RURAL INSECURITY AND COMMUNITY POLICING IN EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.

Cornelius Blessing Weje; Ikezam Innocent; Wachukwu, Fyneface Chijioke; Ameme, Bright Geoffrey
Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Rivers State University

Abstract

This paper examined insecurity and the operation of Emohua Vigilante Services (EMOVIS) as a community policing outfit in Emohua LGA, Rivers State with a view to assessing the causes of insecurity, the factors militating against the ability of state actors in fighting insecurity, the activities and operations of EMOVIS, the strategies in fighting crime, the challenges faced and the level of acceptability of EMOVIS by residents of the area. The research adopted the cross-sectional survey research design employing questionnaire administration to 361 respondents drawn from 8 communities in the study area using stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Data generated was analysed using descriptive statistics employing simple percentages and frequencies. The findings of the study revealed that the increasing rate of insecurity in the area was as a result of the failure of state security actors to galvanize its security architecture to fight crime and insecurity; cult clashes for supremacy; lack of quality leadership and high rate of youth unemployment which has resulted to widespread insecurity in the area. Further analysis revealed that residents prefer EMOVIS to the conventional policing due to their prompt response to crime fighting. Some of the identified challenges militating against effective policing by EMOVIS included poor funding; compromising attitude of EMOVIS officers; and undue interference by some powerful community leaders; extrajudicial killing among others. The study thus recommends that massive rural development and the strengthening of the activities of EMOVIS should be given due consideration to reduce the spate of insecurity in the area.

Keywords: Community Policing; Crime; Insecurity; State Actors; Unemployment.

1. Introduction

As the globe make its journey on the path of urbanization albeit rapidly, insecurity has risen within the urban space with attendant impact on the quality of life of residence. Whether in urban or rural areas, crime is a law-violating attitude of an adult which, if an appropriate authority detects would lead to certain penalties (Brown, Asangausung, James &. Bassey, 2024). Although crime is not the exclusive reserve of urban space, the unique characteristics of cities makes urban policing a central governance challenge especially in urban centres in developing countries (UN, 2011). Crime brings about large welfare costs on society, it diverts private and public resources away from productive activities, crime has been shown to negatively affect private investment (Exbrayat &Stephane, 2024) Also important is the fact that crime and crime incidences are unevenly distributed throughout the world while important disparities exist even between and within regions of the world (UN 2011).

Insecurity threatens the quality of life, human rights, social and economic stability and sustainable development in cities around the

world. This is especially true in developing countries that are doubly burdened with high poverty rates and many informal settlements. The poor are the worst affected by urban crime and violence, regardless of their geographical location. Crime and violence are more severe in urban settlements and are triggered by rapid urban growth (UN-Habitat, 2007).

Although, the challenges of urban safety and security is a global challenge with severe physical planning effect on global space (Ditton, 2000), they encompass a wide range of concerns and issues. High levels of urban growth, inadequate services, poverty, and inequality coupled with recent political transitions in most developing countries results in rising crime rates that calls for more repressive policing (UN 2011). Increasing rate of crimes pose a challenge to the ideal security of lives and properties, increase in crime rates affects the development of both rural and urban areas (Onifade, Imhonopi & Urim, 2013).In the past, the community's involvement in law enforcement efforts has been limited. However, there is increasing awareness that community members can be a valuable source of support and information. Citizens can provide the police with insight into the specific crime problems occurring within their neighbourhoods and can aid officers in their investigations. The collaborations are beneficial to both the police and the community (Portland State University, 2001)

Emohua Local Government Area (LGA) situates very close to Port Harcourt, the Rivers state capital and is blessed with enormous resources including crude oil and gas. The peaceful atmospheric climate in the area makes business and social intercourse to bourgeon. Unfortunately, the once peaceful Emohua in recent times is bedeviled by internal strife and insecurity occasioned by very rapid urbanization of the area and ineffective formal policing by state actors. Though the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has gone through several reforms since 1960, there are still many challenges confronting it to effectively provide adequate policing of residence in the state. The NPF face institutional and administrative challenges including corruption and poor public image (Weje and Wachukwu, 2022) that lowers the social confidence of residence.

All these breed lots of mistrust between the police and the people that further exacerbate insecurity of lives and properties in the area. The inability of formal state actors to meet the security yearnings of most communities in the state led to the emergence of different community security groups one of which is community vigilante group popularly known as Emohua Vigilante Service (EMOVIS).

The formation of EMOVIS, appears to have brought some calm and improvements in the security architecture of the study area even though there are allegations that EMOVIS engages in extrajudicial killings. How has community policing in the study area faired with the introduction of EMOVIS? What has EMOVIS done differently to achieve these feet in terms of ensuring effective policing of crime? And how can we ensure harmony between EMOVIS and formal security state actors? The present study is an assessment of the activities of EMOVIS as community policing alternative in Emohua LGA.

2. Study Area

Emohua is one of the twenty-three LGA of Rivers State with its headquarters in Emohua town. Emohua LGA locates on coordinates 4°53’0” N 6°52’0” E / 4°88’ 33” N 6°88’67” E. It is bounded on the North by

Ogba/Egbma/Ndoni LGA, on the West by Ahoada East and Abu/Odua LGAs, on the South by Asari-toru and Obio/Akpor LGAs and by Ikwerre LGA on the East (Fig 1.).

The study area features tropical wet climate with lengthy and heavy rainy seasons and very short dry seasons (World Weather Information Service, 2017). The dry season in the study area is pronounced much around the months of December to January and experiences heaviest precipitation during the months of June to September with an average rainfall of 364mm of rain yearly (world weather information service, 2018). December is the driest month with a mean rainfall of 25mm, mean temperatures are typically between 25^{o}C – 28^{o}C and relative humidity is between 76% to 79% (World Weather Information Service, 2018). The convenient, conducive and environmentally friendly climatic condition of the area also makes it favourable for agricultural, commercial and other social activities, therefore increasing the massive movement of people to the area. This may account for the very high level of insecurity and crime occurrence observed in the area.

The area falls within the drainage basin drained by the New Calabar River, the fishing gate stream, Elechi Creek, the Dockyard River and several other Rivers (Mmom,Ekekwe& Chukwu-Okeake, 2017). The relief and drainage defined the suitability of the area for socio-cultural, socio-economic and different activities that trigger the emergence of crime in the area. The proximity of Emohua to Port Harcourt the state capital and the presence of oil and gas including the University of Port Harcourt makes the area choice areas for immigrants, resulting in the rapid population growth of the area with attendant implication on crime rate and insecurity in the area.

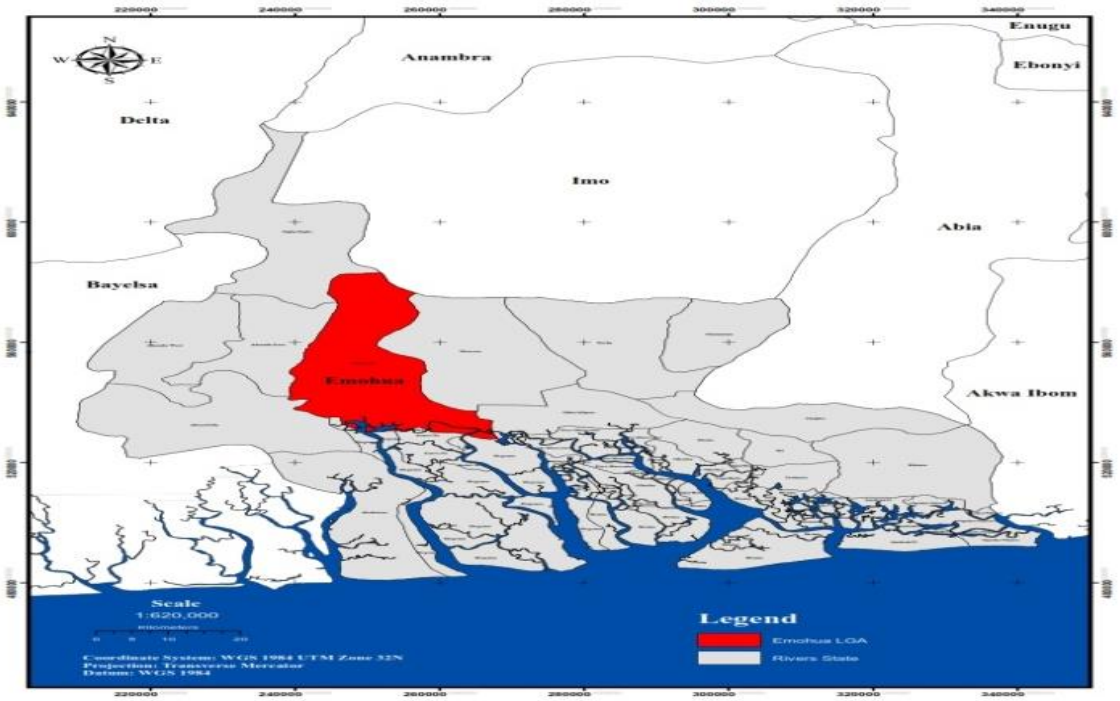


Figure 1: Emohua Local Government Area Administrative
Source: URP Arc GIS Lab, Rivers State University, 2022

3.0. Literature Review

3.1. Concept of Crime and Community Policing

There is no generally accepted single reason of what causes crime as crime itself is a highly complex phenomenon that changes across cultures and time (Farmer, 2016). Crime maybe defined as an action or omission which constitutes an offence and is punishable by law. A crime or offence (or criminal offence) is an act harmful not only to some individual but also to a community, society, or the state (a public wrong). Such acts are forbidden and punishable by law (Farmer, 2016). What precisely is a criminal offence is defined by criminal law of each country. Whether a given act or omission constitutes a crime does not depend on the nature of that act or omission; it depends on the nature of the legal consequences that may follow it. An act or omission is a crime if it is capable of being followed by what are called criminal proceedings (Farmer, 2016).

The concept of Community Policing (CP) has been around for a long time and in the US, it can be traced as far back as the 19th century. The primary purpose for its inception was to have police engaging with communities to build strong relationships between its members and law enforcement. One of the earliest and major tactics of community policing involved officers going on foot patrols through the neighbourhoods they serve. Ferreira (1996), defined CP as a philosophy of full-service personalized policing, where the same officer patrols and works in the same area on a permanent basis, from a decentralized place, working in a proactive partnership with citizens to identify and solve problems. Although CP mostly targets low-level crime and disorder, it can as well reduce more serious crime. The central goal of CP is for the police to build relationships with the community through interactions with local agencies and members of the public, creating partnerships and strategies for reducing crime and disorder.

3.2. Community Implant Theory

The study is anchored on the Community Implant Theory by Rosenbaum (1987). Rosenbaum advanced this theory in his essay titled "Theory and Research Behind Neighbourhood Watch." The Community Implant Theory is predicated on the premise that the primary reason for high crime rates is a lack of informal social control in neighbourhood areas. Sociologists argue that informal social control can be introduced into a community through collective citizen action in areas where social control is naturally weak or non-existent (Rosenbaum, 1987). Social control, in its broadest sense, refers to a group's or community's capacity to regulate its members.

It entails the administration of rewards and sanctions. Thus, while formal social control is always based on written rules and laws and is enforced by courts and police, informal social control is based on customs and norms and is enforced by citizens themselves through surveillance, reprimand, warning, rejection, and other emotional pressures to ensure conformity. In general, the community implant hypothesis argues that crime and social disorder can be better controlled if both formal and informal systems, such as the police, and informal arrangements, such as community participation, work together towards that end. It is believed that this integration will help ensure crime control to a certain extent.

The theory is pertinent to the study because it explains the community's role in establishing a vigilante organization to combat crime in Emohua LGA. The theory becomes critical in

explaining the crime situation in LGA by utilizing community members to maintain social control. The term "social control" refers to a group's or community's capacity to regulate its members. It entails the administration of rewards and sanctions. Thus, the use of EMOVIS security has ensured crime control, and those who violate the laws of the land face charges, fines, and the death penalty, depending on the severity of the crime. Through these measures, social control is restored and crime is reduced in the local governments of Emohua.

3.3. The Marxist Conflict Theory

This theory, which was developed by the German idealist and Philosopher Karl Marx and Frederick Engels claim that conflict in human society, is caused by competition for scarce resources. Adherents of the theory believe that the basis for the maintenance of social order is domination and power, instead of agreement and unity. It argues that the wealthy perpetuate themselves in power by impoverishing and subjugating the poor and powerless. The theory believes that an uneven distribution of nature's wealth would be sustained by laws where the bourgeoisie would compel the proletariat to accept their current repressive conditions.

Marx believes that as the proletariat (for instance, the poor and working-class) continues to be subjected to worsening forms of dehumanization, deprivation, and lack; there would be a mass revolution that will inspire a change in the control and distribution of the means of production. In other words, this theory holds the view that conflict in human society does not just occur for the sake of it. The massive inequalities and inequities in the human society engendered by only a few individuals (i.e., bourgeoisie) amassing and accumulating all of nature's freely given wealth meant for the entire society to themselves at the same time the masses wallow in abject penury make conflict inevitable. Thus, according to the theory, if the lopsided wealth distribution pattern is not corrected and equality restored, the have-nots (for instance, proletariats) can no longer be to bear the repression and excruciating pains. The result is a revolt and armed conflict.

Proponents of Conflict Theory posit that the political class takes advantage of the poverty, deprivation, and suffering of the peasant class to advance their interests. They argue that the sect uses religious indoctrination and material inducements to mobilize the poor as foot soldiers of the insurgency to advance their political interest. The same theory is also used to explain the high rate of insecurity plaguing the Nigerian State in recent times, such as cultism, Niger Delta militancy, farmers-herders' clashes, and armed banditry.

3.4. The Frustration – Aggression Theory

According to Jost and Mentovich (2017), the frustration-aggression hypothesis was introduced by a group of Yale University psychologists (John Dollard, Leonard Doob, Neal Miller, O.H. Mowrer, and Robert Sears) in 1939. It is based on the psychodynamic explanation of catharsis. Freud believed the drive for aggression was innate, like the drive for food. He believed that the only way to reduce aggression is to engage in an activity which released it.

This theory holds that man has the distinctive desire to destroy himself when frustrated and that since man's ego does not always permit self-destruction, such destructive instinct is usually directed against his fellow human beings. The theory holds that aggression is normally the consequence of frustration and that frustration is the product of relative deprivation of an expectation that creates a gap between

aspiration and achievement.

3.5. Related Literatures

Adiele (2021) conducted a study on the effect vigilante groups have on crime control in contemporary Nigeria. He observed that the Nigerian Police is ineffective at crime control and that vigilante -groups sprang up in their current form to compensate for this ineffectiveness. Additionally, he demonstrated that vigilante groups are gaining prominence as crime-fighting agents in contemporary Nigeria. As a result, vigilante groups have proven to be the most effective method of resolving Nigeria's crime problem. The study concluded that the best way to address Nigeria's crime problem is to increase vigilante group activity through training and support from local communities and government and that security committees should be established at the local government level to discuss security issues in their areas and to report any issues of insecurity to the appropriate security agencies for proper management and resolution.

Maniyan (2023) worked on the impact of urban design in minimizing women's fear of crime in India. The methodology consists of a questionnaire to 320 women in urban, peri-urban settings who experience a fear of crime while using public spaces. The study used deductive research approach, where quantitative research method was deployed to evaluate assortment of ideas and design approaches from CPTED and SCP. The result of the study indicates that a destitute urban setting instigates offenders to involve in malevolent activities, thus perniciously increasing the fear of crime. In contrary to this, secured cities with cohesive communities, and mixed land use with bustling activities throughout the day can lessen the opportunities for crime and could create defensible spaces.

For Docobo (2005) carried out a study in Florida, the study reveals that CP is a primary prevention strategy for homeland security at a local law enforcement level by implementing the use of community-oriented policing resources and practices that can be effectively applied for terrorism.

Wehrman and DeAngelis (2011), suggest the underlying goals of police-community partnerships should be seeking out ways for police departments to build stronger relationships with their communities. This can be done through gaining residents' confidence in the police, which will in turn create more willingness to work with police in anticrime initiatives. For Gilbert and Settles (2007) neighbourhood-restorative community justice should be indigenous to the neighbourhoods served. Such programs are not imposed from the outside; they emerge from discussions about neighbourhood problems and how best to respond to these problems by residents of the neighbourhood.

4. Material and Methods

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. The cross-sectional survey research design was used while the sampling technique relied on the stratified sampling and purposive techniques. Emohua local government is made up of forty-eight communities grouped in eight clans/zones viz: Ndele, Omadioga, Emuoha, Rumuekpe, Ogbakiri, Odegu, Ibaa and Akpabu clans (NPC, 2006). One (1) community was selected from each clan bringing the total of eight (8) communities studied. The yardstick for selecting any community is that such community have EMOVIS security outfit operating in them. The selected communities are: Ndele, Emohua, Rumuekpe, Ogbakiri, Odegu, Ibaa and Akpabu.

For purposes of questionnaire administration, all buildings and households in the sampled communities were listed while household heads were purposively selected. The population of the eight (8) communities was 47,584 persons in 1991(NPC, 1991). When projected to 2021using 3.2% growth rate, the population became 122,420 persons. The sample size of 392was determined using Taro Yamane formula at 0.05% level of precision. To determine the number of questionnaires to be administered in each selected community, the proportional allocation method was used as shown in table1.

Table 1: Population and sample size of the study

S/N	Clans	Sample Communities	1991 Pop	2021 Pop	House hold size (6)	% Pop	No. of question naire
1	Omudioga	Aliagha	3162	8,135	1,356	6.6	26
2	Ndele	Mgbuola	14328	36,862	6,144	30.1	118
3	Emuoha	Isiodu	2306	5,933	989	4.8	19
4	Rumuekpe	Omagwa	927	2,385	398	2.0	8
5	Ogbakiri	Okporowo	6828	17,566	2,928	14.3	56
6	Odegu	Rumuiji	6719	17,286	2,881	14.1	55
7	Ibaa	Omuogbo	12549	32,285	5,381	26.4	103
8	Akpabu	Omuodo	765	1,968	328	1.7	7
	Total		47,584	122,420	20,405	100	392

Source: Research's field data, 2022, NPC (1991)

Descriptive statistics such as mean, percentages were used to abstract, analyse and present data.

5.0. Results and Discussion

5.1. Age Distribution of Respondents

The ages of the respondents are shown in table 2. From table 2, the survey shows that 17.7% of the interviewed people were between the ages of 45 – 54, while those within the ages of 55-64 years and 35 – 44 years make up approximately 24.4% and 16.6% respectively. Respondents of 65 and above years of age make up only about 20.5% of the respondents. However, those respondents between the ages of 25-34 years and 15 – 24 years make up 11.9% and 18.9% respectively. This reveals that greater part of the people is of the workforce age bracket. This shows also that people in working population are also conversant with the issue of insecurity and community policing in Emohua LGA, Rivers State.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

S/N	Age	F	%
1.	15 – 24 years	32	8.9
2.	25 – 34 years	43	11.9
3.	35 – 44 years	60	16.6
4.	45 – 54 years	64	17.7
5	55 – 64 years	88	24.4
6.	65 + years	74	20.5
	Total	361	100

Source: Researchers' field survey, 2022

5.2. Sex of Respondents

The sex distribution of the people interviewed is depicted in figure 2.

From figure 2, the study reveals that 63.9% of all the people interviewed were males while 36.1% were females. This shows that as at the time of this study male were available this study than the females.

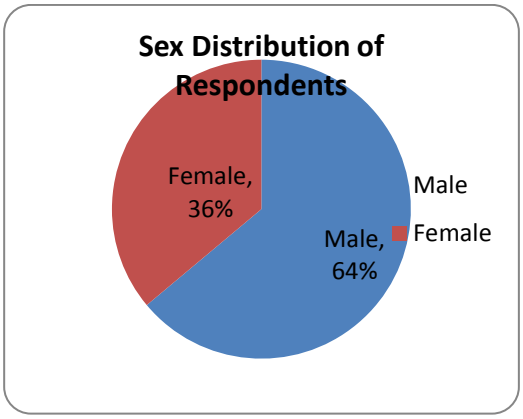


Fig.2: Sex Distribution of Respondents
Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.3. Educational Level of Respondents

The information on the academic status of the people interviewed shows that they cut across all the education level. This is presented in Table 3. From the table, 18.8% of the sampled respondent had education level up to Bachelor's degree level. 21.6% have Master's and above while 19.9% have other added professional trainings alongside the bachelors' degree and master and above. 10.8% have the secondary school education and 10.5% was educated up to the basic level of education while 18.3% has no basic education. This implies that the majority of the respondents are educated and highly knowledgeable insecurity and community policing in Emohua LGA, Rivers State.

Table 3: Academic Status of the Respondents

S/N	Level of Education	F	%
1.	Basic	38	10.5
2.	Secondary	39	10.8
3.	Bachelor degree	68	8.8
4.	Master and above	78	27.6
5.	Other professional training	72	19.9
6.	None	66	18.3
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.4. Causes of Insecurity in the Area

With regard to objective of the study which examines the major causes of insecurity in the study area, the study first examines the nature and kind of insecurity and crimes that are prevalent in the area. Thus, the survey data on the nature, kinds of insecurity prevalent in the study showed that the area is predominantly engulfed with the crime of rape as 12.7% of the total sample respondent have attested to. The survey analyses also revealed that other kinds and nature of insecurity prevalent in the area include Burglary (14.4%), kidnapping (16.3%), property theft 912.3%), Gangsterism (13.6%), armed robbery (16.6%) and others such as cultism, terrorism etc. (14.1%) (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of nature and kind of insecurity in the study area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Rape	46	12.7
2	Burglary	52	14.4
3	Kidnapping	55	16.3
4	Property theft	48	12.3
5	Gangsterism	49	13.6
6	Armed Robbery	51	14.7
7	Other	60	16.6
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

Also, the study investigated the causes of insecurity and raising crime levels in the study area. Thus, the survey data gathered and analysed revealed that the causes of insecurity and raising crime level in the area include cult clash.

5.5. Factors Militating Against State Security Actors in Fighting Crime

The study went further to investigate the factors that militate against the ability of the state security actor in fighting crime and insecurity in the area. To this end, the study revealed that the factors militating against insecurity in the study area to include greed and selfishness on the part of some wealthiest individuals (22.2%), corruption and embezzlement of public funds by security officers (19.4%), lack of political will on the part of the state in fighting crime (20.8%), political gains of crime and insecurity (20.1%) and the issue of conflicting ideologies and belief about crime among Nigerians (17.5%) (Table 5).

Table 5: Distribution of Responses on the Factors Militating Against State Security Actors in Fighting Crime

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Greed and selfishness	80	22.2
2	Corruption and embezzlement of fund by security officers	70	19.4
3	Lack of political will on the part of the state in fighting crime	75	20.8
4	Political gains of crime and insecurity	73	20.1
5	Conflicting ideologies and beliefs among Nigerians	73	17.5
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

Again, the study went further to investigate who the perpetrators of these crimes are. Thus, the study survey data revealed that the perpetrators of these crime and their collaborators are many include the government (21.3%), the greedy and selfish individuals (27.4%) and the beneficiaries of crime and insecurity (26.6%) (Table 6).

Table 6: Distribution of Responses on the Perpetrators of Crime and Insecurity in the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	The government	77	21.3
2	The state actors themselves	89	24.7
3	The greedy and selfish individuals	99	27.4
4	The beneficiaries of crime and insecurity	96	26.6
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.6. Activities/Operations of EMOVIS Security Outfit

Again, the study delved into investigating the activities and operations of EMOVIS security outfit in the area. The study in this regard, investigated the major activities of EMOVIS security outfit in the area, and found out that there are several activities and operations which this security outfit engaged in. These include maintenance of peace and security in the area (17.7%), maintain law and order in the area (14.7%), protect lives and properties in the area (13.9%), arrest and punish law offenders (13.3%), fight crime and criminality in the area (12.7%), collaborate with the conventional security agency and state actor in security maintenance (12.2%) and engaged in judicial and arbitration functions to settle disputes (15.5%) (Table 7).

Table 7:Distribution of responses on the activities of EMOVIS in the area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Maintenance of peace and security	64	17.7
2	Maintain law and order	53	14.7
3	Protect lives and properties	50	13.9
4	Arrest, prosecute and punish law offenders	48	13.31
5	Fight crime and criminality	46	12.7
6	Collaborate with state security actors	44	12.2
7	Engaged in judicial land arbitration functions.	56	15.5
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

In the same vein, the study investigated the operations modules of the security outfit in the area. The survey data gathered and analysed revealed that EMOVIS adopted the following security operations; patrol the entire LGA as 20% of the total sample respondent noted that EMOVIS patrols the entire LGA. Again, from the analysed data in Table 4.14, EMOVIS keeps security watch in the area (20.2%), prevents crime from happening in the area (18.8%), arrest and disband perpetrators of crimes and insecurity in the area (19.7%) and recruit and

train its members on crime and insecurity presentation in the area (21.3%) (Table 8).

Table 8: Distribution of responses on the operations modules of EMOVIS in the area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Patrol the entire LGA	72	20.0
2	Keep security watch in the area	73	20.2
3	Prevent crime from happening in the area	68	18.8
4	Disbands perpetrators of crime sand insecurity in the area.	71	19.7
5	Recruit and train its members on crime and insecurity prevention	77	21.3
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

The study further investigated how EMOVIS security output operates in the area. The data generated and analysed showed that EMOVIS operates by doing night watch of the area as 20.8% of the sampled study population has attested to.

The data in Table 9 also showed that EMOVIS operated by checking every suspecting person and individual in the area (19.14%), arrest and punish anyone caught in the act of crime and criminality (20.5%), orientate its members on crime prevention (21.0%) and gather security and intelligent information about the area (18.3%) (Table 9).

Table 9: Distribution of responses on how EMOVIS operates in the area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	They operate by doing night watch	75	20.8
2	Check every suspecting person and individuals	70	19.4
3	Arrest and punish anyone caught in the act of crime and criminality	74	20.5
4	Orientate its member on crime prevention	76	21.0
5	Gather security information of the area	66	18.3
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

Also, the researcher went further to rate the respondent's position on the activities of EMOVIS in the area. The survey data gathered and analysed revealed that the activities of EMOVIS were rated as either effective (28.5%), very effective (35.5%), ineffective (19.4%) and very ineffective (16.6%) (Table 10).

Table 10 Distribution of responses on the rating of EMOVIS activities in the area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Effective	103	28.5
2	Very effective	128	35.5
3	Ineffective	70	19.4
4	Very ineffective	60	16.6
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

When asked to rate the activities of EMOVIS with that of police the responses of respondents are as presented in table 11. The result revealed that EMOVIS was rated as been better than the police as 25.3% of the total sample population of the study has attested. 22.1% of the respondents however said that EMOVIS is not better than the police, while 32.7% said EMOVIS as the same as the police.

Table 11: Distribution of Responses on the Comparison of EMOVIS and the Police Activities in the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	EMOVIS is better than police	93	25.3
2	EMOVIS not better than police	80	22.1
3	They are the same	118	32.7
4	They operate differently and distinctly	70	19.4
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.7. Strategies adopted by EMOVIS in crime Fighting

The different strategies adopted by EMOVIS in policing and fighting crime in the study area are listed in table 12. The result indicates that

different strategies used by EMOVIS include reliance on informal information from community members (20.8%),constant security patrol (21%), disband crime collaboration, and shot at any on the run criminals that cannot be caught (19.4%), arrest criminal and hand them over to the police (20%) and adjudicate conflict and crisis situation in the area (18.8%).

Table 12: Distribution of responses on the strategies adopted by EMOVIS in crime fighting and community policing

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Reliance on informal information from community members	75	20.8
2	Constant security patrol	76	21.0
3	Disband and shot at any on the run criminals that cannot be caught	70	19.4
4	Arrest criminals and hand them over to the police	72	20.0
5.	Adjudicate conflict and crisis situations	68	18.8
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

On why EMOVIS security outfit succeeds in crime fighting more than the police in the area, the survey data gathered and analysed revealed that the EMOVIS security outfit in Emohua LGA uses unorthodox means (patronize traditional diabolical means such as 'juju') in policing the communities and fighting crime in the area as 21.1% of the total sample population of the study has affirmed. Other success factors include that EMOVIS are usually prompt in responding to crime situation (20%), they have more arms than the police (19.4%), they enjoy cooperation's from the local people (20.5%) and lastly, because EMOVIS personnel know their terrain and landscape very much (19.1%) (Table 13).

Table 13: Distribution of Factors that make EMOVIS Succeed in Crime Fighting in the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Use of diabolical means (juju)	76	21.1
2	Prompt in responding to crime situation	72	20.0
3	They have more arms than the police	70	19.4
4	They enjoy cooperation from the local people	74	20.5
5	They know the landscape and terrain of the area much	69	19.1
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.8. Challenges Faced by EMOVIS in Policing and Crime Fighting in the Area

While there appears to be some success in crime fighting by EMOVIS, the security outfit is faced with some challenges that lower the operations of EMOVIS. From the findings of this study (table 14), the challenges faced by EMOVIS include interface of some powerful public figures and community members in the course of justice by EMOVIS (18.3%), inertia on the part of some corrupt community leaders (17.7%), financial constraint (15.7%), unpleasant images of the EMOVIS officers (14.71%), poor communication and enumerations that made some EMOVIS think the other way (14.1%), poor infrastructural provision (11.1%) and others such as the compromising attitudes of EMOVIS officers (8.9%) (Table 14).

Table 14: Distribution of Response on the Challenges Facing EMOVIS in Community Policing of the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Interface of some powerful members of the society in the course of justice	66	18.3
2	Inertia on the part of some corrupt community leaders	64	17.7
3	Financial constraint	55	15.2
4	Unpleasant images of the EMOVIS officers.	53	14.7
5	Poor enumerations that made some EMOVIS officers to think the other ways	51	14.1
6	Poor infrastructural provision	40	11.1
7	Compromising attitudes of some EMOVIS officers	32	8.9
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

Furthermore, the study investigated the challenges and/or problems the residents have with the activities of EMOVIS in spite of the successes recorded. The respondents revealed that EMOVIS engages in extra-judicial killings (21.0%), venture into family – family issues (20.8%), infringed on people's rights and freedom (20.0%), and have also committed heinous crime under the guise of crime fighting (19.4%)including abetting and perpetrating other forms of crimes in the area (18.8%) (Table 15).

Table 15: Distribution of Responses on the Problem Associated with the Operation of EMOVIS in the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	They engaged in extra-judicial killings	76	21.0
2	They venture into family-family issues	75	20.8
3	They infringe on people rights and freedom	72	20.0
4	They commit heinous crime under the guise of crime fighting	70	19.4
5	The aid and abet/perpetrate other forms of crimes.	68	18.8
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

5.9. Level of Acceptability of EMOVIS Security Outfit by Residents of the Study Area

The level of acceptance of EMOVIS by members of the public shows that in spite of the short comings of the outfit, residents of the study area still rate them high in crime fighting.

From the result of this survey greater percentage of residents of the area accepted the presence of EMOVIS security outfit in their area and preferred that EMOVIS security outfit should continue their operations. Table 17 presents the level of acceptability of the operations of EMOVIS in the study area. Residents who said generally accepted constitutes 21.6%, highly accepted 23.0%, seriously acceptable 22.2%) and greatly accepted 23.3%.

Table 17: Distribution of Responses on the Level of Acceptability of EMOVIS in the Area

S/N	Options	F	%
1	Generally acceptable	78	21.6
2	Highly acceptable	80	22.2
3	Seriously acceptable	83	23.0
4	Greatly acceptable	84	23.3
	Total	361	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

6. Conclusion/Recommendations

Effective crime fighting and prevention can only be achieved through multiple crime reduction strategies one of which is community policing. Community oriented policing and police/community partnerships are valuable tools allowing criminal justice agencies to capitalize on the resources of the community and other agencies, thus extending the reach of their crime prevention efforts.

Crime breeds insecurity with attendant negative consequences that impacts on the health and livelihood of a people. The comatose security situation in the state security architecture including Emuhua town led to the emergence of EMOVIS security outfit to assist the state security operatives to fight and prevent crime in communities of Emohua.

A review of the activities of this outfit indicates that although there are allegations of extra-judicial killings by EMOVIS, this outfit is instrumental to the return of peace in communities of Emohua. Findings of this research has revealed that the causes of insecurity in the area includes cult clashes for supremacy, lack of quality leadership, youth unemployment, corruption in Nigerian security system, failure in the Nigeria security agencies in curbing crime, increase level of poverty among the youths and greed and get rich syndrome easily. Some of the factors militating against the ability of the state security actors in fighting crime in the study area include greed, selfishness, corruption and embezzlement of public funds by security officers, lack of political will on the part of the state security actors, political gains of crime and insecurity and conflicting ideologies and beliefs among residents.

With increasing realization that police/community partnerships can be valuable tools for any law enforcement agency, the following recommendations were made:

All participants should share the same goals, values, and take an active role in achieving the desired outcome.

A sense of empowerment and commitment to collaboration is critical in utilizing a multi-group approach to crime prevention.

There should be massive rural development in Emohua and other LGAs.

EMOVIS should be strengthened as a way to reduce the spate of insecurity in the area. This is the only way promote sustainable meaningful development in the study area.

References

Adiele, I.B.(2021). Vigilante (EMOVIS) and Crime Control in Etche Local Government Area, Rivers State. *Unpublished M.Sc Dissertation, Department of Sociology*, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Brown, A. S.; Asangausung, O. S.; James,N. N.& Bassey, A. E. (2024). Community-Based Organisations and Crime Management in Nigeria: A Study of Rural and Urban Centres of Akwa Ibom State.*AKSU Journal of Social Sciences (AKSUJOSS) Vol.4, No.1, (April) 2024*.pp 1-13.

Ditton, J. (2000). Crime and the City. Public Attitude Towards Open Street CCTV in

Glasgow. *The British Journal of Criminology*, Volume 40, Issue 4, September 2000, pages 692-709, https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/40.4.692.

Docobo (2005) Police Community Partnerships: A Review of the Literature availableat:www.cram.com/essay/His (Assessed 27/4/2023)

Exbrayat, N. & Stephane, V.(2024) Does Urbanization Cause Crime? Evidence from Rural-Urban Migration in South Africa. 2024. ffhalshs-04390026.

Farmer, L. (2016). "Crime, definitions of", in Cane and Conoghan (editors), *The New Oxford*

Companion to Law, Oxford University Press, 2008 (ISBN 978-0-19-929054-3), p. 263 (Google Books Archived 2016-06-04 at the Wayback Machine).

Ferreira, B.R. (1996). *Use and Effectiveness of Community Policing in a Democracy (From Policing in Central and Eastern Europe: Comparing Firsthand Knowledge with Experience from the West*, P 139-148, 1996, Milan Pagon, ed. -- See NCJ-170291). NCJ Number 170306

Gilbert, M.J., & Settles, T.L. (2007). The next step: Indigenous development of neighborhood- restorative community justice. *Criminal Justice Review, 32*(1), 5-25.

Jost, J. T. &Mentovich, A. (2017). Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis". Encyclopedia Britannica, 11 Aug. 2017, https://www.britannica.com/science/frustration-aggression-hypothesis. Accessed 18 April 2023.

Maniyan, R. (2023) The Impact of Urban Design in minimizing Women's Fear of Crime. *Qeios, CC-BY 4.0 · Article, August 21, 2023.https://doi.org/10.32388/NXAMO6. 1-8*

Mmom, P.L; Ekekwe, C.I. & Chukwu – Okeake, G.O. (2017). Land management practices and the yield of cassava (manihot Esculenta Grantz) in the humid Detaic environment of Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Research and Technology*, 8(4), 231 – 240.

NPC (1991). National Population Commission Census figure for communities in Rivers State.

NPC (2006) National Population Commission Report for Emohua LGA 2006

Onifade, C.; Imhonopi, D.; & Urim, U.M. (2013). Addressing insecurity challenges in Nigeria: The imperative of moral values and virtue ethics. *Global Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 13(2), 62-63.

Portland State University(2011). Criminology and Criminal Justice Senior Capstone, "Police Community Partnerships: A Review of the Literature" (Criminology and Criminal Justice Senior Capstone Project. 7. Available at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/ccj_capstone/7 (Accessed 27/4/2023)

United Nations (2011). *Introductory Handbook on Policing Urban Space*. Criminal Justice Handbook Series. United Nations, New York, 2011.

Weje, I. I. &Wachukwu, F, C. (2022). The Distribution of Crime Spots in Public Spaces in Port Harcourt Metropolis. *53rd National Conference/AGM of Nigerian Institute of Town Planners*, Abuja 2022, PP 51-63.

Wehrman, M.M., & DeAngelis, J. (2011). Citizen willingness to participate in police-community partnerships: Exploring the influence of race and neighborhood context. *Police Quarterly, 14*(1), 48-69.

World Weather Information service (2017). Weather Report on Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

World Weather Information Service (2018). Report on the annual temperature, rainfall and relative humidity in Niger Delta region of Nigeria.