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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF AMOTEKUN IN ENHANCING SECURITY IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed the role of the Western Nigeria Security Network (Amotekun) in enhancing security in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by rising insecurity including kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, and communal violence, which exposed limitations in Nigeria's centralized policing system. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Data were collected from 288 respondents drawn from selected communities in Ibarapa North, Oke-Ogun, and Egbeda Local Government Areas using a structured questionnaire titled 'Amotekun Security Enhancement Questionnaire (ASEQ)'. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and mean) and Chi-square test. Findings revealed that Amotekun contributes significantly to crime prevention through patrol operations, intelligence gathering, rapid response, and collaboration with other security agencies (grand mean = 3.06). The study also identified key challenges affecting effectiveness, including inadequate funding, poor logistics, insufficient manpower, lack of modern equipment, and political interference (grand mean = 3.10). The Chi-square analysis showed a statistically significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State ($\chi^2 = 67.43$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that Amotekun plays a complementary role in strengthening internal security and improving public safety in Oyo State. It recommends improved funding, logistics, manpower development, enhanced inter-agency collaboration, and stronger legal frameworks to improve operational effectiveness and sustainability. The findings have policy implications for strengthening decentralized security governance in Nigeria and improving community-based policing effectiveness.

Keywords: Amotekun, crime prevention, community policing, insecurity, security.

Introduction

Security remains one of the most important responsibilities of government and a fundamental condition for national development, political stability, and social order. The ability of a state to protect lives and property, maintain law and order, and ensure the safety of citizens determines the legitimacy and effectiveness of governance within society (Akinola & Lawal, 2023). In contemporary societies, security extends beyond territorial defence to include protection against

internal threats such as terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, communal clashes, and organized criminal activities.

Globally, increasing security challenges have compelled governments to adopt community-oriented and decentralized security strategies capable of complementing conventional policing institutions. This development is largely influenced by the realization that centralized policing structures often face operational limitations in responding effectively to localized and rapidly evolving security threats (Goldstein, 1979). Consequently, many countries now emphasize community participation, intelligence sharing, and grassroots collaboration in crime prevention and public safety management. In Africa, insecurity has become increasingly complex due to political instability, poverty, unemployment, porous borders, weak institutions, and socio-economic inequality. Many African states continue to experience insurgency, communal conflicts, armed violence, and transnational crimes that undermine governance and development. These challenges have encouraged the emergence of local and regional security arrangements aimed at strengthening internal security management.

Nigeria has experienced increasing levels of insecurity in recent years. Incidents of kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, banditry, cult violence, farmer-herder conflicts, and communal clashes have become widespread across different parts of the country. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), over 4,000 Nigerians lost their lives to violent crimes between 2020 and 2022. Similarly, security reports indicate that insecurity has negatively affected agricultural production, business activities, and investment opportunities across several states.

Despite the constitutional responsibility of government to guarantee security and welfare, Nigeria's centralized policing structure has attracted sustained criticism. The Nigeria Police Force operates under federal control, while state governments possess limited constitutional authority over policing operations within their territories. This arrangement has often resulted in inadequate manpower, delayed response to emergencies, poor intelligence gathering, and limited familiarity with local terrains and community dynamics (Adebayo & Alao, 2024). In response to these challenges, the governments of the South-West states established the Western Nigeria Security Network, popularly known as Amotekun, in 2020. The outfit was created to complement federal security agencies through intelligence gathering, local surveillance, community patrols, and rapid response operations. Amotekun represents a significant shift

toward decentralized security governance and reflects increasing demands for grassroots participation in security management.

In Oyo State, Amotekun was institutionalized through the Oyo State Security Network Agency Law of 2020. Since its establishment, the outfit has participated in anti-kidnapping operations, rural patrols, intelligence sharing, and crime prevention activities across the state. Supporters argue that Amotekun has strengthened local security architecture and improved public confidence in community-based security arrangements. However, concerns remain regarding its operational effectiveness, funding, legal framework, training, coordination with conventional security agencies, and respect for human rights.

Although several studies have examined regional security outfits and community policing in Nigeria, limited empirical attention has been devoted to assessing the actual contributions of Amotekun to security enhancement in Oyo State. Most existing studies focus on constitutional debates surrounding state policing and regional security arrangements without critically evaluating operational outcomes at the state level. It is against this background that this study examines the role of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has continued to experience increasing insecurity characterized by kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, terrorism, and communal violence. In Oyo State, these security challenges have disrupted socio-economic activities, weakened public confidence in security institutions, and threatened peace and stability within communities. Despite the presence of conventional security agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, criminal activities persist in several parts of the state.

In response to these challenges, the Western Nigeria Security Network (Amotekun) was established in 2020 as a regional security initiative to complement conventional security agencies through local intelligence gathering, community surveillance, patrol operations, and rapid response strategies. Despite its establishment, there remains uncertainty regarding the extent to which Amotekun has contributed to crime prevention and overall security enhancement in Oyo State. Concerns have also been raised about inadequate funding, insufficient manpower, poor logistics, legal constraints, and coordination challenges with federal security agencies, all of which may limit its operational effectiveness.

Against this background, this study examined the role of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State. Specifically, it assessed the extent to which Amotekun has contributed to crime prevention and identified the challenges affecting its effectiveness in the state. The study was guided by two research questions: (i) To what extent has Amotekun contributed to crime prevention in Oyo State? and (ii) What challenges affect the effectiveness of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State?

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to existing literature on community policing, regional security arrangements, and decentralized security governance in Nigeria. It provides empirical evidence on the operational effectiveness of Amotekun, which may assist policymakers, security agencies, researchers, and government institutions in strengthening internal security strategies. Furthermore, the findings are expected to guide the Oyo State Government and other South-West states in improving the efficiency and coordination of the security outfit.

The study focused on the role of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State between 2020 and 2025. It specifically examined its contributions to crime prevention, intelligence gathering, community surveillance, and rapid response operations. Geographically, the study was limited to selected Local Government Areas in Oyo State, namely Ibarapa North, Oke-Ogun, and Egbeda.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

Concept of Community Policing

Community policing refers to a policing strategy that promotes active partnership and cooperation between security agencies and members of the public in maintaining law and order, preventing crime, and improving public safety. Unlike the traditional policing model that mainly emphasizes reactive law enforcement, community policing adopts a proactive and problem-solving approach that encourages citizens' participation in security management. The philosophy is based on the belief that effective policing cannot be achieved without the support, trust, and cooperation of the community.

According to Goldstein (1979), effective policing requires problem-oriented strategies that focus on addressing the root causes of crime rather than depending solely on reactive law enforcement. Similarly, Skolnick and Bayley (1986) argue that public trust, community participation, and police accountability are essential elements of successful policing systems. Their position

suggests that policing becomes more effective when citizens are actively involved in identifying and reporting criminal activities within their communities.

Contemporary studies have further emphasized the relevance of community policing in addressing modern security challenges, especially in developing countries. For instance, Ibrahim and Ahmed (2023) maintain that community policing strengthens intelligence gathering, improves public confidence in security institutions, and enhances cooperation between citizens and law enforcement agencies. In Nigeria, the growing importance of community policing is associated with the increasing wave of insecurity such as kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, and communal violence. The inability of centralized policing structures to respond effectively to these security threats has stimulated demands for community-based and decentralized security arrangements. Consequently, community policing has increasingly influenced the emergence of vigilante groups, neighbourhood watch associations, and regional security outfits such as Amotekun in South-West Nigeria.

In spite of its perceived benefits, several scholars argue that the implementation of community policing in Nigeria faces serious challenges. Adekunle and Ibrahim (2023) observe that distrust between citizens and law enforcement agencies continues to undermine effective collaboration and intelligence sharing. Other challenges include inadequate funding, corruption, poor training of security personnel, political interference, and weak institutional coordination.

Concept of Crime Prevention

Crime prevention refers to all measures, strategies, and policies aimed at reducing criminal activities, discouraging unlawful behaviour, and improving public safety within society. It involves proactive efforts designed to address the causes and opportunities for crime before offences occur, rather than relying entirely on punishment after crimes have been committed. Modern approaches to crime prevention extend beyond conventional policing and punishment to include community participation, technological surveillance, urban planning, and socio-economic development programmes.

Scholars increasingly emphasize that crime is influenced by social and economic conditions such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, poor education, and weak governance structures (Nnabuihe, Ashindorbe, & Odobo, 2023). Consequently, effective crime prevention requires comprehensive and multi-dimensional approaches capable of addressing both the immediate and structural causes of criminal activities.

Within the Nigerian context, the relevance of crime prevention has increased due to the rising cases of kidnapping, terrorism, armed robbery, banditry, and communal violence across different parts of the country. The limitations of centralized policing structures have encouraged greater emphasis on preventive security strategies involving local communities and regional security initiatives. As a result, community policing and regional security outfits such as Amotekun have emerged as important mechanisms for improving grassroots surveillance, intelligence gathering, and rapid response operations (Out & Apeh, 2022).

Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity refers to a condition characterized by fear, danger, uncertainty, and lack of protection of lives and property within a society. It describes situations where individuals, communities, or states are exposed to threats such as violence, crime, terrorism, armed conflict, and social instability that undermine peace, safety, and development.

According to Nnabuihe, Ashindorbe, and Odobo (2023), insecurity emerges when the survival and well-being of individuals or states are threatened by political, economic, social, military, or environmental factors. In Nigeria, insecurity has become one of the most serious challenges confronting national development and political stability. The country has experienced increasing incidents of kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, armed robbery, farmer-herder conflicts, cult violence, and communal clashes across different regions. The National Bureau of Statistics (2023) reported that these security challenges have negatively affected economic activities, agricultural production, investment opportunities, and citizens' confidence in government institutions.

Concept of Regional Security

Regional security refers to cooperative security arrangements and collective measures adopted by states or sub-national entities within a particular geographical region to address common security threats and maintain peace and stability. It is based on the understanding that contemporary security challenges such as terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, arms trafficking, and organized crime often transcend territorial boundaries and therefore require collaborative responses.

Within the Nigerian context, regional security has gained greater attention due to the increasing wave of insecurity across different parts of the country and the perceived limitations of centralized policing structures. Akinwale (2021) argues that the establishment of Amotekun in

South-West Nigeria reflects the growing relevance of regional security initiatives in addressing contemporary security challenges. According to the author, Amotekun emerged as a response to increasing cases of kidnapping, armed robbery, and farmer-herder conflicts within the region.

Concept of Security Governance

Security governance refers to the system of institutions, policies, processes, and collaborative arrangements through which security is managed within a society. It involves the coordination of state institutions, security agencies, local authorities, and non-state actors in maintaining public safety, preventing crime, and responding to security threats.

According to Adebayo and Alao (2024), security governance involves the coordination of security responsibilities among federal, state, and local actors aimed at improving internal security and crime prevention. In Nigeria, security governance has become a major issue because of persistent insecurity and the limitations of centralized policing structures. The country's security architecture is largely controlled by the federal government through the Nigeria Police Force and other federal agencies. However, increasing incidents of kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, armed robbery, and communal violence have exposed operational weaknesses such as inadequate manpower, delayed response mechanisms, and insufficient local intelligence gathering. Regional outfits like Amotekun represent an attempt to decentralize security governance and bring it closer to the grassroots.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Community Policing Theory. The theory is considered most appropriate because it explains the importance of collaboration between security agencies and local communities in crime prevention and public safety management. The theory emerged from the shortcomings of traditional reactive policing systems and emphasizes proactive strategies, public participation, and grassroots intelligence gathering in maintaining security. The theoretical foundation of community policing is closely associated with the works of Goldstein (1979), who introduced the idea of problem-oriented policing as a strategy for addressing the root causes of crime. The theory was further developed by Skolnick and Bayley (1986), who emphasized that effective policing depends on partnership, trust, and cooperation between security agencies and the public.

Community Policing Theory is based on the assumption that security is a shared responsibility between the government and citizens. The theory assumes that local communities possess

valuable knowledge about their environment, social relationships, and suspicious activities, which can improve intelligence gathering and crime detection. It also assumes that effective policing requires trust, communication, and active collaboration between security agencies and community members.

Conceptual Linkage between Community Policing Theory and Amotekun Operations

Community Policing Theory emphasizes collaboration between security agencies and community members in crime prevention and public safety management. The theory argues that effective policing is achieved when citizens actively participate in providing intelligence, reporting suspicious activities, and supporting law enforcement operations.

The operations of Amotekun align with this theoretical perspective. The outfit engages in community surveillance by working closely with residents to identify and report criminal activities. It also relies on grassroots intelligence gathering, which enhances situational awareness and supports timely intervention in security threats. Through proactive patrol operations and rapid response strategies, Amotekun is able to address security issues before they escalate. Furthermore, its engagement with local communities promotes trust, cooperation, and improved legitimacy of security operations.

In general, the alignment between Community Policing Theory and Amotekun operations demonstrates that community participation and decentralized security structures contribute significantly to crime prevention and improved security outcomes in Oyo State.

The relevance of Community Policing Theory to this study lies in its direct connection to the operational philosophy of the Amotekun Security Network in Oyo State. Amotekun operates through community surveillance, grassroots intelligence gathering, local patrols, and collaboration with residents and conventional security agencies. The theory therefore provides a framework for understanding how Amotekun contributes to crime prevention, rapid response operations, and community participation in security management.

Empirical Review

Empirical studies on community policing, regional security outfits, and crime prevention in Nigeria have produced varying findings regarding the effectiveness of decentralized security arrangements such as Amotekun. Most studies agree that community-based security initiatives contribute positively to intelligence gathering and grassroots crime prevention, although scholars differ on the extent of their effectiveness and sustainability.

Akinwale (2021) examined the emergence of Amotekun as a regional security initiative in South-West Nigeria using a qualitative research approach based on document analysis and secondary data. The study found that Amotekun emerged largely because of increasing insecurity and public dissatisfaction with the centralized policing structure in Nigeria. The author concluded that Amotekun improved local surveillance and intelligence gathering through community participation. However, the study noted that constitutional uncertainty and inadequate institutional coordination limited the operational effectiveness of the outfit.

Otu and Apeh (2022) conducted a descriptive survey on regional policing and crime prevention in selected communities in Oyo State. Findings revealed that Amotekun contributed positively to crime reduction, improved surveillance, and rapid response to security threats. However, the study identified inadequate logistics, insufficient manpower, and weak coordination with the Nigeria Police Force as major operational challenges.

Contrary to studies that strongly support regional security initiatives, Bello (2022) examined the constitutional debates surrounding regional security outfits in Nigeria and argued that decentralized security arrangements may create institutional conflict and jurisdictional overlap with federal security agencies. The study maintained that without proper legal regulation and coordination, regional security outfits could undermine national security administration.

Similarly, Adekunle and Ibrahim (2023) investigated inter-agency cooperation and security effectiveness in Nigeria. Using qualitative interviews and document analysis, the study found that rivalry and poor communication among security agencies reduce the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies. The authors argued that lack of synergy between federal and regional security actors often delays response to security threats.

Gap in Literature

The reviewed studies generally agree that regional and community-based security initiatives contribute positively to intelligence gathering, crime prevention, and grassroots security management. However, most existing studies focus either on constitutional debates, broad regional analysis, or selected local government areas without providing a comprehensive assessment of Amotekun's role in enhancing security across Oyo State.

In addition, many previous studies relied heavily on qualitative analysis and policy discussions with limited focus on structured quantitative assessment of public perception regarding Amotekun's operational effectiveness. This study therefore fills the gap by providing a focused

assessment of the role of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State using empirical data obtained from residents across selected communities within the state.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of data from a sample of respondents using structured questionnaires. It also facilitates the description of respondents' characteristics, opinions, and perceptions regarding the role of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State. The population of the study comprised all adult residents (aged 18 years and above) in selected communities of Oyo State. The study focused on three local government areas, namely Ibarapa North, Oke-Ogun, and Egbeda. Based on the 2006 National Population Census projected to 2023 using a 2.8% annual growth rate (National Population Commission, 2020), the estimated adult population of these areas is approximately 1,245,000. Due to the large and dispersed nature of the population, a sample size was determined using Cochran's formula for large populations. The formula produced a sample size of 384 respondents, which was considered adequate for the study.

A multistage sampling technique was employed in selecting respondents. In the first stage, purposive sampling was used to select the three local government areas based on the presence of security challenges and active Amotekun operations. In the second stage, systematic random sampling was used to select households within the selected communities. In the final stage, accidental sampling was used to select respondents who were available and willing to participate in the study.

A total of 384 questionnaires were administered to respondents across the selected communities. However, 288 questionnaires were successfully retrieved and found usable for analysis, representing a response rate of 75%. This response rate was considered adequate for survey-based research and sufficient for reliable statistical analysis and generalisation of findings.

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "*Amotekun Security Enhancement Questionnaire (ASEQ)*". The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of respondents, while Section B contained 12 Likert-scale items designed to measure respondents' perceptions of Amotekun's role in crime prevention and security enhancement in Oyo State. Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by two experts in security studies and research methodology from the University of Ibadan. Their observations were used to refine ambiguous items and improve clarity and relevance. The reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot test conducted among 30 respondents in Akinyele Local Government Area, which was not part of the actual study area. The data obtained from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.78, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. The four-point Likert scale responses were interpreted using a decision rule. Mean scores ranging from 1.00 to 1.99 indicated Strongly Disagree, 2.00 to 2.49 indicated Disagree, 2.50 to 3.49 indicated Agree, and 3.50 to 4.00 indicated Strongly Agree. A mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as agreement with the statement, while scores below 2.50 indicated disagreement.

Data collected from the field were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distribution, percentages, and weighted mean scores, were used to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics, specifically the chi-square test, was employed to test the relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to questionnaire administration, and participation was entirely voluntary. Respondents were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any form of penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, as no personal identifiers such as names or contact information were collected. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to all participants before data collection commenced.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from respondents on the role of the Amotekun Corps in enhancing security in Oyo State. A total of 384 questionnaires were administered across the selected local government areas, out of which 288 were successfully retrieved and found usable for analysis, representing a response rate of 75%. The data were analysed using frequency distribution, percentages, weighted mean scores, and chi-square statistical analysis. The presentation of findings is organized according to the research

questions and objectives of the study. Therefore, the analysis in this study is based on the 288 duly completed and returned questionnaires.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 288)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	172	59.7
Female	116	40.3
Total	288	100.0
Age Distribution		
18–27 years	74	25.7
28–37 years	96	33.3
38–47 years	68	23.6
48 years and above	50	17.4
Total	288	100.0
Educational Qualification		
Primary Education	38	13.2
Secondary Education	92	31.9
Tertiary Education	128	44.4
No Formal Education	30	10.5
Total	288	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Interpretation of Table 1

The table shows the demographic characteristics of respondents used for the study. The findings reveal that 172 respondents representing 59.7% were male, while 116 respondents representing 40.3% were female. This indicates that male respondents constituted the majority of participants in the study.

Regarding age distribution, respondents within the age bracket of 28–37 years recorded the highest frequency with 96 respondents representing 33.3%, followed by respondents aged 18–27 years with 74 respondents representing 25.7%. Respondents aged 38–47 years accounted for

23.6%, while those aged 48 years and above constituted 17.4% of the total respondents. This suggests that the majority of respondents were within the active and productive age group.

The educational qualification of respondents shows that 128 respondents representing 44.4% possessed tertiary education qualifications, while 92 respondents representing 31.9% had secondary education. Respondents with primary education accounted for 13.2%, whereas 10.5% had no formal education. The implication is that the majority of respondents were sufficiently educated to provide informed responses concerning security issues and Amotekun operations in Oyo State.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One:

To what extent has Amotekun contributed to crime prevention in Oyo State?

Table 2: Respondents' Perception of Amotekun's Contribution to Crime Prevention in Oyo State (N = 288)

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Amotekun has helped in reducing kidnapping in Oyo State	120	102	42	24	3.11	Agree
Amotekun patrol activities have improved community safety	114	98	50	26	3.04	Agree
Amotekun has contributed to intelligence gathering in local communities	126	94	40	28	3.11	Agree
Rapid response operations by Amotekun have reduced criminal activities	108	96	56	28	2.99	Agree
Collaboration between Amotekun and other agencies improves security	118	92	48	30	3.03	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Grand Mean = 3.06

Decision Benchmark = 2.50

“The decision benchmark of 2.50 was obtained from the 4-point Likert scale midpoint $(4+3+2+1 \div 4 = 2.50)$.”

Figure 1: Amotekun’s Contribution to Crime Prevention in Oyo State (N=288)



Source: Field Survey, 2026

Interpretation of Table 2

The findings in Table 2 indicate that respondents generally agreed that the Amotekun Corps has contributed significantly to crime prevention in Oyo State. The statement that Amotekun has helped in reducing kidnapping recorded a mean score of 3.11, which is above the benchmark mean of 2.50. The item on patrol activities recorded a mean score of 3.04, indicating agreement among respondents that Amotekun patrols improved community safety. The table further reveals that respondents agreed that the corps has contributed to intelligence gathering in local communities, with a mean score of 3.11. Rapid response operations by Amotekun were also perceived to have reduced criminal activities, as indicated by a mean score of 2.99. In addition, respondents agreed that collaboration between Amotekun and other security agencies has improved security management in the state, with a mean score of 3.03.

The grand mean score of 3.06 indicates overall agreement among respondents that the Amotekun Corps has played a significant role in enhancing crime prevention and security management in Oyo State.

Research Question Two:

What challenges affect the effectiveness of Amotekun in enhancing security in Oyo State?

Table 3: Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Amotekun in Enhancing Security in Oyo State (N = 288)

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
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Inadequate funding limits Amotekun operations	142	96	30	20	3.25	Agree
Poor logistics affect operational efficiency	128	102	36	22	3.17	Agree
Lack of modern equipment affects effectiveness	124	98	40	26	3.11	Agree
Insufficient personnel affects security coverage	118	100	42	28	3.07	Agree
Political interference affects operations	96	104	52	36	2.90	Agree

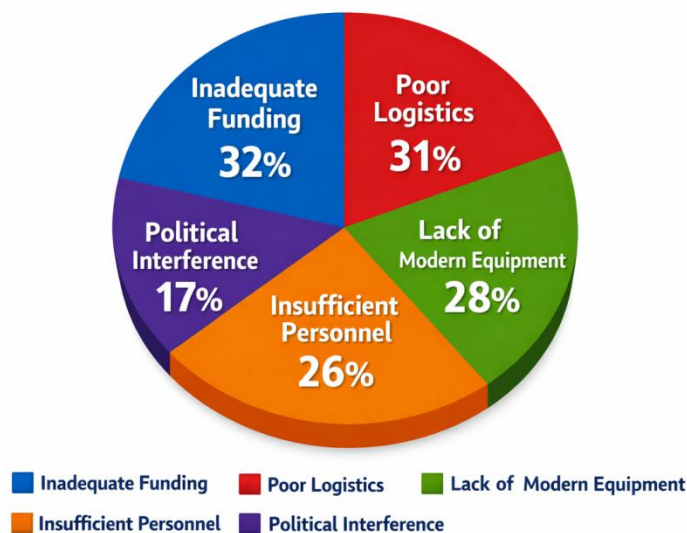
Source: Field Survey, 2026

Grand Mean = 3.10

Decision Benchmark= 2.50

“The decision benchmark of 2.50 was obtained from the 4-point Likert scale midpoint $(4+3+2+1 \div 4 = 2.50)$.”

Figure 2: Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Amotekun in Oyo State (N=288)



Source: Field Survey, 2026

Interpretation of Table 3

The findings in Table 3 show that respondents agreed that several operational challenges affect the effectiveness of the Amotekun Corps in enhancing security in Oyo State. Inadequate funding recorded the highest mean score of 3.25, indicating that it constitutes the major challenge confronting the corps. Respondents also agreed that poor logistics affect operational efficiency, with a mean score of 3.17. Furthermore, lack of modern equipment was identified as a major challenge with a mean score of 3.11, while insufficient personnel affecting security coverage

recorded a mean score of 3.07. Political interference in the operations of the corps also recorded agreement among respondents, with a mean score of 2.90.

The grand mean score of 3.10 indicates that respondents generally agreed that operational, financial, and institutional challenges significantly affect the effectiveness of the Amotekun Corps in Oyo State.

Test of Hypotheses

To determine the relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State, inferential statistical analysis was conducted using the Chi-square (χ^2) test of independence. The Chi-square test was considered appropriate because the variables were categorical in nature, derived from respondents' Likert-scale perceptions.

Hypothesis One

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of Relationship between Amotekun Operations and Security Enhancement

Variables	χ^2 Calculated	df	p-value	Decision
Amotekun operations and security enhancement	67.43	3	0.000	Reject H ₀

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Level of significance = 0.05

Interpretation of Table 4

The result of the Chi-square analysis in Table 4 shows that the calculated Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 67.43$) with a degree of freedom (df = 3) and p-value of 0.000 is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

This implies that there is a statistically significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement in Oyo State. In other words, respondents' perceptions indicate that the activities of the Amotekun Corps such as patrol operations, intelligence gathering, and rapid response are significantly associated with improved security outcomes in the state.

The finding further suggests that community-based security initiatives such as Amotekun play a statistically measurable role in strengthening internal security architecture and reducing crime incidence.

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Operational challenges do not significantly affect the effectiveness of the Amotekun Corps in enhancing security in Oyo State.

H₁: Operational challenges significantly affect the effectiveness of the Amotekun Corps in enhancing security in Oyo State.

Table 5: Chi-Square Analysis of the Effect of Operational Challenges on the Effectiveness of Amotekun Corps

Variables	χ^2 Calculated	df	p- value	Decision
Operational challenges and effectiveness of Amotekun Corps	58.92	4	0.000	Reject H ₀

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Level of significance = 0.05

Interpretation of Table 4.5

The Chi-square analysis presented in Table 5 shows that the calculated Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 58.92$) with a degree of freedom ($df = 4$) and a p-value of 0.000 is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This result indicates that operational challenges significantly affect the effectiveness of the Amotekun Corps in enhancing security in Oyo State. The implication of this finding is that factors such as inadequate funding, poor logistics, lack of modern equipment, insufficient personnel, and political interference have a statistically significant influence on the operational performance and efficiency of the Amotekun Corps.

The finding further suggests that addressing these challenges is essential for improving the capacity of the Corps to effectively combat insecurity and enhance public safety in Oyo State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings show that the Amotekun Corps has contributed significantly to crime prevention in Oyo State through patrol operations, intelligence gathering, rapid response, and collaboration with other security agencies. This supports Akinwale (2021), who noted that community-based

security enhances grassroots surveillance and crime prevention. It also aligns with Community Policing Theory, which emphasizes cooperation between security agencies and local communities. However, contrary views exist. Johnson (2022) argued that regional security outfits in Nigeria often face coordination problems with formal security agencies, which can limit effectiveness. This suggests that Amotekun's impact depends on the level of institutional cooperation.

The study also found that Amotekun's presence has improved community safety and reduced fear of crime. This agrees with Otu and Apeh (2022), who found that community security initiatives improve public confidence and responsiveness to threats, showing the importance of visible security presence. Operational challenges such as inadequate funding, poor logistics, lack of equipment, insufficient personnel, and political interference were also identified. This supports Adekunle and Ibrahim (2023), who reported that weak institutional and financial support limits sub-national security effectiveness in Nigeria. However, Bello (2021) argued that strong community trust and intelligence sharing can still sustain effectiveness even with limited resources.

Inferential results confirmed a significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement, while also showing that operational challenges significantly affect effectiveness. This indicates that improving resources and institutional support will enhance performance. On the whole, the findings reinforce the importance of decentralized security systems in Nigeria and highlight the need for stronger collaboration between Amotekun and formal security agencies to ensure sustainability and effectiveness.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

This study examined the role of the Western Nigeria Security Network (Amotekun) in enhancing security in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by increasing insecurity such as kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, and communal conflicts, which exposed limitations in Nigeria's centralized policing system. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Data were collected from **288 respondents** selected from communities in Ibarapa North, Oke-Ogun, and Egbeda Local Government Areas using a multistage sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated and

found reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.78$). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and weighted mean scores) and inferential statistics (Chi-square test).

Findings revealed that Amotekun contributes positively to crime reduction, community safety, intelligence gathering, and collaboration with other security agencies. The Chi-square result confirmed a significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement ($\chi^2 = 67.43$, $p < 0.05$). However, its effectiveness is constrained by inadequate funding, logistics shortages, manpower limitations, and coordination challenges with other security agencies.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the Amotekun Security Network plays a significant complementary role in enhancing internal security in Oyo State. It strengthens grassroots intelligence gathering, promotes community participation in security management, and supports rapid response to criminal activities. However, its effectiveness is limited by structural and operational challenges, particularly inadequate funding, poor logistics, insufficient manpower, and weak inter-agency coordination. This indicates that while Amotekun is effective at the community level, its long-term sustainability depends on stronger institutional and policy support.

The study also confirms the relevance of **Community Policing Theory**, which explains that effective security management depends on cooperation, trust, and shared responsibility between security agencies and local communities.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge in the following ways:

1. It provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Amotekun based on residents' perceptions in Oyo State.
2. It statistically establishes a significant relationship between Amotekun operations and security enhancement ($\chi^2 = 67.43$, $p < 0.05$).
3. It extends the application of Community Policing Theory to regional security outfits in Nigeria.
4. It provides a methodological framework for evaluating sub-national security initiatives using quantitative approaches.
5. It highlights the operational realities and limitations of decentralized security governance in Nigeria.

Policy Implications

The findings imply that community-based security structures such as Amotekun are essential for strengthening internal security in Nigeria. However, their effectiveness depends on adequate funding, legal backing, and strong inter-agency collaboration. Hence, policymakers should recognize Amotekun as a complementary security institution rather than a rival to the Nigeria Police Force. In addition, there is need for clear legal frameworks defining jurisdiction, authority, and accountability mechanisms to prevent operational conflicts and enhance efficiency.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Strengthening Operational Logistics

The Oyo State Government should urgently equip the Amotekun Corps with patrol vehicles, modern communication systems (walkie-talkies, GPS devices), and surveillance equipment to improve rapid response and operational efficiency.

2. Adequate and Sustainable Funding

A stable funding structure should be established through increased budgetary allocation, timely release of funds, and exploration of alternative financing such as security levies and public-private partnerships.

3. Recruitment and Manpower Expansion

Additional personnel should be recruited to improve security coverage across both rural and urban areas, particularly in high-risk communities.

4. Strengthening Inter-Agency Collaboration

A formal joint intelligence-sharing and operational framework should be established between Amotekun, the Nigeria Police Force, and other security agencies to enhance coordination and reduce operational conflicts.

5. Legal and Institutional Strengthening

The Oyo State House of Assembly should strengthen the legal framework governing Amotekun by clearly defining its mandate, jurisdiction, and accountability structure to improve legitimacy and reduce political interference.

6. Continuous Training and Capacity Development

Regular training should be institutionalized in areas such as intelligence gathering, human rights protection, crisis management, and modern policing techniques to improve professionalism.

7. Establishment of Security Trust Fund

A dedicated Security Trust Fund should be created to ensure sustainable financing through government contributions, private sector support, and development partnerships..

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