1) country level (if relevant), 2) North East: Boko Haram, 3) Niger Delta: MEND, and 4) South West: OPC. The reason for this disposition is to show the material in the most presentable and comparable form possible – that is to provide the context (country level) and then ask the same questions to all the within-cases – in accordance Tim May's suggestion of structure (2011:153). Qualitative material other than the interview material is used to triangulate empirics (May 2011:235).

4.1 Violence within Nigeria – Dependent Variable

ACLED (Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset) has recorded violent events in developing states since 1997. It is, according to themselves, one of the most comprehensive datasets in its nature as it specifies the violence into several categories, for example type, date, by whom and the location of the violence.[15] All this is specified *within* countries, which is why the dataset is suitable to use in a within-case comparison. One must bear in mind the difficulties in producing this type of dataset. There must inevitably have been unrecorded events given that the empirical accessibility in conflict zones is circumscribed. Attributing the violence

[15] "ACLED (Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset) is the most comprehensive public collection of political violence data for developing states. These data contain information on the specific dates and locations of political violence, the types of event, the groups involved, fatalities and changes in territorial control. Information is recorded on the battles, killings, riots, and recruitment activities of rebels, governments, militias, armed groups, protesters and civilians. Event data are derived from a variety of sources, mainly concentrating on reports from war zones, humanitarian agencies, and research publications." (acleddata.com, retrieved 12 June, 2013)

to the right group should also be problematic since the perpetrators do not necessarily reveal themselves and groups can also claim responsibility for violence done by others (Interview 9,14).

Despite the problems of recording violent events, the ACLED-tool enables me to get a picture of the violence within Nigeria across time and space. Nigeria is the fourth most violent developing nation measured by the number of violent events (ACLED 2013), where 4139 violent events has been recorded from 1997 up to the end of 2012 with 15934 people killed (995 per year on average) The section below answers the questions of *when* the violent activity has taken place, the *size* of it, *against whom* it is directed, *where* it has taken place and *how many casualties* it resulted in. This gives a brief overview of the violence.

North East

- The first violent event that involved Boko Haram is recorded by ACLED on July 26, 2009 and the activity has grown since then.
- In total, 570 violent events are recorded as involving Boko Haram. 472 of them have the organization as the initiating actor while 98 of them have it as the responding actor.
- Of the 472 events initiated by Boko Haram were 270 directed against civilians, 114 against police forces and 65 against military forces.
- Boko Haram's activities are clearly regionalized; 295 events are recorded in Borno, 78 in Yobe, 32 in Kaduna and 27 in Bauchi. 75 percent of Boko Haram's recorded violent activity is located to these four states, 52 percent to Borno state.
- ACLED has recorded 1980 people killed between 2009 and 2012 in violent events where Boko Haram initiated the violence and 1005 where it responded. That makes 2985 deaths in total. (calculated from acleddata.com/data/africa/)

Niger Delta

- The first violent activity that involved MEND is on March 23, 2006 and the activity is still ongoing.
- In total, 140 violent events are recorded by ACLED up to the end of 2012 as involving MEND. 101 of them are initiated by MEND while it has been the responding actor in 39 events.
- Of the 101 events initiated by MEND, 36 were directed against civilians (18 events against internationals and 18 against Nigerians), 30 were directed against the military forces of Nigeria and 29 events do not have any counterpart recorded (unknown). Of the 39 events where MEND was the responding actor, 24 are recorded as initiated by the military.
- MEND's activities are also highly regionalized; 49 events are recorded in Delta, 41 in Rivers and 35 in Bayelsa states. 89 percent of MEND's recorded violent activity is located to these three Niger Delta states.
- ACLED has recorded 211 people killed between 2006 and 2012 in violent events where MEND initiated the violence and 210 where it responded.

That makes 421 deaths in total. (calculated from acleddata.com/data/africa/).

South West

- The first violent activity that involved OPC (O'odua People's Congress) is on March 1, 1999 and the organization was mainly active between 1999 and 2006 with two exceptional cases occurring in 2012.
- This makes up 40 in total and 35 violent events where OPC was the initiating actor. 5 events are recorded where OPC was the responding actor, 3 of them initiated by the police forces.
- 10 events were directed against themselves, labeled as "mutiny of OPC", 9 events towards the police forces and 8 events towards other ethnic militias (Ijaw-, Hausa- and Fulani ethnic militias).
- OPC's activity is mainly regionalized to Lagos state, where 28 events, 70 percent, took place.
- ACLED has recorded 99 people killed between 1999 and 2012 in violent events where OPC initiated the violence and 17 people killed where it responded. That makes 116 deaths in total. (calculated from acleddata.com/data/africa/).

The violence in sum:

Actor	Boko Haram	MEND	OPC
Violence			
When?	2009 -	2006 -	1999 – 2006 (2012)
Number of violent events (total)	570	140	40
...where the actor initiated the event	472	101	35
...where the actor responded to the event	98	39	5
Mainly against	Civilians, Police forces, Military forces	Civilians, Military forces	Themselves (due to mutiny), Police forces, Ethnic militias
Mainly where?	Borno, Yobe, Kaduna, Bauchi	Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa	Lagos
Number of fatalities (total)	2985	421	116

4.2 Political Map of Nigeria

I present the political map of Nigeria to show where my cases are located. There are 36 states in Nigeria (plus Abuja as the Federal Capital Territory, F.C.T.) located within six geopolitical zones. The zones and their states are the following:

Geopolitical zones	*States*
South East	Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, Imo and Abia.
South South	Edo, **Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa**, Cross-River and Akwa-Ibom.
South West	**Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti**.
North Central	Kwara, Kogi, Plateau, Nassarawa, Benue, Niger and Abuja Federal Capital Territory
North East	Taraba, Adamawa**, Borno, Yobe, Bauchi** and Gombe.
North West	Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, **Kaduna**, Katsina, Kano and Jigawa.

My study is on the regional level and the states I have put in bold are those that best correspond with my three regional cases.

Since I have described the violence (dependent variable) and showed where my cases are located, I move on to the presentation of the empirical material I use to describe the context of Nigeria and my three within-cases.

4.3 Governance

4.3.1 Governance: Country Level

Governance is a very problematic feature in Nigeria, highlighted by a number of sources as a systemic issue *throughout* Nigeria (Interview 12,13,14,19,20). Three sub-variables of governance often mentioned are lack of accountability, impunity and widespread corruption. Campbell (2011:10) notes that the post-colonial transition of Nigeria, despite becoming a federal state, was marred with elite power centralization and marginalization of disempowered groups.

Lack of accountability. Political institutions in Nigeria often are driven by individuals with the aim of preserving their own political and economic interests rather than work for the population that voted for them (Interview 4,14). How power is distributed in Nigeria is hard to get a clear picture of since there are features that disturb the possibility of holding people in power accountable due to an overall culture of lack of accountability and an "extraordinarily high level of impunity at all levels" (Interview 4). The few states that have better governance seem to be more of a coincidence than stemming from accountability (Interview 4,13,14).

> Governance in Nigeria is [...] simply individual driven. You will find a wonderful governor in the North who will be carrying out needs-driven development for the people. You will find another one in the South West who is doing a good job; you can find another one in the South East or Niger Delta who is doing a good job. But *the majority of them are not so inclined*. So, that means that you can have isolated cases [of good governance]. (Interview 14, my emphasis)

The lack of good governance can be explained by the relationship between the politicians and the population. Accountability does not seem to work due to lack of understanding and experience of how it works – people even seem to perceive the role of politicians as buying loyalty by handing out money (Interview 6). The relationship between the politicians and the population seems to be very asymmetrical:

> Politics is a bit of a closed system. When you are in, you are not going to be loyal to the people because they cannot punish you and they cannot reward you. You cannot base your mandate on the people. You have to satisfy those who got you in that position and those are not the people because the election has been rigged. So it's the people who gave you the candidacy in the party, who rigged for you, who supported you with money in your candidacy. Those are the people you have to serve first. (Interview 6)

Nigerian governments have "over the years showed it is not responsible for the welfare of its citizens" (Interview 20; see also Falola and Heaton 2008:Chapters 7-9 for a historical background) and "one can even challenge the fact that there is

actually a genuine and credible policy oriented towards the broader public" (Interview 4). The huge gap in the relationship between the political elite and the population is further cemented by the fact that merely 8 percent of Nigeria's GDP stem from taxes (estimated as of 2012) (CIA World Factbook). Politicians become independent of their voters and the vast natural wealth[16] has not translated into improved living standards for the great majority, as corruption exact a heavy toll. (ICG 2006b:19) Nigerians were on average poorer in 2000 than in the start of the oil boom in the early 1970s (Meredith 2011:548).

The fact that very few or no one is punished for corruption or for the rigged elections can exemplify the *impunity*. The last presidential election, in 2011, was considered as the best in Nigeria so far, but still the politicians...

> ...clearly buy the votes. During the last election, for six weeks, out of a sudden and in a mysterious way, there were no 1000 Naira bills[17] on the market. For six weeks, they were vanished. (Interview 2)

Buying votes can even be done directly by giving cash at the polling station in exchange for the vote on a certain candidate (Interview 12), or indirectly through proxies such as religious leaders who promise the votes from their respective religious communities (Interview 1). In sum, as one informant formulated it: "The election system is screwy enough that no one trusts it" (Interview 13).

Another method to get and obtain power is through the use of thugs, something that can be done throughout the whole country and "any governor can pick up the phone and call the militants" (Interview 2). Political meetings can easily be disturbed:

> ...you can't rely on police protecting your rally. If you are an opposition party, you would have to have a muscle element or the ruling party will come with theirs and rampage your rally and prevent you from doing your stuff. It has always been there (Interview 6).

Buying thugs is a widespread phenomenon in Nigeria and the consequence is the seasonal violence during election periods (Interview 1,6,12; ICG 2006b:21). The right to a free political campaigning and a free voting procedure are thus severely circumscribed. Moreover, with regards to disputes, the general inability of the judiciary limits the scope for resolving disagreements without recourse to violence, a systemic problem throughout Nigeria (Interview 13).

Corruption, both at high and low levels, is widespread in Nigeria (Falola and Heaton 2008:240). Transparency International ranks Nigeria in the year 2011 as country number 143 out of 183 with the score of 2,4 out of 10 and 73 percent of the Nigerians consider corruption as becoming worse between 2009 and 2011. The police can serve as an example of widespread low level corruption (Falola

[16] Nigeria is Africa's oil producing state number one as of 2010 (the Richest 2013).
[17] Equivalent to 6,2 USD or 40,7 SEK as of July 17, 2013.

and Heaton 2009:240). They often do not have the capacities to carry out their intended work, by not being trained properly and are to a large extent corrupted. (Interview 4)

> What do you expect from the police? You expect them to create safety but that is not what they are doing. They are doing quite the opposite; they are like armed robbers standing somewhere extorting money. That is robbery. (Interview 6)

The elite also grab an un-proportionally large share of the nation's wealth with the use of corruption (see Lundgren & Kromann-Dragsted 2012; Campbell 2011:17). Nigeria's dependence on oil revenues has had major consequences since it has lead the country to becoming a "rentier state" since the 1970s. The rentier state of Nigeria is dependent on the oil companies to pay rents through licenses and royalties. High level corruption has run rampant under that system due to the lack of accountability and "citizens' opinion of the government becomes irrelevant, since the government does not maintain its power through popularity but through coercion and the control of resources". (Falola and Heaton 2008:184)

In terms of a welfare state, there is not much to mention in the case of Nigeria:

> Everyone has first of all to rely on him or herself for basic needs; access to water, access to electricity, access to education. Public education is a disaster. [...] Each Nigerian is a head of government in their own capacity because they have to manage the mini-state which is the house and provide all the basic services for the household, water, electricity, employment, healthcare, all these things you would expect the state to have some degree of intervention or interference, especially in a poor country like this one. (Interview 4)

4.3.2 Governance: Regional Level

I tried to find out if there are regions or states in Nigeria that have better governance and if so, why. I could not get a picture that good or bad governance was varying across the regions[18]. Portraying governance at the regional level is therefore hard.

North East

Governance in the North East can be described by a long term neglect of the area (Interview 15). Examples can be seen in today's situation. Education and policing are features that are under heavy constraints (Interview 9,14). Industries have left

[18] Answering the question of if different regions or states have better governance than others would also require another research approach. Such study would look at the gubernatorial state level, which unfortunately is very hard currently given the travel restrictions due to the bad security situation within the country and also since governance in Nigeria seems to be a closed system without proper and transparent insight into the decision making.

the larger North in recent years, creating a once flourishing area into an economically declining one (Interview 8).

Niger Delta

Likewise, the notable issues in the Delta region are "lack of political commitment" (Interview 15) and bad governance (Interview 20), highlighted by Ms. Abiodun Baiyewu, Country Director at the NGO Global Rights when asked about the reasons behind the low level of development in the region:

> I think it is obvious; it's corruption, lack of transparency in governance resulting in non-governance. Lack of accountability to the people, also because the people do not understand, because of the years of military rule, the people really did not know how to hold government accountable. That itself is also problematic. Where you cannot hold government accountable for governance, government does what it wants to do, how it wants to do it, when it wants to do it – and so no schools, no roads, and of course wherever the extractive activities, cost of living sky-rockets and the local people cannot afford to live in their own communities anymore, apart from the environmental degradation. (Interview 19)

One could without objection say that the Niger Delta region *should* be a high developed area since this is where the oil comes from and also given the amount of funds pumped back to the oil producing states. The oil producing states get a higher share in a derivation form[19] on how to distribute the oil wealth from the federal to the state level, but corrupt politicians have failed to utilize the money for development. (Interview 12,20) A source points out two major hindrances for this; one being that the government does not allow the people to benefit from the oil resources and the second being corruption that the Nigerians "have a government that cannot punish corrupt people so the oil companies operate without regard to the rights of the local people." (Interview 20; also 19)

South West

The relatively peacefulness in the South West is not necessarily due to better governance, since the relationship could go both ways. The interview material on the country level above show that bad governance, impunity, corruption and lack of accountability are factors present throughout Nigeria.

Babatunde Fashola, the governor of Lagos state, is internationally considered as a good governor (Interview 12). One can of course question if the relative peace in Lagos state should be attributed to governance. Other factors should logically partake in the explanation since this region scores relatively well on several indicators. Lagos is for example the major urban and economic center in Nigeria and in West Africa.

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[19] A derivation form grants budgetary allocation from the federal level to the 36 states. The oil producing states gets a higher compensation. For the exact "Monthly Shares of Distribution From The Federation Account By State" (as of December 2011) see WB NER 2013:27.

4.4 Development Indicators

4.4.1 Development Indicators – Country Level

Nigeria scores very low on the Gini Index[20]. Nigeria is ranked country number 49 out of 136 (country number 1 being the most unequal) as of the year 2010 and scores 48,83 (0 being the most equal and 100 the most unequal distribution) (CIA World Factbook). Also, given that the Nigerian population grows with four million people yearly, the increased national wealth has a low impact on the GDP per capita growth. GDP per capita was in 2012 only 1555 USD (World Bank Statistics) and the economic growth in recent years has mostly "padded the pockets of those who are already financially secure" (Falola and Heaton 2009:237). 68% of the population lives below 1,25 USD (PPP) per day (UNDP 2012). Nigeria is in the year 2012 ranked country number 153 out of 186 in the Human Development Index[21] and has not shown any significant progress between 2005 and 2012.[22] Nigeria's HDI was 0,471 in the year 2012, which is slightly below the regional sub-Saharan average of 0,475 (zero being the lowest and 1 being the highest score) (UNDP 2012).

Life expectancy in Nigeria is at 52 years and only 1.9 per cent of the nation's budget is expended on health. A clear North-South health divide, among other divides, can be noted in Appendix D. Adult illiteracy rate for adult (both sexes) is 61.3 per cent. These figures are in stark contrast with the growth in the Nigerian economy.

Major causes of Nigeria's poverty include high level of inequality attributable to unequal access to income opportunities and basic infrastructure, and poor education and health. (Omonona 2010:3) Poverty in Nigeria is as of 2013/2014 at 64,2 percent on the aggregated level, which is worse than 2009/2010 when the number was 62,5 percent At the same time, Nigeria's GDP has grown 7 percent annually in the past seven years. (WB NER[23] 2013:9) A clear consequence is the grave inequality in economic distribution, noted in the low performance on the Gini Index. Official unemployment statistics on the national level has gone from 13,1 in 2000 to 21,1 in 2010 (National Bureau of Statistics 2010). The level of literacy indicates the educational level - Nigeria scores 46 percent on average among children aged 5-16 (DHS EdData Survey 2010:161).

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[20] Gini Index measures "the extent to which the distribution of income or consumption expenditure among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution" (definition by the World Bank).

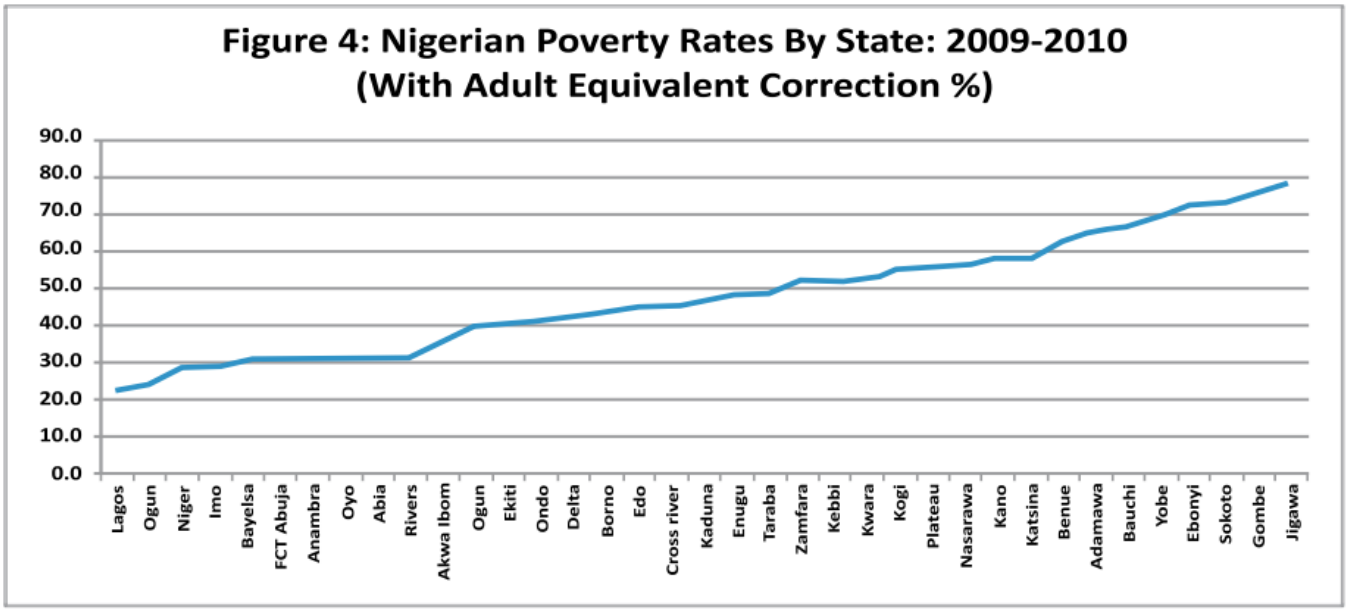
[21] HDI provides a composite measure of three basic dimensions of human development: health, education and income.

[22] Nigeria scored 0,434 in the year 2005 and 0,471 in the year 2012. Longitudinal comparisons should be made carefully due to methodological changes over time.

[23] World Bank Nigeria Economic Report 2013.

4.4.2 Development Indicators – Regional Level

If the economic distribution is split into the disaggregated state level, it looks like the following graph. The North-South poverty divide is clearly seen if the graph is cross-references with the political map of Nigeria.



Source: National Bureau of Statistics

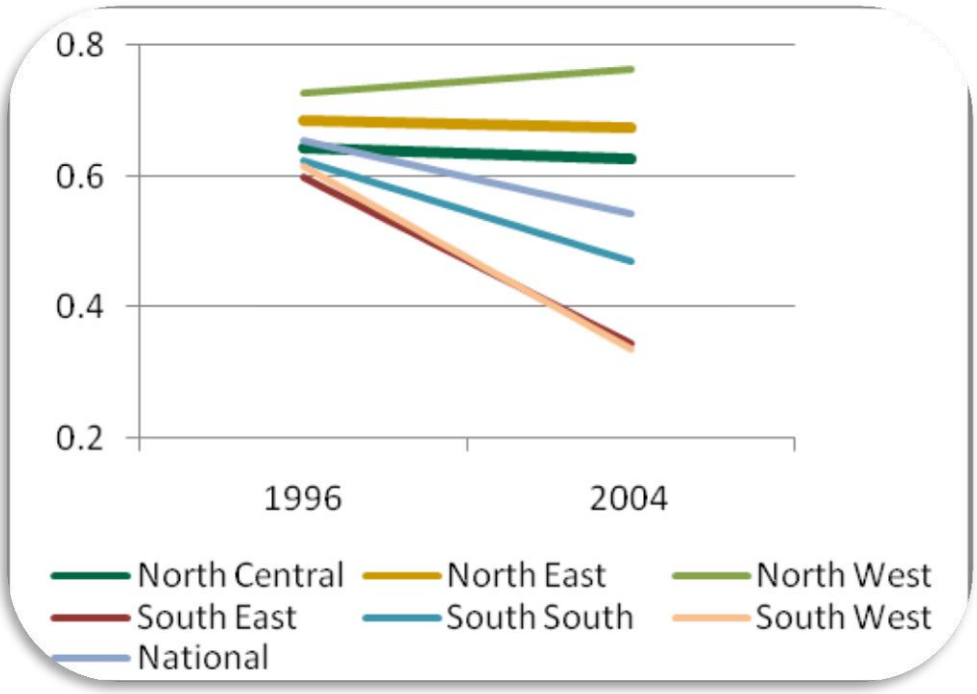
[3]Unfortunately, some irregularities in the household questionnaires received from Niger State (ranked 3rd lowest in poverty above) raise serious questions about the accuracy of the poverty number for that State.

The North East has the highest poverty rate[24] at 59,7 percent on average, the South South (where the Delta region is located) scores 37,6 percent and the South West, the region with the lowest poverty rate, scores at 30,6. (WB NER 2013:9)

The below table (Omonona 2010:2-3) shows disaggregated statistics on poverty between the geopolitical zones from the years 1996 and 2004. It is important to look at statistics from a few years back, since indicators back then could explain the situation of today. The North-South divide is again clearly visible:

[24] With adult equivalent correction. It "measure the welfare of an adult equivalent, supposing that welfare is equally distributed in the household. For instance, if an household with two adults has an equivalence scale of 1 and an household with two adults and one child has an equivalence scale of 1.2, this means that the second household need 1.2 times more income than the first household in order to get the same level of welfare. Or that the cost of the first child is 20%". See http://www.vcharite.univ-mrs.fr/PP/lubrano/cours/Lecture-8.pdf

Incidence of poverty by geopolitical zones[25]



Note that the poverty in the North is at the same levels in 2004 as in 1996, which is not the case with the South where the situation has improved significantly.

I will now briefly present the development indicators of poverty, education/illiteracy and unemployment for each case respectively.

North East

The North East is the region worst hit by poverty, 59,7 percent according to the latest statistics from the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics. Poverty and the implications of it are stressed by a number of sources and the further up north you go, the more the poverty level increases (Interview 1,13). A clear indicator of the level of education is the illiteracy rate. Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) cover educational data in all 36 states.

Borno, Yobe and Bauchi are among the worst performers on literacy among children aged 5-16. 15, 11 and 8 percent respectively of this group are able to read in these states. Kaduna scores at 46 percent. (DHS EdData Survey 2010:161) This makes 20 on average among these states. A dangerous feature is that the lack of education has over the years increased the level of radicalization:

> You can see a sharp divide between the haves and the have nots and it speaks to even the proportion of people that are literate or educated vis-à-vis those that are not literate and not educated. You see a lot of people that are out of school in much of

[25] The incidence of poverty (headcount index) is the share of the population whose income or consumption is below the poverty line; that is, the share of the population that cannot afford to buy a basic basket of goods. (IFPRI 2010)

> the North and this has been like that for many years so the situation in the North right now, with the insecurity and radicalism, is just like playing out what would have been predicted many years ago. (Interview 14)

The unemployment in the North East is as of the year 2010 at 30,2 percent. States accounted for are Borno, Yobe, Kaduna and Bauchi. (calculated from the National Bureau of Statistics). Related to this, an informant referred to a forthcoming study on social capital in West Africa that investigates where young people go for help if they do not have a job or an income. Young people in northern Nigeria had by far fewer answers to that question as compared to young southerners who had a denser network of social contacts. (Interview 13)

Niger Delta

Poverty rate in the three Delta states of interest is around 34 percent on average (calculated from the National Bureau of Statistics).

The states in the Niger Delta region scores relatively well on literacy among children aged 5-16. Delta scores at 65, Rivers at 68 and Bayelsa at 75 percent – which gives a score on 69,3 on average. (DHS EdData Survey 2010:161).

Unemployment in the Niger Delta is at 22,8 percent as of the year 2010. (Calculated from the National Bureau of Statistics)

South West

As stated above, the South West is the region that scores best on poverty rate, on 30,6 percent.

South West is also the region that performs best on literacy rates among children 5-16. The region scores at 78 percent on average, ranging from 61 percent in Ogun and 92 percent in Lagos state. (DHS EdData Survey 2010:161) Education in the South West is highlighted by a number of sources as taking part in the explanation for the relative peacefulness.

Unemployment in the South West (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo states) is comparatively low, at 11,9 percent (calculated from National Bureau of Statistics).

4.5 Unifying Forces

4.5.1 Unifying Forces – Country Level

Given that harsh situation in terms of governance and development, interviewees often come to the point that different groups feel the need of protecting their regional interest in their own capacity and that “everyone in Nigeria wants a share of the cake” (Interview 4). This is also consistent with a historical analysis. Sub-national identities being stronger than the national Nigerian identity goes back to at least the 1960 (Falola and Heaton 2008:159), and seems to be still present. Rebel groups whose causes are to protect regional interests still tend to emerge in

Nigeria and there is still a fear of becoming "dominated" by other groups in the country (Interview 18, Falola and Heaton 2008:159). Many different ethnic and/or regional militias came about between the 1970s and the 1990s (Meredith 2011:544) and such militias can still be seen in the contemporary dataset produced by ACLED (acleddata.com/data/Africa/Nigeria). Esther Ozuma, a Nigerian lawyer, formulates this phenomenon effectively:

> You see some ethnic groups rising to propagate strong ethnic sentiments above national interest and also giving rights to the general feeling that "I have to protect my region", so in the North East you find the Boko Haram, the dominant group you find in the South West is OPC, in the South South [Niger Delta] is the MEND (Interview 18).

Since many sources stated that regional political and economic interests are protected and fought for, I asked if these groups; Boko Haram, MEND and the OPC were of the same "category" in terms of the reasons of their fight and their aim with it. The answers points to the conclusion that they thrive on *different* unifying forces.

An informant summarizes what the "organizing narratives" between the regions are centered around: In the North, it centers around 1) religion and 2) a sense of political exclusion, in the Delta, 1) exploitation by oil companies, 2) environmental degradation and 3) a sense of political exclusion, but when it comes to the South West there are not many organizing narratives. This region is economically dominant, Lagos is a melting pot of ethnicities and there is no clear religious divide amongst the Yorubas. (Interview 13, also Interview 4,9,11,12,14,15,18,19)

4.5.2 Unifying Forces – Regional Level

North East

A main "unifying force" – to use Gurr's own words (2007:138) – of Boko Haram is religious identity and a rejection of politicians, the police and Islamic authorities that they perceive praise western/secular attributes (Interview 1,2,12,19; Walker 2012:2) and "their history as an ideological [religious] movement is much longer than their history as an armed movement" (Interview 13). Western education is particularly criticized as part of a long-standing mistrust towards colonial and Christian influence from the south (ICG 2010:37). A strict Shari'a law was instituted in many northern states when democracy was introduced in 1999 – something that lead to an increased tension between Christians and Muslims in the region (Falola and Heaton 2009:239).

> In wanting to preserve identity, the largely Islamic North resisted Western education in the early 30s, 40s – and 'til today has not manage to catch up with the South, largely with the South West, which is also part of what you find to be one of the solutions of why the South West is also relatively peaceful. (Interview 19).

This is largely played out as a rejection of Nigerian secularism (Interview 15) and Nigerian state institutions. Still, their anger is primarily directed against people in government in Nigeria who live by western ideas and originally against corrupt Muslim leaders (Interview 9,12,13). These are still their main target and attacks on bars, churches and schools in recent years are *in addition* to that. The sense of political exclusion stems from corrupt politician who steals the wealth of the country at the expense of development in the North (Interview 13).

There is also an, *although subordinate,* ethnic dimension – Boko Haram was in its early stages primarily made up of people form the Kanuri tribe in the far North East and "all their leaders are Kanuri" (Interview 13).

Niger Delta

The main unifying force behind MEND is environmental rights and economic compensation for the pollution and destruction of the environment the oil and gas production causes (Interview 4,20). The fight is both anti-government and anti-oil-company (Falola and Heaton 2009:239). Government neglect towards the area results in poor public services (Meredith 2011:543) and corruption disrupts the intended flow of oil revenues back to this area (Interview 10,12,20). The result becomes a widespread mistrust towards the state and the political elite.

The ethnic dimension in this conflict is subordinate to the fight for rights and compensation. Several ethnicities in the delta area partake in the fight, the most notable being the Ijaws and the Ogoni (Meredith 2011:545, Peel 2010:7) and almost all people living in the Delta are Christians (Interview 13).

South West

The South West does not have extractive oil or gas industries and does not seem to have the same problems with religious identity (Interview 6) as compared to other regions:

> The South West is a region where most of the residents are educated and they are not strict on religious issues. In the South West you find a conglomerate of people with various religious persuasions. [...] They have a relaxed approach to issues. You don't see fanatics from the South West, not at all. There are no extremists in the South West. You find people that are very enlightened and brace the Western form of education for generations. The defining thing about the South West is that they have a history of encounter in westernization. It has brought to bear in all facets of their living; their religion, their culture, their hospitality. Lagos is the most populated city, it welcomes everybody without discrimination. (Interview 18)

The fact that South West is different in its religious composition compared to other regions is underscored by Falola and Heaton. The Yorubas, the major ethnicity in the South West, are more or less evenly split between Christians and Muslims (2008:223). This region has therefore also a higher level of interreligious marriage compared with other regions (Interview 11).

OPC "is an intellectual group with militant capacities, but they are silent presently" (Interview 18). The main unifying force behind OPC seems to be political. It was an "armed political vigilante group" that later "metamorphosed into a kind of morale group that was protecting the rights of [southwestern] citizens" (Interview 1,11).

There are no unifying forces in the South West of the same magnitude as in other parts of the country. Opportunities are better in the South West, which Lagos – the economic capital of West Africa – accounts for to a large extent. It is the largest and fastest growing city in Sub-Sahara and Lagosians themselves are the minority today. The result, according to Abiodun Baiyewu is a...

> ...mix of different cultures, different religions, high level of education, expatriates, high-level of commerce which means better job opportunities exist in Lagos which is also the pull to Lagos from the whole of Nigeria and most of West Africa. Possibly, better health care, better infrastructure. [...] Because the dynamic of Lagos itself and the influence of Lagos on the entire South West, you will find that the South West would be largely peaceful because if there was high level of poverty in any of the southwestern states, it is easy for the young people to leave their state and go onto Lagos and try to make a living and so you don't find restive youths frustrated and having nothing to do and nowhere to go creating a lot of problem. (Interview 19)

4.6 International Rebel Assistance – Regional Level

North East

Boko Haram thrive upon international links, for example to AQIM (al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb) (Interview 4,9,13). The question is to know the size and importance of it. What is clear is that the group has become more sophisticated – they went from using motorcycles and guns to use IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devise) and suicide bombings. The techniques and knowledge behind such bombs had to come from somewhere else, and the new type of modus operandi is also used in other countries (Interview 4; Walker 2012:2). The attacks on the UN headquarters (August 26, 2011) and the police headquarters (June 16, 2011) in Abuja would require preparations and outside support. (Interview 4) The latter attack is believed to be the first suicidal car bombing in the history of Nigeria (Brock 2011).

The border to neighboring countries in the North is a very porous desert area, making it very difficult to control (Interview 2,4,12,13), which enables Boko Haram to draw upon affiliates in countries such as Mali, Chad, Niger and Cameroon (Interview 9).

Niger Delta

It could also be the case that the Niger Delta borders, on the Bay of Guinea, should be understood as very porous. It is hard for the police and the military to

intervene in the vast areas of swamps and creeks, which gives the MEND an advantageous position (ICG 2006b:i). MEND's weaponry can possibly be traced to international arms smuggling taking place at sea or in the creeks (Interview 2).

South West
Since the military capacity of the OPC seems have declined and given that the OPC could be seen as a political vigilante group (Interview 1), there should not be much concrete international support to this group, or, at least none of the informants spoke of such support.

4.7 Violence and Crime – Dependent Variable Revisited

North East
It is possible that Boko Haram could have been sponsored financially by people in power[26] (Interview 12,13,19), but that the situation has now gotten out of hand. The logic would have been to finance insurgency in order to destabilize the region and to delegitimize Jonathan and show his incapacities. Boko Haram is now thought to be economically self-sufficient (Interview 9,13), mainly due to successful bank robberies and kidnappings of many Nigerians for ransom (Interview 9,13).

It is hard to understand what Boko Haram really wants by looking at their targets. One aim is the implementation of Shari'a law (Interview 12; Walker 2012:3) and to attack what they perceive as state targets such as security forces, public schools, churches and bars. (Interview 13)

There has been a remarkable shift in the modus operandi of Boko Haram. After the police killed their leader, Mohammed Yusuf, they "took up arms against 'perceived oppressors', i.e. [...] the security forces" (Interview 15). The group has recently undertaken more grave types of violence and has radically propagated for war on secular authorities. They are now targeting school teachers, health care staff, women and children. A high level of radicalism is stated as a requirement before undertaking such attacks. (Interview 1,4,9,15; also ICG 2010:37) "When you go into a school and you slit the throat of students [...] you really have to reach a certain degree of radicalism to go that far" (Interview 4).

Niger Delta
The main intention of MEND is to get compensation for the destruction of livelihoods and a political retribution for the human rights violations. Poverty, lack of development and lack of reasonable alternatives are integral features in

[26] There is a lack of evidence behind this claim due to the shadowy structure at the different political levels.

cementing the dynamic and youths are especially employable by the insurgents (ICG 2006b:21).

The harsh situation has created a large scale black oil market and oil theft is huge in the area. The oil sector shrank by 4,7 percent and the exports declined by 20 percent in 2006 due to unrest in the Delta region (Falola and Heaton 2009:236, 239). Theft of crude oil accounts for *at least* 150 000 barrels a day or seven percent of Nigeria's daily production (World Oil 2012-02-28). Nigeria's loss of oil production reached a record high of one-third in June 2008. (Falola and Genova 2009:xxviii) Oil theft is mainly done by bunkering of oil (cracking and tapping oil from pipelines) and oil piracy on cargos in the Gulf of Guinea. A third dimension is that you can buy cheap subsidized fuel in Nigeria and sell it at the higher market price in neighboring countries[27] (Interview 4). The involvement of authorities in the black oil market is seen as a given fact, because of the massive quantities being stolen and that it needs to be refined and traded (Interview 2,4,12).

Another big source of income is kidnapping of expatriated foreign oil workers for ransom.

> This is a thing that few people would admit in the international community, but there are more than 100 prisoners right now, expats [expatriates], in the Delta. [...] It is a huge business, kidnapping. (Interview 2)

South West

According to ACLED, there are still some instances of political protests or riots, kidnappings and even violent events in the South West, but not as near compared with other regions (acleddata.com/data/africa/; Interview 8). The crime rate in the South West is still high (Interview 8), but there are no organized insurgency today.

4.8 The Reactions of the State

The unrest in the two cases of conflict has been met with different approaches.

North East

Boko Haram rejected an amnesty offer after Jonathan set up a committee to look into the possibilities of granting the Boko Haram amnesty. Only weeks after the rejection, the Nigerian state sent more police and military forces against Boko Haram in May 2013, and reports are saying that killing is done on an

[27] "It is said that when the government lifted the subsidy here, it increased the prices of fuel in the neighboring countries or in some parts of them at least, because they were benefiting from the whole system as well." (Interview 4).

indiscriminate basis, with no intention of minimizing damage and killings[28] (Interview 6,9).

> [W]hat we are facing is not just militancy or criminality, but a rebellion and insurgency by terrorist groups which pose a very serious threat to national unity and territorial integrity. Already, some northern parts of Borno state have been taken over by groups whose allegiance is to different flags and ideologies. [...] Following recent developments in the affected states, it has become necessary for Government to take extraordinary measures to restore normalcy. [...] I hereby declare a State of Emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states.
>
> Accordingly, the Chief of Defence Staff has been directed to immediately deploy more troops to these states [...] (Goodluck Jonathan, President of Nigeria, speech on May 14, 2013)

Four days later, Boko Haram declared war on youths who they claim aid the security forces. The reaction of Boko Haram has not fully been seen yet but the indiscriminate violence of the state fuels the mistrust towards the government (Interview 4,8,13).

Niger Delta

The state has since 2009 being implementing an amnesty program (originally negotiated by former president Yar'adua) towards the MEND insurgents. The idea is that the insurgents are paid monthly (and are also offered education abroad and job training) in exchange for laying down weapons. The program can neither be assessed as a complete success nor as a complete failure. Nothing has been done to tackle the underlying causes of conflict since there are still vast polluted areas left uncleaned (Interview 8). Although, the number of violent attacks decreased after the amnesty was put in place. The logic of granting payments in exchange for not doing violent attacks can of course be criticized. It has created a situation where some people want to be labeled as insurgents since this could give them a share of the amnesty funds. There is also a problem with the distribution of the amnesty money – it is not trickling down to the middlemen or the local foot soldiers as intended, meanwhile the top leaders of MEND enjoy a good life in villas in Abuja and Lagos, which creates a lot of frustration. Also, there is no exit strategy – no one knows what will happen when the amnesty program runs out in 2015 (Interview 4,12). It is believed that MEND easily can resume the violence if the amnesty money stops (Interview 4,12). The amnesty program is hence working partly, temporarily and with unclear consequences when it stops.

South West

> There is no open conflict. It does not seem that there is an ideological issue around the [South] West. There is no environmental issue and a big scramble for access to

[28] Refers to the attack of the security forces on the town of Baga, Borno state, where allegedly 185 people were killed in clashes between the security forces and Boko Haram members on the 16 and 17 of April 2013.

> resources. Of course, there is major corruption like anywhere else, there is major poverty like anywhere else... (Interview 8)

The OPC did have a considerable influence as a political pressure group that politicians needed to get support from. Still, there is no open conflict in the South West today.

5 Analysis

5.1 Merging Theory and Empirics

As stated earlier, it is crucial to merge theory and empirics. How can the empirical findings be understood with the help of theory?

Country Level
Mansfield and Snyder's findings are applicable on Nigeria. Given Nigeria's violent history after independence it is clear that the transitional phase – with weak political institutions together with a heterogeneous identities and economic inequalities between them – could not mitigate the problems in the country. Governance has been manipulated with the help of lack of accountability, impunity and widespread corruption, and created a widespread mistrust towards the politicians, which is consistent with Mansfield and Snyder and Taydas et. al. Coupled with the fact that at least 80 percent of the oil revenue is pumped into the federal revenues (not the state budget), this has created a huge gap between the elite and the population where politicians do not need to be held accountable to the population. This high level of economic and political asymmetry creates a durable opportunity to take action against it, in accordance with Gurr.

Drawing on Murshed and Tadjoeddin, Nigeria seems to be a case of mostly vertical inequality, between the elite and the general population as seen in the Gini index. Still, inequalities can clearly be seen on the horizontal axis, mostly between the North and the South. This could partake as a perceived injustice, and possibly help as a unifying force to Boko Haram since the Christian South is comparatively better off.

North East
The North East has poor developmental circumstances, with high level of poverty, low level of education, high level of unemployment and a harsh desert environment. The fact that this situation is relatively the worst in many variables creates a problematic setting to begin with. Unjustness by the secular state and corrupt Muslim leaders is alluded to and the western form of education is rejected. The possibility to attract members of a cause is done with the help of religious saliency (Gurr refers to ethnocultural saliency).

The North-South poverty divide, coupled with a religious fault line creates a clear conflict dynamic in accordance with Gurr's findings of how insurgencies emerge from communal groups. The government long-term developmental neglect of the North, from where industries have left at a large scale, can be seen as an incentive for insurgent action according to Gurr.

The state response to send in more security forces to attack Boko Haram members has resulted in an increase of deaths and reports show that attacks are done indiscriminately. The mistrust towards the government grows out of this. This can from the Boko Haram's perspective be understood as government repression against their cause, something that Gurr highlights as an incentive to take action and retaliate. A cycle of retaliation can be noted as security forces and Boko Haram have long battled each other.

Capacities for collective action are according to Gurr helped by a geographic concentration, something that can be seen in the case of Boko Haram since it is mainly concentrated in the North East of the country. A preexisting organization in terms of identity cohesion helps to build a rebel organization. Three examples presented by Gurr exist in the case of Boko Haram, namely common religion, a shared economic situation and common political situation – which creates a fertile ground for building capacities and supporters. Religion is more useful to allude to than ethnicity since religion cross-cuts a large number of tribes, why a broader member base can be built. A network that stretches beyond porous national borders helps building capacities – but of what magnitude remains unknown.

The importance of leadership that Gurr refers to seems to have played a part. The main initiating event of Boko Haram involved the death of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in police custody which sparked widespread riots and protests against the security forces. This can also be seen as a sudden opportunity to retaliate against security forces.

Niger Delta

This case scores at medium levels on the development indicators of poverty, education and employment. The oil revenue is distributed from federal level to the 36 states but it has, at least not for the Niger Delta, translated into development or cleaning of the polluted and destroyed lands and waters. Widespread corruption hinders the funds to be properly invested. This can be understood as the long-term neglect that increases the likelihood of an armed insurgency to emerge. The opportunities to gain a share of the wealth that the communities are denied are obvious, in accordance with Gurr's theory, and the result is an emergence of an armed organization that earns a living out of the situation, from oil theft and kidnapping of expatriate oil workers.

There may not be any salient ethnocultural or religious identity in the sense that Gurr proposes, but communities in the Niger Delta share the same overall situation which can be understood as a unifying force, still in accordance with Gurr. The income gap that the oil wealth creates between the elite and the local communities and the denial of their right to control the wealth under their land is as a discriminating policy and creates a disadvantageous position that cements the common identity. This creates a relative group position of past, present and probably future losses – a disadvantageous position and an incentive to rebel – consistent with Gurr's findings.

Alluding to political and economic injustice is therefore useful for MEND to gain members and thus capacities for action. A shared political and economic situation creates a type of preexisting organization that Gurr refers to that goes

beyond ethnicities and communities that has a more limited reach. MEND is also geographically concentrated, in areas that are hard to intervene in, which leads to increased capacities for the rebel organization.

The amnesty deal between the government of Nigeria and the MEND has reduced the violence, but only partly and with unclear consequences when it stops. This could although be an indicator that policy intervention – handing out money in this case – can reduce the willingness to resort to violence.

South West

This region is characterized with relatively better development in terms of low poverty, high education and low unemployment. Still, perceived political unfairness created a breeding ground for the OPC. The exact reasons why this organization has declined or became a peaceful group has not been the main focus of this study and would need a more thorough investigation to reach fair conclusions. Gurr's theory is although useful to understand the peaceful situation of the South West.

To begin with, there should not be the same sense of disadvantage in this region given the better economic situation and lower unemployment rates. Gurr writes that a geographic concentration helps a rebel group in its existence and if the group is within an urban area, this decreases the likelihood rebellion. Lagos, with close to 18 million inhabitants, could therefore contain two important factors that absorb youth restiveness. First, as Baiyewu points out, Lagos is attractive for youths that want to make a living, and second, that urban environment lowers the risk of rebel organizations to emerge.

There is no saliency of ethnocultural or religious identity in the South West. The Yoruba is split between Christians and Muslims. The mixture of identities in this region lessens the capacity of rebel groups to emerge since there would be no identity cohesion, according to Gurr's theory.

5.2 Correlations

The below table summarizes the empirical chapter and describes the correlation between the variables. The country level provides with the general context (constant variables) in which the independent variables vary. Since my investigation is a within-case analysis, it is important to do this kind of differentiation. This enables one to draw meaningful conclusions from the within-cases. An initial step is to show the variance:

Variables	CV 1	CV 2	CV 3	CV 4	CV 5	IV 1	IV 2	IV 3	IV 4	IV 5	IV 6	DV (conflict)
Cases												
North East	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes, High
Niger Delta	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Low	High	Yes, Medium
South West	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	No, Low

The above table describes the correlation between the variables.

Constant variables:
CV 1 – Bad governance
CV 2 – Weak accountability
CV 3 – Impunity
CV 4 – Corruption
CV 5 – Economic inequality

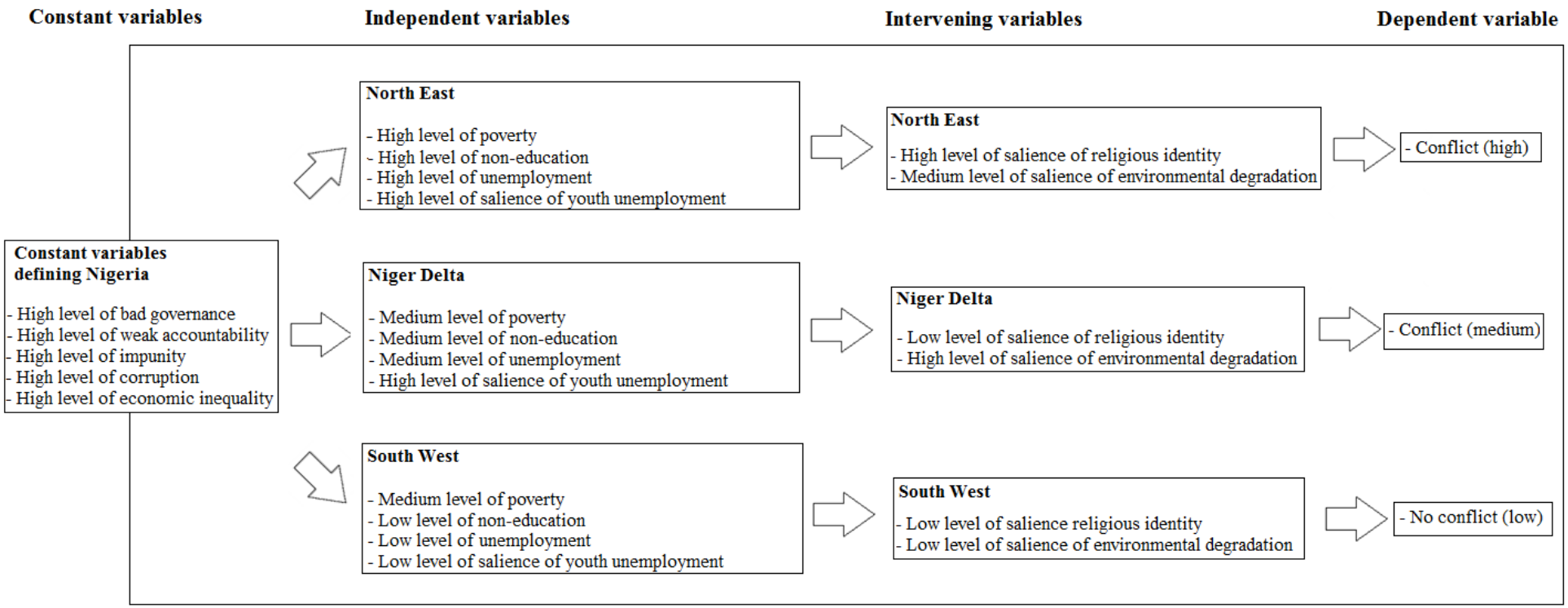
Independent variables:
IV 1 – Poverty
IV 2 – Non-education
IV 3 – Unemployment
IV 4 – Salience of youth unemployment

Intervening variables:
IV 5 – Salience of religious identity
IV 6 – Salience of environmental degradation

Dependent variable
DV – Conflict

5.3 Causal Chain

The below causal chain describes how variables could interact with each other. The observant reader notes that it is a translation of the variable table. I deliberately present it simplistically in order to discuss it below. It is important to bear in mind that I cannot propose an exact causal path since it is not possible to isolate one explaining variable. The below causal chain could although contain significant explanatory power.


Constant variables
Independent variables
Intervening variables
Dependent variable
Constant variables defining Nigeria
- High level of bad governance
- High level of weak accountability
- High level of impunity
- High level of corruption
- High level of economic inequality
North East
- High level of poverty
- High level of non-education
- High level of unemployment
- High level of salience of youth unemployment
Niger Delta
- Medium level of poverty
- Medium level of non-education
- Medium level of unemployment
- High level of salience of youth unemployment
South West
- Medium level of poverty
- Low level of non-education
- Low level of unemployment
- Low level of salience of youth unemployment
North East
- High level of salience of religious identity
- Medium level of salience of environmental degradation
Niger Delta
- Low level of salience of religious identity
- High level of salience of environmental degradation
South West
- Low level of salience religious identity
- Low level of salience of environmental degradation
- Conflict (high)
- Conflict (medium)
- No conflict (low)

The scheme describes the causal chains where the three cases are put within the larger country level context.

5.3.1 Discussing the Causal Chain

All constant variables perform badly, but the case of South West clearly shows that they are not sufficient to result in an organized insurgency. Independent and intervening variables are therefore necessary to explain the different outcomes.

The causal chain above needs contestation. First, the causal directions can be of discussion. There should be a considerable feed-back link from the dependent variable to the independent variables (and possibly the "level of saliency of religious identity" in the case of North East) since it would be logical that a conflict impacts on levels of poverty, education, employment etc. why the conflict dynamics in turn could become further cemented. The causal relationship could partly work in the opposite direction, but if theory is consulted, one could say that such causal feedback *should* be understood as subordinate.

Boko Haram is responsible for most killings, MEND the second most and OPC the least. Two independent variables show a *strong correlation* with this outcome, namely levels of education and unemployment. These two could be seen as indicators of inequality and if coinciding with identity lines, they could in fact contain a significant degree of explanatory power, and as they also coincide with salience of religious identity in the case of the North East and salience of environmental degradation in the case of the Niger Delta, the outcome becomes conflict, in accordance with by Gurr. The salience of *religious* identity has no strong correlation since both low and high levels of it correlate with the outcome of conflict. A look at theory again would say that the probability of conflict heightens when identity lines coincide with inequality. All cases have a high level of economic inequality, but it is only the North East that has a high level on the saliency of religious identity. The fault lines coincide in this case. Still, the unjustness seen in the Niger Delta could be understood as the unifying force of that region, suggesting a strong common identity among marginalized groups. A low level of education, combined with inequalities that coincide with identity lines, could increase the proneness of radicalization, as a qualitative reading of the North East could suggest.

Poverty does not correlate particularly well since the Niger Delta and the South West performs at the same level but have different outcomes. Still, the South West performs slightly better on poverty than the Niger Delta in absolute terms, which could propose a strong correlation between the level of poverty and the level of conflict.

International rebel assistance could unfortunately not be measured properly; this is in fact an extremely shadowy area and few others than the leaders of the insurgent organizations should know the level of it. Still, this variable can contain some degree of explanatory power. Several informants state that Boko Haram have international links (especially with AQIM). MEND's assistance could possibly by linked to the illegal trade of oil and weaponry. It would be reasonable

to say that OPC has no international rebel assistance of significance. It could therefore be the case that it co-varies with the difference in outcome.

South West has low levels on the intervening variables and my findings suggest that the probability of conflict lowers if one of these has a low level. How to distribute explanatory power among the variables is although hard since the South West also has low values on the independent variables.

6 Conclusions

The conclusions I have reached are contingent on my methodological and theoretical considerations and also on my empirical interview material.

Several bad performing variables defines the context of the country, namely high level of bad governance, lack of accountability, high level of corruption, widespread impunity and high level of income inequality. The economic and political divide between the political elite and the population results in a situation where people must rely on themselves to provide for their living and wellbeing. This is coupled with regional groups fearing that they can be politically dominated by one another. These two dynamics translates into a climate that is prone to conflict. Still, the constant variables are not sufficient to result in an organized insurgency as more independent variables have to be added to the explanation of the outcome of conflict.

It is possible to note several interesting regional differences within this overall setting. The three cases differ in several factors and multi-causality does not help to define the exact causes behind the phenomena. Instead, factors can be understood as partaking in a larger and more complex set of explanation, where education and unemployment show particularly strong correlations. Poverty also shows (in absolute terms) a strong correlation with the difference in outcome. Causality can also work in different directions, but theory suggests that such direction could be viewed as additions to the above graph.

The North East has been subject to a long term neglect which translates into low level of or declining development. This coincides with identity lines, which results in a volatile situation. The same goes for the Niger Delta if perceiving identity as a common political and economic situation vis-a-vis the corrupt politicians together with the oil companies. The destruction of the Niger Delta environment is a considerable intervening variable and a main reason to retaliate against the security forces of the state. The level of oil theft suggests that it cannot be done without considerable involvement of authorities. The amnesty deal has reduced the violence, but only with mixed results. The level of radicalization should partake in the explanation of the violence in the North East since it leads to increased and graver violence.

The reason behind the fact the South West is largely peaceful seems to be that it performs better on several development indicators such as low poverty, high education, and low unemployment. The region is also composed of a mixture of identities, which lessens the likelihood for an insurgency to take root, as a possible member base is not cohesive. Lagos seems to absorb youth restiveness since it offers the possibility to make a living. This region is still characterized with a high crime rate and the occurrence of political protests and riots. However, bad performing independent variables would need to be in place for an insurgency

to emerge – in accordance with how to understand reasons behind peace in Nigeria.

6.1 Future Research

Future research on peace and conflict within Nigeria could focus on the following:

North *West*
North West is worse off in terms of poverty than the North East, but has little or no insurgent activity. Investigating why could be fruitful. It could be that Boko Haram does not view this region as strategically important to target. Why Boko Haram emerged from an area slightly better off than the North West could possibly be explained by the need for capacities stressed by Gurr, which could be investigated further.

South *East*
The state of Cross Rivers in the South East could be used to control for variables. This state is considered as peaceful and one explanation could be that it is free from environmental pollution, only bordering the oil field to its west. An informant point out that Cross Rivers harvests money from off-shore oil rigs. Such rigs do not have the same impact on the environment on the lands and fresh waters which is the case in the Niger Delta area. (Interview 5) The lack of environmental degradation could explain why Cross Rivers is peaceful; something a comparative study between the Delta and Cross Rivers could investigate.

South West: OPC
Understanding peace in the South West could be done by a more thorough investigation of the OPC and why it went form a militant to a more politically influential group. This has not been the exact intention of this investigation which applies Gurr's theory which is focused on why insurgencies emerge, and not why they decline. Gurr's theory is still useful to gain an understanding of the peacefulness in the South West. The urban factor could also be of interest to investigate further.

6.2 Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the reasons behind peace and conflict within Nigeria can be understood. It deals with two cases of conflict, namely the North East and the Niger Delta and one case of peace, namely the South West. The main contributions this study makes is that it, first, integrates a peaceful case within a country marred with internal strife, why *both* peace and conflict can be understood and, second, it also integrates the role of the Nigerian state in order to understand the outcomes more comprehensively.

Boko Haram is an Islamic militant sect primarily active in the North East of the country with the aim to establish a pure Islamic state in the primarily Muslim North. It translates into "Western education is forbidden" and it attacks those who they perceive represent the West or the secular state of Nigeria. Targets are corrupt politicians or religious leaders, state security forces, churches, bars and public schools. Bank robberies and kidnappings of Nigerians finance their insurgency.

MEND (the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) is an umbrella organization of armed gangs that is active in the Niger Delta region. It is a reaction of the impoverishment caused by international oil companies that operate in the oil rich region on contracts signed by the corrupt political elite of Nigeria. The industries have polluted and destroyed vast areas that before were farmlands and fishing waters and the contaminated areas remain uncleaned today. MEND targets oil fields and pipelines in order to steal crude oil and the theft accounts for at least 7 percent of the daily oil production in Nigeria. It kidnaps expatriate oil workers that are being held for ransom and attacks also state security forces.

The South West had a militant organization, the OPC (O'odua People's Congress) that rioted and attacked police forces in Lagos after the 1999 elections. It changed into a politically active and peaceful group. The South West has no organized insurgency today, which is why I treat this region as the peaceful case in my study.

The theoretical field on causes of internal peace and conflict deals with a range of independent variables, why I initially did not limit my theoretical scope. Theories on the transitional phase of democratization, on governance and political instability, and on heterogeneous identities are drawn upon. Ted Robert Gurr's theory on how to analyze why insurgency emerge from communal groups is although used the most. The theoretical chapter summarizes as the following. First, transitions to democracy in premature political environments are often a potent setting for manipulation of state institutions. Contestation for political power plays out violently. Second, the institutions are used to favor certain segments of the population disproportionately, at the expense of politically and economically marginalized groups. Third, governance can further cement the inequality gap if for example corruption, lack of accountability and impunity is present at high levels. Fourth, discrimination and repressive policies that goes along with identity lines create inequalities that form incentives for communal

groups to rebel against. Gurr's theory deals with four main factors that are used to analyze why such communal groups rebel. These are 1) saliency of ethnocultural identity, 2) incentives, 3) capacities and 4) opportunities to take action. Theory is applied on the empirical findings in order to see what it has to say about peace and conflict in Nigeria.

With regards to theory of science, I place my study within a reflexivist approach. This sees the world as inseparable from the subjective researcher, why intersubjectivity is used to show what aspects my study is contingent on. It also put emphasis on transfactualism, that is, the possibility to link variables or phenomena with each other without observing the casual path directly. Since these links are unobservable, it is crucial to apply theoretical claims on how relationships between phenomena can be understood.

The used method is a *within*-case comparison which lays out the general Nigerian context and compares the three cases that are found within the country. I selected cases on the dependent variable and those who are extremes – the two cases of conflict are the two most violent regions in recent years and the peaceful case is a large region freed from organized insurgency. The reason for this selection of cases is that I get a great variation on the dependent variable in order to understand the causal relationship correctly. A within-case comparison enables one to reach secure conclusions since several variables can be held constant. Those independent variables that differ are thought to contain explanatory power.

The empirical material for this thesis is mainly qualitative interview material that was collected on an eight week field trip to Abuja, capital of Nigeria. Disaggregated statistics on the state or regional level was also used to get case specific values on certain developmental variables. I interviewed a range of people from both the international community and local Nigerians that had knowledge on aspects relevant for my investigation. The semi-structured informant interview method was used, something that enables the interview objects to talk freely and express their views in their own way. All interviews were recorded, something which enabled an analytical coding procedure of the material. Since I searched for explanatory factors, I identified those that were most salient and notable. The material was broken down into text segments that were labeled with a summarizing variable name and I also analyzed how the relationship between the variables best could be understood. This procedure helped me to reduce my list of independent variables.

A procedure of coding the variables had its purpose to bracket their values into "low", "medium" and "high". This enables me to describe the variance among the different variables, a crucial step in a method of comparison. The main analytical apparatus, the variable scheme, is the following:

Variables	CV 1	CV 2	CV 3	CV 4	CV 5	IV 1	IV 2	IV 3	IV 4	IV 5	IV 6	DV (conflict)
Cases												
North East												Yes, High
Niger Delta												Yes, Medium
South West												No, Low

Constant variables:
CV 1 – Bad governance
CV 2 – Weak accountability
CV 3 – Impunity
CV 4 – Corruption
CV 5 – Economic inequality

Independent variables:
IV 1 – Poverty
IV 2 – Non-education
IV 3 – Unemployment
IV 4 – Salience of youth unemployment

Intervening variables:
IV 5 – Salience of religious identity
IV 6 – Salience of environmental degradation

Dependent variable
DV – Conflict

The aim of the empirical chapter is to show the material needed in order to input values into the cells in the above variable scheme. The material is reproduced under theoretical subsections and is disposed in the following order: 1) country level (if relevant), 2) North East: Boko Haram, 3) Niger Delta: MEND, and 4) South West: OPC. The reason for this is to give the reader the most comparable structure possible. How all the variables performed between my cases is shown. Governance, accountability, impunity, corruption and economic inequality performed all badly *throughout* Nigeria why these were held constant. The independent variables poverty, education, unemployment and the saliency of youth unemployment show variance between my cases, which is why these should contain important explanatory power to the different outcomes. The two intervening variables are specific to the two cases of conflict and are hence crucial to take into account to understand the reasons for those conflicts and, equally important, the two intervening variables also show low scores in the peaceful case.

A revisit to theory concludes that past findings are to a great extent applicable on Nigeria and the three *within*-cases. The violent transitional phase indicates a premature political landscape. Lack of accountability and corruption show the manipulation which results in a gap between the political elite and the general

population. Long-term neglect towards the North East and the Niger Delta in terms of underdevelopment can be seen. The neglect also went along identity lines which created a discriminatory setting and a durable opportunity and an incentive for the emergence of insurgency. Capacities are helped by a preexisting organization or identity base in the two cases of conflict and the lack of such preexisting organization in the South West should account for some explanation behind the peaceful outcome.

Lastly, the values on my variables are the following:

Variables	CV 1	CV 2	CV 3	CV 4	CV 5	IV 1	IV 2	IV 3	IV 4	IV 5	IV 6	DV (conflict)
Cases												
North East	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes, High
Niger Delta	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Low	High	Yes, Medium
South West	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	No, Low

Political manipulation creates high levels of bad governance, lack of accountability, impunity, corruption and economic inequality (constant variables, CV, 1-5) – throughout Nigeria. However, these are *not sufficient* to explain conflict since these features are present even in the South West. Explanation should therefore be found in the independent (IV 1-4) and intervening (IV 5-6) variables. Levels of education and unemployment correlate strongly with the different outcomes, whilst also other variables (poverty, salience of youth unemployment, salience of religious identity and salience of environmental degradation) correlate fairly strong, or, the values are almost always in accordance with the outcome value. A range of variables could hence contain explanatory power. Bad performing variables coincide with identity lines in the two cases of conflict, something that is not present in the South West which consists of a mixture of people and a split in religiosity. This region performs better overall on the independent and intervening variables.

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8 Appendix A

8.1 The Informants

Out of the 20 interviews, only 4 felt that they could be open with their identity and 16 wanted to be anonymous. This could be an indicator of the bad security situation in the country. I did not ask why they wanted to be anonymous, but some stated the worsened security situation as a reason. The titles of some informants are written deliberately unspecific due to anonymity.

Interview 1 – Anonymous, Ph.D. working in an international organization, Nigerian
Interview 2 – Anonymous, Western diplomat 1
Interview 3 – Anonymous, Western journalist
Interview 4 – Anonymous, Western diplomat 2
Interview 5 – Anonymous, Nigerian Igbo, lawyer
Interview 6 – Mr. Thomas Mättig, Head of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Abuja
Interview 7 – Anonymous, Nigerian working in the civil society
Interview 8 – Anonymous, Western diplomat 3
Interview 9 – Anonymous, Working in an international organization
Interview 10 – Anonymous, Working in an international organization
Interview 11 – Anonymous, Nigerian Yorubaman working in the service sector
Interview 12 – Anonymous, Western diplomat 4
Interview 13 – Anonymous, Analyst in a western aid agency
Interview 14 – Anonymous, Professor within the field of Peace and Conflict studies, Nigerian
Interview 15 – Anonymous, High-level ministry worker, Nigerian
Interview 16 – Anonymous, Nigerian northerner working in the service sector
Interview 17 – Mr. Udenta O. Udenta, Director at Centre for Alternative Policy Perspective and Strategy, Nigerian
Interview 18 – Ms. Esther Uzoma, Nigerian lawyer
Interview 19 – Ms. Abiodun Baiyewu, Country Director at Global Rights, Nigerian
Interview 20 – Anonymous, Analyst in a Niger Delta NGO, Nigerian

9 Appendix B

9.1 The Interview Structure

Warm up

- Thanking for letting me interview the person.
- "I am in Abuja on a scholarship to collect interview material for my Master's thesis I write in political science at Lund University, Sweden. I want to explain the difference of peace and conflict within Nigeria by looking at three cases, namely the (1) Boko Haram in the North East, (2) MEND in the Niger Delta and (3) the peaceful region in the South West. I want to explain the underlying causes and dynamics behind the different situations."
- "I cannot use a standardized questionnaire due to the problem of representativeness since I cannot travel to the conflict zones. The interview is instead more of a talk or a discussion and every interview is one piece of the puzzle."
- Asking about the work the person is doing, and if he or she was from the international community, how long he or she has been in Nigeria.
- Stating that the interview would last for approximately an hour and asking for permission to record the interview. Consent to record was always given.
- Stating that it is completely fine if informant wants to be anonymous. Anonymity was recommended if this enabled them to speak more freely.

The variables

- The interview varied in time and relative who I was talking to, but the data I wanted to extract revolved around the below checklist of independent variables:

    - State militarization
    - Hatred due to history of armed conflict
    - Economic marginalization/asymmetry
    - Political marginalization/asymmetry
    - Demographic stress
    - Environmental stress
    - International rebel assistance

- Un-responsiveness of the central power
- Weakness of political institutions
- Corruption
- Religious difference (within the region)
- Religious difference (towards other regions)
- Ethnic difference
- Unemployment
- Youth unemployment
- Accessibility of SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons)
- Collective incentives for political action
- Salience of ethnocultural identity
- Capacities for political action
- Availability of opportunities for political action
- Rebel mobilization

The questions

- Below are examples of the specific questions I asked. My aim was to pose the same questions towards every case. Follow-up questions were asked when it would give me a more comprehensive understanding or clarifications.

    - How would you describe the [North East / Delta region / South West] in terms of the [lack of development / security situation / etc]?
    - How would you describe the [Independent variable expressed more comprehensible, for example: security situation / culture / ethnicity / religion / economic situation / environment degradation / corruption / level of unemployment] in the [case / region]?
    - How does the aspect of [level of militarization / political marginalization / economic marginalization / corruption / youth unemployment / criminal activity] relate to the abovementioned issue in the [case/region]?
    - How would you assess the amnesty program towards the MEND?
    - What is your opinion on the possibility of an amnesty program to Boko Haram?
    - How would you describe the state response against the Boko Haram?
    - Etc.

Outro

- "I am basically done with my questions, but I still want to ask if there is anything that you want to add, anything that you feel should be mentioned relating to peace and conflict in Nigeria?"
- "Could you recommend someone that I should interview?"
- "Thank you for your participation!"

10 Appendix C

10.1 Coding the Variables

Constant variables:
CV 1 – Bad governance
CV 2 – Weak accountability
CV 3 – Impunity
CV 4 – Corruption
CV 5 – Economic inequality

The constant variables are not varying within Nigeria, which is why they are held constant. Since the empirical sections 4.2.1 and 4.3.1 show that constant variables are at high levels throughout the country, I will not code the values "medium" or "low".

Independent variables:
IV 1 – Poverty
IV 2 – Non-education
IV 3 – Unemployment
IV 4 – Salience of youth unemployment

It is a somewhat delicate task to code poverty, education and unemployment in cases within a developing country. It would be unfair to compare such countries with highly developed ones. Since the scores on these variables are poor between all cases, I have deliberately chosen to adjust the coding of these values so that they become more in tune with the case of Nigeria. For example, I code poverty as "low" if it is below 20 percent. The reason behind this adjustment is 1) due to the fact that Nigeria is a developing country and 2) that it otherwise would be hard to draw any meaningful conclusions, for example if all cases were to be labeled with a high poverty rate.

Poverty:	0 – 25 percent = Low
	26 – 50 percent = Medium
	51 – 100 percent = High
Non-education (illiteracy):	The share of illiterate children aged 5-16.
	0 – 25 percent = Low
	26 – 50 percent = Medium

51 – 100 percent = High

Unemployment:
0 – 15 percent = Low
16 – 25 percent = Medium
26 – 100 percent = High

Salience of youth unemployment: There are no published statistics on youth unemployment on state level in Nigeria. The youth unemployment is although thought to follow the same pattern between the cases as the overall unemployment. This is based on two premises. First, the overall unemployment has risen from 13,1 percent in 2000 to 21,1 percent in 2010 and second, that the youth segment (aged 15 – 24) makes up 35 percent of the total unemployed population. But since I cannot find the exact statistics, I do not name the variable "Youth unemployment" but instead "Salience of youth unemployment". Youths makes up a crucial base of the insurgent members and, on the contrary, Lagos absorbs many of the poor youths in the southwestern states who seeks to make a living (Interview 19).

Intervening variables

IV 6 – Salience of religious identity
IV 7 – Salience of environmental degradation

Salience of religious identity: The value given to the North East is "high" since religious identity is one of the central components of Boko Haram (Interview 1,2,12,13,19). Since I have not found that religion play any significant effect with regards to identity in the other regions, I find it fair to label them as "low".

Salience of environmental degradation: Niger Delta gets the value "high" since vast areas are destroyed because of oil spills and gas flaring (Interview 4,20). I gave the North East the value "medium" since this region is to a large extent a desert area. (Interview 12). I gave the South West the value "low" because the larger southern region is a lush tropical area

	and that the South West is freed from the environmental degradation of the Niger Delta.

Dependent variable
DV Conflict

Conflict	Drawn on the size of the violence (ACLED 2013) in the three cases, they are labeled as follows: North East: conflict (high), Niger Delta: conflict (medium) and South West: no conflict (low).

10.2 Coding the Interview Material

The below table exemplifies the logic of how quotes are coded as (1) variables and (2) a causal chain, two of the most crucial units of achieving analytical comprehension of vast amounts of interview material (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:218; Strauss and Corbin 1998:57,66; Lantz 2007:110). This enables comparability and understanding of how variables interact.

Quotation (text segment)	*Variable(s)*	*Causal chain*
"You can see a sharp divide between the haves and the have nots and it speaks to even the proportion of people that are literate or educated vis-à-vis those that are not literate and not educated, you see a lot of people that are out of school in much of the north and this has been like that for many years so the situation in the north right now, with the insecurity and radicalism is just like playing out what would have been predicted many years ago and it is something that also speaks to what is happening in other part of this country." (Interview 14)	Education Radicalism	Low level of education → proneness to radicalization. High level of education → low proneness to radicalization.
"Everyone has first of all to rely on himself or herself for basic needs; access to water access to electricity, access to education. Public education is a disaster. Many Nigerians use to say each Nigerian is a head of government in his own capacity because they have to manage the mini-state which is the house and provide all the basic services for the household, water, electricity, employment, healthcare, all these things you would expect the state to have some degree of intervention or interference, especially in a poor country like this one." (Interview 4)	Lack of welfare system. System of self-reliance	Lack of welfare system → system of self-reliance
"The issue behind terrorism a lot of time is a quest to protect identity. It is a strange symmetry of two fearful groups, a group that often feels that identity is being trampled on or overlooked by another group and in	Independent variable: Threat towards identity preservation.	Threat towards identity preservation → resort to violence.

wanting to preserve culture and identity, identity in this instance being Islam, will then fight back and people don't often understand that the fight back a lot of time is from the fear of losing their identity so they try to create fear in the other group" (Interview 19)	Dependent variable: resort to violence in disputes.	
"There doesn't seem to be a media strategy or a campaign to get the message to the people and when you don't get a positive message to the people, all they can see is actions and they have seen cases, Baga being the most recent, where security forces have entered into a strategy that has resulted in, unconfirmed numbers, but 180 people being killed. I think they forget that people then can't support the government either, if innocent people are being killed. I don't think they have understood that you can get the peoples' support and you can do it at a lower level." (Interview 9)	Independent variable: Militaristic response of the state. Dependent variable: Mistrust towards the government.	Militaristic response of the state → Mistrust towards the government.
"Politics is a bit of a closed system. When you are in, you are not going to be loyal to the people because they cannot punish you and they cannot reward you. You cannot base your mandate on the people. You have to satisfy those who got you in that position and those are not the people because the election has been rigged. So it's the people who gave you the candidacy in the party, who rigged for you, who supported you with money in your candidacy. Those are the people you have to serve first." (Interview 6)	Accountability	Low level of accountability → politicians independent of their population.

11 Appendix D

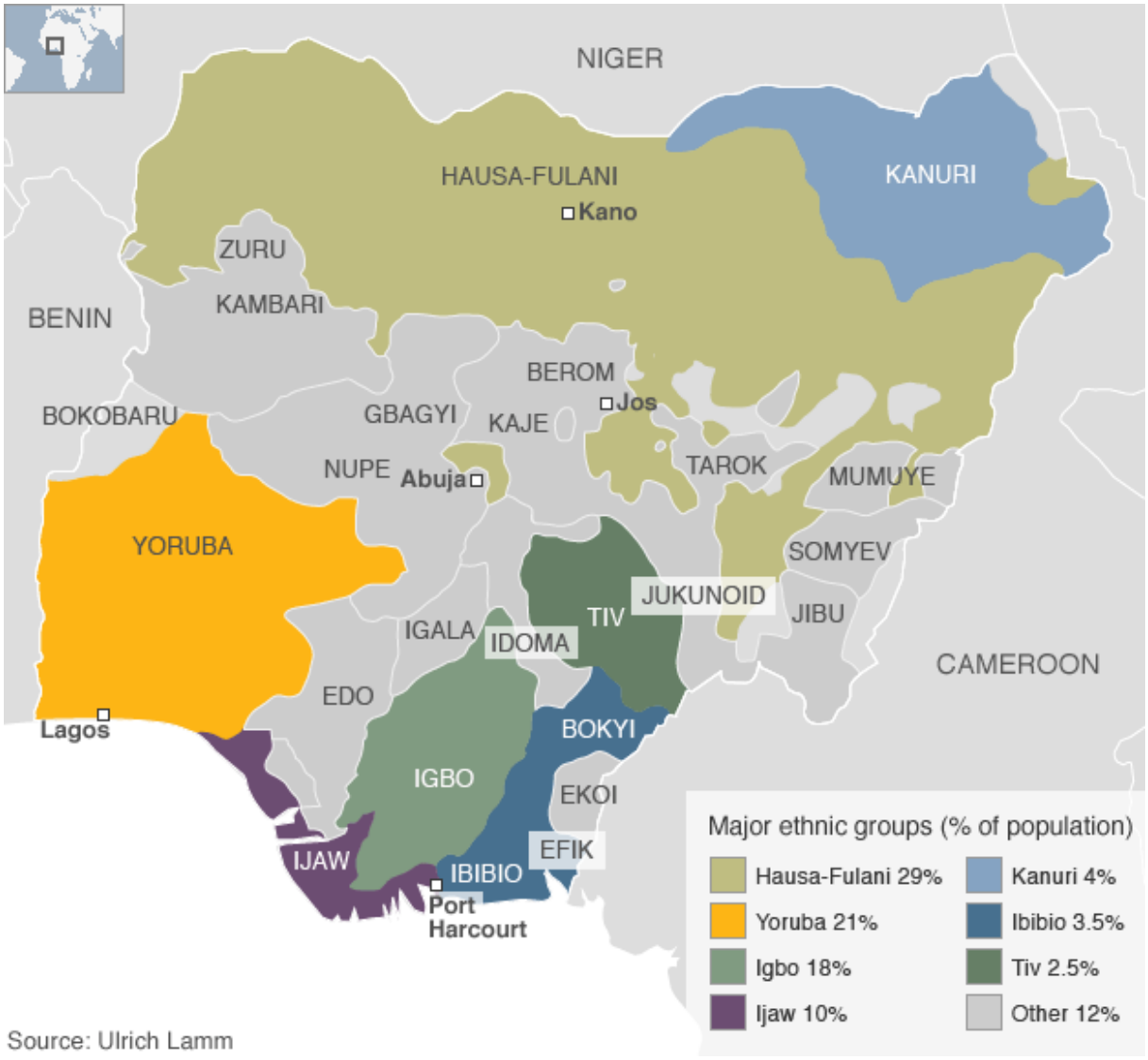
11.1 Maps of Nigeria

The below maps show that Nigeria is a highly divided nation politically, ethnically, and in terms of wealth, health, literacy and oil production. All maps are collected from BBC (2011-04-04).

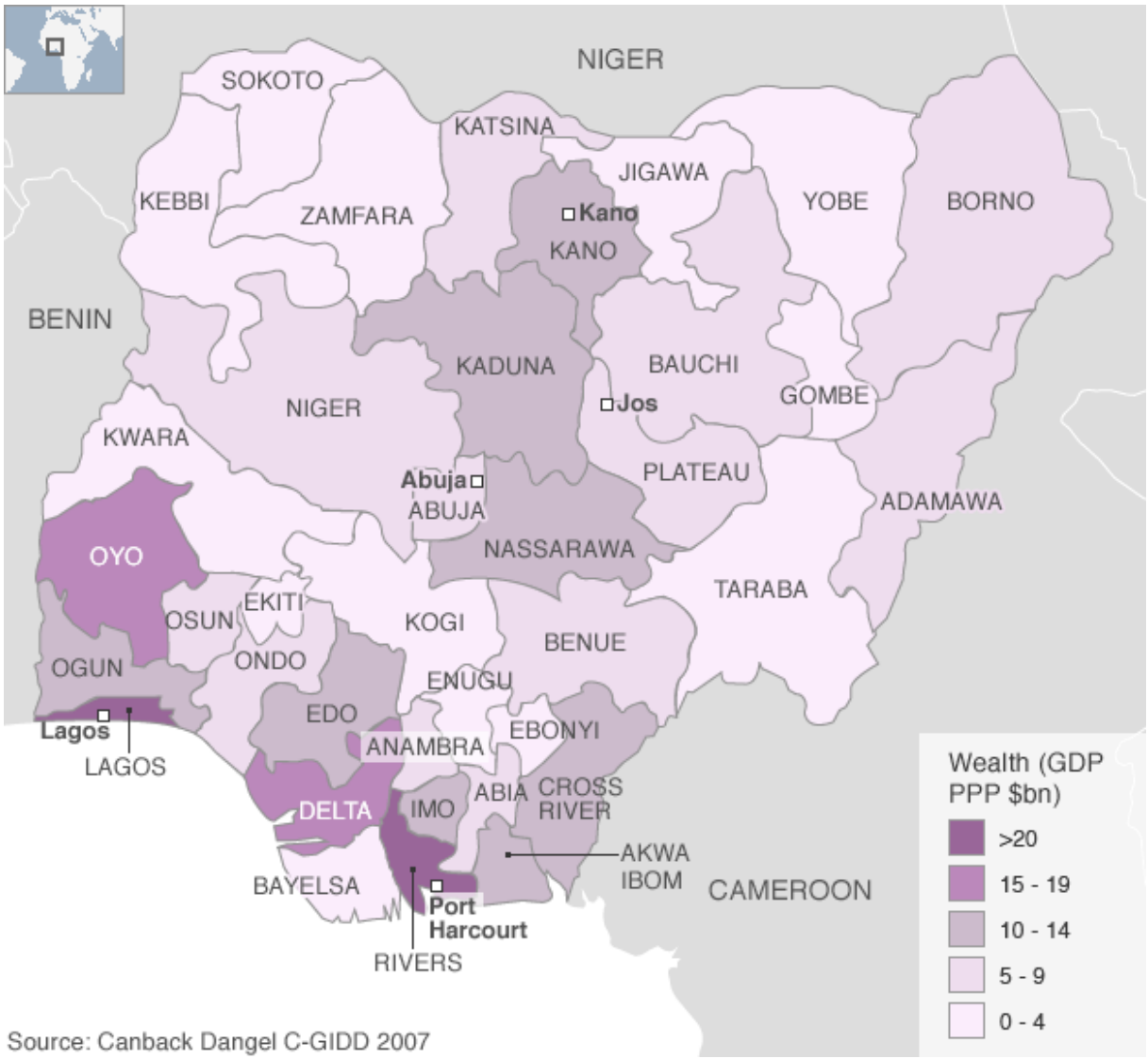
11.1.1 Result of Presidential Election in 2011

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission Nigeria

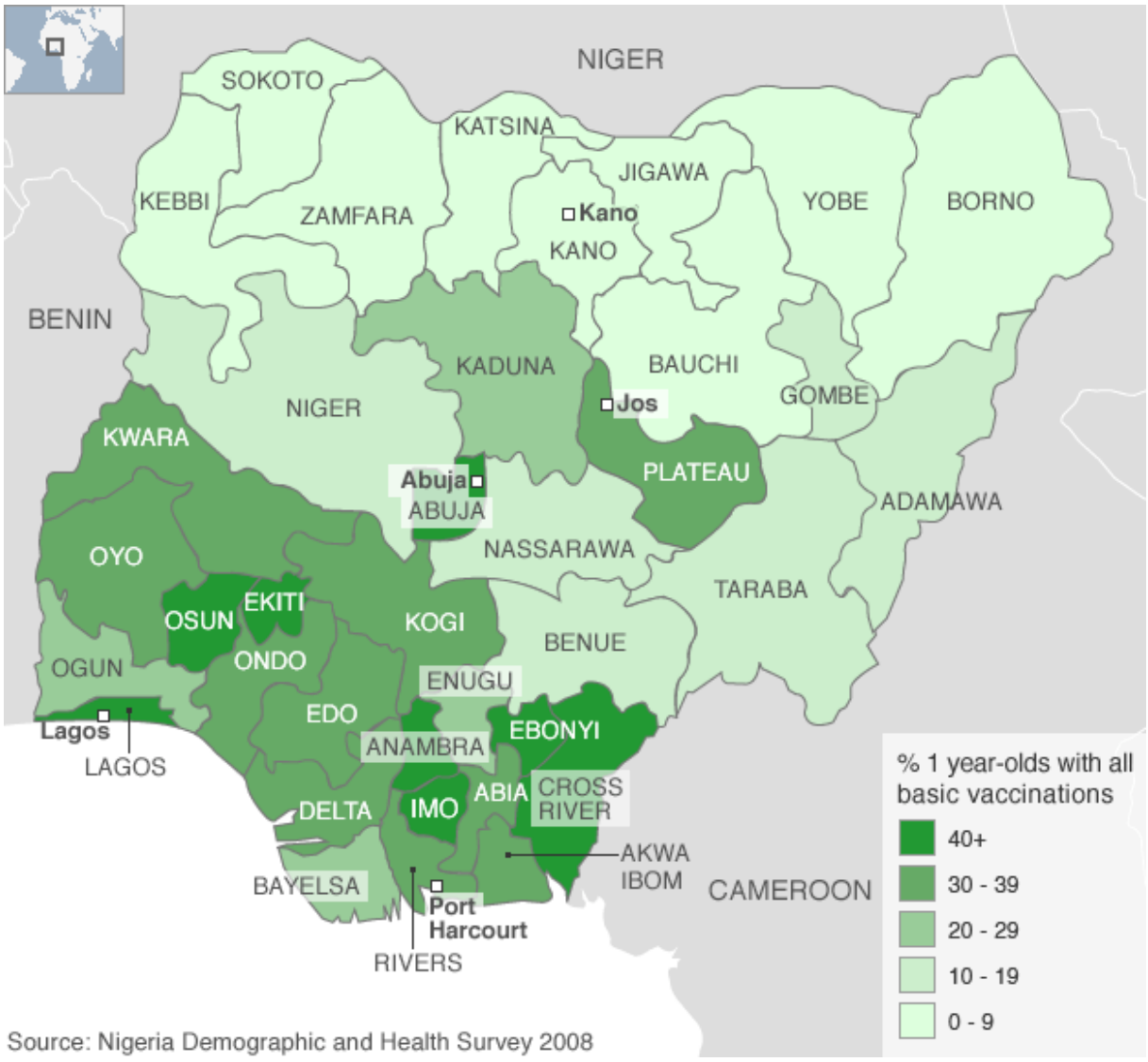
11.1.2 Nigeria's Ethnic Composition



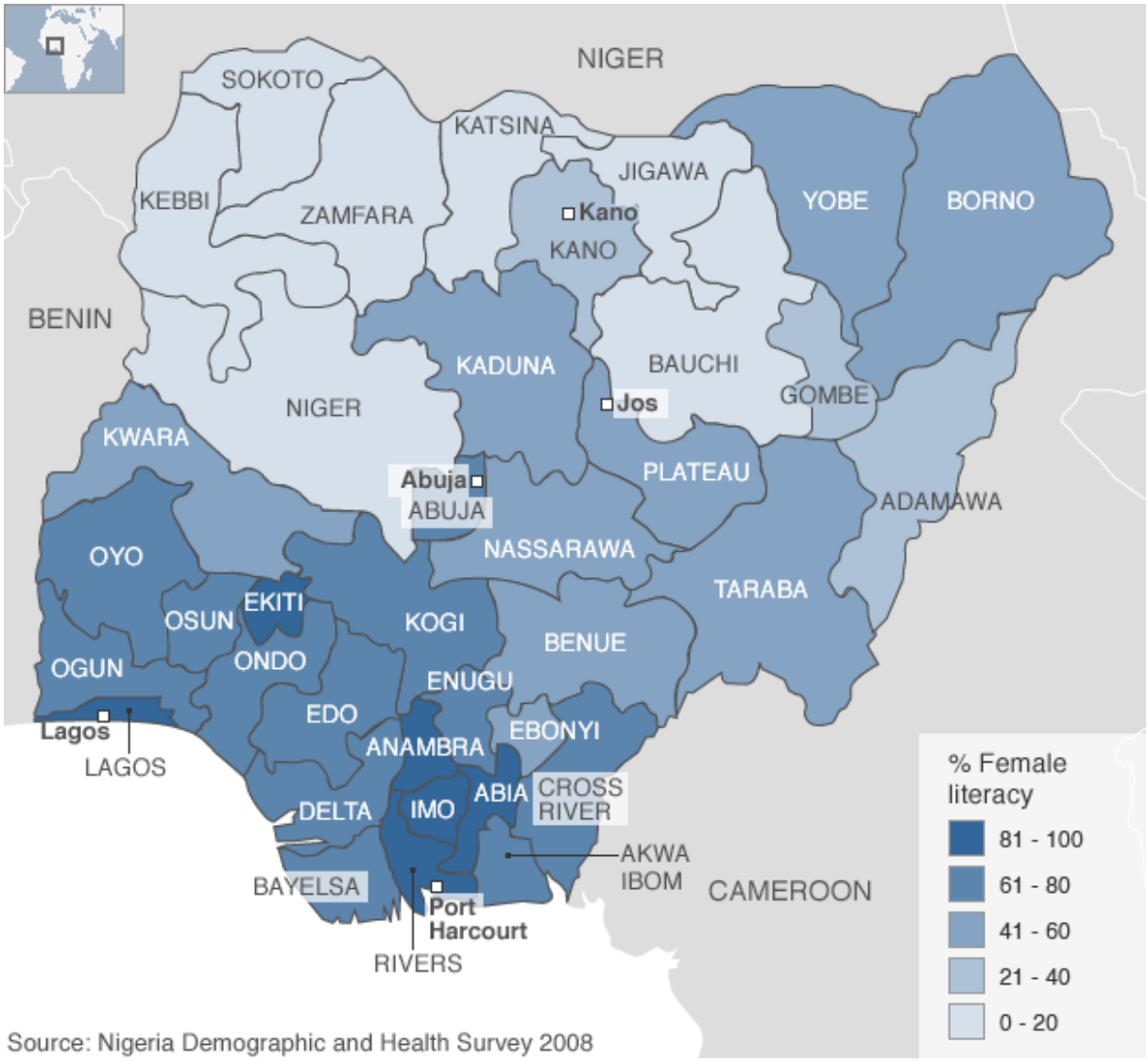
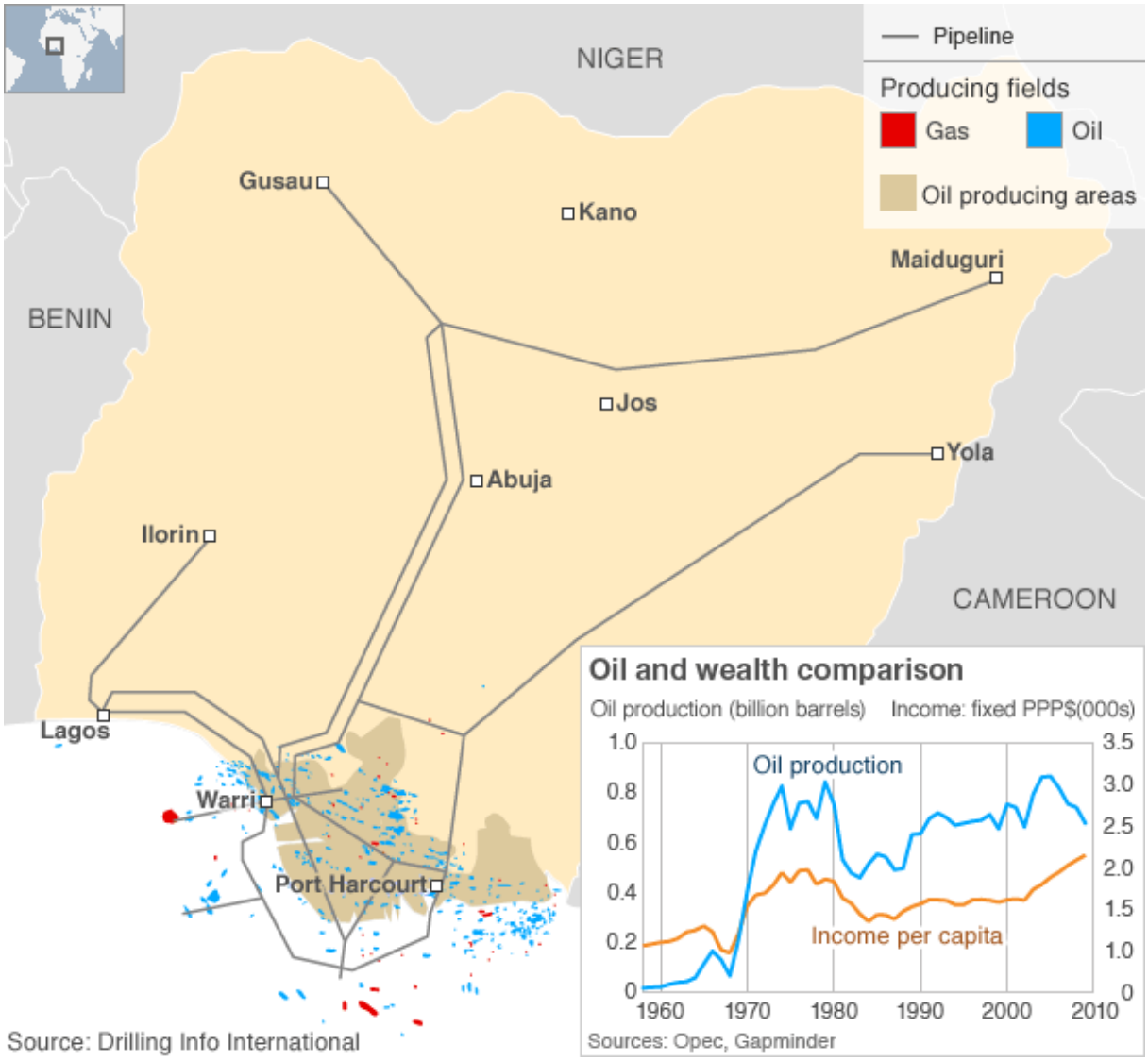
11.1.3 Wealth Distribution in Nigeria



11.1.4 Health Distribution in Nigeria



11.1.5 Female Literacy in Nigeria



11.1.6 Oil in Nigeria