

The Operation Python Dance of the Nigeria Military on South Eastern Nigeria: Causes, Public Perception, Youth Protest, and Impact 2016-2023

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Abstract

The Operation Python Dance of the Nigeria Military, still lingers around the South Eastern Nigeria, as a contended and contested military excursion with far-reaching impact on the region. That's how the security issue evolved and later turned into outright confrontation between the Nigerian military and the locals. The paper demonstrates, through both analytical and historical methods of research, that new paths toward reconciliation and lasting peace can ultimately be forged by a revitalized and more balanced approach. The paper concludes that the Federal Government of Nigeria should give its attention to the perceived marginalization of the region in its efforts to ensure sustainable security.

1. Introduction

Operation Python Dance is a code name for Nigeria's Military exercise in South Eastern Nigeria. The military exercise featured in the column inch of national discourse as it had different interpretations in different quarters in Nigeria. The military exercise led by the Nigerian military was introduced in 2016 as a reaction to increasing tensions and unrest in the Southeast, particularly the actions of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) Movement (Nwakanma, 2017). The IPOB, a pro-Biafran separatism group that persisted to call for secession of the Southeastern states from Nigeria and eventually led to a confrontation with the Nigerian security forces (Akinwotu, 2017). The military's involvement was to curb the agitation sweeping across South Eastern Nigeria.

Nigeria's Federal Government's decision to deploy its military to Eastern Nigeria under the pretext of the "Operation Python Dance" banner was a response to a plethora of factors. There had been an upsurge of violent confrontations, demonstrations and demands for separation in the area. These tensions were rooted in decades of political, economic and social egregiousness which were seen by the Nigerian government as a threat to national security and territorial integrity. The military subsequently raised the formation of Operation Python Dance to cover these challenges through the enforcement of security measures that include curfews, military patrols and targeted actions against criminal elements and agitators. The Nigerian military, carried out the deployment while raising concerns about the use of excessive force, and human rights abuses among others. The military operation triggered a significant debate and controversy, with supporters claiming it is vital to enforce law and order, fight criminal activities and protect the territorial integrity of Nigeria.

One of the key issues surrounding the military exercise is its effect on the civilian population in the region. A multitude of reports of alleged violations of human rights, including arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial killings and

intimidation of civilians. The reports triggered condemnation from human rights groups and with that demands for accountability and transparency on how the military operation was carried out. The military drill had wider social and economic consequences in the region. Daily life and economic activities were disrupted as curfews and restrictions of movement were imposed. The Nigerian military has also had a turbulent past, and the debate over whether to engage them in security operations in Nigeria is often framed in political language.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Operation Python Dance by the Nigerian military in South Eastern Nigeria is one of those issues that is still controversial and attracted the attention of many citizens in the country. Most of the inspiration for the exercise stems from the security challenges in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. This activity was one of the responses of the Nigerian Military as their safety and peace was being threatened by the increasing agitation and unrest activities by the separatist groups with the attack intensifying.

The people had very different and multiple perspectives about Operation Python Dance. The military action was welcomed in some circles as a necessary action to restore peace and order, but a violation of the rights of the victims and an incompetent approach to resolving the issues in the region was also held in wide regard. Different opinions also trailed the debate on the exercise, its effectiveness and the implications on the people of South Eastern Nigeria.

Nigeria's military exercise in the region aggravated anxiety and consequently, the US expressed concern about the potential for human rights abuses and excessive use of force by the Nigerian military during this period. The operation also affected local businesses and the daily routines of residents. The operation's long-term effects are still being felt and are continuing to shape the socio-political landscape of the region. Despite the very serious implication of the military exercise, Operation Python Dance on the internal security of Nigeria and national integration, the subject matter is yet to be addressed fully by other scholars. Therefore, we are the first to identify these preliminary findings as this is a contribution to the current literature on this subject done to fill the knowledge gap.

2. Methodology and Sources of Data

This study is very unique because many have yet to explore the theme to a great extent. However, regarding the subject of discussion, the historical and descriptive methods of analysis were deployed. The authors utilized the descriptive and analytical methods of historical research to analyzed the brief origin of Operation Python Dance, the cause of the military exercise in the region and how it impacted the civilians in the region. The paper depended on secondary sources that included textbooks, journal articles, and internet sources.

For a better understanding of the paper, it subdivides into the following parts that include the abstract, introduction, statement of the problem, methodology and sources of data, definition of terms, the brief origin of Operation Python Dance, the causes of Operation Python Dance, public perception and reactions to Operation Python Dance, the impact of operation python dance, Igbo youth protest regarding the military exercise in the region, criticisms and controversies surrounding operation python dance, the decision of the global community regarding Nigerian military's operation python dance in southeastern Nigeria, media coverage and propaganda surrounding operation python dance, conclusion and recommendations.

From the research perspective, some terms have been clarified in the following section. This section of the paper will assist any reader who will come across the article.

Indigenous People of Biafra: The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is a militant group in South Eastern Nigeria that has a plan to restore the defunct Republic of Biafra which seceded from Nigeria leading to the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970). (Allison, Simon, 2017). IPOB was formed in 2012 by Nnamdi Kanu and Uche Mefor. (Nwonwu, Chiagozie, 2019). Kanu is a British Nigerian political activist known for his involvement in the modern Biafran Independence Movement. (BBC News, 2017). In 2017, the Nigerian government listed the group as a terrorist organisation under the Nigerian Terrorism Act.

The Federal Government of Nigeria accused IPOB of bad investment, political marginalization, undeservedly allocated resources, ethnic marginalization, heavy military deployment, and extrajudicial killings in the South-Eastern, South-Central and parts of North-Central regions of the country. (Mahr, Oluwatosin, Adeshokan, et al 2019) They are the largest Biafran independence group by membership. It has received crucial media attention over the years for becoming a perennial target of the political crackdown by the Nigerian government. IPOB has many sites and communication channels serving as trusted social apparatus propagating and inculcating first-hand information and news to its members. (Amnesty International, 2016)

Aggression: It is a behaviour which is directed towards combating something, a person or an entity. It is done with intent to harm as some channel the rage into creative and practical means. (Hollowood, Lorna 2022). It can happen reactively or unprovoked. In human society, aggression can emerge for different reasons such as a build-up of frustration when perforated objectives or a sense of disrespect. (DeBono, et al 2014) There are two types of human aggression: direct and indirect aggression. Direct aggression is physical or verbal

behaviour designed to harm someone, while indirect aggression is characterised by an attitude intended to hurt the social relationships of a person or group. (De Almeida, et al 2015). Aggression is determined as the action taken by an individual which produces something unpleasant to another individual in the domain of social sciences and behavioural sciences. (Buss, 1961)

During multidisciplinary groups aggression is “a machinery ensemble that is constructed along the pathway of evolution solely to defend oneself, relatives or a company against others. These are usually driven by emotions of fear and frustration, anger, stress and dominance. In all but a few, aggressive behaviour is an outlet to relieve stress, an inward feeling of strength and power. (Wahl, 2020). There is also anti-predator, defensive, predatory, dominant, inter-male, resident-intruder, maternal, species-specific, sex-related, territorial, isolation-induced and irritable aggression.

3. Result & Discussion

3.1 The Brief Origin of Operation Python Dance

Operation Python Dance, or Egwu Eke, was initiated by the Nigerian Armed Forces in 2016 in Southeastern Nigeria. It was a military operation meant to tackle the security challenges in the region, which had been marred by secessionist agitations, civil unrest, and the activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) movement. (Ogbonnaya, et al, 2013).

Operation Python Dance, which is a military operation in Nigeria, originated from the increase in Biafran secessionist sentiments in South Eastern Nigeria. The IPOB agitation for an Independent Biafran State, led by Nnamdi Kanu, caused a rise in tensions and sporadic violence in the region. (Eze, 2017). In response to the rising security issue in the southeastern part of Nigeria, the Federal government, with the fear of the reoccurrence of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) took proactive measures to combat the security plague.

The Nigerian Army launched Operation Python Dance in September 2016, deploying thousands of troops to the Five Southeastern States including Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States. (Onuoha, 2017). The operation aimed to tackle a wide range of criminal elements, such as the spontaneous movement of IPOB, kidnapping and armed robbery activities. (Nwangwu, et al 2014). Operation Python Dance was received in mixed ways by the residents of the Southeastern region. Some welcomed the military presence as a response to restore order and security, while others viewed it as an excessive response, due to the need for security in the regional context. (Ibeanu et al, 2016). The IPOB movement in particular spoke out against the operation, as it was seen to be a ploy to undermine their secessionist aims.

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3.2 The Causes of Operation Python Dance

The Nigerian military had security challenges in South Eastern Nigeria, which were adequately addressed by Operation Python Dance. The area had been dealing with the same problems as the previous time it was put on the blacklist — secessionist agitations, the activities of non-state armed groups. The military move was interpreted as a past regulator of these threats that is meant to ensure peace and stability in the surrounding area.

The tension and unrest in the Southeastern region, particularly in Abia State was another issue that prompted the exercise. The region had witnessed a continuous resurgence of secessionist movements, spearheaded by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The Federal troops were sent to the area, as the movements were viewed as an affront to the territorial integrity and security of the country by the Federal government.



Fig 1 IPOB protest Sources: <https://www.thewatchngr.com/2018/09/call-off-operation-python-dance-3-now.html>.

Another contributory factor of this operation is civil unrest in the region that caused increasing incidents of violence. They had also been into different protests and different demonstrations that led to violence, thus causing clashes with Nigerian security forces.(Nkwede,et al 2017). The Nigerian government thought that the military operation in the region still is the only way of regaining peace and order in the region.

Also, increasing cases of kidnapping and other criminalities in the South East prompted the military exercise. The region was also suffering from an increasing rate of kidnapping and other anti-social activities.(Okoro et al, 2019). The Nigerian military was perceived as a crucial tool in curtailing the criminal activities swimming in the region. The focus of the Nigerian Security Forces was on the security situation in the Southeast which was disrupted due to the agitation of the Indigenous People of Biafra IPOB, a separatist group seeking to establish an independent Biafran State. The Nigerian government considered the IPOB to be a threat to national unity and security, and thus the military operation aimed to suppress their activities to return peace to the area. (Nwankpa et al 2017).

3.3 Operation Python Dance: Public Response and Reactions

People and organisations perceived Operation Python Dance differently. Some regarded it as a necessary move to counter security threats and secure stability, while critics blasted the operation as a heavy-handed approach that has resulted in human rights abuses and the stifling of dissent. (Amnesty International, 2017). The military was accused by IPOB and other pro-Biafra groups of using excessive and disproportionate force — allegations that triggered widespread protests and condemnations. (Akinwotu, 2017).

Controversy and debates have surrounded the military exercise in the region, especially in Southeastern Nigeria. Indeed, the Federal security forces operating in the area have met with mixed reactions from civilians with some applauding the actions taken by the government to preserve the security of the people, while others have expressed concerns about the impact on regional stability. The operation attracted criticism over its heavy military presence, which at times caused tensions with local communities and resulted in allegations of excessive use of force.

Some residents in the area also perceived the operation as a government intimidation strategy, which, contrary to its intention, raised the tension between the state and the population. Consequently, many in South Eastern Nigeria are skeptical of the intentions of Operation Python Dance and how effective it would be, highlighting the need for more transparent and community-focused approaches to resolving security issues in

general. This military presence was viewed as oppressive to the rights of the Igbo majority of the Southeastern population.

The operation's timeliness, at the height of significant cultural and political events in the region, also aroused suspicion that the government was using the military as a tool for repressing dissent and stifling the Igbo's political aspirations.(Eze, 2019). This creates lasting doubt and antagonism from the Southeast towards the government and military. The program has faced criticism from human rights organizations and the opposition parties that have argued its implementation infringes on the fundamental rights of the citizens. The government has repeatedly maintained that it was all the success of the operation in the sense that it has helped in curtailing the activities of the IPOB and the violence in the Southeastern states. (Olatunji, 2019). The area had been dealing with the same problems as the previous time it was put on the blacklist — secessionist agitations, the activities of non-state armed groups. The military move was interpreted as a past regulator of these threats that is meant to ensure peace and stability in the surrounding area.

3.4 Operation Python Dance and its Impact

There has been a lot of debate on the effect of Operation Python Dance on the state of security in the South-Eastern region. Despite this, the Nigerian government's claims of success in curbing the spate of criminal activities and restoring normalcy in the region have been met with skepticism by human rights organizations and civil society groups, due to allegations of military excesses and violation of the rights of the civilians.(Amnesty International, 2017).

On the one hand, the military exercise in South Eastern Nigeria resulted in reports of increased security and a drastic reduction in the activities of armed groups within the region. The military presence has also been praised as effective in restoring a sense of safety and normalcy in some areas. Yet, conversely, the operation has had a profound effect on the social and economic aspects of the region. Casualties among civilians, displacement and disruption of daily life have affected the local population.

However, it is said, that both in regards to the security context and the socio-economic ramifications. The military was involved in daily life and economic activities in the region, resulting in the displacement of thousands of people and the disruption of essential services. (Amnesty International, 2017). The operation was condemned for other reasons, including deepening the existing rift between the Southeastern region and the federal government, which only galvanised calls for secession and autonomy. (Nwakanma, 2017).

The social dimension of the Nigeria Military Operation Python Dance in South Eastern Nigeria has recently garnered widespread debate and concern. The region where military action has been launched has significantly impacted the lives of the people in the area. The daily activities of many civilians are disrupted the most, due to the Nigeria military exercise. The military presence with their actions laid fear and uncertainty on the people. Many residents say they've been intimidated, or feel their safety is at risk, creating insecurity in their daily lives. The operation has also imposed restrictions on movement and curfews that further curtailed the freedom of the local population.

Table 1: Relationship between the presence of military and impacts on residents of the cities

	Military violation of Respondents' right in crisis areas of South-Eastern Nigeria		Total	χ^2
Positive impact	156(31.20)	270(54.69)	226(35.99)	$\chi^2 = 66.42$
Negative impact	344(68.80)	58(45.31)	402(64.01)	
Total	500(100)	128(100)	628(100)	

Significant at 0.05 level

The result was also a distrust of the military among the civilian population. The resulting human rights abuses and excessive use of force by the military during the operation led to a breakdown of trust and confidence in the security forces inter-alia. On the one hand, this development has alienated and embittered the local communities, further aggravating the already tense relationship between the military and civilians.

Table 2: Cross tabulation for relationship between military violation of human rights and victims' level of formal education

Highest formal education	Military violation of respondents in conflict areas in South-Eastern Nigeria (n=628)		Total χ^2
	Very frequent	Not frequent	

High level of education	95(19.20)	55(42.97)	$x^2 = 25.1$ Df = 1
Low level of education	404(80.80)	73(57.03)	
Total	500 (100)	128(100)	

Significant at 0.05 level

The region experienced significant negative impacts, as normal economic activities like trade and commerce were curtailed abruptly. Many of the businesses were forced to shut down, transmission of goods and services was severely limited and many of the residents in the area suffered due to economic strain. The employment of Federal military forces discouraged potential tourists and investors from entering the area. It hampered economic growth and development in the area under the sectoral limitation in question.

The operation has also exacerbated the existing ethnic and political tensions within the region, resulting in polarization of communities and a breakdown of social cohesion. This gave rise to extremist ideologies that have further divided the population along ethnic and political lines.

3.5 Youth Protest Against the Military Exercise in the Igbo Land

In South Eastern Nigeria, Igbo youth took to the streets against the Nigerian military's Operation Python Dance. The military action, initiated as a consequence of brewing escalations and security threats to the region, was met with apprehension and controversy among the Igbo youth and the wider community. The Igbo indigenous youth vehemently opposed this operation, perceiving it as a clear plot to subdue their people. The resistance of Igbo youth to this military operation stems from a range of reasons that are grounded in the historical and political context of Nigeria.

The Nigerian military as a target of an Igbo youth during the protest is the first complaint of the youth. The Igbo people, the most populous ethnic nationality in South East Nigeria, have been politically and economically marginalised in the Nigerian state since its formation. Operation Python Dance was viewed as just the latest iteration of this oppressive pattern, where ever-reactive military measures and arbitrary arrests were used to stifle dissent and tighten the reins of power in the region.(Nwosu, 2019).

Moreover, there was fear among the Igbo youth of possible human rights abuses and a violation of their civil liberties in the course of the operation. Accounts of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions and the use of excessive force by the military against civilians stoked the protests. (Amnesty International, 2017). The Igbo youth considered these acts as an affront to their basic human rights and an assault on the fundamentals of democracy the Nigerian government preaches.

Table 3: Cross tabulation for relationship between coefficient and military violation of human rights, n = 628.

Location	Military violation of human rights within conflict and non-conflict areas		Total	x^2
Conflict area	500 (70.42)	128(18.03)	628 (88.45)	$x^2 = 64.32$ Df = 1
Non-conflict area	52(7.320)	30(4.23)	82(11.55)	
Total	552(77.74)	158(22.26)	710(100)	

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 significantly indicates a high level of military violation of human rights within conflict areas compared to non-conflict areas. That is why many advocate for a non-military solution to sectional agitation like that of Eastern Nigeria.

The Operation Python Dance on the Igbo youth was also a source of fear not just because of the economic and social impact of the operation on their communities and how that would affect the cycle of life in their various communities. Residents had their daily life and economic activities interrupted and their access to essential services was controlled. (Ikpe, 2019).

The protest against the military exercise by the Igbo youths was part of a long history of political activism by the Igbo people, who have consistently sought political and economic reforms that would grant them greater autonomy and self-determination in the Nigerian federation. The Igbo have long sought the formation of Biafra, a separate state that would give them more autonomy and resources to control their development. The military intervention not only threatened these aspirations but also strengthened the resolve of Igbo youth and their demands for a more equitable and inclusive political system. (Onyeji, 2017).

Furthermore, the Igbo youth perceive Operation Python Dance as a representation of the marginalization and neglect that they still suffer from within the Nigerian state. They say that the military presence and the use of force in their communities have only intensified the underlying grievances and alienation experienced by the Igbo people. Thus, the absence of any meaningful dialogue or inclusive governance processes has exacerbated the sense of disillusionment and frustration resulting in an escalating atmosphere of heightened tensions and chronic unrest.

Indeed, the protest of Igbo youth against Operation Python Dance is symbolic of their desire for justice, dignity and self-determination. The youth in the South Eastern insisted on pressing for a peaceful settlement to the age-long agitations that have triggered the agitation for an independent state. They want cultural identity, economic empowerment and political inclusion in the Nigerian state.

There is a need for dialogue and mutual understanding on how to tackle the underlying issues that led to the protests, especially the root causes of the grievances expressed by the Igbo youth. Civil society organizations, religious leaders and other stakeholders have urged restraint and genuine engagement to ease rising tensions to proffer sustainable solutions to the challenges confronting the South Eastern region.



Nigerian Army ends Operation Python Dance, Sources: www.nigerianeye.com

3.6 Criticisms and Controversies Surrounding Operation Python Dance

The government set about addressing the issue of whether to reduce excess levels of troops, numbers of civilians, and other personnel there through military operations. The deployment of the military for internal security operations such as Operation Python Dance can be a threefold concern to critics against the constitutional roles of the Armed Forces in a democracy. Such military interventions to suppress civil unrest tend to be ineffective due to the public outcry against them and potentially save further tension between the military and civilian citizens. During these operations, there have been concerns regarding the militarized use of force against civilians, which led to serious human rights violations and a violation of international humanitarian law and the rules of engagement.(Akanni,2019).

Operation Python Dance has been mired in accusations and controversies that get to the heart of the tension between national security, human rights and civil liberties, which is the stuff of nightmares for any military official. The operation ignited debates about the appropriateness of military involvement in internal security matters, particularly its implications for civil-military relations in Nigeria.(Victor, 2023).

A more controversial component of Operation Python Dance, however, has been the perception that it targets pro-Biafra activists and groups in the region. It is widely believed that the operation was aimed at stifling dissent and cracking down on separatist movements like the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This has raised alarm over freedom of expression and assembly in Nigeria, as well as fears of worsening relations between the authorities and marginalized groups in the region.

Moreover, Operation Python Dance was accused of aggravating existing ethnic tensions in Southeastern Nigeria. Heavily armed soldiers were deployed in predominantly Igbo areas which only fanned the flames of mistrust, resentment, and division in the society. Critics say the militarized response instead alienates already marginalized populations and exacerbates long-standing grievances. Operation Python Dance drew extensive criticism and became embroiled in extensive controversies, underscoring more general issues of governance, security, and human rights in Nigeria. These actions could also potentially strain relationships between the military and civilian populations, making it all the more important for authorities to listen to these voices and ensure that future military actions will be implemented in a way which emphasizes the protection of human rights and encourages peace in regions affected by violence.

3.7 Python Dance: Where the World Stood on Nigeria vs Nigeria Military Operation in the South East

These include its decision to have the UN and the AU negotiate with the Nigerian government on the issue. First, both organizations are tasked with promoting global peace, security, and human rights, and the happenings in Southeastern Nigeria were regarded as a potential threat to stability in the region. (Adebajo, 2017). Also, the IPOB struggles to receive wide global interest, being credited for fears of human rights violations and overreaching aggression from the Nigerian forces.

In response to the situation, the UN and the AU engaged with the Nigerian government to withdraw from the military exercise and called for a peaceful resolution of the situation. However, the international community, led by the UN and AU, cannot ignore the rising tensions in Southeastern Nigeria, they emphasize that it is time to bring the Nigerian state to end the bloodshed and address the issues that underpin the secessionist agitation. (Adebajo, 2017). The Nigerian government's perceived inflexible and unyielding attitude toward the IPOB movement and its unwillingness to engage in dialogue strained the country's relationship with its people to be met with available international observers at the time and raised questions about the country's commitment to safeguarding human rights and upholding democratic principles.

3.8 Media Reporting and Propaganda on Operation Python Dance

The military operation 'Operation Python Dance' became a topic of media coverage and speculation in Southeastern Nigeria, the media coverage associated with it, serving as a race to the finish line in portraying the public perception of the military operation. Some media outlets painted it as a needed intervention to restore peace and order in the region, while others condemned it as an excessive approach that disobeyed human rights. Adding to the controversy over the operation was propaganda from both government and opposition groups, eager to move public opinion towards their side.

At the same time, the spread of misinformation and one-sided media coverage contributed to the confusion and distrust of the local population to judge what Operation Python Dance was really about. The combination and eventual salience of these two aspects - the media coverage, and the other - propaganda by the military, shaped the perception of the military's presence in their communities. (Piers, 2014). At the outset of the militaristic exercise, the federal forces had ample opportunity to mould opinions, but that influence began to fade as conflicts continued, and the numbers of casualties increased. (Piers, 2014). The implications in the medical field are profound as the media also harnessed for misinformation, which influence both public perceptions and policy. (News Media, 2021). Given various forms of media representation, it is not surprising that the military, as well as other public organizations, are sometimes cautious toward the press.

However, military entities also acknowledge that the advantages of media coverage in democratic societies usually exceed the disadvantages. (Michael, 1991). Also called "WarTok", platforms such as TikTok have also made it easier for media organizations to reach the public and are a boon for media image. (Valerij, et al, 2023). Propaganda and media coverage work only to the extent that the situation has not been already allowed to develop too far and is dependent on the outlet through which it is delivered, as well as whether citizens within the country believe in it at all. (Philip, 1996). Thus, to understand public opinion towards military actions like Operation Python Dance, one needs to understand the dynamics of media coverage and propaganda.

Conclusion

The military's attempts to keep the nation secure and stable were, of course, understandable, but the sheer heavy-handedness of the responding action led to human rights abuses and widespread socio-economic disruptions that were held more and more against the military's transitory rule. Going forward, it becomes imperative for the Nigerian government to address the laid down issues and limit the impetus for exploitation of unarmed citizens while figuring out a more holistic path to preventing unrest of such nature from breeding in Nigeria's southeastern neighbours.

However, the operation's implementation has drawn varying responses from the public, leading to fear of human rights violations. Operation Python Dance of the Nigerian military in the southeastern region extends after a demand for a rise in the emergence of other peacekeeping forces in every area. Given the dynamic nature of the situation, all stakeholders must participate in constructive dialogue and efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution that addresses the drivers of this conflict.

This segment of the paper will proffer reliable recommendations regarding restoring lasting peace in the region.

- In order to move forward in many dimensions in the region, the Nigerian government needs to engage in constructive dialogue with all stakeholders to address the root causes of the unrest in the southeastern region.
- Balancing security concerns in the region is also crucial for the respect for fundamental human rights which is essential in fostering lasting peace and stability in the area.
- The Federal government should use the available medium to ensure that the listed educated person is aware of his or her rights among all the law enforcement agents as it will go a long way in reducing the incidence of human rights violations in Nigeria.
- The Federal Government of Nigeria should use economic development as a distinct strategy for conflict resolution and crisis management, particularly in the South East Region of the country. Physical development remains the only antidote to violence in many regions of Nigeria.
- The protest of Igbo youth against Operation Python Dance underscores the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the complex dynamics at play in the region. The Nigerian government and the military must uphold human rights standards, engage in constructive dialogue, and work towards building trust and social cohesion.
- It is essential to reflect on the lessons learned from Operation Python Dance and consider alternative approaches to addressing security challenges in South Eastern Nigeria. A holistic strategy that addresses the root causes of instability promotes dialogue, and respects human rights is crucial for long-term peace and stability in the region.
- Mutual efforts to rebuild trust between the military and the local communities in the region should be prioritized to foster reconciliation and prevent further alienation.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows:

- **Study conception and design:** Gold Sunday Chukwuemeka, Paul Oshagwu Opone
- **Data collection:** Paul Oshagwu Opone
- **Analysis and interpretation of results:** Gold Sunday Chukwuemeka, Paul Oshagwu Opone
- **Draft manuscript preparation:** Paul Oshagwu Opone, Gold Sunday Chukwuemeka

All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Appendix A: An Example

Authors including an appendix section should do so before the References section. Multiple appendices should all have headings in the style used above. They will automatically be ordered A, B, C etc.

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