Evaluating the Effectiveness of State Security Networks in Enhancing Community Safety: A Study of Selected Communities in Southwest Nigeria

By
Lawal A. Bakare PhD
Department of Public Administration
Osun State University, Osogbo
lawal.bakare@uniosun.edu.ng
&
Mojeed A. Animasahun PhD
Department of Political Science
Fountain University, Osogbo
adekunleanimashaun39@gmail.com

Abstract

This study evaluates the effectiveness of state security networks in several communities of Southwest Nigeria, aiming to understand their efficiency in addressing local security challenges. Given the rising apprehensions about crime, community violence, and threats from non-state actors, these security networks are crucial for maintaining peace and order. Employing a descriptive approach, data were gathered via interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires distributed to neighbourhood inhabitants, security officers, and local leaders. The findings reveal disparate performance across communities: some networks effectively foster collaboration with established institutions and engage residents in crime prevention efforts, while others are hindered by limited resources, insufficient training, and issues concerning trust and accountability. Community opinions highlight both successes in prompt response and persistent challenges related to corruption and operational inefficiency. The research underscores the necessity for augmented training, refined resource allocation, and heightened community involvement to maximise the effectiveness of state security networks. Consequently, the police and all relevant stakeholders in security should endeavour to enhance and reposition Amotekun, while also addressing its institutional deficiencies to bolster and improve its effectiveness in intelligence-led policing inside the communities.

Keywords: Security, State, Peace, Amotekun, Police, South West

Introduction

Since human civilization, security has occupied a central place in human society. Understood in various dimensions such as physical security, economic security and social security, the criticality of security to modern society is underscored by the fact that the attainment of developmental efforts of the contemporary state rests on the existence of sound security architecture within the state.

Security, as a concept and a societal benefit, precedes the contemporary state. In political theory, social contract theorists like as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau have demonstrated that security was a fundamental concern in the transition from the state of nature to the modern state. Security denotes a state that enables individuals to engage in their lawful everyday activities without the apprehension of dangers to their lives or property. Insecurity, conversely, is the antithesis of security. It signifies exposure to peril, injury, and aggression. Insecurity engenders a state of susceptibility to peril, perhaps resulting in the loss of life and property. Common terminology in the literature to characterise insecurity encompasses hazard, risk, lack of safety, uncertainty, and instability (Usman, 2022).

In his submission, Okeke (1999) observes that security could be conceived as a state of being free from injury or damage, encompassing the defense, protection, and maintenance of values, as well as the absence of threats to those values. George-Genyi (2013) characterizes security as a situation of being protected from danger and anxiety for a nation, whereas Ebeh (2015) defines security as the lack of factors that could undermine internal cohesion and the collective integrity of a country, along with its ability to sustain itself and advance its fundamental values. Similar to earlier submission, Akinade (2016) characterizes security as a state of being devoid of danger, risk, injury, uncertainty, and worry.

In essence therefore, security entails all measures aimed at protecting and safeguarding the citizens, their possessions and the entire nation against violence or attacks either from within the country or outside of it. However, in the contemporary post-World War 11 period, the conceptualization of security has been expanded; moving beyond the physical dimension of security and emphasizing other forms of security including economic, social and environmental security (Akindejoye & Ayenakin, 2022).

In the modern world, the state, buoyed by its recognition as the only legitimate user of force (Weber, 1968), has a responsibility to protect or defend the state and its people against external attack and internal insurrection. This state's obligation for the maintenance of law and order is stated in national constitution which is the foundation of constitutional democracy. For instance, Section 14 sub-section 2(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, states that security and welfare of the citizens are primary responsibilities of government. As a complex phenomenon composed of independent processes and institutions

related to formally defined territories, each national government designs its security architecture to achieve its goals of national security (Haider, 2011). These national security goals are developed on the basis of national peculiarities and constitutional mandate (Walker, 2009).

In the traditional pre-colonial African society, the responsibility of securing the indigenous society was vested mainly in the youth and adults of the stateless society (Iwuamadi, Ngu & Onyemaobi, 2021) which was lacking in formal institutions of governance associated with the modern state such as parliament, executive, judiciary, ministry, and military services. The coordination of the security matters in the traditional society was under the leadership of the head of the security of each society who in the Yoruba traditional system was called 'Aare Ona Kakanfo'.

Under colonialism, security services were centrally controlled by the colonial authorities. Although there were regionally based security organizations such as the Hausa Constabulary in northern Nigeria and the Southern Nigeria Police in the southern half of the country, these were later merged by the colonial state to form a unified Nigeria Police Force. As its name indicated, the colonial police was indeed an organization of brute force which not only committed egregious human rights abuse but also repressed and resisted anti-colonial coalitions (Obikaeze, Udoh, Adebogun & Enapeh, 2023).

In the post-colonial Nigerian state, security and its management is a constitutional matter. Under the current democratic dispensation, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, includes security as one of the 68 items in the Exclusive Legislative List. With this constitutional stipulation, Nigeria runs a centralized security system where the security services are put under the control of the federal government with the President designated as the 'Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces'. By the same token, the police is a federally-controlled institution under the headship of an Inspector General who is an appointee of the President.

The irony of the discourse on insecurity in Nigeria (and by extension in Africa) is that the state (albeit fundamentally different from the Weberian state model found in the Western contexts) which has the obligation to provide security within the defined territory of the state, is perceived to be a threat to the security of citizens and groups within the state (Aning, 2024).

While the federal government had enjoyed an unquestioned hegemony in the control of security architecture in Nigeria, this hegemony began to come under serious challenge with the restoration of democratic rule in 1999. Starting with the activities of the militants in the delta region of Nigeria in 2007, the country was seized by an unexampled spate of security challenges including Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, separatist agitations, sectarian conflicts, farmer-herder conflicts and generalized urban violence.

As an Islamist, and later terrorist group, Boko Haram emerged within the context of perennial religious conflict between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria (Dimitriadis, 2024). The group however became radicalized with deep anti-Western sentiments following the arrest and subsequent extra-judicial killing of its leader, Mohammed Yusuff in 2009 (Thurston, 2019). On the other hand, bandits who are largely concentrated in the north-west geo-politico zone of Nigeria usually operate from ungoverned spaces mostly located in rural areas with limited state presence in terms of government security services (Ojewale, 2023).

The apparent inability of the federal government to contain the growing insecurity that hit the country provided the immediate context for the clamor for state police in the country (Iwuamadi, Ngwu & Onyemaobi, 2021). Thus, state or regional police was touted as a panacea to the perceived inefficiency of the federal police (Thisday, 2021). These calls for decentralization of security were in stark contrast to the post-9/11 realities in the United States which witnessed calls for the centralization of security intelligence even if the calls did not materialize because of their implications for civil liberties (Waxman, 2012). Needless to say that the ruinous activities of militants, insurgents, separatist agitators, armed herders and bandits have wreaked havoc on communities across the Nigerian federation resulting in heavy human and material losses as well as displacement. For instance, Mbiyozo (2017) reports that by 2017, an estimated 20,000 people and 2 million persons were killed and displaced respectively by frequent Boko Haram attacks. On the other hand, their activities have also negatively impacted on state revenue (Yusuf & Mohammed, 2023). At another level, the combined activities of criminal groups have conspired to put Nigeria on the global list of the least safe countries in the world (Otu & Dickson, 2017).

One major consequence of the gross failure of the federal government to rein in criminal networks across Nigeria's geo-politico zones was the emergence of regional security initiatives. As a response to the central government's failure to address their aspirations, both state and non-

state actors within the Nigerian federation have turned to self-help security measures by establishing regional security networks. Notable examples include the Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), known as Operation Amotekun, the Eastern Security Network (ESN), and Ebube Agu, a security organization declared by the governments of the five southeastern states. While some analysts have raised concerns regarding the legality and constitutionality of these sub-national security entities, others assert their entitlement to self and collective protection. The South West blazed the trail with the establishment of the South Western Security Network code named 'Amotekun' in January, 2020. The launch of 'Amotekun' provoked, quite expectedly, a raging debate across the Nigerian federation. At the heart of the debate was the question of its legitimacy within the framework of central policing provided by the Nigerian constitution. The northern region followed suit in February of the same year to establish its own outfit called 'Shege Kafasa' while the South East launched the south eastern version code named 'Ebube Agu' in April, 2021. To be sure, these regional security initiatives represent an attempt to engage with alternative modes of security provisioning which, if well managed and sufficiently resourced, could prove more successful than the formal security apparatus at least in overcoming localized security challenges. In terms of character, these security outfits are patterned in form of community policing which existed in the indigenous pre-colonial Nigerian society. For instance, Okeke (2013) has shown that the Igbo traditional society operated community policing which maintained law and order within the Igbo traditional state.

At the onset of the regional security system initiative, the utilitarian value of regionally-based security outfits was submerged by political sentiments that bordered on perceived weakening of the powers of the federal government over security matters and the corresponding increase in the powers of the state governments (Deribe, 2023). These sentiments apparently informed the initial hostile posture of the federal government to the idea of regional security system.

This study examines the South West security outfit, 'Amotekun'. The study seeks to assess the extent to which the security outfit has been able to stem the tide of insecurity in the South West, the Nigerian. The study also attempts to identify the operational challenges faced by the security organization, examine the character of its relationship with other security services.

The task of combating the current wave of insecurity in Nigeria is critical for the country, the West African sub-region and African continent. Against the backdrop of Nigeria's status as the

most populous country and the largest economy in Africa, the continuing deterioration of her security challenges has serious implications for the entire African continent. To the extent that development can neither exist nor be sustained in a context of insecurity, the conversation on security has continued to preoccupy policymakers, development agencies and civil society. This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

(i)   to show the extent to which 'Amotekun' has succeeded in combating crime and criminality within the South West which constitutes the operational sphere of the security network.

(ii)   to identify the challenges facing the security outfit in discharging its mandate.

(iii)   to suggest policy, institutional, legislative and administrative measures that are capable of strengthening the security organization.

Literature Review: Federalism, security crisis, containment

The topic of security encompasses numerous academic definitions. Describing "security" involves various indicators, typified by numerous fluctuating coefficients or factors that facilitate this process. Security can be understood as the presence of peace, safety, happiness, and societal development, achieved through actions aimed at protecting human lives and property, or as the enhancement of humanity through the assurance of dignity against threats to life or injury. Consequently, human and societal growth, together with the safeguarding of lives and property, depend on security.

Security pertains to the safeguarding of a society's fundamental values and the defense against threats to those values. William (2008) asserts that the primary objective of security is to eliminate threats that jeopardize values highly esteemed by individuals, particularly those threats that endanger the survival of essential assets. Assets may encompass real estate, governmental institutions, or individual security. Consequently, security can be defined as the absence of dangers to a nation's survival and its capacity for development, achieved via the safeguarding of its fundamental principles. Ogaba (2010) posits that internal security can be defined as a state of freedom or the absence of factors that compromise internal cohesion, threaten the collective existence of nations, and weaken the state's ability to uphold its fundamental socio-political and economic objectives that fulfil the aspirations of the populace. It may be extrapolated that, regardless of the diverse perspectives around the term, security fundamentally focusses on

safeguarding both living and non-living entities from loss or destruction. Nwolise (2008) presents two paradigms that may clarify the concept of security: the traditional and non-traditional paradigms. The conventional educational framework aligns with the pre-Cold War notion of security. A conventional educational institution defines security as protection from peril and liberation from external hostility or assault. The conventional paradigm prioritizes the state as the referent object (Dogi, Afolabi, Ola, & Idowu, 2024). Academics at this institution assert that security is synonymous with peace and the prevention of violence by military strategies, namely policies aimed at deterring aggressors or employing offensive defense. Walt (1991) characterizes security within this framework as the examination of threats, utilization, and regulation of military coercion. The conventional school of thought emphasizes the application of military power or coercion and the defense strategies implemented by the state to initiate or avert conflict. This philosophical perspective is closely linked to the military's strategy towards security. Buzan (1991) notes that security was in a rudimentary condition and required immediate restoration. Nwozor (2013) asserts that the Cold War era promoted the concept that military action is the most effective means of addressing threats or attacks.

Prof. Ise Sagay (SAN), chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption (PAAC), underscores the necessity of regional or local security networks, asserting that it would be imprudent for an entire nation to depend solely on the federal government for the safeguarding of lives and property; thus, it is imperative to advocate for greater reliance on local security initiatives. He further emphasised that those who experience the anguish of grief should assume responsibility for their security measures. Nigerians have significantly lost confidence and trust in the formal state security apparatus, such as the police, due to their reprehensible conduct and distasteful attitudes in executing their responsibilities. Furthermore, numerous instances have been documented in the media wherein the Nigerian police have been deemed responsible for egregious human rights violations and abuses against innocent civilians. Consequently, a new regional security framework was established to function as a confidence-building mechanism for the populace in the area. This project aims to help national security formations in their operations and to provide a complementary role in community policing (Vanguard, 2020). The ineffectiveness of our established security framework, including the police, to address the escalating crime trends has compelled community people to pursue diverse

self-help measures to safeguard their lives and abandon conventional law enforcement methods. (Ikuteyojo, 2008).

Consequently, due to the persistent occurrence of violent crimes such as banditry, kidnapping, vandalism, and conflicts between farmers and herders, there has been a resurgence in the development of unconventional security strategies aimed at safeguarding lives and property while addressing criminal threats nationwide. The Eastern Security Network (ESN) was established in the eastern section of the country to combat insurgency and the increasing incidents of kidnapping in the area. The Hisbah police, alongside the civilian joint task force in northern Nigeria and other similar entities, assist the state security apparatus in combating the Boko Haram insurgency afflicting the region. The formation of these alternative security organisations is chiefly a response to security threats, including extrajudicial killings, violent assaults, abductions, and the sexual assault of both young and married women by herdsmen and armed bandits, all of which pose a significant threat to national stability.

In response to escalating instability and to safeguard the region, the Western Nigeria Security Network, referred to as the "Amotekun" Corps, was established. This regional security program encompasses Ondo, Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, and Ekiti States. The formation of the Amotekun Corps was prompted by the pressing necessity for a coherent regional security system in response to violent assaults on the Yoruba populace and their assets by encroaching pastoralists, chiefly Fulani herders (Nwoko & Osiki, 2024). The Amotekun Corps functions under the Western Security Network Law, authorized to perform searches, collect criminal intelligence, and cooperate with the Nigeria Police Force in criminal investigations to address criminal activities associated with purported Fulani herders (Nwoko & Osiki, 2024).

In the Yoruba language, the term "Amotekun" refers to a leopard. Additionally, it is used as an operational nomenclature for the western Nigeria security network (WNSN). In addition to being a symbol of rigour, perseverance, hardness, autonomy, aspiration, tranquilly, and caution, the leopard also represents courage. As a security organisation, Amotekun is well-known for its exceptional hunting capabilities and logical operational operations, both of which enable the organisation to safeguard and protect its territories from any potential interference. In order to tackle any kind of violent crime and other security difficulties or threats in the southwest region of Nigeria, which includes Ekiiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, and Lagos state

successively, the West Nigerian Security Network (WNSN) was established as a regional security architecture. The initiative would include some of the members of the vigilante associations of each state in the region, and at the same time, security wizards and some other Yoruba socio-cultural groups would participate in the local security in this regard. For example, the "Agbekoya farmers association" and the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) would play a role that is complementary and supportive in the operation of formal policing, such as the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), the Department of State Security (DSS), and the National State Crime Control and Crime (NSCDC), among other state security apparatus (Odewale & Lamidi, 2020). An act of legislation that also enables state authorities to be responsible for the organization's finance and management was brought into effect in March of 2020 (Jennifer, 2020). This act of legislation was responsible for the founding of the Amotekun outfit.

Federalism as a form of government entails the constitutional sharing of governmental powers among the component units that make up a federal state (Wheare, 1946). These powers are distributed into three distinct lists made up of different items or matters namely, the Exclusive List, Concurrent List and Residual List. Across federations, matters on the exclusive list are under the exclusive mandate of the central government while both the central and state (or regional) governments have jurisdiction over items on the concurrent list with a proviso that central government laws take precedence in the case of clash or conflict of laws. Residual list contains matters that are neither in the exclusive nor concurrent lists. In most federations, such matters are put under the jurisdictional authority of local governments (Watts, 2008).

As a system of political rule, federalism is characterized by deep or sharp diversities manifested in ethnic, cultural and religious differences (Sodaro, 2015). Under federal systems, key matters of governance including revenue generation and sharing, governmental powers and responsibilities, security and external affairs are constitutionally determined (Hague, Harrop & McCormick, 2011).

Contemporary global federalism exists in a variety of forms. Asymmetrical federalism which is the model operated in Germany confers varying levels of power on the federating units. Symmetrical federalism accords the component units of the federation with equal powers such as operated in Australia. Centralized federalism vests considerable powers in the central government such as practiced in Nigeria and the United States. Competitive federalism practiced

in Malaysia permits federating units to freely compete for development and economic advantage according to the respective capabilities of the component units (Deribe, 2023).

In most federal polities, security agencies like anti-corruption institutions are located at the central level under the control of the national government (Steytler & Muntingh, 2019). This suggests that the sub-national units have limited supervisory and oversight roles over armed services. The South African 1993 Interim Constitution which placed public security under the concurrent control of the national and provincial governments, even if the powers of the latter were very limited (Steytler & Mutingh, 2019) was a rare exception to this general rule.

Studies (Heath, 2019; Moliki, Nkwede & Dauda, 2020; Aluko, 2020; Fawole, 2014)   have identified key security challenges facing federal polities to include climate change, terrorism, cybercrime, infrastructure attack, ethnic conflicts, insurgency and separatist agitations. These security problems do not only threaten the corporate existence of federations but also undermine trade and investment (Heath, 2019).

The intensity of security conundrum, the mechanisms of containment as well as the efficacy of the mechanisms vary across federal societies. While some countries experience infrequent attacks that are few and far between, other nations experience frequent terror attacks or internal insurrection that are in many cases accompanied by heavy human and material casualty. Maintaining public security in a modern state is a very complex venture in view of the increasing sources of incentives for crimes and criminalities in the contemporary world. However, ensuring public security in federal polities is particularly complex and tasking given the nature of federal systems and the constitutionally-backed division of authorities associated with them. As shown by Mehra (2014), the compartmentalization of power and authorities as well as the compelling need for inter-tier collaboration in the face of growing insecurity have become a huge challenge for deeply divided societies.

Across federations, both developed and emergent, containment strategies employed to combat security crises are as diverse as the nature and degree of the security threats. One of these strategies is decentralization of containment measures through empowerment of the sub-national units to respond to emerging security challenges. Another strategy is the inter-governmental intelligence-gathering and sharing in which all the levels of government within the federation are involved in efforts at checkmating insecurity. There is also the strategy of inter-governmental

resource support for security agencies through, for instance, donation of security vehicles and intelligence infrastructure by state (regional) governments to security agencies as practiced in Nigeria. International cooperation which could be sub-regional, regional and global in character is yet another strategy that is employed by federations to checkmate security challenges. These containment measures have produced varying consequences leading to relative peace and stability in some countries but failing to produce intended consequences in other contexts (Stevens & Vaughan-Williams, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

The Community Policing Theory is the most relevant theoretical framework for clarifying the functioning of state security systems in Southwest Nigeria. Emerging from criminological studies on crime prevention, this theory—which underlines cooperation between law enforcement authorities and local populations to improve security—emerged from Inspired by community policing—where security is localized and controlled through grassroots involvement and information collecting—the development of regional security agencies like Amotekun reflects Nigerian values (Ajayi, 2020).

According to Community Policing Theory, good crime control calls for a distributed strategy whereby security staff members interact closely with the areas they cover. This is consistent with the framework of state security networks in Southwest Nigeria, which fight insecurity by means of indigenous knowledge, local recruiting, and traditional conflict resolution strategies (Ogunmodede, 2021). The approach emphasizes that since community support improves intelligence collecting and crime prevention, security authorities should create confidence and cooperation with the people. Nevertheless, operational clashes with federal security forces, poor finance, and lack of legal support impede the best performance of these networks (Alemika, 2013).

The actual state of affairs in Nigeria shows how poorly the federal policing agency has been able to handle growing security concerns including banditry, armed robbery, and kidnapping. State governments in the Southwest responded by building security networks to cover the voids created by the stretched-out national police force. While highlighting the challenges these networks encounter, including political interference and inter-agency tensions, Community

Policing Theory clarifies why they have been very successful in intelligence-driven security operations (Ajayi, 2020). Effective operation of these networks depends on institutional backing, legal validity, sufficient financing, and integration into a larger security structure honoring community requirements.

Ultimately, the Community Policing Theory offers the most all-encompassing justification for how state security systems in Southwest Nigeria perform. It draws attention to the need of local participation in security operations and the systematic difficulties restricting their efficiency. Legal changes, capacity building, and inter-agency cooperation will help to strengthen community policing systems so enhancing the sustainability and efficiency of state security networks in addressing security issues facing Nigeria.

Methodology

This research is a qualitative study employing the interpretive technique to provide detailed descriptions for understanding the efficacy of the Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), also called "Amotekun," in maintaining security. This method is seen most appropriate for elucidating how the Amotekun outfit aids in the restructuring of the region by safeguarding and ensuring the security of the residents in the southwest area. This strategy also encompassed ethnographic participant observation in the communities where the residents live and at the locations of the personnel of the organization. This research employed a survey methodology for data collection. This research utilized both primary and secondary data sources to gather pertinent information. Primary data were collected from local respondents, police officers with the of questionnaire and interview guide. The study population encompass both educated and uneducated individuals, spanning responses from upper-class, middle-class, and lower-class demographics. A multi stage sampling technique was adopted to select the respondents for questionnaire administration. At the first stage, only three states, Ondo, Osun and Ekiti were purposively selected given the high insecurity level and the prominence of Amotekun in those states. At the second stage, two LGAs were purposively selected making a total of 6 LGAs. The convenient sampling method was employed to pick 300 respondents from each of the 2 selected LGAs per states. Hence, this totals 900 respondents for the questionnaire. A total of 30 informants were picked for the interview session, with 5 informants chosen from each of the 6 LGAs. The informants selected included the Police officers, traditional rulers, Leaders of

Vigilante group and the Amotekun commandants. Descriptive analysis was employed to examine the quantitative data collected via the questionnaire, while content analysis was utilized to assess the data gained from the interview, facilitated using Atlas Ti.

Findings

The performance of Amotekun was evaluated based on four major issues which include the perceptions of community members regarding Amotekun's performance; extent of Collaboration of Amotekun with the Nigeria Police Force in fighting crime in the study area; the extent to which Amotekun Reduce Criminal Activities in Lagos State; as well as the Extent to which State security network Protects Lives and Properties of community members. Then, the fifth part of the analysis was focused on establishing the challenges inhibiting the performance of Amotekun in the study area.

Analysis of Respondents' Perception of Amotekun in Southwest Nigeria

The mean ratings provide insight into the perceptions of Amotekun, a state security network in Southwest Nigeria. With a threshold of 2.5 and above for agreement, the overall mean of 2.50 signifies that respondents generally view Amotekun's performance positively. However, nuanced analysis reveals mixed sentiments across specific aspects of their operations.

Amotekun is perceived as a beneficial addition to community security, with respondents acknowledging improvements since its establishment. This suggests that the initiative has effectively addressed certain safety concerns, reinforcing its role as a complementary force to existing security measures. Trust in Amotekun's effectiveness and reliability in crime-fighting further bolsters the perception of its credibility. These findings align with the notion that localized security frameworks can enhance crime prevention and management in culturally specific contexts.

Nonetheless, there are critical challenges to note. Some respondents disagree with the assertion that Amotekun meets community security expectations, reflecting gaps in operational effectiveness or resource allocation. Furthermore, the perception that Amotekun is sometimes

used as thugs raises ethical concerns about the misuse of authority, which could erode trust over time. Similarly, while there is limited agreement on their collaboration with criminal elements, any indication of such misconduct warrants immediate investigation to safeguard the integrity of the initiative.

The data also indicates varied community responses to Amotekun's visibility and role. For instance, while many appreciate their operations, others question their actual contribution to security. This divergence highlights the need for improved communication of Amotekun's objectives and achievements to enhance public understanding and support.

In conclusion, the analysis underscores a broadly positive perception of Amotekun, reflecting its value in community-based security. However, addressing identified weaknesses—such as ethical concerns, unmet expectations, and transparency issues—will be crucial for sustaining its effectiveness and community trust. Strategic interventions like enhanced training, robust accountability mechanisms, and community engagement initiatives can ensure that Amotekun fully realizes its potential as a trusted partner in security management.

Table 1: Mean Ratings of community members' Perception on the Performance of State security network.
(N=648)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remark
1.	I like how Amotekun operate in my community	166	174	155	153	2.54	Agree
2.	Members of Amotekun constitute menace in my community.	159	149	173	167	2.46	Disagree
3.	I have trust in Amotekun effectiveness in my community.	180	139	165	164	2.52	Agree
4.	Amotekun services are mainly used as thugs in my community	159	189	158	142	2.56	Agree
5.	Members of my community do not see Amotekun as doing any security work.	145	162	185	156	2.46	Disagree
6.	Amotekun maintain security to the expectation of members of my community	146	156	171	175	2.42	Disagree
7	The setting up of Amotekun is a good development for reducing crimes in my community	172	157	167	152	2.54	Agree

8.	There have been lots of improvements on security services in my community since the inception of Amotekun.	166	159	158	165	2.50	Agree
9.	Members of Amotekun in my community collaborate with robbers in crime.	141	170	167	170	2.44	Disagree
10.	I see Amotekun as being reliable in fighting crimes.	172	153	164	159	2.52	Agree
	Mean					**2.50**	**Agree**

Source: Researchers' computation (2025)

Extent of Collaboration of Amotekun with the Nigeria Police Force in fighting crime in the study area

The data reveals the respondents' perception of the collaboration between Amotekun and the Nigerian Police Force, with the mean serving as the basis for analysis. A mean rating of 2.5 and above indicates a high extent, while a mean below 2.5 signifies a low extent of collaboration.

The overall mean rating of 2.56 suggests a high extent of collaboration between Amotekun and the police force in crime-fighting efforts. This reflects a generally positive perception of synergy and cooperation between the two entities. Key areas of collaboration are evident in operational integration, information sharing, and support for crime prevention. Amotekun's immediate reporting of criminal activities to the police, quick response to police calls, and adherence to police directives indicate a structured and responsive partnership. These actions underline the complementary role Amotekun plays in supporting formal law enforcement mechanisms.

The data also highlights specific areas where collaboration is perceived to be less effective. For instance, there is a low extent of response from Amotekun regarding police instructions in certain communities, as well as limited cooperation in addressing specific challenges like the menace of cattle herders. These gaps point to possible operational or communication inefficiencies that may hinder optimal collaboration. Furthermore, the perception that Amotekun sometimes hesitates to report crimes underscores the need for greater transparency and mutual accountability.

The mean ratings for specific items, such as Amotekun's role in providing actionable intelligence and facilitating prosecutions, suggest that while their contributions are significant, there are areas requiring further reinforcement to enhance trust and functional integration. For instance, information sharing aimed at curbing the sale and consumption of hard drugs is perceived as

moderately successful, indicating room for improvement in tackling systemic issues through collaborative strategies.

The overall high mean score reflects a shared acknowledgment of the importance of Amotekun as a critical local security outfit that complements the efforts of the Nigerian Police Force. However, the mixed responses in certain aspects call for strategic interventions. Improved training, clearer communication protocols, and joint operational planning could strengthen the partnership and address the challenges identified by respondents. In conclusion, while the collaboration between Amotekun and the Nigerian Police Force is rated as high to a significant extent, targeted efforts to resolve identified challenges would enhance the effectiveness of their collective crime-fighting capabilities.

Table 2: Mean Ratings of the Respondents on the Extent to which Amotekun Collaborate with the Nigerian Police Force in Fighting Crime.
(N= 726)

S/N	Items	TUE (N=648)	Police (N=78)	Mean	Remark
11.	Amotekun report any observed sign of criminal activity to the police immediately	2.51	3.01	2.76	High Extent
12.	Amotekun arrest criminals and take them to the Police for formal prosecution	2.46	3.08	2.77	High Extent
13.	Amotekun respond quickly to police calls for operational assistance.	2.50	2.89	2.70	High Extent
14.	Amotekun take operational instructions from the police to handle some criminal problems in your community.	2.50	2.91	2.71	High Extent
15.	Amotekun treat criminal matters by cooperating with the police.	2.49	3.00	2.75	High Extent
16.	Amotekun do not respond to police instruction accordingly in your community	2.41	1.89	2.15	Low Extent
17.	The collaboration between the police and Amotekun for crime prevention is cordial.	2.50	3.12	2.81	High Extent
18.	In your community, Amotekun provide police with report on how to trace and control the menace of cattle herdsmen	2.41	2.03	2.22	Low Extent
19.	In your community, Amotekun gives report of criminal activities to the police to				High Extent

	facilitate prosecution of criminals.	2.49	2.83	2.66	
20.	Information sharing between the police and Amotekun has not helped to stop the sale and consumption of hard drugs in your community.	2.52	2.59	2.56	High Extent
21.	Amotekun do not like reporting any incidence of crime to the police.	2.53	1.61	2.07	Low Extent
Mean				**2.56**	**High Extent**

Source: Researchers' computation (2025)

The Extent to which Amotekun Reduce Criminal Activities in study area.

The perception of respondents on the extent to which Amotekun reduces criminal activities reveals a generally positive impact, with an overall mean rating of 2.64, indicating a high extent of effectiveness. This suggests that Amotekun plays a significant role in mitigating crime within the study area.

Amotekun's presence appears to act as a deterrent to criminal activities, as criminals are perceived to operate less freely in communities where Amotekun is active. This demonstrates the psychological impact of visible security operations on potential offenders. Furthermore, Amotekun's efforts in identifying and demolishing criminal hideouts enhance their practical contribution to crime reduction. Such proactive measures directly target the infrastructure that supports criminal activities, thereby disrupting illicit networks.

The data also suggests reductions in specific crimes such as kidnapping, daily robberies, and murder, with mean ratings for these aspects consistently above 2.5. These findings align with the broader narrative of localized security initiatives being better equipped to address community-specific threats. The presence of Amotekun fosters a sense of safety and responsiveness, especially in areas underserved by conventional law enforcement agencies.

However, the extent to which Amotekun addresses more systemic crimes, such as human trafficking and sexual violence, appears more modest. While these areas still meet the high-extent threshold, their slightly lower ratings hint at underlying challenges in tackling complex criminal networks or cultural stigmas that may limit reporting and intervention. This highlights

the need for specialized training and inter-agency collaboration to address these multifaceted issues more effectively.

Overall, the findings emphasize Amotekun's role as a pivotal force in enhancing security and reducing crime within the study area. Their localized approach and community-centric operations contribute to a high extent of crime deterrence and resolution. To sustain and improve their impact, efforts should focus on addressing systemic crimes, strengthening community trust, and ensuring operational transparency. This would further solidify Amotekun's position as a complementary and indispensable component of the region's security framework

Table 3: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Extent to which Amotekun Reduce Criminal Activities in study area.
(N= 726)

S/N	Items	Tue (N=648)	Police (N=78)	Mean	Remark
22.	The presence of Amotekun makes criminals afraid to operate freely in your community	2.55	3.00	2.78	High Extent
23.	Some criminal hideout are identified and demolished by Amotekun in your community	2.52	2.77	2.65	High Extent
24.	Human trafficking in your area has not been reduced because of the emergence of Amotekun	2.46	2.54	2.50	High Extent
25.	Kidnapping has reduced due to the presence of Amotekun in your community.	2.47	2.73	2.60	High Extent
26.	Daily robbing of people"s home has not been reduced since the inception of Amotekun in your area	2.52	2.99	2.76	High Extent
27.	Raping of innocent girls in your community has not reduced because of the presence of Amotekun	2.52	2.67	2.60	High Extent
28.	Murder and assassination of people in your community has reduced due to the emergence of Amotekun	2.58	2.63	2.61	High Extent
	Mean			**2.64**	**High Extent**

Source: Researchers' computation (2025)

Extent to which State security network Protects Lives and Properties of community members

The analysis of respondents' perceptions reveals an overall **high extent** of effectiveness by Amotekun in protecting lives and properties, with a mean rating of **2.50**. This suggests that, generally, the community acknowledges Amotekun's significant contributions to safeguarding lives and assets. However, the data reveals notable variations in perceptions across different security issues.

Amotekun's impact is particularly noted in areas such as reducing early morning robberies, curbing harassment by criminals, and combating kidnapping, all of which received mean ratings above the high-extent threshold. These outcomes reflect Amotekun's localized and visible operations, which deter crimes and improve community confidence. Their success in tackling violent crimes, such as the killing of innocent individuals, further underscores their value as a responsive security network addressing urgent community threats.

Conversely, the data highlights challenges in areas where Amotekun's influence is perceived as limited. For instance, the inability to significantly reduce housebreaking, crop destruction by herdsmen, and human trafficking points to systemic issues or operational gaps. These findings suggest that while Amotekun excels in some areas, it may require enhanced training, resource allocation, and inter-agency partnerships to tackle crimes requiring specialized interventions.

Interestingly, the mixed perception regarding car theft indicates that some communities may not feel sufficiently protected in all aspects of property security. This highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach to crime prevention that includes surveillance, intelligence gathering, and community engagement.

The overall high mean suggests that Amotekun has been effective in many areas of crime prevention and protection. However, addressing areas of lower performance, such as organized crime and property-related offenses, is critical to sustaining and expanding its legitimacy and effectiveness. Strengthening collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, investing in capacity building, and enhancing transparency will ensure that Amotekun continues to meet community expectations and fulfill its mandate comprehensively. This analysis underscores the

need for a nuanced approach to evaluating localized security initiatives, recognizing their strengths while addressing operational weaknesses to optimize impact

Table 4: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Extent to which State security network Protects Lives and Properties of community members.
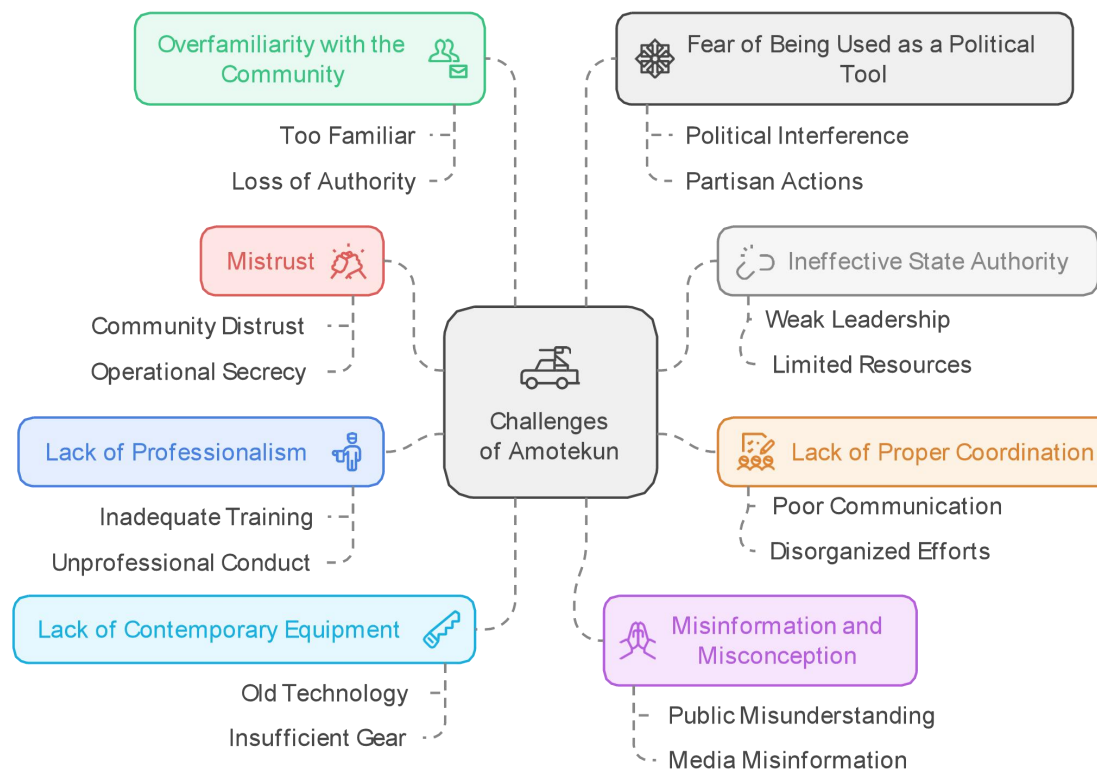**(N= 726)**

S/No	Items	Tue (N=648)	Police (N=78)	Mean	Remark
29	House breaking has been reduced since the inception of Amotekun in your community	2.46	2.31	2.39	Low Extent
30	Killing of innocent people by criminals has been tackled by Amotekun in your community.	2.47	2.68	2.58	High Extent
31.	Early morning robbery of commuters has reduced in your community since the inception of Amotekun	2.49	2.96	2.73	High Extent
32.	Frequent harassment of people by criminals has reduced in your community due to the presence of Amotekun.	2.49	2.85	2.67	High Extent
33.	Destruction of crops by herdsmen has reduced in your community due to the presence of Amotekun	2.48	1.83	2.16	Low Extent
34.	Human trafficking has not reduced in your community due to the presence of Amotekun	2.49	2.42	2.46	Low Extent
35.	Kidnapping has been combated by Amotekun in your community.	2.43	2.99	2.71	High Extent
36.	Car theft has not reduced since the inception of Amotekun in your community	2.50	2.04	2.27	Low Extent
	Mean			**2.50**	**High Extent**

Source: Researchers' computation (2025)

Challenges inhibiting State Security Network, Amotekun

Amotekun, established to address security challenges in Southwest Nigeria, faces several significant obstacles that hinder its performance. These challenges are rooted in operational limitations, systemic issues, and sociopolitical dynamics. Past studies provide a comprehensive understanding of these barriers, offering insights into how they constrain Amotekun's efficacy. The interview responses are captured in the following diagram:

Figure 1: Challenges inhibiting State Security Network, Amotekun

Source: Author's compilation from interview responses (2024)

One of the most pressing challenges is the inability of Amotekun operatives to carry sophisticated arms. Despite facing heavily armed criminals, Amotekun personnel are restricted by federal laws, which limit access to advanced weaponry. This disparity in firepower reduces their operational effectiveness and endangers personnel during engagements. As noted by Olayanju (2021), this limitation is a significant drawback for Amotekun, especially in combating well-armed criminal syndicates

Amotekun lacks prosecutorial powers, meaning it must hand over suspects to the Nigerian Police Force or other federal agencies for further investigation and prosecution. This dependency often leads to delays, inefficiencies, and, in some cases, a lack of accountability for apprehended suspects. Oluyemi and Ogunsakin (2021) argue that the lack of a clear legal framework and limited autonomy undermine the outfit's credibility and effectiveness. The network is severely understaffed, given the vast area it needs to cover and the scope of its responsibilities. With

increasing security threats, including farmer-herder conflicts, kidnapping, and armed robbery, the current workforce is overstretched. Recruitment drives have been initiated, but the scale of security demands outpaces the available personnel. Amotekun's operational capacity is constrained by inadequate funding and insufficient logistical support. The lack of resources for transportation, communication equipment, and training hampers its ability to respond swiftly and efficiently to security threats. According to Folorunso and Adebayo (2021), this challenge reflects broader resource allocation issues faced by decentralized security outfits in Nigeria.

Amotekun has faced criticism for alleged ethnic bias and political motivations, particularly regarding its operations in inter-ethnic disputes such as farmer-herder conflicts. This perception, whether justified or not, can erode public trust and hinder cooperation from certain communities. Nwoko (2024) emphasizes the importance of maintaining neutrality to sustain its legitimacy Although Amotekun was designed to complement federal security forces, coordination challenges persist. The lack of a unified command structure and occasional jurisdictional conflicts with the Nigerian Police Force and military limit its ability to operate seamlessly. Awotayo et al. (2023) stress that better integration and clearer operational guidelines are crucial for enhancing collaboration

A brief comparative analysis of security networks across the regions in Nigeria is important here. Amotekun, the Western Nigeria Security Network, differs significantly from the Eastern Security Network (ESN) and Hisbah in both mandate and performance, reflecting the varied socio-political contexts of their emergence. Amotekun, established by the six southwestern states in 2020, has largely operated within a quasi-formal framework, focusing on community policing, anti-banditry, and intelligence gathering in collaboration with state security agencies. Despite criticisms of inadequate training, funding, and occasional allegations of excesses, studies suggest Amotekun has contributed meaningfully to curbing farmer-herder clashes and kidnappings in the region (Omitola & Akinola, 2021; Olaniyi, 2022).

By contrast, the ESN, launched in December 2020 by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), operates outside state recognition, making it more militant in orientation. Its activities, framed as community protection against herdsmen attacks, have often escalated into violent confrontations with federal forces, thereby undermining its legitimacy and deepening insecurity in the Southeast

(Nwanegbo-Ben & Odigbo, 2021). Unlike Amotekun, ESN's lack of formal institutional backing has limited its effectiveness and entrenched tensions with the Nigerian state.

Hisbah, operating mainly in northern states like Kano, reflects a different model as it is state-recognized but oriented toward enforcing Sharia-based morality laws rather than tackling violent crimes. While Hisbah has been praised for social regulation and dispute mediation, critics argue that its selective enforcement and focus on moral policing (e.g., alcohol prohibition, dress codes) often neglect urgent security concerns, thereby reducing its relevance in addressing contemporary criminality (Alemika, 2020; Ibrahim, 2021).

Comparatively, Amotekun's semi-formal collaboration with state authorities positions it as more effective in addressing conventional security threats, while ESN's militancy and Hisbah's moral policing highlight the divergent approaches to community security across Nigeria. However, Amotekun's sustainability remains tied to issues of professionalization, legal clarity, and resource adequacy.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on Amotekun's performance in reducing crime, protecting lives and property, and collaborating with other security agencies, such as the Nigerian Police Force, reveal significant insights into its role in the Southwest of Nigeria. These findings align with existing studies and theories, which provide a framework for understanding its impacts and challenges.

Respondents acknowledged Amotekun's contribution to reducing crimes such as kidnapping and robbery, with a high extent of effectiveness observed. This aligns with findings by Odewale and Lamidi (2020), who reported that Amotekun's establishment reduced crime levels in the Southwest, though more effort is needed to address persistent issues like human trafficking The deterrence observed can also be linked to the *Broken Windows Theory*, which posits that addressing minor crimes and maintaining visible security reduces larger criminal acts (Holborn, 2014)

The perception that Amotekun provides significant protection, especially in reducing violent crimes like murder, resonates with the findings of prior studies such as Nwoko, (2021) which highlighted its effectiveness in tackling communal security challenges   . However, its limited

success in systemic issues like crop destruction by herdsmen reflects the broader challenges of addressing socio-economic conflicts.

The findings indicate strong collaboration between Amotekun and the police, particularly in intelligence sharing and operational support. This supports Oluwafemi and Oyewumi (2021), who noted that regional and local collaboration enhances crime prevention in Nigeria . However, gaps in responsiveness to some systemic crimes suggest the need for enhanced inter-agency frameworks. Amotekun's success is partly due to its grounding in community policing principles. Involving local residents in reporting suspicious activities and participating in patrols has great potentials to fosters trust and cooperation . This approach aligns with Hirschi's *Social Control Theory*, which argues that strong community bonds reduce deviant behavior

Despite its achievements, ethical concerns about the potential misuse of authority and instances of perceived bias highlight the need for greater accountability. These concerns echo Nwoko's (2021) warning that politicization or lack of transparency could undermine the efficacy of regional security initiatives like Amotekun

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study underline Amotekun's pivotal role in addressing security challenges in Southwest Nigeria. While its impacts are significant, targeted improvements in training, inter-agency collaboration, and operational transparency are essential to sustain and enhance its effectiveness. These measures would address lingering challenges, ensuring that Amotekun remains a credible and indispensable part of Nigeria's security architecture. Also, Amotekun's performance is inhibited by a range of structural, legal, and operational challenges that need urgent attention.

This article articulates the significance of WNSN Corps as a pivotal participant in the regional initiative to combat kidnapping in southwest Nigeria.

Recommendation

This study has established the ingenuity, vigour, and local knowledge of the security network, which have greatly improved the detection of kidnappers' locations, intelligence acquisition, and of abducted individuals from their captors. Henc, the WNSN, as an institution in southwest

Nigeria, deserves acknowledgement as a crucial organisation in the ongoing struggle against kidnapping and hostage-taking in the region. Thus, the following recommendations are made:

i) implemention of legislative reforms, to enhance financing, and foster strategic inter-agency collaboration so as to enable Amotekun efficiently execute its mandate.

ii) It is necessary to confer prosecutorial authority and access to modern weaponry to Amotekun within a regulated framework.

iii) There is need for effective communication among the diverse security agencies and stakeholders for improved performance. Additionally, there is need for collaborative border patrol among governments security agencies with the aim of apprehending kidnappers in the region.

iv) Moreover, it is imperative to improve intelligence sharing among regional security organisations and their neighbouring counterparts to successfully combat kidnapping. Moreover, regional and national authorities must remain vigilant in preventing coordinated kidnapping efforts before their implementation. To improve its effectiveness and establish a more resilient security framework, the WNSN Corps might be organised more clearly within a hierarchical command structure that includes community, local government, state, and regional levels. Furthermore, it is essential to prioritise granting the group access to resources, training, retraining, and legal assistance. It is essential to periodically upgrade personnel training and retraining to guarantee the team utilises modern securitisation approaches while upholding human rights and maintaining security

References

Ajayi, J. O. (2020). Community policing and local security in Nigeria: Evaluating the Amotekun initiative. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13*(2), 89-105.

Akinade, A. (2016). *Public-private and community security systems: Towards sustainable cooperation, partnership, and professionalism.* University of Lagos Press.

Akindejoye, T., & Ayenakin, O. (2022). Law and administration of justice in Nigeria: The new paradigm for enhancing national security. *Global Journal of Politics and Law Research, 10*(1), 15-22.

Alemika, E. O. (2013). Security and policing in Nigeria: Challenges and options. *Security Journal of Africa, 7*(1), 112-129.

Alemika, E. E. O. (2020). Community policing in Nigeria: Rhetoric and reality. *CLEEN Foundation Monograph Series*.

Aluko, O. A. (2020). Federalism, security, and the challenge of managing diversity in Nigeria. *Journal of African and Asian Studies, 55*(1), 1-17.

Aning, K. (2024). Responses to insecurity in Africa: The challenge of peacebuilding. *Claude Ake Memorial Papers, 13.* The Nordic Africa Institute.

Awotayo, M., Adeyemi, T., & Alade, B. (2023). Regional security governance and inter-agency collaboration in Nigeria. *African Security Review, 32*(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2023.1234567

Buzan, B. (1991). New patterns of global security in the twenty-first century. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 431-451.

Deribe, A. U. (2023). National security architecture and the question of Nigerian federalism: The phenomenon of state police and its feasibility. *Khazanah Sosial, 5*(3), 403-417.

Dimitriadis, S. (2024). Bribery, insecurity, and firm performance: Evidence from the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. *Strategic Management Journal, 45*, 1061-1086.

Dogi, I. G., Afolabi, M. B., Ola, A. A., & Idowu, O. O. (2024). The Western Nigeria Security Network Operation and Crime Management in Ondo State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Sociological & Psychological Studies (AJOSAPS)*, *4*(1).

Ebeh, J. I. (2015). National security and national development: A critique. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities, 6*(2), 23-45.

Fawole, W. A. (2014). *Federalism and the challenges of security in Nigeria.* University Press of America.

Folorunso, O., & Adebayo, K. (2021). Decentralized security and resource challenges in Nigeria: The case of Amotekun. *Journal of African Studies and Development, 13*(2), 45–56. https://doi.org/10.5897/JASD2021.0602

Hague, R., Harrop, M., & McCormick, J. (2016). *Political science: A comparative introduction.* Macmillan.

Haider, H. (2016). *Safety, security, and justice.* University of Birmingham Press.

Heath, J. B. (2019). The new national security challenge to the economic order. *Yale Law Journal, 129*, 1020.

Holborn, H. (2014). Broken windows and community security: An African perspective. *Journal of Security Studies, 7*(3), 211–227.

Ibrahim, J. (2021). Sharia, governance and the limits of Hisbah in Nigeria. *African Journal of Legal Studies, 14*(2), 115–133.

Iwuamadi, C. K., Ngwu, E. C., & Onyemaobi, M. (2021). Regional security outfits and the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. *University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy, 11*(2), 36-48.

Mbiyozo, A. N. (2017). Policy brief: How Boko Haram specifically targets displaced people. *Institute for Security Studies.*

Mehra, A. K. (2014). *Public security in federal systems.* Lancer Publishers Limited.

Moliki, A. O., Nkwede, J. O., & Dauda, K. O. (2020). Federalism, national security, and state policing system in Nigeria's fourth republic. *Islamic University Multidisciplinary Journal, 7*(2), 95-104.

Nwanegbo-Ben, J., & Odigbo, J. (2021). Insurgency, separatist agitation and the Nigerian state: The case of IPOB's Eastern Security Network. *Journal of African Security Studies, 30*(4), 389–405. https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2021.1955220

Nwoko, K. C. (2024). Amotekun: The Southwest region's response to the failures of the Nigerian police and worsening insecurity in Nigeria. *African Identities*, *22*(1), 1-17.

Nwoko, C. (2021). Community security and regional policing in Nigeria: The Amotekun experiment. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 14*(1), 77–95.

Nwolise, C. (2008). National Security and Sustainable Democracy. Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria. Ibadan: JohnArchers Publisher.

Nwozor, A. (2013). National security, religious anarchism and the politics of amnesty in Nigeria. *Covenant journal of politics and international affairs*, *1*(1).

Obikaeze, V. C., Udoh, O. N., Adebogun, O. B., & Enapeh, O. (2023). The state and dilemma of post-colonial Nigeria: An explanatory perspective of security governance failure. *ABUAD Journal of Social and Management Sciences, 4*(1), 38-55.

Odewale, A., & Lamidi, K. (2020). The effectiveness of Amotekun in combating crime in Southwestern Nigeria. *African Journal of Security Sector Management, 9*(2), 88–103.

Ogaba, O. (2010). Security, Globalization and Climate Change: A Conceptual Analysis. Climate Change and Human Security in Nigeria. Lagos: NIIA.

Ogunmodede, C. (2021). The politics of state policing in Nigeria: An assessment of the Amotekun security initiative. *Journal of African Security Studies, 8*(3), 42-61.

Ojewale, O. (2023). Theorizing and illustrating plural policing models in countering armed banditry in hybrid terrorism in northwest Nigeria. *Cogent Social Sciences, 9*(1), 2174486.

Okeke, A. A. (1999). National security, good governance, and integration in Nigeria: A discourse. *Asian Social Science, 7*(4), 167-181.

Okeke, V. O. S. (2013). Community policing, vigilante security apparatus, and security challenges in Nigeria: A lesson from Britain and Igbo traditional society of Nigeria. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, 14*(2), 306-323.

Olaniyi, R. (2022). Vigilantism and state response: Amotekun and the dynamics of regional security in Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 40*(3), 377–395. https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2022.2045217

Olayanju, T. (2021). Firepower disparity and the challenges of community security in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Security Studies, 6*(1), 23–39.

Oluwafemi, A., & Oyewumi, B. (2021). Local-regional collaboration and policing efficiency in Nigeria. *International Journal of Policing and Security Studies, 5*(2), 64–79.

Oluyemi, F., & Ogunsakin, A. (2021). Legal frameworks and the limits of regional security initiatives in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Law and Policy, 18*(2), 120–135.

Omitola, B., & Akinola, A. O. (2021). Regional security initiatives and the politics of Amotekun in Nigeria. *African Security Review, 30*(2), 144–160.

Out, O. D., & Dickson, A. A. (2017). Corruption and the challenge of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria: A case of the Nigerian armed forces. *Asian Research Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, 4*(2), 1-20.

Sodaro, M. J. (2015). *Comparative politics: A global introduction.* McGraw-Hill.

Stevens, D., & Vaughan-Williams, N. (2016). *Security threats and their consequences.* Manchester University Press.

Steytler, N., & Mutingh, L. (2019). South Africa. In C. Leuprecht, M. Kolling, & T. Hataley (Eds.), *Public security in federal polities.* University of Toronto Press.

This Day Newspaper. (2021, August 24). Editorial: Tackling all sides of the state police debates.

Thurston, A. (2019). *Boko Haram: The history of an African jihadist movement.* Princeton University Press.

Usman, M. (2022). Governance and security challenges in Nigeria. *Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 11*(1), 1244-1259.

Walker III, W. O. (2009). *National security and core values in American history.* Cambridge University Press.

Walt, S. M. (1991). The renaissance of security studies. *International studies quarterly*, *35*(2), 211-239.

Watts, R. C. (2008). *Comparing federal systems.* Queen's University Press.

Waxman, M. (2012). National security federalism in the age of terror. *Columbia Law School.*

Weber, M. (1968). *Economics and society.* New York.

Wheare, K. C. (1946). *Federal government.* Oxford University Press.

Williams, P. (2013). Security Studies: An Introduction. 2nd edn. New York: Routledge

Yusuff, A., & Mohammed, S. (2023). Growth and fiscal effects of insecurity on the Nigerian economy. *The European Journal of Development Research, 35*(4), 743-769.