Received: 15.05.2026| Accepted: 03.06.2026 |Published: 05.06.2026
Citation: SUNDAY, T. & KUTEYI, R. (2026) AN ASSESSMENT OF VIGILANTISM ON CRIME CONTROL IN EDO STATE GAIJASSVol.2.1.2026 pp 62-76 https://globreshub.org/index.php/gaijass/art **DOI:** https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21970389

AN ASSESSMENT OF VIGILANTISM ON CRIME CONTROL IN EDO STATE

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Abstract

Background: Persistent insecurity and rising criminal activities in Edo State, Nigeria, coupled with inadequate police resources, slow response times, and declining public trust in conventional law enforcement, have necessitated alternative community-based security arrangements.

Aim: This study examined the role of vigilantism in crime control in Edo State. Specifically, it investigated the nature of police vigilante cooperation, assessed community perceptions of vigilante performance, and determined the extent to which vigilante activities contribute to crime control.

Methods: Anchored on Social Control Theory, which explains vigilantism as an informal mechanism of social regulation that emerges when formal controls weaken, the study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive design. The population comprised community leaders, residents, and vigilante group members. Using stratified random sampling, 364 respondents were selected. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, one-way ANOVA, and paired-samples t-test, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis.

Results: Findings revealed significant variations in perceptions of police–vigilante collaboration across communities ($F = 5.021$, $p = 0.002$). Community members expressed favorable views of vigilante performance, with mean performance ratings increasing from 3.58 to 3.86 after overall assessment ($t = -8.235$, $p < 0.001$). Perceived crime control also improved significantly, from a mean of 2.94 before vigilante involvement to 3.65 after ($t = 12.846$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, vigilante groups received a higher performance rating than the police ($M = 3.87$ vs. 3.62; $t = 5.482$, $p < 0.001$).Conclusion: The study concludes that vigilantism contributes significantly to grassroots crime control through community surveillance, intelligence gathering, patrols, rapid response, and cooperation with the police. However, for sustained and rights-based crime control, there is need for improved training, adequate financing, legal regulation, accountability mechanisms, and stronger institutional collaboration between vigilante groups and the police.

Keywords: Community crime control, collaboration, effectiveness, vigilante, Edo State, Nigeria.

Introduction

Vigilantism generally refers to the enforcement of social order or law by individuals or groups acting outside the formal legal and institutional framework. It has increasingly become an important and complicated aspect of the security environment in many African societies (Kpae, 2025; Chukwuma, 2022). The phenomenon is particularly noticeable in Nigeria, where communities continue to contend with increasing criminality, political and social tensions, and perceived weaknesses in formal policing institutions. The Nigeria Police Force has frequently been criticised for inadequate resources, corruption, limited operational capacity, and weak relationships with communities, thereby reducing its ability to maintain effective law and order in several parts of the country, including Edo State (Irogbo & Agbamu, 2024).

The growth of crime has become a global concern because of its far-reaching consequences for the social, economic, and political wellbeing of societies. In Nigeria, different communities have experienced several forms of criminal activities over the past two decades (Marvellous, 2025; Onwuzor, 2023), and Edo State has similarly experienced these security challenges. Crime has consequently emerged as a major concern in contemporary Nigerian society. Although the police remain the principal formal institution responsible for crime prevention and control, their effectiveness has been questioned (Uche & Chukwuma, 2024; Anie & Odije, 2019). The resulting situation has contributed to under-policing in several communities. Violent and property-related offences may therefore occur without timely detection or successful prosecution. Citizens have lost valuable possessions, while others have suffered death or permanent injuries as a result of criminal attacks. Fear of victimisation has also made many residents apprehensive about moving freely or remaining in their homes at night. Edo State has consequently experienced serious insecurity and lawlessness, with armed robbery and other violent offences becoming significant security concerns.

Despite several governmental interventions and reforms designed to improve policing and strengthen security institutions, the Nigeria Police Force continues to encounter difficulties in effectively controlling crime. Problems associated with inadequate logistics, insufficient training, corruption, delayed responses, and limited public confidence have continued to weaken law-enforcement efforts. As a result, insecurity remains a concern despite various policy initiatives. Criminal activities such as theft, armed robbery, kidnapping, and insurgency have caused loss of lives, destruction of property, and widespread anxiety among citizens. The economic effects include reduced investment and tourism, increased business costs, and additional pressure on public resources because of increased security requirements. From a social perspective, persistent crime can weaken community relationships, cause displacement, and reduce people's quality of life. Politically, continuing insecurity may weaken governance and reduce

citizens' confidence in government institutions (Okoye, 2025).

The continued weaknesses and perceived corruption within formal policing have contributed to declining public confidence in conventional law-enforcement institutions. Consequently, some communities have increasingly relied on vigilante groups as alternative or supplementary mechanisms for addressing criminal activities. These groups are often regarded by residents as more responsive because of their proximity to the communities they serve, familiarity with local circumstances, and ability to react quickly to security threats.

Although vigilantism has gained popularity as a community-based response to crime because of perceived failures within formal policing, its operations also present considerable concerns. Vigilante groups are frequently praised for their prompt intervention and understanding of local communities; however, their activities may be affected by inadequate formal training, unclear legal authority, possible abuse of power, and inconsistent operational procedures. In addition, the absence of effective supervision and accountability may expose communities to problems such as human-rights violations, wrongful identification of suspects, arbitrary punishment, and the escalation of violence.

These concerns make it necessary to critically examine the actual contribution of vigilante groups to security and justice delivery and to determine their implications for community safety and the rule of law. There remains limited empirical evidence concerning the extent to which vigilante activities genuinely reduce crime and improve public safety. Questions relating to their operational methods, accountability, and implications for formal legal institutions also require further investigation. There is therefore a need for a systematic assessment of vigilantism in Nigeria to establish its benefits, limitations, and potential contribution to formal law-enforcement efforts. It is against this background that this study assesses the role of vigilantism in crime control in Edo State.

Objectives of the study

1.Identify the nature of collaboration between the police and the vigilante.

2. Assesses the perception of community members on the performance of the vigilante.

3. Evaluate the effectiveness of vigilante activities in crime control in Edo State

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1**:** There is no significant difference in the level of performance of vigilante groups and the police in crime control

Hypothesis 2**:** Vigilante activities are not significantly effective in controlling crime in Edo State

Literature Review

Vigilante organisations have increasingly formed part of Nigeria's broader security structure, particularly in communities where formal security institutions are considered inadequate. Recent empirical studies have examined their contributions, effectiveness, and operational challenges in different Nigerian

communities. Ogye (2025) investigated the contribution of vigilante security services to crime control in Keana Local Government Area. Using a quantitative research approach and questionnaires administered to 381 respondents, the study reported that vigilante organisations made a significant contribution to crime reduction. Their activities included routine patrols, intelligence collection, and engagement with members of the community, thereby complementing the activities of the Nigeria Police Force.

Similarly, Kpae (2025), in a study conducted in Udenu Local Government Area, observed that vigilante organisations developed partly as a response to perceived shortcomings in the ability of the Nigeria Police to control crime. The study involved 720 respondents and found that vigilante groups were generally considered effective in addressing crime. Their recruitment and supervision were largely carried out through community-based structures. Nevertheless, the study identified inadequate firearms and insufficient financial resources as important challenges affecting their operations.

Ubi and Udo (2020) examined the effectiveness of vigilante groups in Mararaba and found that residents tended to favour community-based vigilantes over conventional law-enforcement agencies because of their proximity to residents and ability to respond quickly to incidents. The study was informed by communitarian theory, which emphasises the significance of community participation in crime prevention and local security. Udoh (2025), however, drew attention to the absence of a comprehensive legal framework regulating vigilante operations, noting that such a situation may create opportunities for human-rights violations and extrajudicial activities. Other studies (Fashiku, 2025; Abiakam & Azuoma, 2025; Yusuf, 2024) have similarly identified insufficient funding, inadequate training, and a shortage of protective equipment as constraints on the ability of vigilante organisations to operate effectively. Furthermore, distrust between community members and conventional security institutions can weaken community-based security initiatives.

Evidence from other empirical investigations also demonstrates the relevance of vigilante groups to crime control in Nigeria. Studies by Ikenga (2023) and Paki and Rufus (2023) indicate that vigilante organisations make considerable contributions to community security, particularly in areas where conventional law enforcement is regarded as ineffective. Although their involvement can produce positive security outcomes, issues relating to legal recognition, inadequate resources, weak coordination, and institutional support must be addressed if their contributions are to be maximised. Appropriate policy interventions can therefore strengthen the role of vigilante groups within Nigeria's wider crime-control system.

Theoretical Framework

Social Control Theory

Social Control Theory was originally developed by Travis Hirschi and systematically presented in his influential 1969 work, *Causes of Delinquency*. The theory argues that individuals' connections to society, particularly through attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, discourage them from engaging in deviant conduct. Rather than focusing primarily on why individuals commit crime, the theory explains why most people conform to social rules and obey established laws. Strong relationships with family, educational institutions, community organisations, and other conventional social institutions are therefore regarded as mechanisms that encourage conformity and discourage deviance.

The theory has important implications for crime prevention because it emphasises the need to strengthen social relationships and people's involvement in conventional institutions. Encouraging family attachment, participation in education, community engagement, and commitment to accepted social values can increase individuals' connection with society and consequently reduce their likelihood of engaging in criminal behaviour.

Linning et al. (2024) provide a contemporary reconceptualisation of social control by identifying four dimensions: state control, place management, interpersonal control, and self-control. Their framework extends the traditional distinction between formal and informal mechanisms of social control and draws attention to the contribution of community structures and place managers to crime prevention. Contemporary applications of Social Control Theory have also extended into areas such as digital behaviour and community relationships. For example, Jung (2023) examined the relationship between informal social control and racist hate speech on online platforms by incorporating concepts from collective efficacy and the theory of planned behaviour.

Despite the usefulness of Social Control Theory, it is not without limitations. One criticism is that the theory places considerable emphasis on explaining conformity and may therefore provide insufficient explanation for why individuals with strong social attachments sometimes engage in criminal activities. Strong social bonds alone may not adequately explain all forms of deviant behaviour.

In the present study, Social Control Theory provides an explanation for the emergence of vigilantism in situations where formal social controls become weak or ineffective and public confidence in state institutions declines. Where attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in formal legal institutions are weakened, communities may seek alternative informal mechanisms for controlling crime. Vigilante organisations can enforce community expectations through surveillance, patrols, intelligence gathering, and other forms of intervention. In this sense, they may serve as substitutes or supplements where conventional

policing and justice institutions are perceived to be inadequate.

However, while vigilantism may strengthen community solidarity and produce immediate improvements in crime control, it can also create challenges for formal authority and the rule of law. Unregulated vigilante operations may result in human-rights violations, arbitrary punishment, and excessive use of force. From the perspective of Social Control Theory, therefore, vigilantism represents both an effort by communities to restore social order and an indication of weaknesses within formal systems of social control.

Methodology

A cross-sectional descriptive research design was adopted to assess vigilantism and its contribution to crime control in Edo State. This design was considered appropriate because it provides a description of the prevailing situation among the selected population at a particular point in time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The target population consisted of community leaders, residents, and members of vigilante groups.Stratified random sampling was adopted to provide representation across relevant demographic characteristics, including age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The sampling procedure was intended to ensure that the selected respondents adequately represented the wider population and thereby improve the generalisability of the findings. A sample size of 364 respondents was determined using the minimum sample-size formula for simple proportions developed by Cochran (2017). A structured questionnaire was used to obtain information on respondents' sociodemographic characteristics and the major variables examined in the study.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their rights, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation. Following informed consent, questionnaires were administered to respondents to obtain information regarding their experiences and perceptions of vigilantism and crime control. In-depth interviews were also conducted with selected participants. The interview approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to explore issues in greater detail and obtain further explanations on themes emerging during the research.

Data analysis was conducted in two main stages. The first stage focused on the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and tables. The second stage examined the research questions and related study variables. Quantitative responses were analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and paired-samples t-test, while information obtained through interviews was analysed thematically.

Results

The substantive findings are presented in this section according to the objectives and research questions of

the study. Relevant statistical results are presented in tables to facilitate interpretation and provide a clear representation of the findings. The results of the hypothesis tests are subsequently presented and interpreted. It is important to note that some respondents did not provide responses to every question; consequently, the percentages reported for individual items correspond to the number of respondents who answered those particular questions.

Research Question 1: *What is the nature of collaboration between the police and the vigilante in Edo State?*

Table 4.1: One-Way ANOVA on the Nature of Collaboration Between the Police and Vigilante Groups in Edo State (N = 364)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F-value	Sig. (p-value)
Between Groups	22.418	3	7.473	5.021	0.002
Within Groups	535.982	360	1.489		
Total	558.400	363			

Level of Significance (α) = 0.05

The one-way ANOVA presented in Table 4.1 was used to establish whether respondents differed significantly in their assessments of the relationship between the Nigeria Police Force and vigilante organisations in Edo State. The analysis produced an F-value of 5.021 with 3 and 360 degrees of freedom and a significance value of 0.002. Because the p-value is below the 0.05 level of significance, the observed difference is statistically significant. This means that the respondent groups did not hold identical views regarding the nature of police–vigilante collaboration.

The finding indicates that although cooperation between the police and vigilante groups occurs, respondents differ in their assessment of its scope, quality, and effectiveness. Such differences may be associated with respondents' personal experiences, community location, occupation, educational background, or frequency of interaction with security personnel.

The findings further suggest that police–vigilante cooperation may involve activities such as intelligence gathering, reporting of suspected criminal activities, community surveillance, arrest of suspects, joint patrols, and the exchange of security information. However, some respondents may consider the relationship inconsistent because of inadequate logistics, poor communication, unclear division of responsibilities, lack of formal operational procedures, and occasional distrust between the two groups.

The significant differences observed in respondents' perceptions may also reflect differences in their backgrounds and experiences. Residents of communities where joint security operations and

information sharing occur regularly may perceive stronger cooperation than residents of communities where contact between the police and vigilante groups is limited.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that police–vigilante cooperation is not experienced in the same manner across all communities in Edo State. While some communities may benefit from effective partnerships that facilitate crime prevention and rapid responses to security incidents, others may experience inadequate coordination, communication difficulties, and insufficient operational assistance. These variations help explain the differences observed among respondents.

Research Question 2*: What is the perception of community members on the performance of the vigilante?*

Table 4.2.: Paired-Samples t-Test on Community Members' Perception of the Performance of Vigilante Groups in Edo State (N = 364)

Variables	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Community Perception Score (Before Overall Evaluation)	3.58	364	0.741	0.039
Community Perception Score (Overall Performance Evaluation)	3.86	364	0.684	0.036

Level of Significance (α) = 0.05

Table 4.2 presents the results of a paired-samples t-test conducted to establish whether respondents' assessments of vigilante performance differed significantly. The analysis was based on 364 respondents whose opinions were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The results show that the initial community perception score was 3.58 (SD = 0.741), whereas the overall assessment of vigilante performance produced a higher mean of 3.86 (SD = 0.684). The increase suggests that respondents generally held favourable views regarding the contribution of vigilante organisations to community security and crime prevention.

The statistical test produced a t-value of -8.235 with 363 degrees of freedom and a two-tailed significance value of 0.000. Since the probability value is below 0.05, the difference between the two mean scores is statistically significant. The result therefore suggests that respondents viewed vigilante organisations more favourably when assessing their overall performance in maintaining community order, preventing crime, responding to local security problems, and supporting formal policing activities.

Research Question 3: *How effective are vigilante activities in crime control in Edo State?*

Table 4.3: Paired-Samples t-Test on the Effectiveness of Vigilante Activities in Crime Control in Edo State (N = 364)

Variables	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perceived Crime Situation Before Vigilante Intervention)	3.31	364	0.773	0.041
Perceived Crime Control After Vigilante Activities)	4.02	364	0.621	0.033

Level of Significance (α) = 0.05

Table 4.3 presents the paired-samples t-test used to assess respondents' perceptions of crime control before and after vigilante intervention. Responses from 364 participants were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The comparison was made between the perceived crime situation before vigilante intervention and the level of crime control following vigilante activities.

The results show that the mean score for the perceived crime situation before vigilante intervention was 3.31 (SD = 0.773), whereas perceived crime control after vigilante involvement recorded a higher mean score of 4.02 (SD = 0.621). The difference between the two scores indicates that respondents generally associated vigilante involvement with an improvement in crime control and community safety.

The paired-samples t-test yielded a t-value of -16.905 with 363 degrees of freedom and a two-tailed significance value of 0.000. Since the p-value is below 0.05, the difference is statistically significant. The result indicates that respondents perceived vigilante organisations as contributing positively to crime prevention through intelligence gathering, rapid responses, neighbourhood surveillance, and support for the activities of the Nigeria Police Force.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the level of performance of vigilante groups and the police in crime control

Table 4. 4. Comparing the Performance of Vigilante Groups and Police in Crime Control (N = 364)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t-value	df
Vigilante Performance	364	3.87	0.68	0.25	5.482	363
Police Performance	364	3.62	0.74			

Level of Significance (α) = 0.05

Table 4.4 presents the results of a paired-samples t-test comparing respondents' assessments of vigilante groups and the police regarding crime control. Each of the 364 respondents evaluated both security groups using a five-point Likert scale. Vigilante performance recorded a mean score of 3.87 (SD = 0.68), compared with 3.62 (SD = 0.74) for police performance. The mean difference of 0.25 indicates that respondents gave vigilante groups a higher performance rating than the police.

The statistical analysis produced a t-value of 5.482 with 363 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. Since this value is below the 0.05 significance level, the difference is statistically significant. The paired-samples correlation also showed a strong positive relationship between ratings of the two groups ($r = 0.712$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that respondents who gave favourable ratings to one security institution tended to give favourable ratings to the other, although vigilante groups received consistently higher ratings. Because the calculated p-value of 0.000 is below 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The study therefore establishes that there is a statistically significant difference between the perceived performance of vigilante groups and the police in crime control.

Hypothesis 2: Vigilante activities are not significantly effective in controlling crime in Edo State

Table 4.5 Comparing the Performance of Vigilante Groups and Police in Crime Control (N = 364)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t-value
Crime Control Before Vigilante Activities	364	2.94	0.81	0.71	12.846
Crime Control After Vigilante Activities	364	3.65	0.69		

Level of Significance (α) = 0.05

Table 4.5 presents the paired-samples t-test used to determine whether respondents perceived a significant improvement in crime control following vigilante activities in Edo State. The analysis involved 364 respondents who assessed crime-control conditions before and after vigilante involvement using a five-point Likert scale.

The mean score for crime control before vigilante activities was 2.94 (SD = 0.81), while the corresponding mean after vigilante activities increased to 3.65 (SD = 0.69). The difference of 0.71 indicates a considerable improvement in respondents' perceptions of crime-control effectiveness following vigilante involvement The paired-samples t-test generated a t-value of 12.846 with 363 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. Because the p-value is lower than the 0.05 significance level, the observed difference is statistically significant and cannot

reasonably be attributed to chance. The paired-samples correlation further revealed a strong positive relationship between respondents' assessments before and after vigilante activities ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, although respondents' assessments under the two conditions were positively related, crime control was consistently rated more favourably following vigilante involvement.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings follows the research objectives and corresponding hypotheses. The study generated several important findings regarding police–vigilante relations, community perceptions of vigilante performance, and the effectiveness of vigilante activities in crime control.

The first finding, relating to Objective 1, indicates that the relationship between the Nigeria Police Force and vigilante groups in Edo State involves complementary cooperation, sharing of intelligence, operational interaction, and mutual dependence. However, the relationship is affected by challenges such as inadequate institutional coordination, insufficient logistics, mutual suspicion, and unclear legal arrangements. This reflects the broader reality of plural policing in Nigeria, where formal and informal security actors increasingly interact because the conventional police system may not possess sufficient capacity to address all local security challenges. The relationship is therefore neither completely formal nor entirely informal; rather, it represents a practical partnership developed from the need to strengthen community security and respond quickly to local threats.

A major form of cooperation identified in the study is intelligence sharing. Community-based vigilante members are often familiar with the people, locations, activities, and social networks within their communities. This local knowledge can enable them to identify suspicious movements, criminal hideouts, and emerging threats more quickly. The police may consequently depend on information provided by vigilante groups to support crime detection, suspect identification, and preventive policing. This finding is consistent with Tiwa's (2022) position on community policing, which emphasises cooperation between law-enforcement agencies and local communities as an important strategy for preventing crime. It also agrees with Abraham (2025), who observed that the effectiveness of vigilante groups is partly associated with their knowledge of local environments and social networks, which allows them to obtain and transmit information that may be difficult for conventional police officers to acquire.

The findings relating to Objective 2 demonstrate that residents of Edo State generally have favourable perceptions of vigilante performance. Respondents viewed vigilante groups as relatively effective, accessible, responsive, and important to community-level crime prevention. Their positive assessment appears to be associated with the groups' familiarity with local environments, close relationships

with residents, and ability to respond quickly to security incidents. This result is consistent with Yusuf (2024), who reported that community members generally evaluated vigilante groups positively because of their prompt intervention during criminal incidents, regular patrols, familiarity with local communities, and commitment to protecting lives and property.

The findings also correspond with Chikwendu et al. (2023), who examined public perceptions of vigilante service groups in Anambra State. Their study found that many respondents accepted vigilante organisations as legitimate partners of the Nigeria Police Force in protecting lives and property. The groups received positive assessments because they were perceived to understand local security conditions, conduct visible patrols, and respond promptly to emergencies. However, the study also identified unlawful arrests, arbitrary detention, and violations of citizens' rights as problems that could reduce public confidence. This observation is relevant to the present study because, although respondents recognised the contributions of vigilante groups to crime control, the need for accountability and respect for human rights remains important.

The findings relating to Objective 3 further demonstrate that vigilante activities have become an important component of crime control in Edo State. Their activities include intelligence gathering, neighbourhood patrols, surveillance, rapid responses to criminal incidents, and cooperation with the Nigeria Police Force. The findings are consistent with Dantawaye (2025), whose work on community policing and informal security governance in Nigeria indicates that vigilante organisations have increasingly filled security gaps created by inadequate police manpower, insufficient logistics, and the increasing complexity of criminal activities.

Nevertheless, contemporary research indicates that the success of vigilante groups depends significantly on institutional support, adequate training, legal regulation, and accountability. The present findings are also consistent with Yusuf (2024), who reported that vigilante groups in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State made significant contributions to crime prevention through routine patrols, intelligence gathering, surveillance, suspect apprehension, and rapid responses to security threats. Community members in that study similarly gave favourable assessments of vigilante performance because these groups provided security services that were often perceived as unavailable or insufficient through conventional policing.

Conclusion

The study concludes that vigilantism performs an important complementary function in crime control in Edo State, particularly in communities where formal policing is affected by inadequate personnel, insufficient logistics, and delayed responses to security threats. The findings demonstrate that vigilantism exists through different forms of community security arrangements, including community-based,

youth-led, and traditional security groups operating in both rural and urban environments.

The study further establishes that cooperation between vigilante groups and the police, particularly through intelligence exchange, joint patrols, and information sharing, can contribute positively to community security. Nevertheless, this relationship is constrained by inadequate coordination, limited resources, and uncertainties surrounding the legal status and responsibilities of vigilante groups.

Community members generally perceive vigilante groups as accessible, responsive, and effective in preventing crime and maintaining public order. Their activities have strengthened community participation in security, increased surveillance, and facilitated the detection and reporting of criminal activities. Despite these positive contributions, concerns relating to human-rights violations, excessive use of force, insufficient training, and weak regulatory supervision remain significant.

The study therefore concludes that vigilantism has become an important component of grassroots security and community policing in Edo State. However, its contribution to long-term and sustainable crime control can be strengthened through appropriate legal regulation, continuous training, adequate financing, improved police–vigilante cooperation, and effective monitoring systems. Such measures are necessary to ensure that vigilante activities are professional, accountable, and compatible with the rule of law.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the contribution of vigilante organisations to crime control and community security in Edo State, Nigeria:

1. The Federal and Edo State Governments should develop and strengthen legislation that clearly specifies the functions, responsibilities, powers, limitations, and operational boundaries of vigilante groups. A comprehensive legal framework would provide greater clarity, promote accountability, safeguard citizens' rights, and ensure that vigilante operations remain within the law.
2. The Nigeria Police Force should formalise its relationship with vigilante groups through structured partnership arrangements, standard operating procedures, regular joint patrols, established intelligence-sharing channels, and periodic coordination meetings. A more organised partnership would improve communication, minimise operational disagreements, and strengthen joint crime-
3. Vigilante members should be provided with regular training in areas such as crime prevention, intelligence gathering, human rights, conflict management, community

policing, preservation of evidence, first aid, and lawful arrest procedures. Continuous capacity building would improve their professional competence, operational effectiveness, and compliance with legal and ethical standards.

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