

Title of Article: Analysis of 'Militants' and 'Freedom Fighters.'

Author(s): Chiluya, I.

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Abstract: The Nigerian Niger Delta insurgents preferred to be recognized as 'freedom fighters' which to them was a more positive representation of their actions. However, the press generally labeled them 'militants,' which corresponds with the value judgment of the Nigerian government and the political elite. This study applies critical discourse and collocation analysis to examine the ideological implications of 'militants' and 'freedom fighters' as documented in a Nigerian Media Corpus. Analysis combines a systematic concordance and collocation analysis of the word 'militants' and the phrase 'freedom fighters' with a denotative and connotative contrast between the British and Nigerian use of the labels. This study argues that the contrast highlights ideological positions and attitudes. The results show that the label 'militants' in the Nigerian sense negatively represents the identity not only of the radical groups but also of the entire Niger Delta people. This negative label merely constructed the unlawful methods applied by the militia groups to redress the injustice of underdevelopment and environmental disaster in the Niger Delta.