

**COMMUNITY POLICING AND CRIME PREVENTION IN URBAN NIGERIA:
AN ASSESSMENT OF EDO STATE SECURITY NETWORK
(2021-2025)**

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
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**BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE OF
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FEBRUARY, 2026.

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this project titled “**Community Policing And Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network (2021-2025)**” was carried out by Amenze IGIEBOR with matriculation number PG/EDU1105400 in the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty, whose guidance and grace helped me throughout this pursuit.

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the role of community policing in crime prevention within urban Nigeria, with a specific focus on the Edo State Security Network (ESSN). Against the backdrop of escalating urban insecurity and public distrust in conventional policing, the research investigates how ESSN contributes to maintaining law and order in Edo State. Utilizing the quantitative method, data was gathered from residents, security personnel, and community leaders in Oredo Local Government Area through structured questionnaires. Findings reveal that while the ESSN has enhanced rapid response to crime, fostered inter-agency collaboration, and improved security visibility, challenges persist in areas such as logistics, training, community trust, and coordination. The study also identifies a paradox where despite these operational gains, many residents still do not feel significantly safer. Drawing on empirical literature and grounded in community policing theory, the study concludes that sustainable crime prevention requires more inclusive engagement strategies, adequate funding, and trust-building mechanisms between security actors and the public. The research contributes to policy and scholarly discourse on local security architectures and recommends strategic reforms to strengthen community policing frameworks across urban Nigeria.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Urban areas in Nigeria have witnessed an upsurge in criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cult violence, and drug trafficking. These security threats have intensified due to rapid urbanization, unemployment, and systemic governance issues. Traditional policing models have largely failed to curb these crimes, prompting a shift towards community-driven alternatives. As the Nigeria Police Force remains overstretched and under-resourced, there is a growing call for grassroots-oriented strategies that empower local actors to play active roles in safeguarding their communities (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024).

Community policing has been globally recognized as an inclusive approach that emphasizes the collaboration between security agencies and residents to proactively address the root causes of crime. In Nigeria, community policing gained national traction in the early 2000s but has faced implementation challenges, including political interference, mistrust, and poor coordination (Osifodunrin, 2024). Despite these setbacks, its relevance continues to grow, especially in urban areas where local knowledge and trust are vital for effective crime control (Ivorgbe, 2024). The strategy is considered essential for building public trust and improving intelligence gathering.

In response to growing insecurity, the Edo State Government launched the Edo State Security Network (ESSN), locally known as “Atalakpa,” in 2021. The ESSN was

established to formalize and coordinate the efforts of local vigilante groups, hunters, and other traditional security actors to provide support to the formal policing system. This hybrid security model is designed to enhance rapid response, intelligence sharing, and crime deterrence across urban and rural communities in the state (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024). The initiative reflects an attempt to bridge the gap between state security forces and communities through participatory and decentralized mechanisms.

However, the operations of ESSN have raised critical concerns around legality, accountability, and professionalism. Critics have pointed out issues such as extrajudicial actions, lack of proper training, and potential human rights abuses associated with the network. Moreover, questions remain about the long-term sustainability and oversight of such informal security bodies (Aigbe and Isibor, 2023). Without a clear legal framework and monitoring structures, the risk of abuse and public distrust persists, potentially undermining the core objective of community policing in urban crime prevention.

Given the context, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network in preventing crime within urban communities. By examining the structure, implementation, and impact of the ESSN, the study seeks to contribute to scholarly discourse on community policing in Nigeria. Furthermore, it will provide evidence-based insights for policymakers and security stakeholders on how best to institutionalize community policing practices that are transparent, accountable, and locally responsive.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Oredo Local Government Area (LGA), encompassing Benin City—the capital of Edo State—has witnessed a persistent rise in criminal activities, including armed robbery, cultism, and kidnapping. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF), tasked with maintaining law and order, faces challenges such as inadequate personnel, limited resources, and strained community relations, leading to diminished public trust and cooperation (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024). In response to these challenges, the Edo State Government established the Edo State Security Network (ESSN), locally known as "Atalakpa," aiming to bolster grassroots policing and enhance crime prevention efforts.

While the ESSN was conceived to complement existing security structures, its implementation has been marred by concerns over effectiveness, accountability, and human rights adherence. A study by Idowu and Usifoh (2024) highlighted challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of proper training, and insufficient collaboration with formal security agencies, which have hindered the ESSN's operational efficiency. Moreover, incidents like the 2025 Uromi massacre, where 16 individuals were killed following a confrontation involving local vigilantes, underscore the potential for abuse and the dire consequences of inadequate oversight (Yusuf, 2025).

Given Oredo LGA's strategic importance and its unique security dynamics, there is an urgent need to critically assess the ESSN's role in crime prevention within this urban context. This study seeks to evaluate the operational effectiveness of the ESSN in Oredo, examining its successes, challenges, and the perceptions of community members. The findings aim to inform policy recommendations for enhancing community policing

frameworks, ensuring they are effective, accountable, and aligned with human rights standards.

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent has the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) contributed to crime prevention and community safety in Oredo Local Government Area?
2. What are the key operational, structural, and community-related challenges facing the ESSN in Oredo LGA?
3. What strategies and policy interventions can be adopted to improve the effectiveness, accountability, and sustainability of community policing in Oredo and other urban centers in Nigeria?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in preventing crime and enhancing public safety in Oredo Local Government Area.
2. To identify and analyze the major operational, structural, and community engagement challenges confronting the ESSN in Oredo.
3. To propose actionable strategies and policy recommendations for improving the functionality, accountability, and sustainability of community policing in Oredo and similar urban contexts in Nigeria.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is geographically limited to Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria, which includes the state capital, Benin City. The choice of Oredo as the study area is informed by its status as a densely populated and economically strategic location that has experienced significant security challenges and active deployment of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN).

Thematically, the study focuses on the concept and practice of community policing as implemented through the ESSN. It examines the network's structure, operations, effectiveness in crime prevention, level of collaboration with formal security agencies, and public perceptions of its activities. Special attention is given to challenges such as funding, training, accountability, and alleged political interference.

The study covers the period from 2020 to 2025, aligning with the formation and operational timeline of the ESSN under the administration of Governor Godwin Obaseki. Data will be collected from community members, security personnel, local government officials, and civil society organizations within Oredo LGA. Other LGAs in Edo State or beyond will not be considered in detail, as the focus is on assessing ESSN within the unique urban dynamics of Oredo.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it provides an empirical assessment of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN)—a relatively recent community policing initiative—within the urban context of Oredo Local Government Area. Given the rising

crime rates in Nigerian cities and the growing demand for localized security solutions, this research contributes to the understanding of how grassroots security frameworks can be structured and evaluated for impact.

Secondly, the findings of this study will be valuable to policy makers and state security agencies in Edo State and beyond. By identifying both the strengths and limitations of the ESSN, the study offers evidence-based recommendations for improving community policing structures. It may guide future decisions on legislation, training, funding, and institutional reforms necessary for sustaining community-based security models.

Thirdly, this research will benefit academics and researchers by contributing to the body of knowledge on urban security, crime prevention, and community engagement in Nigeria. It provides localized data from Oredo LGA that can serve as a reference point for comparative studies in other urban areas.

Finally, the study holds relevance for civil society organizations, local leaders, and residents who are directly impacted by the outcomes of community policing. Understanding the public's perception of ESSN operations can foster dialogue and trust between citizens and security operatives, paving the way for more inclusive and rights-respecting approaches to crime prevention in Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Community Policing

Community policing refers to a collaborative strategy between the police and the community aimed at identifying and solving issues that affect public safety and security. Unlike traditional policing models that focus heavily on reactive and enforcement-based strategies, community policing emphasizes proactive problem-solving, partnership building, and community engagement (Akinlabi & Murphy, 2021). It is built on the principle that sustainable security can only be achieved when law enforcement agencies work hand-in-hand with local communities to identify root causes of crime and co-create solutions.

At its core, community policing is characterized by decentralized decision-making, accountability to the public, and the integration of community members in security efforts. This includes involving local leaders, youth groups, neighborhood associations, and vigilante outfits in surveillance, information sharing, and conflict resolution (Ekhomu, 2020). In the Nigerian context, community policing has gained traction as a response to the overstretched Nigeria Police Force and the growing complexity of insecurity, particularly in urban areas such as Oredo, where population density and socio-economic diversity contribute to varied security threats.

The Edo State Security Network (ESSN), popularly known as *Atalakpa*, is an example of a state-level community policing initiative designed to complement conventional law enforcement agencies. The ESSN recruits local vigilantes and integrates them into a structured security framework to enhance surveillance, intelligence gathering, and rapid response (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024). While it aligns with the principles of community policing in theory, its practical implementation in Oredo has sparked debates around accountability, legality, and effectiveness.

2.1.2 Crime Prevention

Crime prevention refers to strategies and measures designed to reduce the risk of criminal activities and their harmful effects on individuals and society. It focuses on proactively addressing the root causes of crime rather than merely reacting after crimes occur (UNODC, 2021). Crime prevention involves a range of actions, including social interventions, situational strategies, law enforcement efforts, and community-based initiatives aimed at deterring individuals from engaging in criminal behavior.

In the context of urban Nigeria—especially in areas like Oredo LGA—crime prevention takes on added urgency due to high rates of youth unemployment, drug abuse, cult-related violence, and property crimes. Effective crime prevention in such urban settings requires a multi-agency approach that includes not only the police but also local governments, community leaders, religious institutions, and civil society actors (Alemika, 2020). Community policing, as an example of proactive crime prevention, plays a vital role in building trust, enhancing local intelligence, and addressing crimes before they escalate (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024).

The Edo State Security Network (ESSN) was established as a localized crime prevention strategy aimed at augmenting the efforts of the formal police force. It seeks to achieve crime prevention by deploying locally recruited personnel familiar with the terrain and social dynamics of communities such as Oredo. However, the effectiveness of such measures is contingent on transparency, community support, and legal backing to avoid issues of abuse, political interference, and lack of oversight (Obarisiagbon & Afolabi, 2023).

2.2 Historical Development of Community Policing Globally

The concept of community policing has evolved over several decades as a response to the limitations of traditional, enforcement-driven policing models. Its roots can be traced to the early 19th century in Britain, particularly with the establishment of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829 by Sir Robert Peel. Peel emphasized that “the police are the public and the public are the police,” a philosophy that laid the foundation for police-community cooperation (Miller & Hess, 2022). This early approach recognized the importance of police legitimacy and public trust in maintaining law and order.

In the United States, community policing gained prominence during the 1960s and 1970s, in response to civil unrest, police brutality, and the breakdown of trust between law enforcement and minority communities. These tensions prompted a shift toward policing models that emphasized decentralization, citizen participation, and collaborative problem-solving (Cordner, 2021). Pilot programs in cities like Chicago and New York introduced neighborhood foot patrols, community outreach initiatives,

and police advisory boards—tools that aimed to humanize the police and improve community relations.

Globally, the concept of community policing was embraced in various forms throughout the 1990s and 2000s, particularly in response to urbanization, rising crime rates, and the limitations of reactive policing strategies. In developing countries, including Brazil, South Africa, and India, community policing was introduced to address both formal policing gaps and community-led security needs (Brogden & Nijhar, 2020). These countries adapted the model to fit local contexts, often incorporating traditional authorities and non-state actors to improve safety and build trust in under-policed areas.

In Africa, community policing became a central theme in post-conflict and democratizing societies seeking to rebuild public trust in state institutions. Nigeria, for example, has experimented with community policing since the early 2000s but faced significant challenges due to centralization of police authority, political interference, and lack of citizen engagement (Alemika, 2020). More recent efforts—such as the Nigeria Police Force's 2020 rollout of a National Community Policing Framework—aim to strengthen local partnerships and empower community members to participate in crime prevention efforts (NPF, 2021).

By the 2020s, community policing had become a global best practice, endorsed by international agencies like the United Nations and INTERPOL as a key strategy for ensuring safety, justice, and human rights. While its effectiveness varies based on context, research affirms that community policing enhances police legitimacy, improves local intelligence gathering, and fosters safer communities when properly implemented

(Tyler & Jackson, 2022). As countries like Nigeria continue to grapple with complex urban security challenges, the historical lessons from global community policing experiments offer valuable insights into designing more inclusive and accountable security frameworks.

2.3 Development of Community Policing in Nigeria

Community policing in Nigeria has evolved through several phases, shaped by colonial legacies, post-independence security reforms, and growing internal security challenges. The colonial policing system was largely authoritarian and structured to protect British economic interests, with minimal concern for community engagement or civil liberties (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2020). This legacy persisted after independence, resulting in a centralized and paramilitary-style police force that often functioned in isolation from the communities it was meant to serve.

By the early 2000s, worsening crime rates, communal conflicts, and public mistrust of the police prompted calls for reform. In response, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), with support from organizations such as the CLEEN Foundation and the British Council, began experimenting with pilot community policing initiatives in states like Enugu, Kaduna, and Lagos (Chukwuma, 2020). These early models introduced community policing forums, neighborhood watch groups, and regular town hall meetings aimed at fostering police-community collaboration. However, progress was hampered by a lack of legal backing, insufficient training, and limited political will.

Recognizing these challenges, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2019 approved the National Community Policing Policy, and in 2020 the Nigeria Police Force launched a more formalized framework to institutionalize community policing across the country. This approach involved recruiting Community Policing Officers (CPOs) from within local communities to work alongside traditional police officers, enhancing local intelligence and trust (NPF, 2021). The framework aimed to decentralize policing responsibilities and make communities active participants in their own security.

States like Edo have also taken independent steps to domesticate community policing through initiatives like the Edo State Security Network (ESSN), launched in 2021. This state-backed initiative, also known locally as *Atalakpa*, integrates vigilante groups, hunters, and neighborhood watch volunteers into a structured security architecture under the oversight of local government and traditional institutions (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024). In urban areas such as Oredo, the ESSN has become a key mechanism for addressing crimes like robbery, cultism, and kidnapping, although it continues to face criticisms related to training, accountability, and political influence.

Despite its promise, the development of community policing in Nigeria remains uneven. Structural issues such as the centralized command structure of the NPF, inter-agency rivalry, and underfunding undermine its effectiveness. Furthermore, reports of human rights abuses by local vigilantes, especially in urban centers like Oredo, reveal the risks of poorly regulated community-based security (Obarisiagbon & Afolabi, 2023). For community policing to be sustainable in Nigeria, reforms must address legal

frameworks, community oversight, and inclusive participation to ensure legitimacy and long-term impact.

2.4 Urban Crime Trends in Nigeria

Urban crime in Nigeria has become increasingly complex and dynamic, driven by rapid urbanization, economic inequality, weak governance, and systemic youth unemployment. According to Adebayo and Olayiwola (2022), over 50% of Nigeria's population now resides in urban areas, and the expansion of informal settlements without corresponding infrastructure or security services has contributed to rising crime rates. The most common forms of urban crime include armed robbery, burglary, cultism, cybercrime, kidnapping, and gender-based violence, which disproportionately affect vulnerable populations in cities such as Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, and Benin City.

One of the most persistent and troubling trends is the rise in violent crimes, particularly in high-density urban centers. In cities like Benin City (Oredo LGA), incidents of cult-related killings, armed robbery, and street violence have escalated, often linked to territorial battles between youth gangs and cult groups (Ede & Ehis, 2021). These crimes are exacerbated by limited police visibility, poor community engagement, and a lack of responsive justice systems. In many urban neighborhoods, especially slums, residents often rely on informal security arrangements due to the mistrust of formal policing.

Another concerning trend is the proliferation of kidnapping for ransom, which has moved from rural highways into urban centers. Urban elites, professionals, and even

students have become targets, reflecting a shift in criminal tactics that exploit the weaknesses of law enforcement and judicial processes (Onah & Ogun, 2023). The monetization of abduction in Nigerian cities reflects a broader criminal economy that thrives on impunity and poor surveillance. This trend has also prompted state governments and communities to turn to community policing models and vigilante groups for support.

Cybercrime and internet-related fraud, often perpetrated by educated youth in urban areas, represent a more modern and tech-savvy form of crime. Nigeria's cities have become breeding grounds for these crimes, largely due to youth unemployment, peer pressure, and the glamorization of fraudulent wealth (Ogbonna, 2021). The phenomenon, popularly known as "Yahoo Yahoo," has become normalized among many urban youths, contributing to broader concerns about moral decay and the failure of traditional social institutions.

Consequently, gender-based and domestic violence have surged in Nigerian cities, especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturns. Reports from civil society organizations show increased cases of sexual assault, child abuse, and domestic violence in urban areas, with many victims lacking access to legal or psychosocial support (Ibrahim & Musa, 2022). This trend reflects the deep-seated patriarchal structures in urban Nigerian society and underscores the urgent need for community-driven approaches to urban safety and justice reform.

2.5 Government Strategies for Crime Prevention in Nigeria

The Nigerian government has employed a combination of law enforcement, legislative reforms, and community-based interventions to combat rising crime levels, especially in urban areas. Traditionally, crime prevention was largely reactive, relying heavily on the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and military operations. However, increasing insecurity—including banditry, terrorism, kidnapping, and urban violence—has led to a broader strategy that includes intelligence-led policing, surveillance, and neighborhood policing (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2020). The federal government, through the Ministry of Interior and Police Affairs, has sought to realign security architecture to focus more on crime prevention rather than mere response.

One key strategy has been the institutionalization of community policing. In 2020, the federal government formally launched the National Community Policing Framework, aimed at addressing crimes at the grassroots level through partnerships between law enforcement and community stakeholders. This policy involves recruiting community policing officers (CPOs) from local areas and empowering them to work collaboratively with traditional police units (NPF, 2021). The strategy also emphasizes the establishment of Police Community Relations Committees (PCRCs) and regular town hall meetings to enhance mutual trust and information sharing between the police and citizens (Chukwuma, 2021).

In addition, several legislative and policy reforms have been enacted to support crime prevention. For instance, the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) has been adopted by many states to promote a more efficient, transparent, and rights-respecting criminal justice system. Other legal tools include the Cybercrimes (Prohibition,

Prevention, etc.) Act of 2015, which targets internet fraud and digital crimes, and various anti-terrorism and anti-money laundering laws designed to address organized crime and insurgency (Eze & Lawal, 2022). These legal frameworks aim to modernize Nigeria's criminal justice system and close impunity gaps.

The Nigerian government has also invested in technological innovations for crime prevention. Through the deployment of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems in cities like Lagos and Abuja, biometric data collection, and digital crime databases, the government hopes to enhance surveillance and law enforcement response times. Moreover, collaborations with international partners—such as INTERPOL, UNODC, and ECOWAS—have supported the adoption of forensic technologies, capacity building, and joint task forces to disrupt transnational crime networks (Ajayi, 2023).

Despite these efforts, challenges persist due to corruption, underfunding, poor police training, and a lack of public trust in security institutions. The fragmented nature of security agencies and limited coordination also hinder the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies. Furthermore, many interventions remain concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural communities under-policed and vulnerable (Obarisiagbon & Afolabi, 2023). Sustainable crime prevention in Nigeria will require not only technical reforms but also systemic changes that address socio-economic inequality, justice access, and community empowerment.

2.6 Structure and Functions of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN)

The Edo State Security Network (ESSN), popularly known as *Atalakpa*, was established in 2020 as a community-based security outfit designed to complement the formal police force in tackling crime and insecurity within Edo State. The structure of the ESSN is hierarchical and organized to ensure both operational efficiency and community representation. At the top is the State Command, which oversees overall strategy, policy implementation, and coordination with government agencies. Below this are zonal and local commands that operate in various Local Government Areas (LGAs), including Oredo, enabling decentralized decision-making and rapid response (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024).

At the grassroots level, the ESSN incorporates local vigilante groups, hunters, and neighborhood watch volunteers, who are familiar with their communities and act as the eyes and ears of the network. These operatives are selected from local populations to foster trust and improve intelligence gathering. The ESSN also engages traditional rulers and community leaders to legitimize its operations and enhance community participation, thereby embedding its structure within existing social institutions (Ezeani & Okolie, 2023). This integration is crucial for effective community policing, as it bridges formal security agencies and informal local actors.

The primary functions of the ESSN include crime prevention, intelligence gathering, conflict mediation, and rapid response to security threats. Unlike the conventional police, the ESSN operates with a proactive mandate, patrolling neighborhoods, conducting checkpoints, and intervening in emerging disputes to prevent escalation (Obarisiagbon & Afolabi, 2023). The network also focuses on curbing specific crimes

prevalent in Edo State, such as armed robbery, cultism, kidnapping, and domestic violence. Additionally, the ESSN supports the police by sharing actionable intelligence and assisting in investigations.

To maintain discipline and accountability, the ESSN has established internal oversight mechanisms and collaborates with the Edo State Ministry of Internal Security. Regular training programs on human rights, conflict resolution, and community engagement are conducted to professionalize the operatives and reduce incidents of abuse (Idowu & Usifoh, 2024). However, challenges remain regarding the formal legal backing of the ESSN and ensuring its operations respect civil liberties, issues which are critical for its long-term legitimacy and effectiveness.

Thus, the ESSN represents a hybrid security arrangement blending formal and informal elements to address Edo State's complex security challenges. Its structure—spanning state to local levels—and its multifunctional roles position it as a key actor in Edo's security landscape. Ongoing reforms aimed at improving coordination with the Nigeria Police Force and institutionalizing oversight will be essential to harness the full potential of the ESSN in sustainable crime prevention (Ezeani & Okolie, 2023).

2.7 Stakeholder Involvement in the ESSN

The Edo State Security Network (ESSN) thrives on the active involvement of multiple stakeholders, which is critical for its legitimacy and effectiveness. One of the primary stakeholders is the Edo State Government, which provides the policy framework, funding, and political backing necessary for the establishment and operation of the

ESSN. The government's role includes approving the network's mandate, coordinating its activities with other state agencies, and ensuring it aligns with broader security objectives (Okwu & Izeze, 2023). This top-level support has been instrumental in differentiating the ESSN from informal vigilante groups by giving it an official status within the state's security architecture.

Local communities represent another essential stakeholder group in the ESSN. The network relies heavily on community leaders, traditional rulers, and neighborhood associations to facilitate recruitment, intelligence gathering, and conflict resolution efforts. These actors bridge the gap between the formal structures of the ESSN and the grassroots, providing critical cultural legitimacy and ensuring community buy-in (Onyekachi & Udoh, 2022). Their involvement enhances trust, which is vital for encouraging residents to cooperate with the ESSN and report criminal activities without fear of retaliation.

The members of the ESSN themselves are vital stakeholders whose participation and conduct directly affect the network's performance and public perception. Drawn largely from the local population, these operatives often have a deep understanding of the local terrain and social dynamics, which aids in effective crime prevention (Akinwale & Eze, 2024). However, their training, discipline, and adherence to human rights principles remain areas requiring continuous attention to maintain operational integrity and avoid abuses that could undermine community support.

Collaboration with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and other formal security agencies constitutes a crucial aspect of stakeholder involvement in the ESSN. While the ESSN

functions as a complementary force, coordination mechanisms have been established to share intelligence, coordinate patrols, and jointly respond to security threats (Bello & Adamu, 2023). This partnership is intended to leverage the strengths of both organizations—community knowledge from the ESSN and the investigative capacity of the police—though challenges such as jurisdictional overlap and occasional mistrust still need to be addressed.

Additionally, civil society organizations (CSOs) and human rights groups play an important watchdog role in ensuring that the ESSN operates within legal and ethical boundaries. These groups engage the network through advocacy, capacity-building workshops, and monitoring activities to promote transparency, accountability, and respect for citizens' rights (Okoye & Iroanya, 2023). Their involvement is crucial for maintaining public confidence in the ESSN and pushing for reforms that strengthen governance and prevent abuses.

2.8 Effectiveness of Community Policing in Crime Reduction

Community policing has been globally recognized as a strategic approach that fosters collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities to address crime proactively. Research indicates that community policing enhances trust and cooperation, leading to improved crime reporting and preventive measures (Musa & Ibrahim, 2021). By involving residents in safety initiatives and decision-making processes, police forces can better understand local crime dynamics, tailor interventions, and respond swiftly to emerging threats, thus reducing overall crime rates.

In the Nigerian context, studies have shown that community policing initiatives, such as neighborhood watch groups and state security networks, have contributed significantly to lowering petty crimes and violent incidents in urban areas. For instance, the introduction of community policing in Lagos and Edo states has led to increased patrols, improved intelligence sharing, and quicker responses to criminal activities (Okafor & Eze, 2022). This localized approach empowers communities to act as partners rather than mere recipients of police services, which enhances collective efficacy in crime control.

One notable aspect of community policing effectiveness lies in its ability to reduce the fear of crime among residents. When community members perceive that their environment is safer due to active police presence and participation, social cohesion and community vigilance improve (Adeyemi & Babalola, 2023). This psychological benefit not only deters criminals but also encourages residents to engage in social activities that strengthen communal bonds, further reducing opportunities for crime.

However, the effectiveness of community policing is not without challenges. Issues such as insufficient training for community officers, lack of adequate resources, and occasional distrust between police and citizens can undermine the initiative's success (Okonkwo & Umeh, 2024). Moreover, sustainability concerns arise when political will or funding diminishes, leading to intermittent or superficial implementation. Therefore, for community policing to achieve lasting impact, continuous capacity building and institutional support are crucial.

Therefore, evidence suggests that community policing is most effective when integrated with broader criminal justice reforms and socio-economic development programs. Addressing root causes of crime such as poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion complements policing efforts and creates an enabling environment for sustainable crime reduction (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2022). Hence, community policing should be viewed as part of a holistic security strategy rather than a standalone solution.

2.9 Challenges Facing Community Policing in Nigeria

Community policing in Nigeria faces numerous obstacles that limit its full potential in enhancing public safety and crime reduction. One significant challenge is the lack of adequate funding and resources. Many community policing units operate with minimal financial support, insufficient vehicles, communication equipment, and protective gear, which hampers their operational capacity and effectiveness (Okonkwo & Umeh, 2024). Without sustained investment, these units struggle to maintain consistent patrols, conduct investigations, and engage meaningfully with communities.

Another critical challenge is poor training and capacity-building for community policing officers and volunteers. Often, recruits into community policing receive limited instruction on essential skills such as human rights, conflict resolution, and community engagement (Chukwuemeka & Ojo, 2022). This inadequacy sometimes results in unprofessional conduct, excessive use of force, and erosion of public trust, which counteracts the objectives of community policing. Effective training programs are essential to professionalize the units and improve their interaction with the public.

The issue of mistrust between the police and local communities remains a persistent barrier. Historical experiences of police brutality, corruption, and neglect have created skepticism towards law enforcement efforts, including community policing initiatives (Nwankwo & Eze, 2023). In some areas, citizens hesitate to cooperate or share intelligence due to fears of retaliation or betrayal. This mistrust undermines community participation, which is foundational for successful policing partnerships.

Moreover, political interference and manipulation have complicated the impartiality and sustainability of community policing. In certain regions, local political actors have been accused of using community policing groups to advance partisan interests or suppress opposition (Adebayo & Salisu, 2021). Such politicization compromises the credibility of these units, leads to conflicts of interest, and can escalate insecurity rather than mitigate it.

On this note, the study argues that the lack of clear legal frameworks and oversight mechanisms poses governance challenges for community policing in Nigeria. Many community policing outfits operate in a legal grey area without explicit statutory backing or accountability structures (Ibrahim & Musa, 2022). This absence of regulation makes it difficult to monitor activities, address misconduct, and integrate community policing fully into the national security architecture, thereby limiting effectiveness and public confidence.

2.10 Comparative Analysis of Community Policing Models in Nigeria

Community policing in Nigeria has evolved into various models across different states, shaped by local security challenges, governance structures, and socio-political dynamics. A notable contrast exists between the federal-led community policing model, initiated by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), and state-based security outfits like Amotekun in the South-West, Ebube Agu in the South-East, and the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in the South-South. While the federal model aims to decentralize policing through community partnerships and neighborhood watch initiatives under police supervision, state-led outfits operate with greater autonomy, often incorporating local vigilante groups and traditional institutions (Akinyemi & Bello, 2022).

The federal community policing framework, rolled out nationally in 2020, emphasizes training select community members—known as Special Constables—under the command of the regular police to serve as liaisons between residents and law enforcement. This model is designed to bridge trust deficits, improve intelligence gathering, and enhance responsiveness. However, critics argue that it suffers from limited operational autonomy, inadequate funding, and over-centralization, which hinder its effectiveness in adapting to specific local threats (Okorie & Audu, 2021).

In contrast, state-led community policing initiatives are more embedded in the local context. For example, the Amotekun Corps in the South-West states, established under state laws, is structured with independent command hierarchies, equipped with mobility tools, and actively collaborates with hunters, traditional rulers, and local intelligence units. This has enabled quicker response to incidents such as banditry, kidnapping, and armed robbery in rural areas (Adegbite & Ogunrinu, 2023). However, challenges

around legal recognition at the federal level and coordination with the NPF persist, raising concerns about parallel policing structures.

The Edo State Security Network (ESSN) offers a hybrid approach by combining community-based recruitment with direct state oversight. It operates in collaboration with local vigilante groups and traditional institutions, and its decentralized command structure allows flexibility in responding to incidents, particularly in Oredo and other urban centers. The ESSN has been praised for its role in disrupting cult violence and reducing petty crime, though concerns remain about training quality, human rights oversight, and political interference (Odigie & Enabulele, 2024).

Comparing these models reveals that effectiveness is highly contingent on political will, funding, legal backing, and integration with formal security systems. While state models offer greater responsiveness and contextual relevance, they often struggle with sustainability and regulatory clarity. The federal model, although conceptually unified, lacks the operational agility needed to address hyper-local threats. Therefore, policy reforms should focus on harmonizing these approaches by providing legal frameworks for state initiatives while enhancing the flexibility and community ownership of the federal model (Ibrahim & Nwachukwu, 2023).

2.11 Community Participation and Public Trust in Policing

Community participation is a foundational pillar of effective policing and directly influences the level of public trust in law enforcement. In democratic societies, trust between the police and citizens is built when the public is actively involved in

identifying security concerns and co-producing solutions. In Nigeria, however, historical experiences of police brutality, corruption, and abuse have eroded public confidence, necessitating a shift toward participatory models like community policing (Adebanjo & Nwosu, 2021). Such models are designed to humanize the police force and promote transparency by encouraging regular engagement with residents, community leaders, and civil society groups.

In regions where community participation is strong, trust in law enforcement tends to be higher. For example, in parts of Lagos and Edo States, the incorporation of residents into neighborhood watch structures and local security networks has improved crime reporting and encouraged collaboration with police officers (Onah & Ibrahim, 2023). These initiatives foster a sense of ownership and mutual responsibility for community safety. When citizens perceive that their voices are heard and their security concerns are addressed promptly, it enhances their willingness to work with security actors.

Conversely, low levels of participation often correlate with public apathy and hostility toward policing institutions. In many urban and peri-urban areas across Nigeria, residents refrain from reporting crimes due to fear of retaliation or a belief that law enforcement will not act effectively or fairly (Okeke & Bello, 2022). Such perceptions are worsened by instances of police extortion and impunity, which contribute to an adversarial relationship between the public and the police. Without deliberate efforts to rebuild trust through inclusive practices, the legitimacy of policing will remain weak.

One of the proven ways to deepen public trust is through transparent communication and accountability mechanisms. Community town hall meetings, feedback forums, and

community policing committees serve as platforms for sharing information, resolving disputes, and correcting misinformation about police actions (Aliyu & Danjuma, 2024). These efforts demonstrate a commitment to openness and responsiveness, which are key to building long-term trust. Moreover, when law enforcement agencies show respect for human rights and uphold ethical standards, they reinforce public belief in the fairness of the justice system.

Ultimately, public trust in policing is both a driver and a product of sustained community participation. When properly structured and supported by law, community engagement fosters collective efficacy, empowers local actors, and helps demystify the role of law enforcement in society. Therefore, for Nigeria's security architecture to be truly effective, community participation must go beyond token consultation—it must become an integral part of policy design, resource allocation, and daily policing practice (Obi & Hassan, 2023).

2.12 Human Rights and Ethical Concerns in Community Policing

The implementation of community policing in Nigeria has raised serious human rights and ethical concerns, particularly regarding accountability, use of force, and the treatment of suspects. While community policing is meant to bridge the gap between the police and the public, reports have emerged about abuses by local security actors, including extrajudicial actions, arbitrary arrests, and torture (Okorie & Yusuf, 2022). These violations often occur in informal or hybrid security arrangements, where vigilante groups work alongside state-sanctioned forces with limited oversight or legal clarity.

A major issue is the lack of training in human rights protocols for many community policing operatives. In states such as Edo, where local vigilante members are absorbed into the state security network, concerns have been raised about their understanding of legal procedures and citizens' rights (Ehimuan & Musa, 2023). Without proper training, these operatives may resort to tactics rooted in fear or intimidation, undermining the core principles of justice, fairness, and due process that should guide community policing.

Furthermore, there are ethical dilemmas related to the involvement of non-state actors in law enforcement activities. While their local knowledge and proximity to the community offer practical advantages, such actors are often not bound by formal codes of conduct or disciplinary mechanisms. This situation creates gaps in accountability, making it difficult for victims of abuse to seek redress (Aliyu & Nwankwo, 2021). Moreover, political actors have occasionally co-opted community policing structures to harass opponents or settle local disputes, blurring the line between security and political repression.

The situation is exacerbated by the absence of independent monitoring mechanisms. Despite Nigeria's ratification of international human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), enforcement at the community level remains weak. Civil society organizations have called for institutional safeguards such as civilian oversight committees and human rights desks to ensure that community policing practices align with constitutional guarantees (Obi & Lawan, 2024).

Without such measures, there is a risk that community policing will perpetuate the same abuses it was intended to correct.

To ensure ethical compliance and protect human rights, community policing in Nigeria must be institutionalized through clear legal frameworks, transparent recruitment practices, and rigorous training on constitutional rights and ethical standards. A rights-based approach is essential not only to prevent abuse but also to build public trust, which is foundational to effective community policing. Policymakers must also create mechanisms for redress and incorporate human rights impact assessments into the design and evaluation of all local security programs (Ogunlana & Ebhohimhen, 2025).

2.13 Sustainability and Institutionalization of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN)

The sustainability of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) hinges on the ability to integrate it into a robust institutional framework that ensures continuity, effectiveness, and accountability. While the ESSN was initially established as a stopgap measure to combat rising urban crime, cult violence, and kidnapping, particularly in areas like Oredo LGA, it is now clear that a long-term strategy is needed for it to endure beyond changes in political leadership or short-term funding cycles (Ehigie & Akinlolu, 2023). Sustainability in this context requires legal codification, consistent resource allocation, and effective coordination with federal law enforcement bodies.

One major concern is the lack of a comprehensive legal framework that clearly defines the mandate, operational boundaries, and oversight structures of the ESSN. Although

the network enjoys state executive backing, the absence of a state assembly-enacted law institutionalizing its operations leaves it vulnerable to political interference and dissolution (Osaghae & Iyamu, 2022). Proper institutionalization would entail passing enabling legislation that articulates the ESSN's recruitment protocols, jurisdiction, funding sources, and mechanisms for community oversight, thereby legitimizing it within Edo's security architecture.

Funding and logistics also play a crucial role in the sustainability of the ESSN. Presently, much of its support comes from the state government's security vote and ad hoc provisions, which are often subject to political discretion and economic volatility. Without a dedicated and transparent budget line, the network risks becoming under-resourced, especially in times of fiscal downturn or political transition (Igbinedion & Ajayi, 2024). For long-term stability, there is a need for a statutory funding mechanism, possibly through the Edo State Security Trust Fund, to ensure that operational needs such as training, mobility, and equipment are met sustainably.

Another critical factor is the professionalization of the ESSN workforce. Currently, the network includes a mix of trained security personnel and local vigilantes, some of whom lack formal security training. This not only raises concerns about operational efficiency and human rights compliance but also undermines public trust. For institutionalization to be meaningful, the state must develop a standardized training curriculum, regular capacity-building programs, and a code of conduct aligned with national security standards and democratic policing principles (Uhunmwagho & Enagbare, 2025).

Lastly, the integration of the ESSN into the broader national security framework is vital for its institutional success. Fragmentation between state and federal policing efforts has historically hindered coordinated crime prevention. For the ESSN to be sustainable, it must operate in synergy with the Nigeria Police Force, DSS, and other agencies, while maintaining its community-based ethos. Establishing formal Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), data-sharing platforms, and joint operational protocols would help bridge existing gaps and promote a unified approach to security in Edo State (Omoregie, 2023).

2.14 Research Gaps and Directions for Future Studies

Despite growing interest in community policing in Nigeria, several research gaps persist, particularly in relation to the operational dynamics, effectiveness, and socio-political implications of state-led security networks like the ESSN. Much of the existing literature focuses broadly on federal policing reforms or generalized insecurity across regions, without adequately disaggregating the localized impacts and contextual challenges faced by networks like ESSN in urban centers such as Oredo (Ibrahim & Danladi, 2021). Consequently, there is a need for more empirical studies that assess the unique structure, strategy, and outcomes of the ESSN from both security and governance perspectives.

One prominent gap lies in the assessment of community perception and trust in the ESSN. While anecdotal evidence and media reports suggest that the network has had both successes and controversies, scholarly data on citizen attitudes—especially in crime-prone urban districts like Oredo—is scarce. Understanding how different

demographic groups (e.g., youth, traders, traditional leaders) perceive and interact with ESSN operatives is vital for evaluating its legitimacy and effectiveness. Future studies could employ qualitative and mixed methods to capture these complex dynamics, particularly around issues of fear, cooperation, and access to justice (Okonkwo & Salisu, 2023).

Another underexplored area is the impact of ESSN on human rights and legal accountability. While concerns have been raised about the role of vigilantes within the network and the potential for extrajudicial behavior, there is little empirical documentation of the mechanisms in place for oversight, complaints, and redress. This raises important questions about the balance between local security needs and constitutional safeguards. Research could explore how ESSN personnel are trained on rights-based policing, and how incidents of abuse are handled—if at all—by the state or community stakeholders (Adegoke & Ogundipe, 2022).

Additionally, comparative studies between ESSN and similar sub-national security outfits, such as Amotekun or Ebube Agu, are limited. Such comparative analyses would illuminate variations in structure, performance, accountability mechanisms, and public acceptance across states, thereby helping to identify best practices and policy lessons. This type of research could be especially useful in the ongoing national discourse around the possible constitutional decentralization of policing in Nigeria (Chukwu & Ekong, 2024).

Thus, there is a theoretical gap in linking community policing frameworks in Nigeria to broader discourses on state capacity, decentralization, and informal security governance.

Future research should explore how institutions like the ESSN fit into the larger security ecosystem, including their relationship with federal agencies, political actors, and civil society. This line of inquiry is critical for informing future reforms and ensuring that local policing initiatives not only respond to crime but also reinforce democratic accountability and inclusive governance (Usman & Ibhide, 2025).

2.16 Theoretical Framework

2.16.2 Community-Oriented Policing Theory

The Community-Oriented Policing (COP) Theory was developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, gaining prominence through the works of scholars such as Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucqueroux (1990) at Michigan State University. It emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional reactive policing methods, advocating for a more decentralized, collaborative, and preventive approach to public safety. The theory is grounded in the belief that crime prevention is more effective when the police actively engage with communities as partners, rather than merely enforcing laws in isolation.

The central argument of COP theory is that police effectiveness improves when officers build trust with the community, work collaboratively to identify and solve problems, and focus on the underlying causes of crime rather than merely responding to incidents (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). The model emphasizes visibility, accountability, proactive problem-solving, and the mobilization of local resources in order to enhance

both real and perceived public safety. It shifts the paradigm from "policing the community" to "policing with the community."

Applied to this study, the theory provides a robust framework for understanding the operational logic behind the Edo State Security Network (ESSN). The ESSN, particularly in urban areas such as Oredo, was conceptualized to fill security gaps left by the overstretched Nigeria Police Force. By involving local actors—such as vigilantes, youth groups, and traditional leaders—the ESSN seeks to leverage local knowledge and foster communal participation in surveillance, crime reporting, and neighborhood patrols. These practices align well with the principles of COP, especially the emphasis on community empowerment, local problem-solving, and decentralization of policing structures.

However, the theory is not without criticism. One major limitation is its idealized assumption of community homogeneity and cooperation. In contexts like Oredo, where ethnic, political, and class divisions are pronounced, the notion of a unified “community” can be misleading. COP theory also tends to downplay issues of power dynamics, human rights abuses, and the potential for local actors to be co-opted by political interests or used for social control rather than protection (Herbert, 2006). Moreover, the theory assumes that communities trust the police or local security operatives—an assumption that does not hold in many Nigerian urban areas, where distrust of authority is widespread.

This study addresses the shortfalls of COP theory by empirically examining both the successes and the tensions within the ESSN's implementation. Through a focus on

Oredo as a microcosm, it critically evaluates how community trust is negotiated, how oversight is (or is not) maintained, and how some segments of the population feel excluded or targeted by ESSN operatives. It also accounts for institutional and political factors that complicate community-police relations, such as the use of ESSN operatives during elections or for settling local disputes. By incorporating quantitative data from multiple stakeholders and interrogating the diversity within the community, the study provides a nuanced view that extends COP theory to account for power asymmetries, legal frameworks, and rights-based concerns.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter dealt with the description of the procedure that was used in conducting the study and in analyzing the data collected. This includes the design of the study, population, sampling techniques, description of instruments to be used and method of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design, Source of Data and Population of Study

This study adopted a survey research design, which is appropriate for collecting quantifiable data from a broad cross-section of respondents to assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in crime prevention within urban Nigeria, focusing on Oredo Local Government Area (LGA). The study will rely solely on primary data collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to selected residents, community leaders, and ESSN operatives. Secondary data will support the analysis, drawn from official government publications and academic literature. The population of Oredo LGA, according to the National Population Commission (NPC) projection based on the 2006 census, is estimated at 374,671 people as of 2023 (NPC, 2023; Edo State Government, 2024). This population forms the basis for the study's sampling frame, given Oredo's strategic significance in the state's urban security landscape and its exposure to varied forms of criminal activities.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

This study adopted a sample size of 400 respondents from the population of Oredo residents and the researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents. The sample size was gotten using the Taro Yamani formula as calculated below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n= the relevant population sought for

N= total population of study

e = limit of tolerable error (0.05)²

1 = constant

$$n = \frac{374671}{1+374671(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{374671}{1+374671 \times 0.05 \times 0.05}$$

$$n = \frac{374671}{1+374671 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{374671}{1+936.6775}$$

$$n = \frac{374671}{937.6775}$$

$$n = 399.57$$

$$n \simeq 400$$

3.4 Research instrument

The research instrument that was for this study is the questionnaire. The instrument of data collation which is the questionnaire is written in a simple English language to facilitate comprehension by the respondents. A five scale likert style was adopted, which includes; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was divided into two parts namely; part one is the demographic-data and part two consists of the questions which is related to the topic under review.

3.5 Data Collection

The data for this study was collected using a structured questionnaire, which was designed to gather quantitative information from respondents on the operations, effectiveness, and public perception of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in crime prevention within Oredo Local Government Area. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions to ensure uniformity and ease of analysis, and it was distributed to a purposively selected sample of residents, community leaders, and ESSN personnel. The instrument was administered in person to enhance response rates and clarify any ambiguities, while ethical standards such as informed consent and confidentiality were strictly observed. This method is suitable for obtaining a broad spectrum of responses within a short time frame and allows for statistical analysis to test relationships and patterns relevant to the research objectives (Bryman, 2016).

3.6 Validity of Instrument

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the questionnaires underwent through both content and face validation. Experts in criminology, security studies, and research methodology were consulted to assess whether the questions adequately cover all relevant aspects of community policing and crime prevention as related to the Edo State Security Network (ESSN). Their feedback was used to refine the wording, structure, and relevance of the items to ensure they align with the study objectives and accurately measure the intended variables. In addition, a pilot test was conducted with a small sample from a community similar to Oredo to identify and correct any ambiguities or biases in the questions. This process enhanced the instrument's clarity, comprehensiveness, and overall effectiveness in capturing reliable data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

3.7 Reliability of the Study

The reliability of the study was ensured through a consistent and systematic data collection process, using a well-structured questionnaire that was pre-tested and refined based on a pilot study. The pilot test was conducted among a small group of respondents with similar characteristics to the target population in Oredo LGA, allowing the researcher to identify and correct any inconsistencies or confusing items. To further assess reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha statistical method was employed to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, with a coefficient value of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). This approach

guaranteed that the instrument yielded stable and consistent results over time and across different groups of respondents, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

This research employed the simple percentage method to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire. As a descriptive statistical tool, the simple percentage is useful for summarizing and presenting data in a clear and concise manner. It helps in expressing the proportion of responses or occurrences in relation to the total number of responses, thereby making it easier to identify trends, patterns, and the overall distribution of responses. This method is particularly effective for analyzing categorical data and will aid in providing a straightforward interpretation of the findings. The simple percentage was computed using the formula thus;

$$\text{Simple Percentage (\%)} = \frac{PC}{N} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where PC (F) = Percentage

3.9 Ethical Considerations of the Research

In the course of conducting this study on *Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of the Edo State Security Network*, ethical considerations were carefully observed to ensure the protection of respondents and the credibility of the research process. Since the study adopted the questionnaire as the sole instrument for data collection, ethical principles guided the administration and handling of respondents' information.

Firstly, informed consent was obtained from all respondents before the administration of the questionnaire. The respondents were adequately informed about the purpose and objectives of the study, and participation was made entirely voluntary. They were informed that they had the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without any form of punishment or negative consequence. This ensured that respondents participated willingly and without coercion.

Secondly, confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the study. Respondents were assured that the information they provided would be used strictly for academic purposes and would not be disclosed to unauthorized persons. The questionnaire did not require respondents to provide their names or any personal details capable of revealing their identities. This helped to protect respondents from fear, intimidation, or possible victimization, particularly because issues relating to crime prevention and security could be sensitive.

The researcher also ensured that the principle of non-maleficence was observed during the study. The questionnaire items were carefully structured to avoid offensive, threatening, or psychologically disturbing questions that could cause discomfort to respondents. In addition, the administration of the questionnaire was conducted in a peaceful and safe environment to ensure that participants did not experience any form of harm or stress during the research process.

Furthermore, honesty and objectivity were maintained in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data obtained from the questionnaires. The researcher avoided manipulation, falsification, or misrepresentation of respondents' views. Data collected

from the field were analyzed and presented accurately to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Lastly, the study adhered to academic integrity through proper acknowledgment of all materials and scholarly works consulted during the research. Relevant authors and sources of information were adequately cited to avoid plagiarism and maintain the ethical standard of academic research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter present and interprets the quantitative data generated through questionnaire among respondents from the study titled; *Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network*. A total number of 400 questionnaires were administered and 310 were completely filled, returned and analyzed.

4.2 Respondents Profile

Question 1: Sex

Table 1: Survey of Respondents Sex

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	216	69.68
Female	94	30.32
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

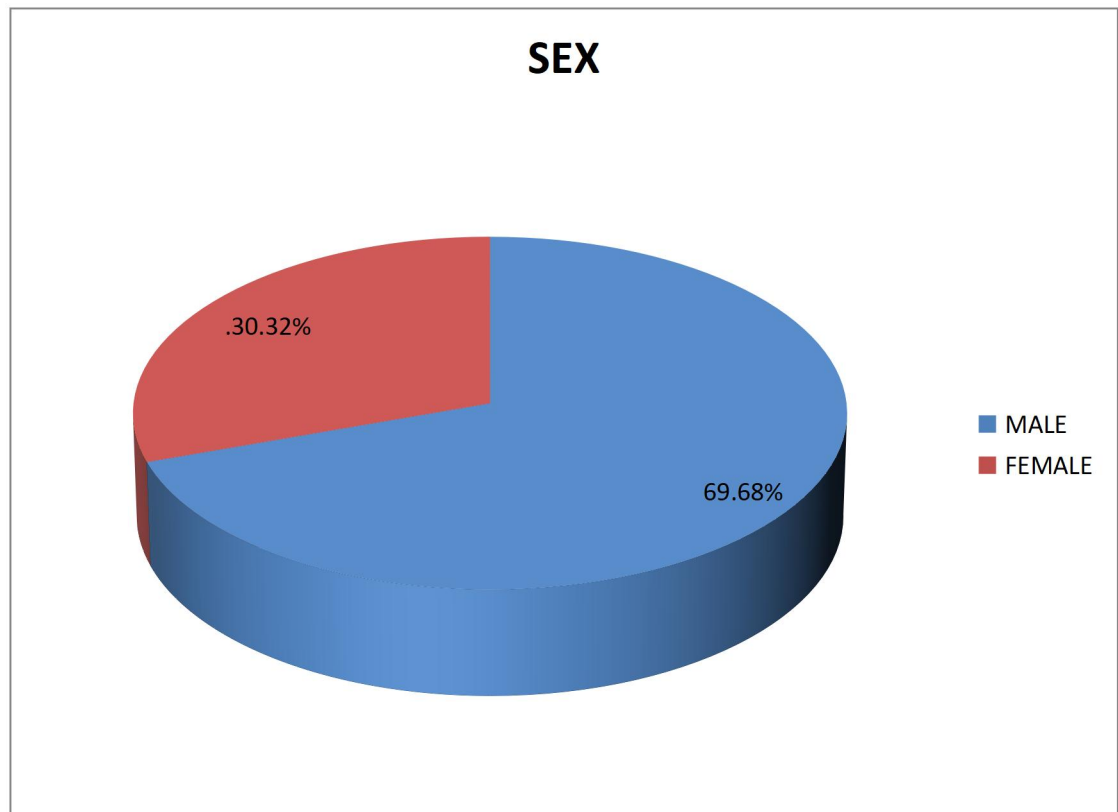


Table 2 fig 2 showed that 69.68% of the respondents are male while 30.32% are female, which implies that majority of the respondents are male.

Question 2: Age

Table 2: Survey of Age Distribution

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
18-27 years	73	23.55
28-37 years	47	15.16
38-47 years	105	33.87
48-57 years	45	14.52
58 years and above	40	12.90
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

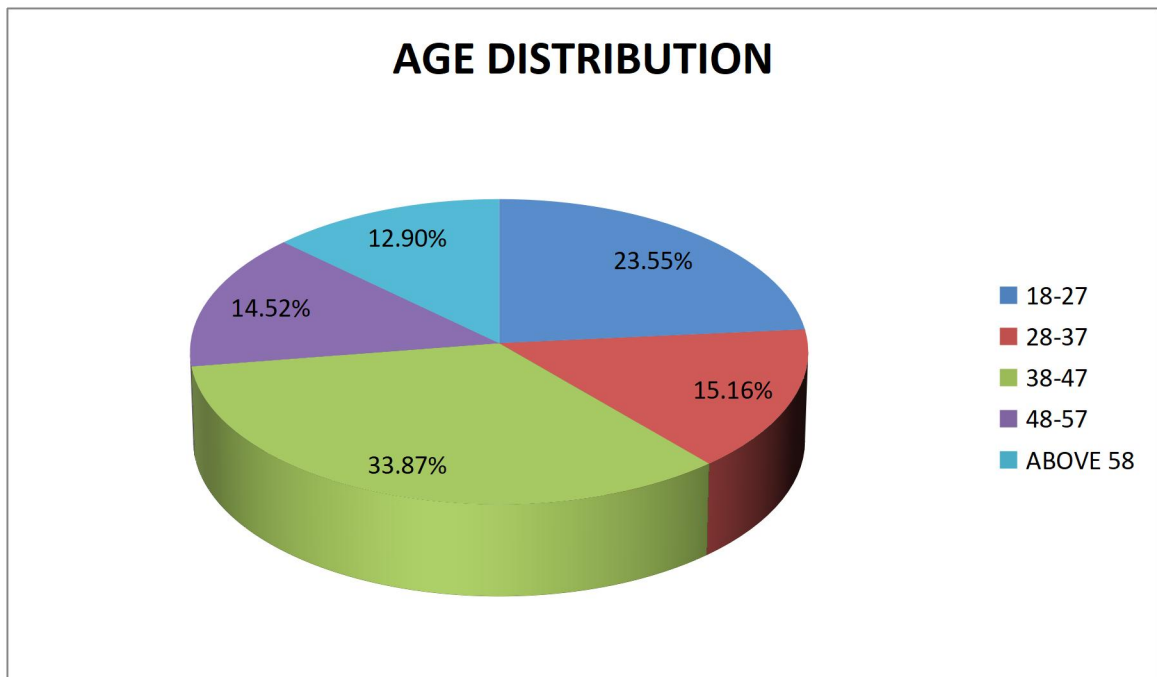


Table 2 fig. 2 showed that 23.55% of respondents are of the age between 18-27 years, 15.16% of respondents constitute the age between 28-37 years, 33.87% of respondents constitute the age 38-47 years, 14.52% of respondents constitute the age between 48-57 years, and 12.90% of respondents constitute the age of 58 years and above. The majority of the respondents are between the ages of 38-77 years, which implies that majority of the respondents are in their mid-age.

Table 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	215	69.35
Divorced	4	1.29
Widowed	9	2.90
Single	82	26.45
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

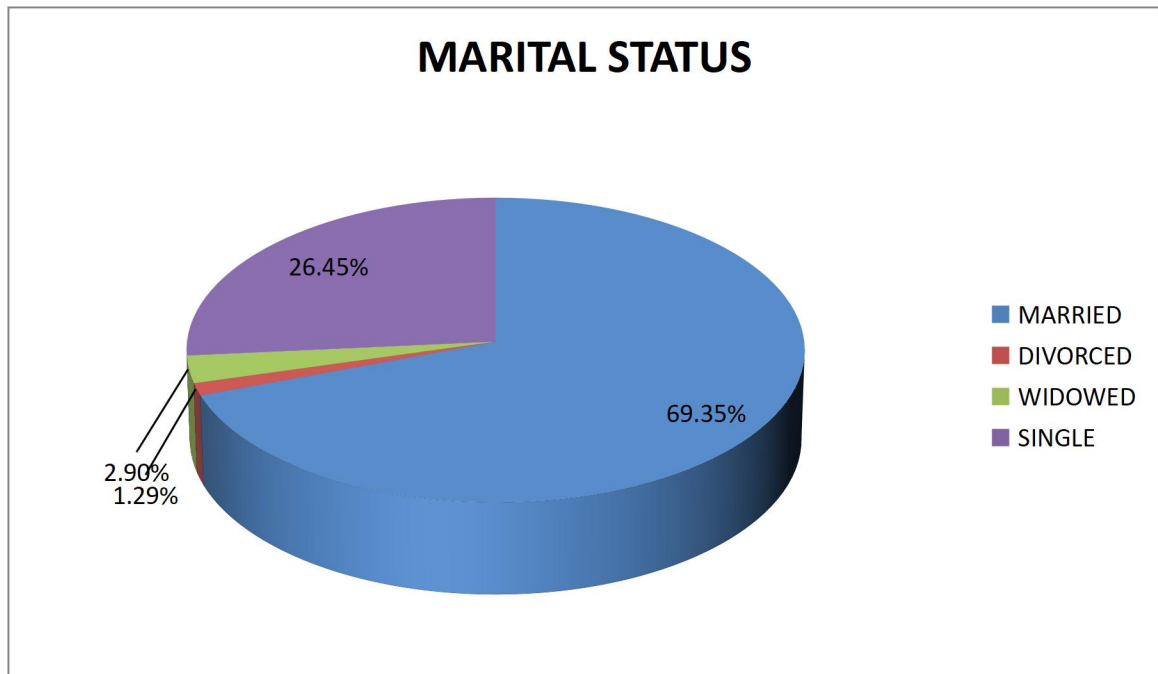


Table 3 fig. 3 above shows the analysis of marital status, 215 respondents representing 69.35% of the sample under review are married, 4 respondents representing 1.29% are divorced, 9 respondents representing 2.90% are widowed and 82 respondents which represent 26.45% are single. Majority of the respondents are married which implies that there are more married people among the respondents.

Question 4: Educational Qualification

Table 4: Survey of Respondents Qualification:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Primary School Leaving Certificate	29	9.35
SSCE	60	19.35
NCE/OND	64	20.65
B.Sc./HND	137	44.19
M.Sc.	13	4.19
Ph.D	5	1.61
Others	2	0.65
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

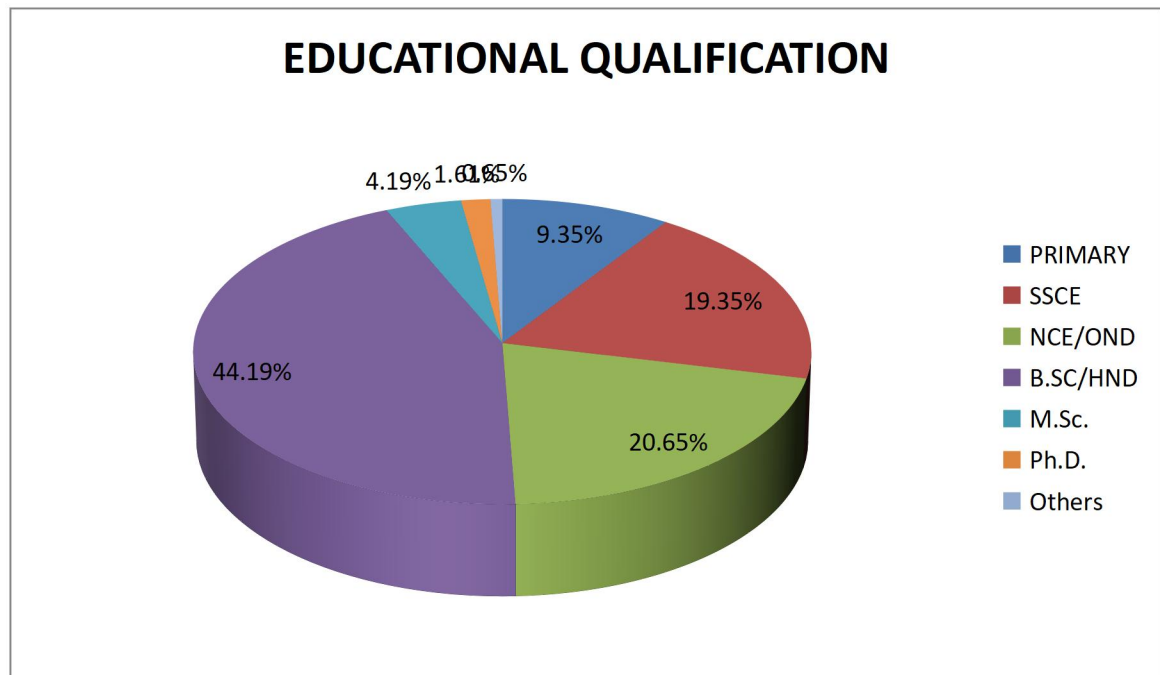


Table 4 fig. 4 showed that 9.35% respondents have Primary School Leaving Certificate, 19.35% of the respondents have SSCE, 20.65% have NCE/OND Certificates, 44.19% of the respondents have B.Sc./HND, 4.19% of respondents have M.Sc. 1.61% have Ph.D. and 0.65% have other certificates. Majority of the respondents have B.Sc. /HND certificates which implies that majority of the respondents are educated.

Table 5: Survey of Respondents Religion:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Christianity	197	63.55
Islam	95	30.65
Africa Traditional Religion	18	5.80
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

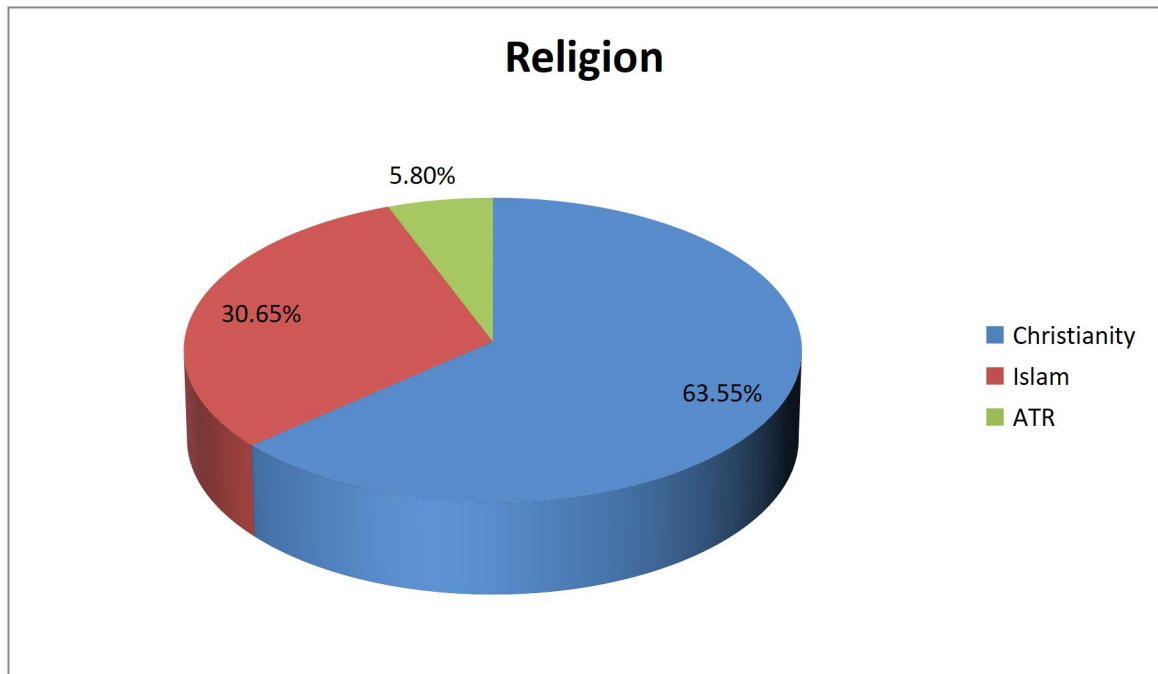


Table 5 fig 5 shows that 63.54% of the respondents are Christians, 30.65% are Muslims while 5.80% of the respondents are African Traditional Religion worshipers. From the table above, majority of the respondents are Christians which demonstrates that there more of Christians in Oredo LGA of Edo State.

4.3 Data Presentation of the Questionnaire

Part B of the questionnaire contains questions that relates to the study in which the researcher tends to obtain information in order to draw up conclusion from the findings.

These questions were analyzed through the use of table. They include the following:

Question 6: The presence of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) has significantly reduced crime in my community.

Table 6:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	31	10.00
Agree	178	57.42
Undecided	20	6.45
Disagree	51	16.45
Strongly disagree	30	9.68
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

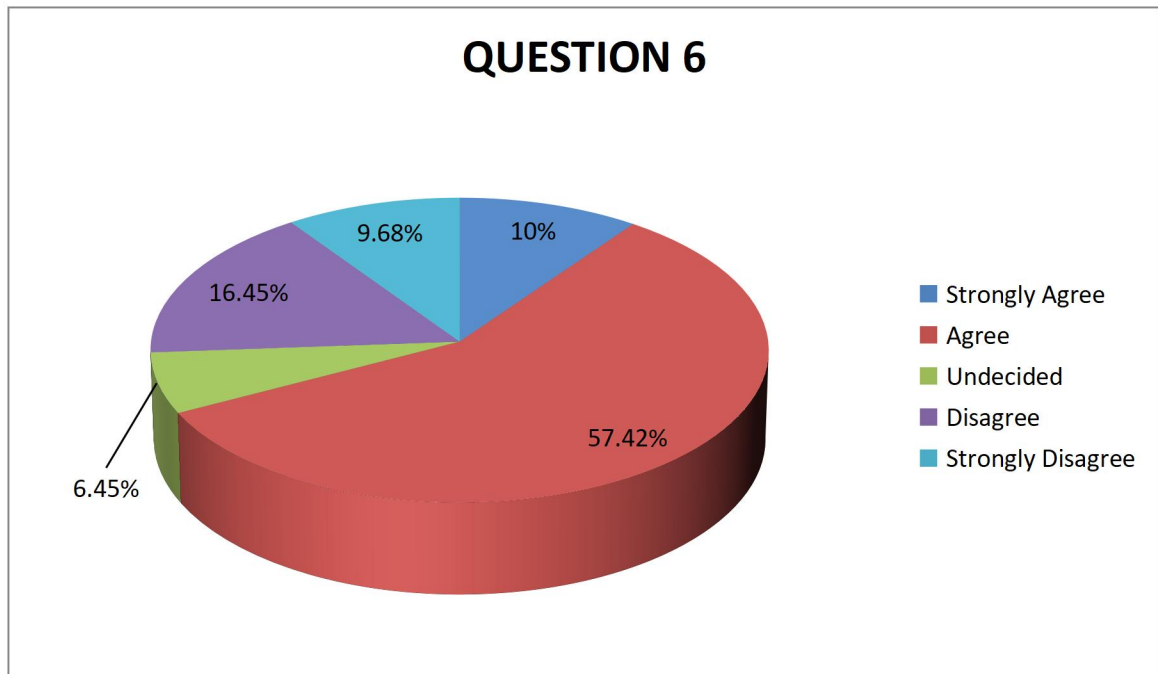


Table 6 fig. 6 revealed that 10.00% of the respondents strongly agreed that the presence of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) has significantly reduced crime in their community, 57.42% agreed on the statement, 6.45% where undecided with the assertion, 16.45% disagreed while 9.68% strongly disagreed on the statement. Majority of the respondents agreed on the statement which implies that the presence of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) has significantly reduced crime in Edo State.

Question 7: I feel safer in my neighborhood because of the activities of the ESSN.

Table 7:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	55	17.74
Agree	72	23.23
Undecided	5	1.61
Disagree	155	50.00
Strongly disagree	23	7.42
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

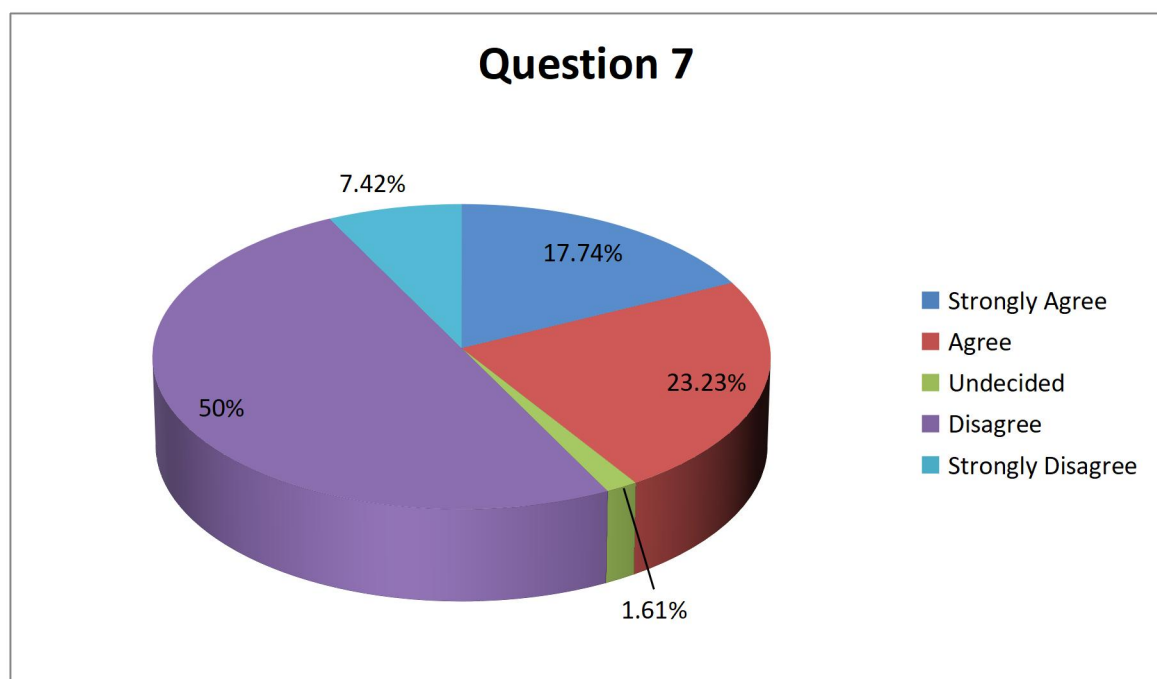


Table 7 fig. 7 revealed that 17.74%% of the respondents strongly agreed that they feel safer in their neighborhood because of the activities of the ESSN, 23.33% agreed on the statement, 1.61% where undecided, 50.00% disagreed and 7.42% strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondents disagreed to the assertion which demonstrates that people do not feel safer in their neighborhood because of the activities of the ESSN.

Question 8: The ESSN responds promptly and effectively to security incidents in Oredo Local Government Area.

Table 8:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	215	69.35
Agree	25	3.87
Undecided	3	0.97
Disagree	55	17.74
Strongly disagree	12	3.87
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

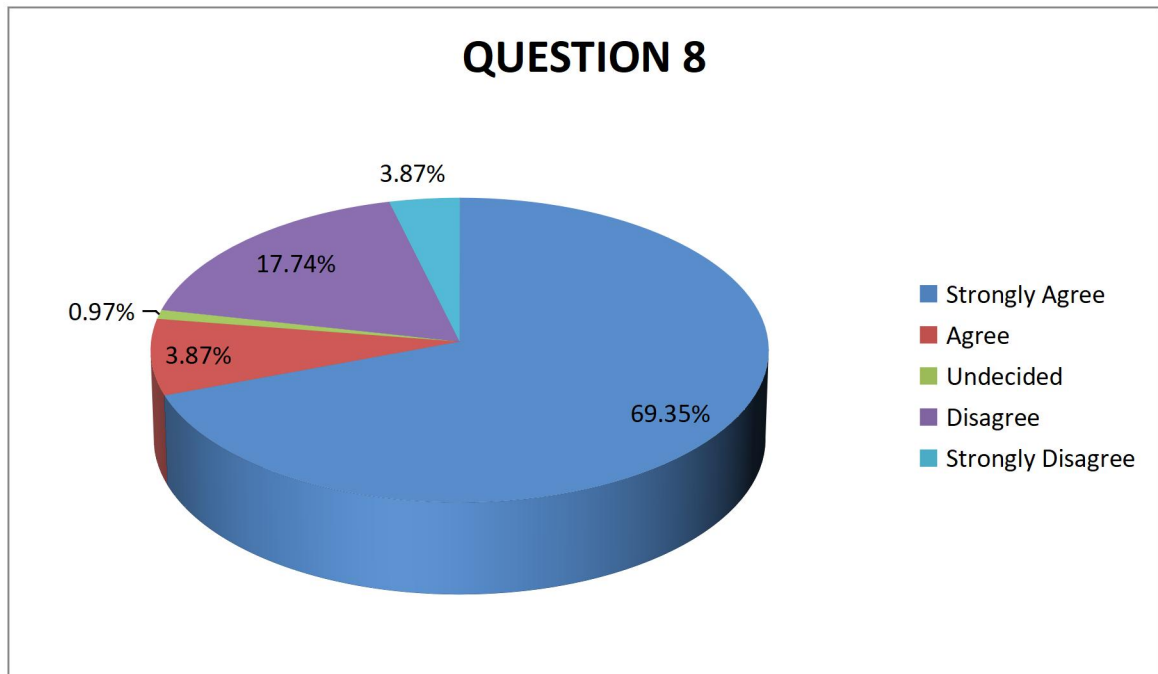


Table 8 fig. 8 revealed that 69.35% of the respondents strongly agreed that ESSN responds promptly and effectively to security incidents in Oredo Local Government Area, 3.87% agreed on the statement, 0.97% where undecided over the assertion, 17.74% disagreed and 3.87% strongly disagreed on the statement. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, which implies that ESSN responds promptly and effectively to security incidents in Oredo Local Government Area.

Question 9: Members of the ESSN demonstrate professionalism and respect for citizens during their operations.

Table 9:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	55	17.74
Agree	82	26.45
Undecided	13	4.19
Disagree	129	41.61
Strongly disagree	31	10.00
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

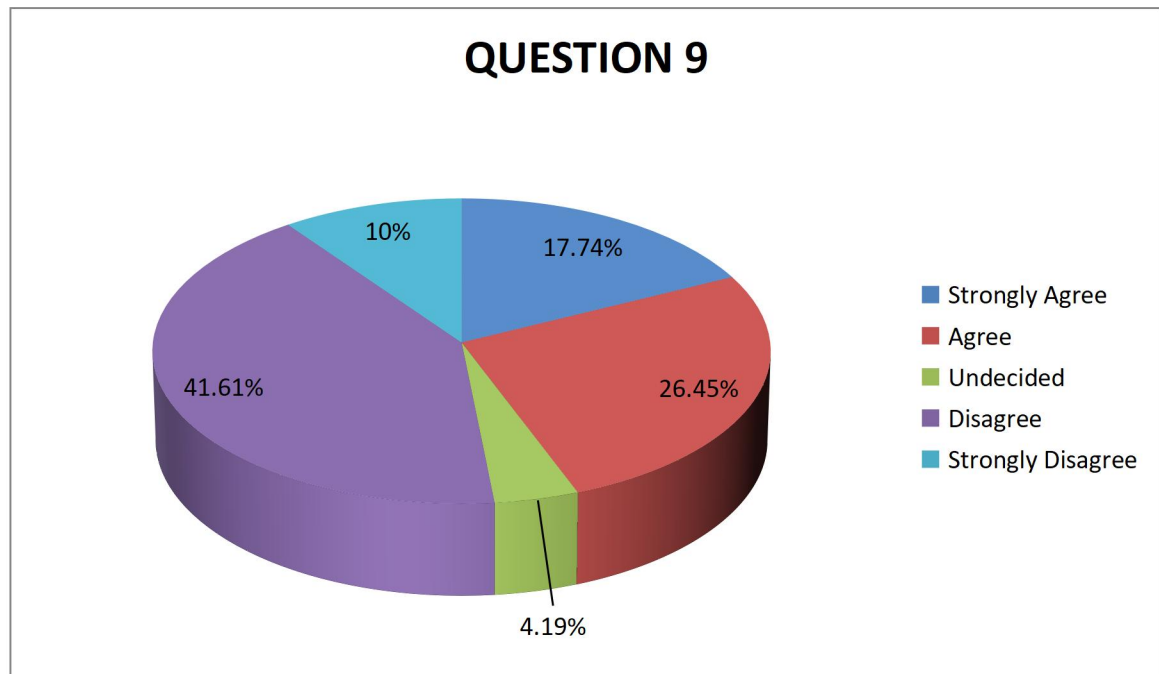


Table 9 fig. 9 revealed that, 55 respondents which comprised 17.74% strongly agreed that members of the ESSN demonstrate professionalism and respect for citizens during their operations, 82 of the respondents which constitutes 26.45% agreed to the assertion, 13 respondents which is 4.19% where undecided, 129 respondents which equaled 41.61% disagreed on the assertion and 31 respondents which comprised 10.00% strongly disagreed to the statement. Majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement which implies that members of the ESSN do demonstrate professionalism and respect for citizens during their operations.

Question 10: The collaboration between the ESSN and other security agencies has improved public safety in Oredo LGA.

Table 10:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	99	31.94
Agree	105	33.87
Undecided	10	3.23
Disagree	55	17.74
Strongly disagree	41	13.23
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

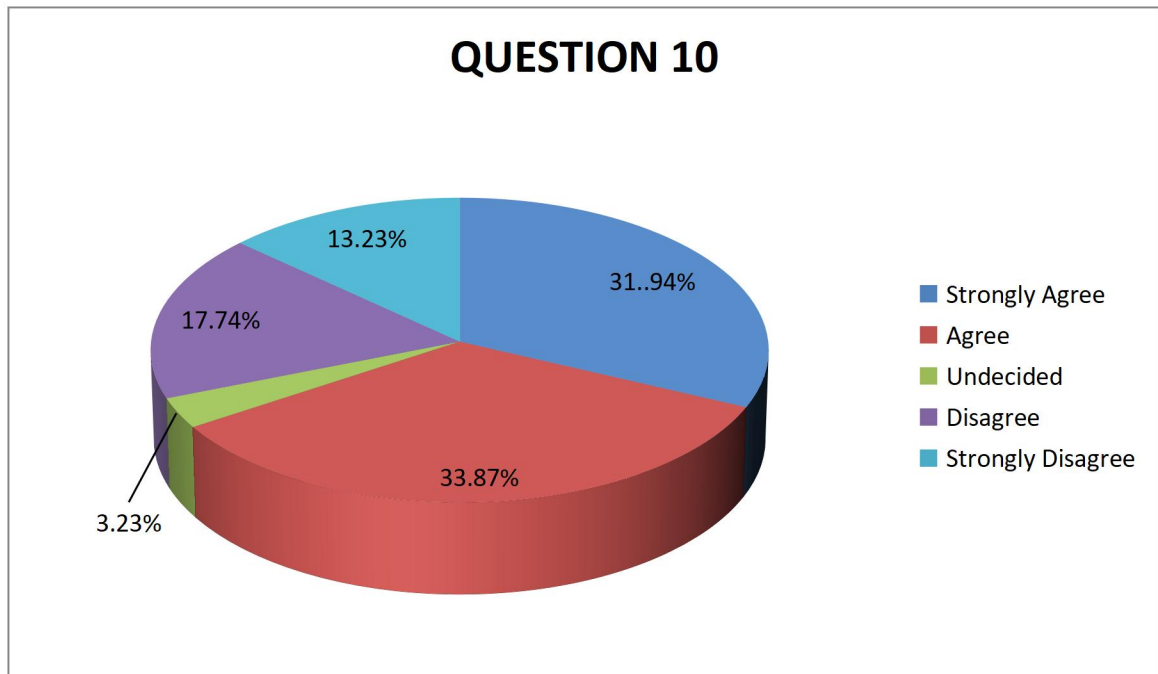


Table 10 fig. 10 revealed that 31.94% of the respondents strongly agreed that the collaboration between the ESSN and other security agencies has improved public safety in Oredo LGA, 33.87% agreed to the statement, 3.23% were undecided, 17.74% disagreed and 13.23% strongly disagreed to the statement. Majority of the respondents agreed on the statement which implies that the collaboration between the ESSN and other security agencies has improved public safety in Oredo LGA.

Question 11: The ESSN lacks adequate logistics and equipment to effectively carry out its security operations.

Table 11:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	29	9.35
Agree	178	57.42
Undecided	11	3.55
Disagree	74	23.87
Strongly disagree	18	5.81
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

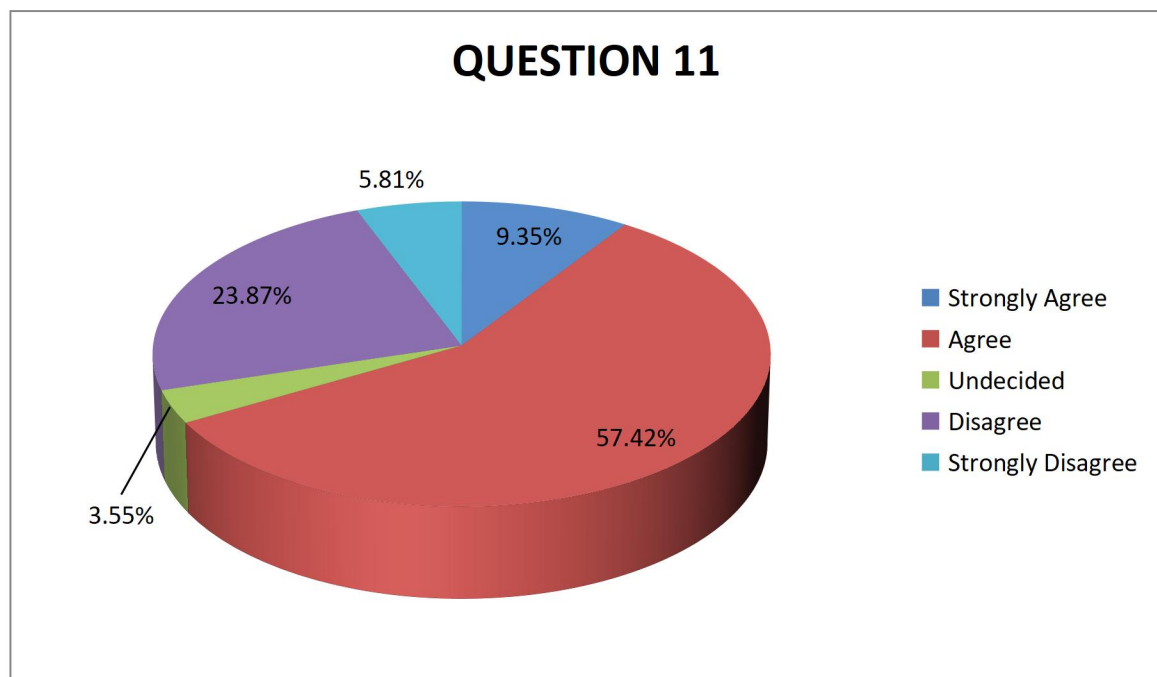


Table 11 fig. 11 revealed that 29 respondents which constitutes 9.35% strongly agree that the ESSN lacks adequate logistics and equipment to effectively carry out its security operations, 178 respondents which is 57.42% agreed in the statement, 11 respondents which totals 3.55% were undecided, 74 respondents which comprised 23.87% disagreed and 18 respondents that made up 5.81% strongly disagreed in the statement. Majority of the respondents agreed on the statement which means that the ESSN lacks adequate logistics and equipment to effectively carry out its security operations.

Question 12: There is poor coordination and communication within the structure of the ESSN in Oredo.

Table 12:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	41	13.23
Agree	28	9.03
Undecided	15	4.84
Disagree	137	44.19
Strongly disagree	89	28.71
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

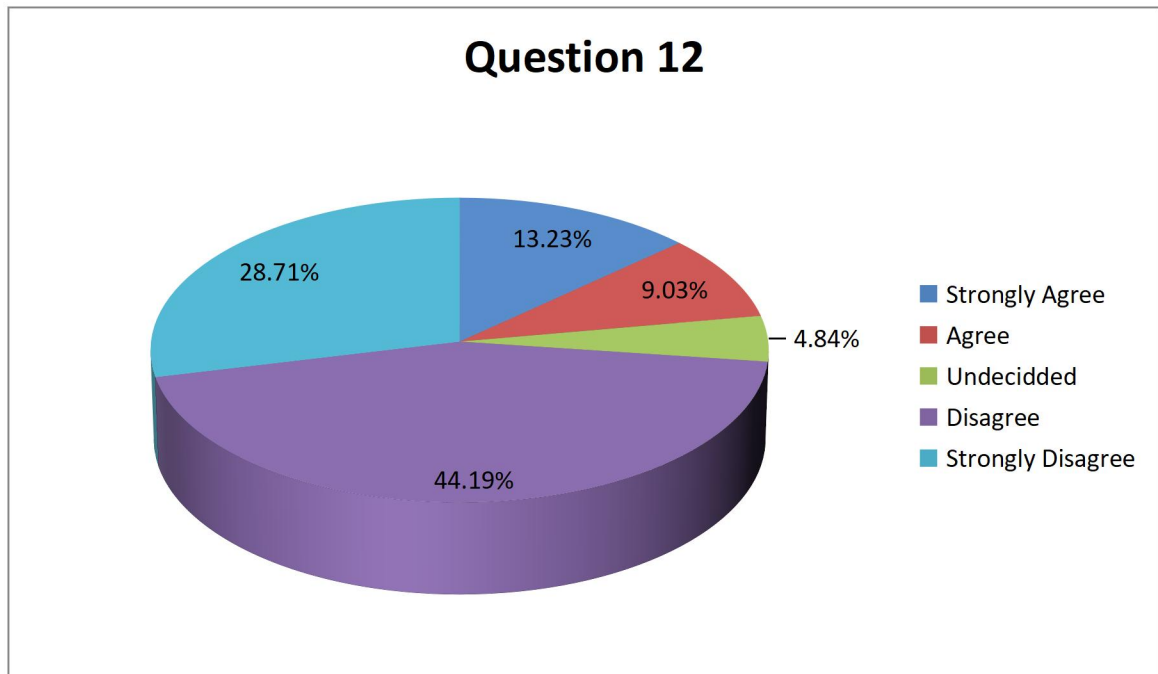


Table 12 fig. 12 revealed that 13.23% strongly agreed that there is poor coordination and communication within the structure of the ESSN in Oredo, 9.03% agreed, 4.84% were undecided, 44.19% disagreed and 28.71% strongly disagreed on the statement. Majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement which implies that there is no poor coordination and communication within the structure of the ESSN in Oredo.

Question 13: Insufficient training and capacity-building programs affect the performance of ESSN personnel.

Table 13:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	249	80.32
Agree	30	9.68
Undecided	4	1.29
Disagree	17	5.48
Strongly disagree	10	3.23
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

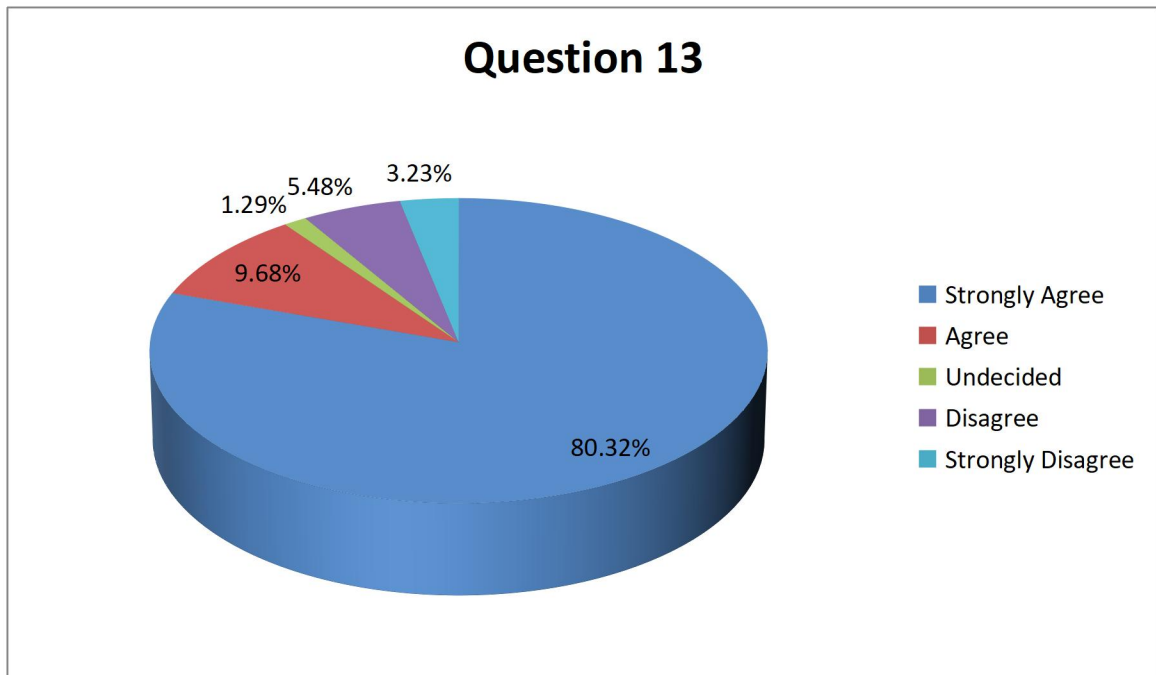


Table 13 fig 13 revealed that 80.32% strongly agreed that insufficient training and capacity-building programs affect the performance of ESSN personnel, 9.68% agreed on the statement, 1.29% were undecided, 5.48% disagreed and 3.23% strongly disagree on the statement. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed to the assertion which means that insufficient training and capacity-building programs affect the performance of ESSN personnel.

Question 14: The ESSN does not engage effectively with community members in identifying and resolving security issues.

Table 14:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	33	10.65
Agree	61	19.68
Undecided	20	6.45
Disagree	105	33.87
Strongly disagree	91	29.35
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

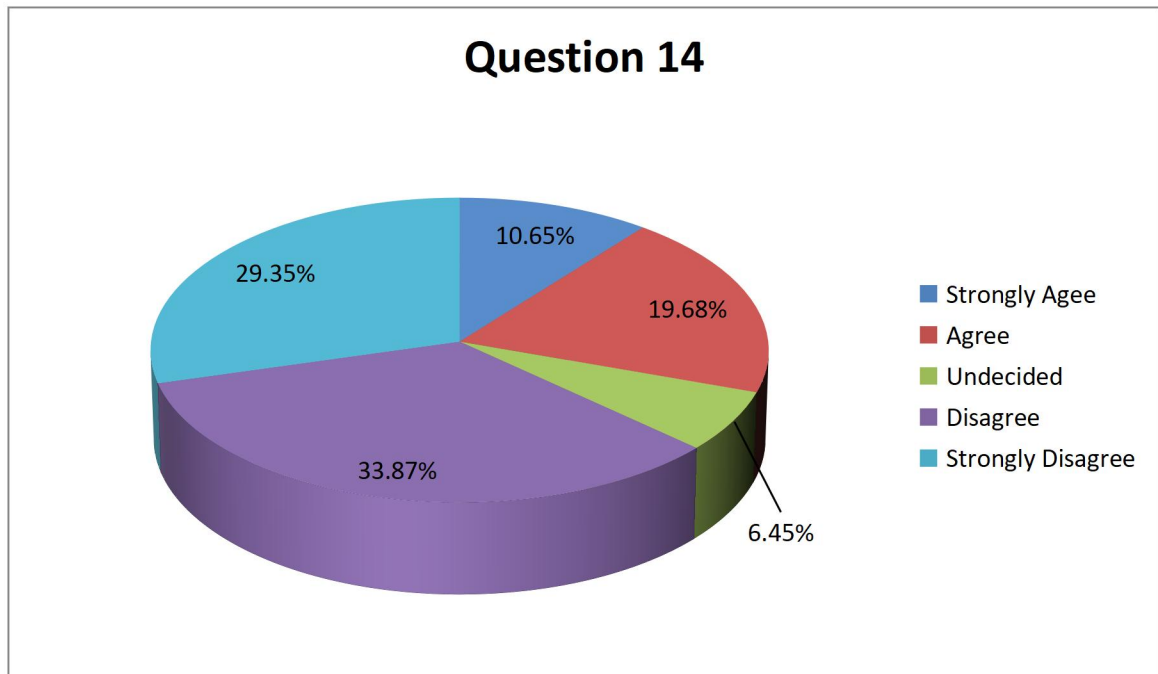


Table 14 fig. 14 revealed that 10.65% strongly agreed that the ESSN does not engage effectively with community members in identifying and resolving security issues, 19.68% agreed to the statement, 6.45% were undecided, 33.87% disagreed and 29.35% strongly disagreed to the statement. Majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement which implies that the ESSN engages effectively with community members in identifying and resolving security issues.

Question 15: There is a lack of trust and cooperation between the ESSN and residents of Oredo Local Government Area.

Table 15:

Option	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	49	15.81
Agree	222	71.61
Undecided	3	0.97
Disagree	21	6.77
Strongly disagree	15	4.84
Total	310	100

Source: Field survey 2025

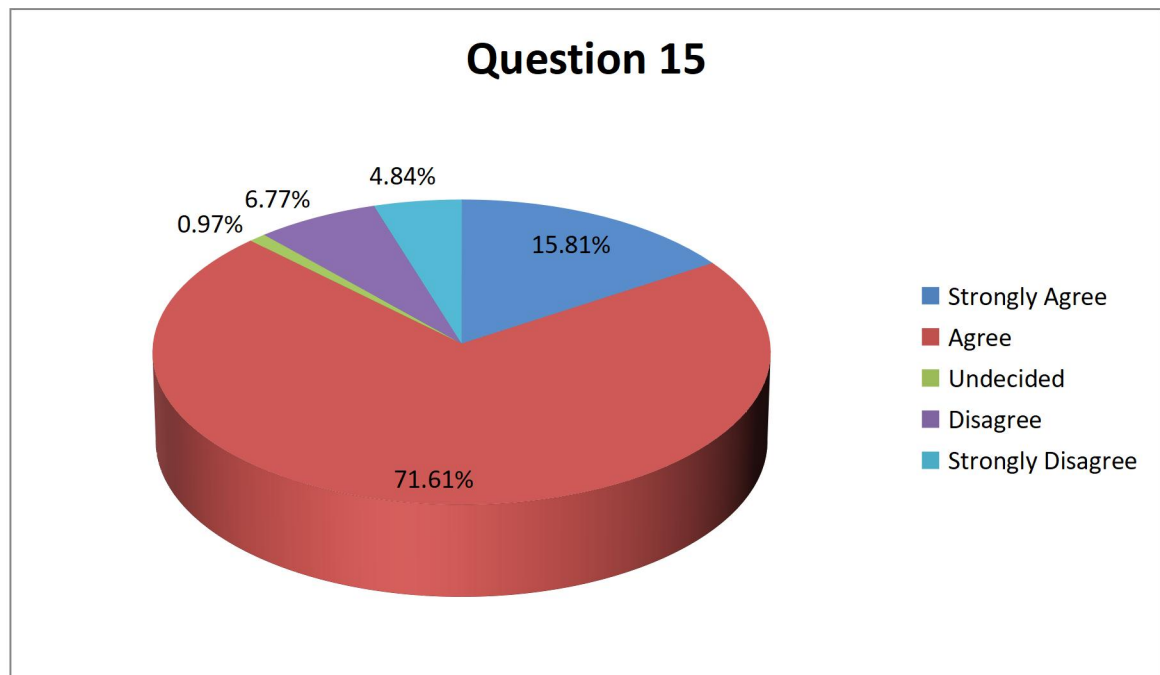


Table 15 fig. 15 revealed that 15.81% of the respondents strongly agreed that there is a lack of trust and cooperation between the ESSN and residents of Oredo Local Government Area, 71.61% agreed on the statement, 0.97% were undecided with the assertion, 6.77% disagreed while 4.84% strongly disagreed on the statement. Majority of the respondents agreed to the statement which implies that there is a lack of trust and cooperation between the ESSN and residents of Oredo Local Government Area.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are presented below in line with the objectives of the study:

Objective 1: To assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in preventing crime and enhancing public safety in Oredo Local Government Area.

The research findings from tables 6 through 10 suggest that the establishment of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) has played a pivotal role in crime reduction across Edo State, particularly in Oredo Local Government Area. The ESSN has demonstrated operational efficiency through timely responses to security threats, high levels of professionalism, and respectful interactions with the public. Additionally, their collaborative efforts with other security agencies have enhanced coordinated responses and public safety outcomes. Despite these institutional strengths, a disconnection remains between the ESSN's presence and public perception of safety, as many residents still report feelings of insecurity in their neighborhoods, indicating that physical security infrastructure alone may not be sufficient to foster psychological assurance and community trust.

These findings align with recent empirical research. For instance, Okoh and Uhunmwagho (2023) conducted a study on community policing in Southern Nigeria and found that while local security outfits contributed to a decline in crime rates, many citizens continued to express fear due to lingering mistrust, unresolved criminal cases, and the memory of previous violence. Similarly, in a 2022 survey by the CLEEN Foundation on sub-national security initiatives, it was revealed that although residents acknowledged the visibility and quick intervention of local vigilante groups like the ESSN, only 46% of respondents said they felt "somewhat safer," indicating a gap between operational effectiveness and emotional security.

Moreover, Adebayo and Adeoye (2024) examined community responses to hybrid security models in the South-South region of Nigeria and concluded that public safety perception is heavily influenced by consistent community engagement and transparent accountability mechanisms. Their study emphasized that security outfits, no matter how efficient operationally, must invest in building trust, addressing past grievances, and involving community members in safety decision-making processes to shift public perception and improve the overall sense of security. These studies underscore the need for the ESSN not only to maintain its operational efficiency but also to work actively on deepening its relationship with the communities it serves.

Objective 2: To identify and analyze the major operational, structural, and community engagement challenges confronting the ESSN in Oredo.

The findings from tables 11 through 15 reveal several operational and relational challenges faced by the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in Oredo Local

Government Area. While the ESSN has been effective in engaging community members in identifying and addressing security concerns, its operations are hindered by inadequate logistics and equipment, insufficient training, and weak internal coordination and communication. Furthermore, despite community engagement efforts, a lack of trust and cooperation persists between ESSN personnel and residents, which undermine the effectiveness of the security network in ensuring long-term stability and safety.

These findings are consistent with existing empirical studies on local and state-level security formations in Nigeria. Eze and Ojo (2023) observed that many community-based security outfits suffer from underfunding, poor training, and lack of standard operational equipment, which negatively impacts their efficiency. Their study, focusing on security networks in the Niger Delta region, concluded that the absence of structured communication channels and regular training programs results in inconsistent performance and poor crisis response coordination. Similarly, Oladeji and Ahmed (2022) emphasized that personnel effectiveness is directly linked to continuous capacity-building efforts and that neglect in this area diminishes the trust and credibility of security outfits among local populations.

Moreover, empirical evidence from the work of Nwankwo and Ibrahim (2024) supports the observation that trust between security agencies and communities is vital for meaningful cooperation. Their research found that despite good intentions and community outreach, mistrust rooted in historical abuse, unfulfilled promises, and lack of transparency remains a significant barrier to effective policing. This mirrors the

situation in Oredo, where despite community engagement, deep-seated skepticism limits resident collaboration with the ESSN, thereby weakening its operational outcomes. These findings underscore the need for institutional reforms, logistics investment, and community trust-building to enhance ESSN's performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

As the final chapter of the study, it focuses on the summary of findings on; *Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network*.

5.2 Summary of the Work

The major aim of this research is; *Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network*. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in preventing crime and enhancing public safety in Oredo Local Government Area.
2. To identify and analyze the major operational, structural, and community engagement challenges confronting the ESSN in Oredo.
3. To propose actionable strategies and policy recommendations for improving the functionality, accountability, and sustainability of community policing in Oredo and similar urban contexts in Nigeria.

In addition to the objectives, **chapter one** contains the statement of research problem, the research questions, significance of the study and scope of the study.

In **Chapter two**, extensive literature was discussed in relation to the focus of the study which is; *Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network*.

In **chapter three**, with the aim of achieving the stated objectives of this study, the researcher adopted the survey method and the research instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered to 400 respondents in Oredo LGA of Edo state, Nigeria, whereby 310 of the questionnaires were returned and analyzed.

The **chapter four** involves the presentation and analysis of data which was gotten from questionnaires administered and simple percentage was used for analyzing the data.

The **chapter five** contains summary of the work, conclusion and recommendations.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The study assessed the role of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in community policing and crime prevention across urban areas of Edo State, with a focus on Oredo Local Government Area. One of the core findings revealed that the ESSN has contributed significantly to crime reduction in the area. Through their visible presence, prompt responses to security threats, and collaborative operations with other state and federal security agencies, the ESSN has improved public safety. Residents acknowledged that incidences of petty theft, armed robbery, and cult-related violence have declined due to ESSN's active patrols and intelligence gathering. However, despite these improvements in crime statistics, the psychological impact of crime remains

strong, as many residents still report feeling unsafe, suggesting a disconnect between operational success and public confidence.

Another key finding is that the ESSN demonstrates a relatively strong community engagement framework. The security outfit collaborates with community leaders, market associations, and youth groups to identify and address local security challenges. This grassroots-level engagement has helped in identifying criminal hotspots and in facilitating conflict resolution without escalation. However, the study also noted that while engagement exists, it does not necessarily translate into sustained cooperation, as mutual trust between the ESSN and community members remains weak. Many residents are reluctant to share sensitive information due to fears of retaliation, lack of confidentiality, or past negative experiences with law enforcement personnel.

The study also uncovered significant structural and logistical deficiencies within the ESSN. Personnel are constrained by inadequate transportation, lack of surveillance equipment, and insufficient funding. These limitations restrict their ability to respond swiftly to crimes in remote urban areas and sustain patrols in high-risk neighborhoods. Furthermore, there is evidence of poor internal coordination and communication within the ESSN hierarchy, leading to delayed responses, confusion during operations, and inefficient deployment of resources. The absence of standardized training and lack of professional development programs also weaken the overall capacity of ESSN personnel to deal with emerging urban security threats effectively.

Additionally, the study found that although the ESSN's community policing approach is conceptually aligned with modern policing principles—such as citizen partnership,

problem-solving, and decentralization—the implementation falls short of expectations. There is no formal structure for performance monitoring, and accountability mechanisms are weak. Without transparent reporting systems and public feedback loops, the ESSN risks being perceived as another poorly managed security initiative rather than a transformative force in urban safety. Moreover, the limited involvement of women and marginalized groups in ESSN decision-making processes raises concerns about inclusivity and long-term effectiveness.

Thus, while the ESSN has made meaningful strides in crime prevention through community policing in Edo State, its effectiveness is hampered by structural, logistical, and relational shortcomings. Enhancing the trust between the security outfit and the public, investing in logistics and training, and establishing clear accountability frameworks are essential for achieving sustained impact. If properly strengthened and institutionalized, the ESSN could serve as a model for urban community policing in Nigeria, especially in addressing the complex interplay between crime, trust, and urban governance.

5.4 Conclusion

This study has critically examined the role of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in promoting community policing and preventing crime in urban areas of Edo State, with particular emphasis on Oredo Local Government Area. The findings reveal that while ESSN has made notable strides in reducing crime through visible patrols, rapid response to incidents, and collaboration with other security agencies, its overall impact remains mixed. The physical reduction in crime has not fully translated into improved

perceptions of safety among residents, indicating that community policing must go beyond enforcement to build trust and social reassurance.

A key conclusion from the research is that the success of community policing initiatives like the ESSN depends heavily on meaningful community engagement. While the ESSN has engaged various local stakeholders in identifying and resolving security issues, these efforts have been undermined by a lingering trust deficit. Many residents still perceive the outfit with suspicion and hesitate to cooperate fully due to fears of reprisal, limited transparency, and weak feedback mechanisms. Therefore, building and sustaining trust should be a top priority if the ESSN is to fulfill its community-based mandate.

The study also concludes that structural challenges significantly limit the effectiveness of the ESSN. Inadequate logistics, poor communication infrastructure, and lack of professional training have hampered the operational efficiency of the security network. Without the right tools, skills, and coordination, even the most well-intentioned community policing initiative will struggle to maintain long-term success. These limitations must be addressed through government support, policy reforms, and targeted investments in capacity building and infrastructure.

Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of institutionalizing accountability and inclusivity within the ESSN. Transparent operations, periodic performance reviews, and the involvement of diverse community groups—including women and youths—will enhance legitimacy and responsiveness. Accountability mechanisms such as community

oversight boards or public complaint systems can also strengthen public trust and ensure that the ESSN does not become disconnected from the people it is meant to serve.

In summary, while the ESSN represents a promising step toward localized and responsive security in urban Edo State, its potential can only be fully realized through reforms that address trust deficits, logistical constraints, and governance weaknesses. Strengthening the institutional framework, enhancing community relations, and professionalizing personnel will go a long way in making the ESSN a viable model of community policing in Nigeria. Policymakers, security stakeholders, and civil society organizations must work collaboratively to reposition the ESSN for sustainable crime prevention and public safety in Edo State and beyond.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, one of the primary recommendations is the urgent need for the Edo State government to improve the logistics and infrastructure available to the Edo State Security Network (ESSN). This includes the provision of functional patrol vehicles, modern surveillance tools such as CCTV cameras and drones, as well as adequate communication equipment to enhance rapid response to security threats. Without the necessary tools, the ESSN will continue to face operational inefficiencies that limit its capacity to prevent and combat crime in urban areas.

Secondly, structured and continuous training and capacity-building programs must be institutionalized for all ESSN personnel. These programs should not only focus on

crime-fighting techniques but also cover essential areas such as human rights, community engagement, conflict resolution, and ethical standards. Regular refresher courses will ensure that personnel remain updated on modern policing techniques and are better equipped to deal with evolving security threats. Training partnerships can also be forged with national security institutions, NGOs, and international partners to widen the scope and quality of the learning experience.

Thirdly, there should be deliberate efforts to strengthen the coordination and internal communication channels within the ESSN. Establishing a clear command hierarchy, communication protocols, and regular inter-unit briefings will minimize confusion during operations and promote a culture of discipline and professionalism. In addition, a digital data management system should be introduced for case reporting, tracking of operations, and resource allocation to ensure that decisions are data-driven and timely.

Fourth, the ESSN must deepen its community engagement strategies to rebuild and sustain trust among residents. Community policing cannot thrive without mutual confidence and cooperation. To achieve this, the ESSN should set up local community liaison offices in neighborhoods where regular town hall meetings can be held to interact with residents, listen to their concerns, and update them on ongoing security efforts. Involving local opinion leaders, religious groups, youth organizations, and market associations will foster a sense of shared responsibility and collective action in crime prevention.

Fifth, the establishment of an independent oversight and accountability mechanism is highly recommended. This body should include representatives from civil society,

traditional institutions, and government, and should be empowered to monitor ESSN activities, handle complaints from the public, and ensure that officers are held accountable for misconduct. Transparency and accountability will go a long way in improving the image of the ESSN and reinforcing public confidence in its operations.

Sixth, inclusivity should be a central part of the ESSN's reform agenda. Women, youths, and marginalized groups must be represented in both the decision-making and operational arms of the security network. Gender-sensitive policing and the deployment of female officers to handle sensitive community issues—such as domestic violence or sexual assault—can increase the effectiveness of the ESSN and ensure that security services are more responsive to the diverse needs of the urban population.

Lastly, the state government should explore avenues for sustainable funding of the ESSN. Relying solely on public allocations may not be sufficient. A security trust fund, supported by private sector contributions, philanthropic donations, and community levies (where acceptable), can provide a more stable financial base for ESSN operations. This fund should be managed transparently and audited regularly to prevent corruption and mismanagement. With reliable funding, the ESSN will be better positioned to fulfill its mandate of community policing and urban crime prevention in Edo State.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Political Science
Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Benin,
Benin City.

June 12th, 2025.

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am pursuing a Master's degree program in the University of Benin. I am now investigating; **Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Urban Nigeria: An Assessment of Edo State Security Network**. Kindly dedicate a few minutes to completing this form with utmost honesty and completeness. With humility, I beg your help. Your comments or any other information you send will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and be used exclusively for academic purposes.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully,

Amenze IGIEBOR

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

Part A: Personal Data Please tick (✓) the option that is applicable to you.

1. Gender: a. Male [], b. Female [].
2. Marital Status: Single [], Married [], Divorced [], Widowed [].
3. Age: a. 18-27 [], b. 28-37 [], c. 38-47 [], d. above 48 [].
4. Religion: a. Christianity [], b. Muslim [], c. Africa Traditional Religion [].
5. Educational Qualification: a. Primary School [], b. Secondary [], c. Post-secondary [], d. Post graduate [], Others [].

SECTION B: Questionnaires for the Study: Please tick (✓) the option that is applicable to you; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

SECTION B: To assess the effectiveness of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) in preventing crime and enhancing public safety in Oredo Local Government Area.

Where; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N		SA	A	N	D	SD
6	The presence of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN) has significantly reduced crime in my community.					
7	I feel safer in my neighborhood because of the activities of the ESSN.					
8	The ESSN responds promptly and effectively to security incidents in Oredo Local Government Area.					
9	Members of the ESSN demonstrate professionalism and respect for citizens during their operations.					
10	The collaboration between the ESSN and other security agencies has improved public safety in Oredo LGA.					

SECTION C: To identify and analyze the major operational, structural, and community engagement challenges confronting the ESSN in Oredo.

S/N		SA	A	N	D	SD
11	The ESSN lacks adequate logistics and equipment to effectively carry out its security operations.					
12	There is poor coordination and communication within the structure of the ESSN in Oredo.					
13	Insufficient training and capacity-building programs affect the performance of ESSN personnel.					
14	The ESSN does not engage effectively with community members in identifying and resolving security issues.					
15	There is a lack of trust and cooperation between the ESSN and residents of Oredo Local Government Area.					