Impact of Security Crises on Socio economic Activities in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

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Abstract—The impact of security crises on socioeconomic activities in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria, has become a critical concern in recent years, with severe consequences for both the local economy and the overall well-being of residents. The South-Eastern region, particularly Owerri, has been grappling with persistent security challenges such as insurgency, ethnic and political tensions, youth unemployment, and corruption, all of which have disrupted the normal functioning of society. These crises have led to significant declines in key sectors such as agriculture, trade, education, healthcare, and infrastructure. For instance, violent conflicts and criminal activities have resulted in the displacement of farmers, hindering agricultural productivity and food security. Small businesses have been severely affected, with many being forced to close or relocate due to disruptions in supply chains and the safety of workers. Additionally, the education sector has faced considerable setbacks, with schools being forced to suspend academic activities, thereby affecting students' academic progress. The healthcare system has also been severely strained, with hospitals closing or reducing their services due to security concerns, leaving many vulnerable individuals without proper medical care. Furthermore, the erosion of social cohesion and increased mistrust among the population have weakened governance structures, making it difficult for effective policies to be implemented. This research seeks to explore these challenges in detail, examine the root causes of insecurity, and provide recommendations for addressing the socioeconomic impacts of security crises in Owerri.

Keywords— Security crises; socioeconomic impact; Owerri; Imo State; insurgency; socioeconomic development.

I. INTRODUCTION

The security crises in the South-Eastern region of Nigeria, particularly in Owerri, Imo State, have severely affected the region's socioeconomic activities. Insecurity, marked by armed robbery, political unrest, and insurgency, has destabilized both social and economic systems, leading to significant disruptions. Onwuchekwa et al. (2019) note that the agricultural sector has suffered, as violent activities in rural areas forced farmers to abandon their lands. Similarly, Ajayi and Ogechi (2018) highlight the challenges faced by small businesses, including supply chain disruptions and the exodus of skilled workers from the region. The consequences of insecurity extend to the labor market, where Akinmoladun et al. (2020) report job losses and the closure of several industries in Owerri. Educational institutions have also been impacted, with schools suspending classes and contributing to poor educational outcomes (Otu & Ibe, 2019). The healthcare sector is not spared, as Nwachukwu and Ibe (2021) note that hospitals in the region have faced closures, exacerbating the strain on medical care during security crises.

Insecurity has also affected social cohesion. According to Ikenna and Ogbonna (2018), ethnic and religious tensions have intensified, weakening community bonds and hindering collective development. Adebayo and Eme (2021) argue that these issues, combined with corruption and political instability, have undermined government efforts to enforce policies that could mitigate the socioeconomic effects of insecurity. Uche and Okafor (2020) further emphasize that the absence of effective law enforcement deepens the challenges, perpetuating a cycle of violence and economic decline. The region's recovery from insecurity will require addressing the root causes of conflict, such as arms proliferation and historical grievances, as Akinleye and Ayotunde (2021) suggest. Ajibola et al. (2018) advocate for inclusive policies to promote economic resilience and stability. Okoro and Onwuka (2023) explore the impact of insecurity on business growth and essential services in Owerri, while Nwankwo and Eze (2022) discuss the destruction of infrastructure and its economic repercussions.

Educational disruptions continue to be a significant concern. Chika and Ekene (2024) emphasize the long-term effects of security crises on student attendance and educational standards. Ofor and Chukwu (2020) discuss how the closure or relocation of businesses has further stalled economic progress. Akintoye and Olise (2022) examine how political violence has hindered investment opportunities and job creation, making sustainable economic growth difficult under prevailing security conditions. The healthcare system has also faced severe disruption. Eze and Okoye (2023) highlight the loss of medical personnel and interruptions in service delivery, worsening public health outcomes in Owerri. Addressing these impacts requires rebuilding infrastructure and providing comprehensive support to affected communities, as emphasized by the referenced studies.

These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted effects of insecurity on the socioeconomic stability of Owerri, Imo State, and the urgent need for targeted interventions to address these challenges. Despite the existing body of research on the impacts of security crises in Nigeria, there remains a critical gap in understanding the specific effects on socioeconomic activities in Owerri, Imo State. Previous studies have largely focused on general security issues in Nigeria or on larger regions, with limited attention to localized studies within the South-Eastern region. Owerri, as a central urban area in Imo State, has unique socio-economic dynamics that are

significantly impacted by persistent insecurity. This research is necessary to provide a deeper, more nuanced understanding of how security challenges affect local businesses, education, healthcare, infrastructure, and social relations. By focusing specifically on Owerri, this study aims to offer targeted insights that can inform policy and interventions tailored to the region's unique needs. Furthermore, it will contribute to broader discussions on security and development in Nigeria, offering actionable recommendations for restoring stability and promoting sustainable socioeconomic recovery.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodologies employed to investigate the impact of security crises on socioeconomic activities in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Data collection involved the use of structured questionnaires administered to a sample of residents, business owners, and local authorities within the region. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders such as community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and policymakers to gather qualitative insights into the ongoing security challenges. The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data. This approach allowed for a comprehensive assessment of how security crises influence key aspects of the region's economy, education, healthcare, and overall social well-being.

a) Area of the Study

Owerri, the capital of Imo State, Nigeria, is a city of significant academic interest due to its unique geographical, historical, and socio-economic features. Located in southeastern Nigeria at 5°29'N latitude and 7°1'E longitude, Owerri is characterized by diverse landscapes, including plains, hills, and rivers. The city, with a population largely aged 15-35 years, is home to various ethnic groups, including the Igbo and Ogoni. Historically, Owerri was a colonial administrative center. Its economy, driven by agriculture, trade, and industry, is complemented by well-developed infrastructure like roads, educational institutions, and an international airport. Despite urbanization, challenges such as poor urban planning and environmental degradation persist, offering rich opportunities for research on growth, culture, and governance.

b) Research Design

A mixed-method research design was adopted, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the security crises.

c) Population of the Study

In this study, the target population comprised of residents in Owerri, Imo State. The population target was a random estimate of 6000. The sampling techniques used in this study were stratified sampling, probability random sampling and purposive sampling. The major criterion being the roles of the respondents.

d) Sample and Sampling Design

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select participants from different socioeconomic and professional groups.

The required sample size for the study is determined using Taro Yamane's formula:

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

Where:
- N is the population size (6000)
- n is the sample size
- e is the level of significance (0.09)

Substituting the values:

$$n = \frac{6000}{1 + 6000(0.09)^2} = \frac{6000}{1 + 6000(0.0081)} = \frac{6000}{48.6} \approx 123$$

A probability sampling technique, specifically random sampling, was employed to select the sample, ensuring high reliability, representativeness, and generalizability of the findings. Thus, the final sample size is 123 respondents.

e) Research Instruments

Data were collected using structured questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data for analysis, providing descriptive information about current events, conditions, or attributes of a population at a specific time. The questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Closed-ended questions offered predefined answer choices, while open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide full, unstructured responses. The questionnaire gave respondents time to consider their answers, ensuring accuracy. A pretest was conducted with a small group of potential respondents before the full-scale administration. To ensure data accuracy and completeness, questionnaires were numbered serially, and research assistants thoroughly checked the completed forms for proper responses.

f) Validity of Instruments

The raw data from the survey were examined for validity and reliability through sorting, editing, and coding to minimize errors, omissions, and discrepancies that could compromise the accuracy of the findings.

g) Method of Data Collection

Data for the main study were collected over a four-week period using questionnaires administered by the researcher. The questionnaire was structured to align with the study's objectives, with sections based on factors such as age and occupation. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires. After two weeks, the researcher conducted follow-ups, reminding respondents of the remaining time for submission and replacing any lost questionnaires. A total of 99 completed questionnaires were retrieved in August 2023 for processing and analysis.

h) Method of Data Analysis

The large volume of data from the survey required systematic analysis to meet the study's objectives. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were employed,

with EXCEL software facilitating the data analysis. A non-parametric Chi-square test was also applied at a 5% significance level. The analysis aimed to identify relationships between variables, characterize group variables, and assess differences in the distribution of related variables.

i) Hypothesis Testing

Chi-Square hypothesis testing was conducted to assess respondents' behavior in relation to the study, aiming to compare observed and expected values.

In the context of this study, the Chi-Square test was conducted to examine respondents' behavior in relation to specific variables. We follow the steps below:

1. State the Hypotheses:
- Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies. In other words, the behavior of respondents aligns with what is expected based on the study's assumptions.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies, indicating that the respondents' behavior does not align with the expected values.

2. Calculate the Expected Frequencies: The expected frequency for each category is calculated using the formula:
$$E_i = \frac{(Row\ Total \times Column\ Total)}{Grand\ Total}$$
where:
- E_i is the expected frequency for the ith category,
- Row Total is the sum of frequencies for each row,
- Column Total is the sum of frequencies for each column,
- Grand Total is the overall sum of all frequencies.

3. Compute the Chi-Square Statistic: The Chi-Square statistic is calculated using the formula:
$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$
where:
- O_i is the observed frequency for the ith category,
- E_i is the expected frequency for the ith category.

The sum of the squared differences between the observed and expected frequencies is divided by the expected frequency for each category.

4. Determine the Degrees of Freedom (df): The degrees of freedom for the Chi-Square test is calculated as:
$$df = (r - 1)(c - 1)$$
where:
- r is the number of rows,
- c is the number of columns in the contingency table.

5. Find the Critical Value: Using the Chi-Square distribution table, find the critical value based on the significance level (typically 0.05) and the degrees of freedom.

6. Decision Rule:
- If the calculated Chi-Square statistic (χ^2) is greater than the critical value, reject the null hypothesis (H_0).
- If the calculated Chi-Square statistic (χ^2) is less than or equal to the critical value, fail to reject the null hypothesis.

7. Interpret the Results: In this study, the Chi-Square test helps to determine if respondents' behaviors or responses to certain questions align with expected patterns, based on a theoretical or prior assumption of how they should respond. The results from this test are used to evaluate whether the behaviors observed in the sample population reflect broader trends or if they differ significantly from expectations. The results and conclusion drawn from this test are presented under result and discussion section.

j) Sources of Data

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with local residents, community leaders, and relevant stakeholders, as well as focus group discussions with individuals directly affected by security crises. Quantitative data were gathered through structured surveys administered to a sample of residents and businesses in Owerri, Imo State.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussions highlight how security crises in Owerri, Imo State, have severely disrupted economic activities, leading to business closures, unemployment, and reduced investments. Education and healthcare sectors have also been affected, with school closures and limited medical services. Community interviews reveal heightened social tensions and declining public trust. Quantitative analysis confirms a strong link between insecurity and declining economic productivity. The findings underscore the need for improved security measures and comprehensive socioeconomic strategies to restore stability and growth.

1) Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section outlines the demographic characteristics of the study respondents, including age, educational background, occupation, gender, and years of residence in the community.

a) Educational Background of Respondents

The educational background of respondents revealed the following: 20.20% had Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), 27.27% had Ordinary National Diploma (OND), 41.41% held Higher National Diploma (HND), and 11.11% had a Master's degree or higher.

TABLE 1

Educational Background	Respondents	Percentage (%)
SSCE	20	20.20
OND	27	27.27
HND/BSC	41	41.41
MSC >	11	11.11
Total	**99**	**100**

2) Sex of Respondents

The gender distribution of respondents showed that 55.56% were male, while 44.44% were female.

TABLE 2

Sex	Respondents	Percentage
Male	55	55.56
Female	44	44.44
Total	**99**	**100**

a) Age of Respondents

The age distribution of respondents was as follows: 29.29% were aged 18-30, 45.45% were 31-40, 16.16% were 41-50, 6.06% were 51-60, and 3.03% were 61-70.

TABLE 3

Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
18-30	29	29.29
31-40	45	45.45
41-50	16	16.16
51-60	6	6.06
61-70	3	3.03
Total	**99**	**100**

b) Occupation of Respondents

The occupational distribution was as follows: 29.29% were civil servants, 28.28% were business owners, 11.11% were farmers, 19.19% were artisans, 7.07% were healthcare professionals, and 5.05% were transport workers.

TABLE 4

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Civil Servants	29	29.29
Business Owners	28	28.28
Farmers	11	11.11
Artisans and Craftsmen	19	19.19
Healthcare Professionals	7	7.07
Transport Workers	5	5.05
Total	**99**	**100**

c) Years Lived in Owerri, Imo State

Respondents' years of residence in Owerri were as follows: 25.25% had lived for 1-10 years, 15.15% for 11-25 years, 23.23% for 26-35 years, 11.11% for 36-45 years, 18.18% for 46-55 years, and 7.07% for 56-70 years.

TABLE 5

Years in Owerri	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1-10 years	25	25.25
11-25 years	15	15.15
26-35 years	23	23.23
36-45 years	11	11.11
46-55 years	18	18.18
56-70 years	7	7.07
Total	**99**	**100**

Source: Authour Field Survey, 2023

3) Root Causes Contributing to Security Challenges in Owerri, Imo State

This section evaluates the root causes of security challenges in Owerri, Imo State. Key factors identified include ethnic and political tensions, economic disparities, youth unemployment, corruption and governance issues, marginalization, religious extremism, arms proliferation, lack of access to education, weak law enforcement, and historical grievances.

Among these, arms proliferation and historical grievances were identified as the most significant factors (10.48%), followed by weak law enforcement and justice systems (10.37%), and corruption and governance issues (10.26%). The least significant factor, with 8.36%, was the lack of access to education and opportunities.

Arms proliferation contributes to security issues due to the widespread availability of illegal firearms, leading to violent crime. Historical grievances fuel current conflicts, requiring reconciliation and addressing underlying issues. Weak law enforcement undermines the rule of law, and corruption diverts resources from essential security functions. Though less significant, the lack of education and opportunities fosters social unrest and criminal behavior.

TABLE 6: Root Causes Contributing to Security Challenges in Owerri, Imo State

Root Causes/Factors	Observed Frequency	Percentage (%)
Ethnic and Political Tensions	95	10.05
Economic Disparities	94	9.94
Youth Unemployment	95	10.05
Corruption and Governance Issues	97	10.26
Marginalization and Inequitable Distribution	94	9.94
Religious and Ideological Extremism	95	10.05
Arms Proliferation	99	10.48
Lack of Access to Education and Opportunities	79	8.36
Weak Law Enforcement and Justice Systems	98	10.37
Historical Grievances	99	10.48
Total	**945**	**100**

a) Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis for the analysis is as follows:

• Null Hypothesis (H_0): The identified root causes are significant contributors to security challenges in Owerri.

• Alternate Hypothesis (H_1): The identified root causes are not significant contributors.

The Chi-Square analysis (Table 4.7) yielded a calculated value of 3.18 with 9 degrees of freedom and a critical value of 16.92 at a 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating that the identified root causes significantly contribute to security challenges in Owerri, Imo State

TABLE 7: Chi-Square Analysis for Root Causes of Security Challenges in Owerri

S/N	Root Causes/Factors	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	P-Value	Alpha Value	df	Critical χ^2	Calculated χ^2
1	Ethnic and Political Tensions	95	94.5			9	16.92	3.18
2	Economic Disparities	94	94.5					
3	Youth Unemployment	95	94.5					
4	Corruption and Governance Issues	97	94.5					
5	Marginalization and Inequitable Distribution	94	94.5					
6	Religious and Ideological Extremism	95	94.5	0.96	0.05	9	16.92	3.18
7	Arms Proliferation	99	94.5					

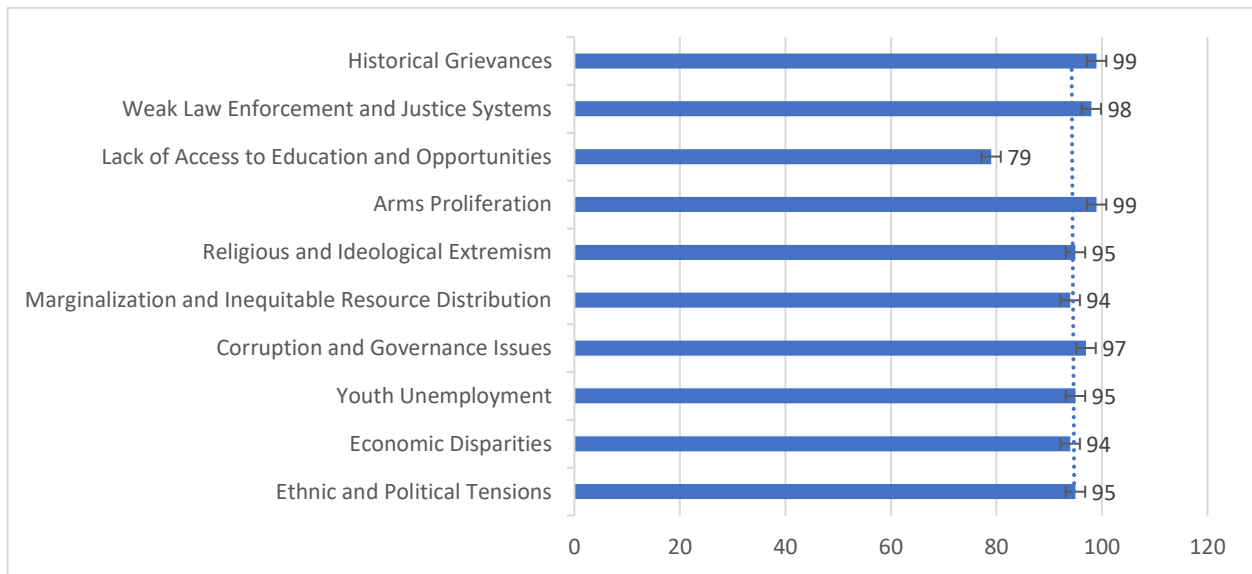| S/N	Root Causes/Factors	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	P-Value	Alpha Value	df	Critical χ^2	Calculated χ^2
8	Lack of Access to Education and Opportunities	79	94.5					
9	Weak Law Enforcement and Justice Systems	98	94.5					
10	Historical Grievances	99	94.5					
	Total	**945**	**945**					

Figure 4.1: Root causes or factors contributing to security challenges in Owerri, Imo State.

4) Socio-economic Repercussions of Security Crises in Owerri, Imo State

This section evaluates the socio-economic repercussions of security crises in Owerri, Imo State. Key effects identified include population displacement, loss of lives and property, decline in investment, business closures, reduced agricultural productivity, increased food prices, educational disruption, healthcare challenges, economic informality, and psychological stress.

The most significant impact identified is educational disruption (10.66%), followed by displacement of population (10.55%) and loss of lives and property (10.44%). The least identified effect, though still significant, is psychological stress (8.83%).

Educational disruption has long-term consequences, as it hampers student learning and future opportunities, leading to a decline in educational standards and regional development. The displacement of populations forces individuals to leave their homes in search of safety, affecting the social fabric and economy. Loss of lives and property has a devastating impact, hindering economic recovery. Psychological stress, while less frequently identified, has severe mental health impacts, such as anxiety and depression, which affect the well-being of individuals and communities.

a) Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis for the analysis is as follows:

- Null Hypothesis (H₀): The socio-economic repercussions of security crises in Owerri are significant.

- Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): The socio-economic repercussions of security crises in Owerri are not significant.

TABLE 8: Socio-economic Repercussions of Security Crises in Owerri, Imo State

Socio-economic Repercussions	Observed Frequency	Percentage (%)
Displacement of Population	98	10.55
Loss of Lives and Property	97	10.44
Decline in Investment	94	10.12
Business Closures	96	10.33
Reduced Agricultural Productivity	89	9.58
Increased Food Prices	90	9.69
Educational Disruption	99	10.66
Healthcare Challenges	95	10.23
Economic Informality	89	9.58
Psychological Stress	82	8.83
Total	**929**	**100**

Chi-Square analysis (Table 4.9) shows a calculated value of 2.72 with 9 degrees of freedom and a critical value of 16.92 at a 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted, confirming that the socio-economic repercussions are significant.

5) Coping Mechanisms of the Local Population in Response to Security Crises in Owerri, Imo State

This section examines the coping strategies of the local population in Owerri, Imo State, in response to security crises. The strategies identified include community vigilance groups, relocation, curfew adherence, stockpiling essentials, economic diversification, social support networks, information sharing,

self-defense measures, collaboration with local authorities, and education and awareness.

TABLE 9: Chi-Square Analysis for Socio-economic Repercussions in Owerri

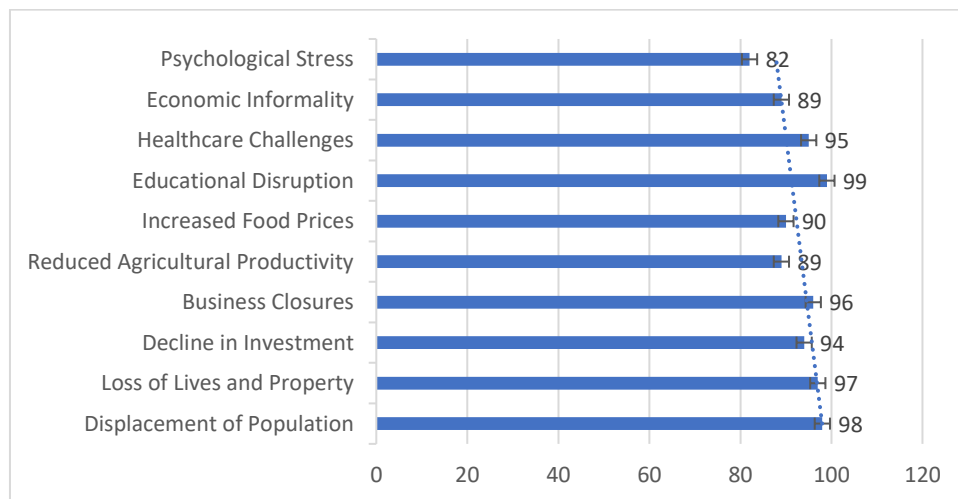| S/N	Socio-economic Repercussions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	P-Value	Alpha Value	df	Critical χ^2	Calculated χ^2
1	Displacement of Population	98	92.9			9	16.92	2.72
2	Loss of Lives and Property	97	92.9					
3	Decline in Investment	94	92.9					
4	Business Closures	96	92.9					
5	Reduced Agricultural Productivity	89	92.9					
6	Increased Food Prices	90	92.9	0.97	0.05	9	16.92	2.72
7	Educational Disruption	99	92.9					
8	Healthcare Challenges	95	92.9					
9	Economic Informality	89	92.9					
10	Psychological Stress	82	92.9					
	Total	**929**	**929**					

Figure 4.2: Socio-economic repercussions of security crises in Owerri, Imo State.

The most prominent coping strategies are curfew adherence and stockpiling essentials (11.26%), followed by relocation (11.15%) and social support networks (10.92%). The least identified strategy is education and awareness (8.05%).

Curfew adherence and stockpiling essentials reflect a high level of compliance with government directives and preparation for crisis situations, indicating a strong preference for safety. Relocation, as a strategy, suggests that many residents seek safer areas during security threats, highlighting a sense of insecurity. Social support networks demonstrate the importance of interpersonal relationships for protection and comfort during crises. The lower percentage for education and awareness suggests limited engagement with security-related information, potentially due to resource constraints or insufficient awareness programs.

TABLE 10: Coping Strategies of the Local Population in Response to Security Crises in Owerri, Imo State

Coping Strategies	Observed Frequency	Percentage (%)
Community Vigilance Groups	78	8.97
Relocation	97	11.15
Curfew Adherence	98	11.26
Stockpiling Essentials	98	11.26
Economic Diversification	88	10.11
Social Support Networks	95	10.92
Information Sharing	90	10.34
Self-defense Measures	67	7.70
Collaboration with Local Authorities	89	10.22
Education and Awareness	70	8.05
Total	**870**	**100**

a) Hypothesis Testing
The hypotheses for this analysis are:

- Null Hypothesis (H₀): The coping strategies of the local population in response to security crises in Owerri are significant.

- Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): The coping strategies of the local population in response to security crises in Owerri are not significant.

Chi-Square analysis (Table 4.11) shows a calculated value of 13.68 with 9 degrees of freedom and a critical value of 13.68 at the 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated value equals the critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted, confirming the significance of the identified coping strategies.

TABLE 11: Chi-Square Analysis of Coping Strategies of the Local Population in Response to Security Crises in Owerri

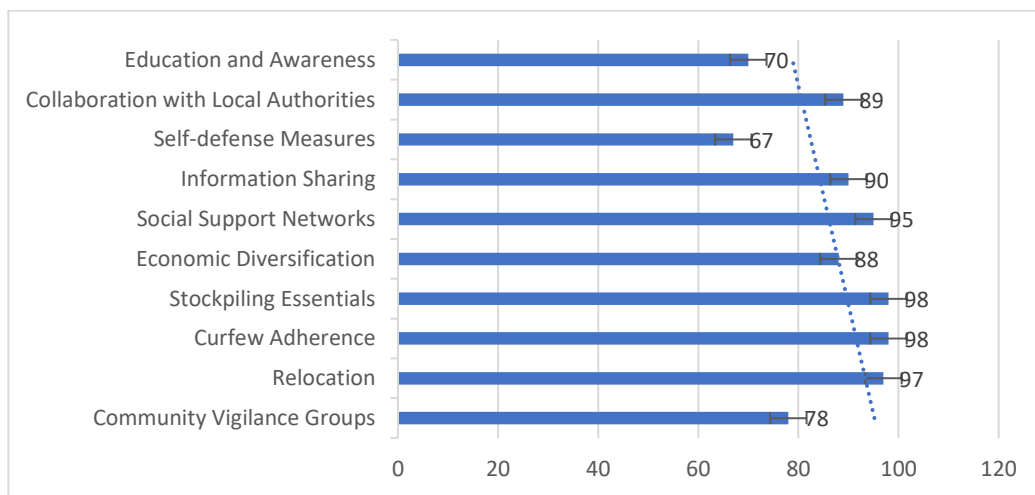| S/N	Coping Strategies	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	P-Value	Alpha Value	df	Critical χ^2	Calculated χ^2
1	Community Vigilance Groups	78	87			9	16.92	13.68
2	Relocation	97	87					
3	Curfew Adherence	98	87					
4	Stockpiling Essentials	98	87					
5	Economic Diversification	88	87					
6	Social Support Networks	95	87	0.1342	0.05	9	16.92	13.68
7	Information Sharing	90	87					
8	Self-defense Measures	67	87					
9	Collaboration with Local Authorities	89	87					
10	Education and Awareness	70	87					
	Total	**870**	**870**					

Figure 4.3: Coping strategies of the local population in response to security crises Owerri, Imo State.

6) Strategies to Address Security Issues in the South-Eastern Region

This section evaluates the strategies identified to address security issues in the South-Eastern region. The strategies include increased police and military presence, community policing, intelligence gathering and sharing, surveillance and CCTV, checkpoints and roadblocks, border security, amnesty programs, dialogue and conflict resolution, and economic development initiatives.

The most frequently identified strategies are increased police and military presence, and checkpoints and roadblocks, both at 10.61%. These are closely followed by community policing and border security (10.29%), and intelligence gathering and sharing (9.65%). The least identified strategy is surveillance and CCTV (4.82%).

The high percentages for increased police and military presence, and checkpoints, suggest that these strategies are seen as essential for maintaining security. Community policing and border security are viewed as important collaborative measures. Intelligence gathering and sharing also play a significant role in addressing security concerns. The relatively low identification

of surveillance and CCTV indicates that these measures are less prioritized, possibly due to resource constraints.

TABLE 12: Strategies to Address Security Issues in the South-Eastern Region

Strategies to Address Security Issues	Observed Cases	Percentage (%)
Increased Police and Military Presence	99	10.61
Community Policing	96	10.29
Intelligence Gathering and Sharing	90	9.65
Surveillance and CCTV	45	4.82
Checkpoints and Roadblocks	99	10.61
Border Security	96	10.29
Amnesty Programs	88	9.43
Dialogue and Conflict Resolution	78	8.36
Economic Development Initiatives	63	6.75
Total	**933**	**100**

a) Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses for this analysis are:

- Null Hypothesis (H₀): The strategies to address security issues in the South-Eastern region are significant.

- Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): The strategies to address security issues in the South-Eastern region are not significant.

Chi-Square analysis (Table 4.13) reveals a calculated value of 45.35 with 8 degrees of freedom and a critical value of 15.51 at the 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated value exceeds the critical value, the alternate hypothesis is accepted, indicating that the identified strategies are significant.

TABLE 13: Chi-Square Analysis of Strategies to Address Security Issues in the South-Eastern Region

S/N	Strategies to Address Security Issues	Observed Cases	Expected Frequency	P-Value	Alpha Value	df	Critical χ²	Calculated χ²
1	Increased Police and Military Presence	99	75.4			8	15.51	43.35
2	Community Policing	96	75.4					
3	Intelligence Gathering and Sharing	90	75.4					
4	Surveillance and CCTV	45	75.4					
5	Checkpoints and Roadblocks	99	75.4					
6	Border Security	96	75.4	3E-07	0.05	8	15.51	43.35
7	Amnesty Programs	88	75.4					
8	Dialogue and Conflict Resolution	78	75.4					
9	Economic Development Initiatives	63	75.4					
	Total	754	678.6					

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A Summary of the Study

Security crises in Nigeria's southeastern region, particularly in Owerri, Imo State, have severely disrupted socioeconomic activities. Driven by separatist movements and criminal elements, these crises have exacerbated insecurity, economic decline, and infrastructure damage. Restoring stability and fostering growth remains a significant challenge.

Arms proliferation and historical grievances are identified as key contributing factors to the security issues in Owerri, Imo State, with arms proliferation being linked to violent crime and conflicts. Historical grievances further fuel tensions, with calls for reconciliation and addressing past wrongs. A weak law enforcement and justice system, characterized by corruption, inadequate resources, and poor training, has made addressing these security challenges difficult.
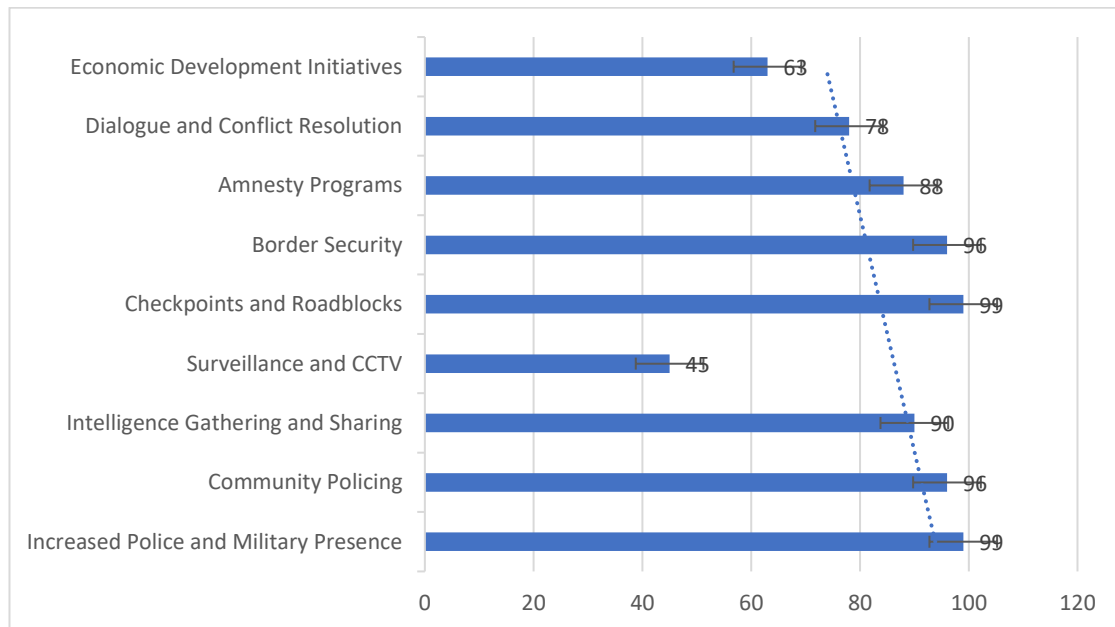

Figure 4.4: Strategies to address security issues in the South-Eastern region.

The socio-economic effects of these crises have been profound, with educational disruption emerging as the most significant consequence. The disruption of schooling affects the region's future prospects, contributing to a decline in educational standards and hindering development.

The local population has employed various coping strategies, with curfew adherence and stockpiling essentials being the most prevalent. These strategies indicate that many residents prioritize compliance with government directives and

preparing for crises. On the other hand, education and awareness, though important, were less emphasized, suggesting a need for enhanced awareness programs.

To address these security issues, strategies such as increased police and military presence, checkpoints, and roadblocks have been seen as critical. Strengthening the law enforcement and justice system and addressing the root causes of conflicts, like arms proliferation and historical grievances, are essential for long-term stability.

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B   Conclusion

The security crises in the South-Eastern region of Nigeria, particularly in Owerri, Imo State, have significantly disrupted the region's socioeconomic activities. This study highlights the complex relationship between security challenges and the well-being of the local population.

The ongoing crises, including insurgency, political unrest, and ethnic tensions, have severely impacted businesses, led to a decline in foreign investments, and created widespread hardships. Economic growth has stagnated, with domestic and international investments hindered, resulting in job losses, increased poverty, and growing inequality.

Additionally, essential services such as education, healthcare, and public utilities have been disrupted, further exacerbating the difficulties faced by the local population. The displacement of communities due to insecurity has strained social systems, with many individuals seeking refuge in overcrowded camps, thereby depleting already limited resources.

Restoring peace and security in the region is crucial for revitalizing socioeconomic activities. Achieving this will require coordinated efforts from government authorities, local communities, and stakeholders, focusing on enhancing security measures and implementing policies to promote economic recovery, social welfare, and conflict resolution.

In conclusion, the security crises in Owerri, Imo State, have deeply affected the lives of the local population. To mitigate these impacts and foster sustainable development, prioritizing peace, security, and socioeconomic restoration is essential. Only through collective efforts can the region hope for a brighter, more secure future.

Findings: The following are some of the findings of this work:
1. Economic Decline: The security crises have led to a significant decline in local businesses, reduced foreign investments, and increased poverty and inequality in Owerri, Imo State.
2. Disruption of Essential Services: Security challenges have disrupted essential services, including education, healthcare, and public utilities, affecting the well-being of the local population.
3. Community Displacement: Ongoing insecurity has resulted in the displacement of communities, leading to overcrowding in refugee camps and placing pressure on limited resources.
4. Impediment to Economic Growth: The deteriorating security situation has deterred both domestic and foreign investments, causing job losses and hindering economic development in the region.
5. Need for Comprehensive Solutions: Restoring peace and security, along with implementing policies for economic recovery, social welfare, and conflict resolution, is crucial for revitalizing the region's socioeconomic activities.

C Recommendations

To address security crises in Owerri, Imo State, and the South-Eastern region, the following recommendations are made:

1. Promote community-based conflict resolution involving local leaders and traditional rulers.
2. Strengthen the capacity and professionalism of security forces through better training and oversight.
3. Implement programs to diversify the local economy and create job opportunities, especially for youth.
4. Launch education and awareness campaigns to foster peace and unity among ethnic and religious groups.
5. Improve infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and healthcare, to attract investments and enhance quality of life.
6. Develop reintegration programs for former militants, offering counseling and vocational training.
7. Enhance transparency and accountability in governance to build trust and foster civic participation.

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