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# Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Community Security: A Case Study of the Vigilante Groups in Jos South, Jos, Plateau State

# Lucy Ernest Bolarinwa

Centre for Research and Strategic Studies, National Defence College, Nigeria, Postal Code; 900103

Email: lucybolarinwa70@gmail.com

#### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of emotional intelligence on community security using a case study of the vigilante group in Jos South, Jos, Plateau State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study while the data collection through questionnaire targeted 120 vigilante group members from the twelve areas in Jos South Local Government. This was designed to assess their emotional intelligence as it relates to securing the life of the members of the community they protect. The result showed that emotional intelligence has a substantial impact on interpersonal communication, strategic alignment, and communication efficacy within vigilante groups, they all influence community security. Findings also revealed that conflict resolution and peacebuilding capacity may be hampered, due to low or lack of emotional intelligence in moderating connections with psychopathic traits. The results highlight how crucial emotional intelligence is to the effectiveness of vigilante activities and offer strategies for developing emotional competency to increase community safety. Based on the above, it is recommended that government through the ministry of defence should organise regular trainings, workshops and seminars to enhance the emotional competency of vigilante members within the communities. To achieve this, programmes should embrace emotional awareness, affective emotion, regulation skills, empathy and interpersonal skills.

Keywords: Community security, emotional intelligence, vigilante group, psychopathic traits and conflict resolution.

# 1. Introduction

A peaceful and enabling environment can only be guaranteed through security. It is a significant component of life. Therefore, citizens can carry out their activities without fear of injury or molestation only under a safe environment. Thus, the characteristic or state of being safe, free from danger, fear, or anxiety is security, according to Omario (2003). The defence of the nation's territory and its citizenry is always viewed as the function of the nation. Where this is adequately sustained, it fosters peace and security.

There is acceptability of the impact of security in the aspect of progress, development of the people and the environment. Okunola (2011) reported that, progress is impossible in any nation or community where there is insecurity. For many decades, crime cases in many countries and in Nigeria specifically, have been seen to be increasingly high resulting to loss of confidence in the police and other security agencies by the populace. In the past, the police had been in charge of preventing and controlling crimes, but their ability to uphold law and order has been weakened by the steadily rising number of violent crimes (Bello, Agunyai, & Amusan, 2022). The eruption of such challenges seemed to have rendered inchoate the popular notion that the state held the responsibility to protect lives and properties of the citizenry from both internal and external aggressors. This is because, the state has not been living up to required expectation as the main stake holder in maintaining law and order. The high rates of kidnapping, killings and violent crises with the perpetrators and perpetuators getting away with it point to the fact that crime control is beyond the security agencies including the military. These failures on the part of the security agencies have provoked a strong quest for survival imperatives among the community members.

Generally, there is a widely accepted notion that security of life and property is a fundamental requirement for achieving growth and progress in any human community. In support, Adejoh (2013) maintained that the absence of security severely jeopardises both individual and societal dignity and quality of life, it inhibits human potential for growth and development. Working towards ending or minimising insecurity, many communities have turned to community-based or Informal Policing Systems (IPS) to improve their safety. This is engendered by constant crimes that occur across the country and the desire to ensure that people live good lives without fears in Nigeria. Among these self-help techniques are citizen patrols, vigilante organizations, and neighbourhood watch programs. Looking at the dynamism and the crime rate in Nigeria, some scholars have advocated for a deepening attention on the security of the communities in the country.

Ensuring the security of communities in Nigeria is a crucial concern given the diverse security issues such as insurgency, rural banditry, conflicts between farmers and herders, kidnapping, and robbery the country faces (Joab-Peterside, 2020). Thus, the constant success by the perpetrators and the ease in committing these crimes without interruption or apprehension have built up a severe state of insecurity that draws a huge concern.

The National Security Strategy of Nigeria underscores the significance of leveraging border communities to advance and safeguard national interests and objectives, emphasising the necessity of incorporating them into the overall security framework of the country (Wapmuk, Akinkuotu, & Ibonye, 2014). Pressured by the perpetuity of crimes and incessant violent killings, some states in the country have endorsed the adoption of members of community policing or the vigilante into the security framework to fight crime. In a move to push back rampaging kidnappers and bandits operating freely across the country, 15 state governors have assembled no fewer than 52,106-man Vigilante Squads to battle the hoodlums (The Punch, 2024). Despite the challenges, the IPS has been widely adopted and accepted by many communities in the country. Thus, the IPS members being overwhelmed by many challenges in a decaying society like ours have adopted some strategies to excel in their mission. Using some naturally endowed potentials to build resilience has been the significant aspect of this brave people. Developing good auditory processing, high visual acuity at night, deep collaborating spirit, enduring ability and emotional intelligence have been the strategies that have aided in their achievements of goals. In this study, the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on community security is explored. EI, encompassing self-regulation and the ability to comprehend and handle one's own emotions as well as those of others plays a pivotal role in various dimensions of community security. Research indicates a significant connection between EI and Aggression, with implications for criminal behaviour (Sharma et al., 2015; Megreya, 2014).

On the contrast, EI is observed to impact positively on healthy communal life. Heightened Emotional Intelligence correlates with improved adaptation to community living, suggesting that individuals with greater Emotional Intelligence may foster a more secure and harmonious community environment (Mutuku et al., 2021). EI has been found to be one of the mediating factors in rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders into the community after detention. However, not much has been done to investigate if it plays a role in prevention of further involvement in similar crime or other criminal activities.

Emotional International has been identified as a mediator in the association between psychopathic traits and the duration of detention for property offenders, suggesting potential implications for the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals into the community post-criminal activities (Lanciano et al., 2022)

Recent studies maintained that EI builds interpersonal relationship through effective communication strategies and by extension builds a healthy community. Additionally, Emotional Intelligence has been shown to influence communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication and all critical factors for sustaining a secure and cohesive community (Jorfi, 2011; Jorfi et al., 2014; Umalihayati, Hardhienata, & Wulandari, 2022). Similarly, a few studies have maintained that EI is relevant in perception of safety in a teamwork and community security. It has been found to impact members' perceptions of psychological safety within the structure of a team, a crucial aspect of community security as it contributes to the overall well-being and safety of its residents

Vigilante groups are prevalent in Nigerian societies, and their commitment to duty stems from being primarily residents and indigenes of the areas they operate. Their dedication is driven by a desire to safeguard their lives, properties and the well-being of their families and friends. These groups are accountable to the communities they serve and have demonstrated effectiveness in combating crime, often surpassing the capabilities of state law enforcement agencies. For instance, in the Northwest, hunters in Adamawa state played a crucial role in blocking Boko Haram's advance in 2013, reclaiming cities like Gombi and Mubi from the militants (International Crisis Group, 2022).

In the Southeast vigilante groups have demonstrated similar strategies and strength. Many have recognised the significance of the efforts of these groups. In the Southwest, the Amotekun, a two-year-old initiative, received praise for reducing crime, especially kidnapping, in collaboration with the police (Jack-Rabin et al., 2023). However, concerns in some areas showed that vigilantes do take laws into their own hands, engaging in extortion, lies, human rights abuses, and even participating in criminal activities. Despite these challenges, Owumi and Ajayi (2013) asserted that neighbourhood watch organizations and vigilante groups operate optimally and are consulted on security matters. In recognition of their increasing efforts, there is a pressing need to implement a comprehensive strategy that leverages local resources collaboratively with security agencies to combat crimes in communities. Based on the aforementioned, the study sought to investigate the effects of emotional intelligence on community security: A case study of the vigilante group in Jos South, Jos, Plateau State.

# 2. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the effects of emotional intelligence on community security: A Case Study of the Vigilante Group in Jos South, Jos, Plateau State. To achieve this, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- Find out the effectiveness of emotional intelligence of the members within the vigilante group in maintaining the security of the community.
- Examine the role emotional intelligence plays in mitigating between characteristics and incarceration of vigilante group members that commit
  crimes against property.
- Investigate the extent to which emotional intelligence communication and interpersonal communication within the vigilante group impact on the security and well-being of the people.

### 3. Research questions.

The following research questions guided the study:

- What extent does emotional intelligence influence communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication within vigilante groups, and its overall impact on the security and well-being of the community?
- What is the role of emotional intelligence in mitigating characteristics and incarceration of members of the vigilante groups that commit crimes in Jos South, Plateau State?
- How does the psychopathic characteristics traits of vigilante group members relate to their imprisonment as property offenders, and the role
  emotional intelligence plays in mitigating this relationship?

# 4. Literature review

Abdulkadir et al (2023) conducted a study to evaluate the impact of vigilante patrolling and community engagement on crime prevention in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria. The study explained that, even with the police and vigilantes stationed in several districts and settlements in the Dekina Local Government Area, there are still issues with lawlessness, intimidation, kidnapping, and assassinations during the day, armed robbery, and burglary as the day extends into night. The study's objectives were to determine the rate of crime, investigate the vigilante group's methods of preventing and controlling crime, assess the success of their roles, pinpoint the obstacles to their operational effectiveness, and suggest ways to improve their performance in these areas. On the adoption of Social Contract Theory and Structural Strain Theory as the study's theoretical foundations, from a total population of 1304, 297, respondents were chosen using a systematic simple sampling procedure as part of a survey research design. To validate the research tool, a pre-test of the questionnaire was administered. Chi-square analysis and multiple linear regression were used to evaluate two hypotheses.

The results showed a strong correlation between the incidence of crime in the Dekina Local Government Area and effective vigilantism. The tactics used by vigilantism in Dekina LGA were characterized by the study as beat patrol, stop, detention and search, undercover work, personality escorts, and static guards. Additionally, it was discovered that the vigilantes' ability to operate efficiently was hampered by several problems, including godfatherism, poor training, limited resources, and inadequate operational equipment. The study's recommendations include more financing, appropriate training, and better welfare for vigilante group members to avoid circumstances that could erode the public trust in the Nigeria Police Force. It also recommends giving appropriate training on how to handle advanced weapons and awarding outstanding vigilante members with prizes to increase their efforts to crime prevention and control in Dekina Local Government Area. While this work was similar to the current study in the aspect of investigating crime rates and activities of the Vigilante groups, it was not looking specifically at the emotional intelligence which this study centres on. The location of the study and the topical issue being emotional intelligence of vigilantes created a departure which the present study tries to fill the gap.

Chukwuma and Bulus (2019) study of vigilante groups within Nigeria reveal diverse structures and operational patterns influenced by factors such as intelligence control, emotional dynamics, and the specific societal context and objectives they serve. While numerous groups, categorised as militias, align with various interests across Nigeria's pluralistic societies and religions, the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN) encompasses factions solely dedicated to addressing crime and chaotic situation within Nigerian communities, devoid of political, economic, or religious affiliations. This paper focuses on the VGN, delving into its establishment that unified disparate vigilante groups under a national umbrella, subsequently gaining federal support. The objective was to foster professional collaboration with government law enforcement agencies. By scrutinising the VGN as a unified entity, this paper aims to provide comprehensive understanding of vigilantism and how they maintain law and order in Nigeria. By shedding light on a distinctive dimension, the study unravels the challenges of these vigilante groups. However, akin to challenges faced by other law enforcement agencies in Nigeria, the VGN contends with persistent issues related to logistics and insufficient funding. These hurdles do not only impede operational efficiency but also hinder capacity building and the development of manpower, particularly among a substantial number of members who still lack adequate literacy. However, the concept of the above study is similar in a way, looking at the activities of the Vigilante groups but was not focusing on Vigilante Groups in Jos South where the case study of the current work is.

Adejoh, (2013) explored in his research the integration of Informal Security Structures (ISS) into the daily security fabric of various communities in Nigeria, a phenomenon attributed to the perceived inadequacies of the formal police in addressing the country's security challenges. Some state governments have embraced ISS as part of their anti-crime initiatives. Within Lagos State, three distinct categories of ISS have been identified: state-organised, community-organised, and individually employed by house owners/occupants. This study investigates the perspectives of residents in four local government areas of Lagos metropolitan regarding the effectiveness of ISS groups in controlling community crimes. A cross-sectional survey involving 1,107 community members aged 18 years and above was conducted to gather quantitative data, while qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with ISS members, police personnel, and community leaders. Content analysis was applied to the qualitative data, and simple percentages were utilised for quantitative data analysis. The findings highlight the significant role played by informal security groups in curbing neighbourhood crime, despite occasional reported excesses. The study recommends the formal registration of all ISS entities, ensuring their lawful operation to fully harness their crime control capabilities for the benefit of the state. The current study would assist to further expand the author's quest as the aim of his paper is to determine the significant role of informal security groups, which vigilante is one of them in ending or minimising crimes. The current study targets EI of vigilante groups who contribute significantly to the control of crime rates.

Fakokunde, Esere and Idowu (2008) examined the escalating incidents of violence, terrorism, and insurgency in Nigeria from the perspective of emotional intelligence, recent research underscores the pressing concern within the security community for a sophisticated approach to establish a safer environment. Despite considerable strategic and diplomatic measures implemented by the current government to address these challenges, the issue persists, leading to the perception that the nation is entrenched in a theatre of war and insecurity. National security, vital for ensuring the state survival, relies on economic power, diplomacy, power projection, and political influence. However, an effective military or armed forces constitute a paramount necessity for

safeguarding national security. The military and various security entities must maintain a constant state of combat readiness. Consequently, this paper advocates for enhancing national security by fostering EI and combat self-efficacy among military and other security personnel in Nigeria. The goal of this study, therefore, is to in-still these competency skills into those constitutionally tasked with maintaining security, ultimately improving their performance and contributing to the realisation of the much-needed national security in Nigeria.

# 4. Methodology

The methodology design of the study is a descriptive survey design while the population targets consist of all the vigilante groups in all the areas (Angwa) in Jos south Local Government area. As at the time of this study, Jos South with vigilante groups comprised the following communities: Jos (capital of Plateau State), Bukuru, Rikkos, Tudun Wada, Angwan Rogo, Angwan Rukuba, Angwan Jukun, Angwan Rimi, Angwan Miango, Angwan Soya, Angwan-Rukuba and Anguldi. Also, simple random sampling technique was used to a group of the respondents comprising of ten members from a vigilante group in each of the angwa making it a total of 120 respondents. Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) consisting of 15 items with a reliability index of 0.85 was used for data collection in this research. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Regarding the decision rule, any questionnaire item with a mean of 2.50 or above was interpreted to show high level response for such item while a mean score below 2.50 indicated a low-level response for the items.

# 5. Interpretation and Discussion of Findings

#### 5.1 Research Question One:

To what extent does emotional intelligence influence communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication within vigilante groups, and how does this impact the overall security and well-being of the community?

Table 1: Respondents' view on Emotional Intelligence Influence on Communication Effectiveness, Strategic Alignment, and Interpersonal Communication within the Vigilante Groups

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD
11	My emotional intelligence contributes to effective communication within my group during security operations.	44	58	7	11	2.67	0.64
12	Emotional intelligence influences the strategic alignment of my group towards the common goal of community security.	40	55	15	10	2.22	0.65
13	High levels of emotional intelligence enhance my interpersonal communication skills, promoting positive relationships within the community.	44	58	7	12	2.77	0.65
14	Emotional intelligence impacts my ability to collaborate with other community stakeholders and law enforcement agencies for enhanced security.	11	7	59	43	2.83	0.64
15	Emotional intelligence within my group contributes to a perceived sense of psychological safety and wellbeing among community members.	11	7	43	59	2.18	0.67
		2.53					0.65

Table 1 shows the extent emotional intelligence influences communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication within the vigilante groups. Results show that at the sample size of 120 respondents who responded to the questionnaire, the average mean value is 2.53 and the standard deviation is 0.65. The average mean of 2.53 is greater than 2.50, implying that emotional intelligence influences communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication within the vigilante groups.

Higher emotional intelligence among the group may equip them to manage and understand their own emotion and that of others as this will lead to effectiveness and a coordinated success for the vigilante group in their efforts to provide security services to the community. This finding aligns with the conclusion drawn by Fakokunde, Esere, and Idowu (2008), who suggested that a team of individuals or security personnel possessing a high level of emotional intelligence is inclined to achieve significant success in addressing the security challenges they encounter.

#### 5.2 Research question Two:

How does the emotional intelligence of members within vigilante groups in Jos South, Plateau State, impact their effectiveness in maintaining community security?

Table 2: Respondents' View on the impact of Emotional Intelligence of Members within Vigilante Groups on Their Effectiveness in Maintaining Community Security

S/N	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD
1	I am proficient in identifying and controlling my own emotions during operations in my vigilante group	15	29	58	18	1.70	0.64
2	I respond well to my emotions and that of others during our activities in the group.	29	18	62	11	1.86	0.70
3	I show understanding and empathy for the mental health of others and the community people during our security task.	33	16	58	13	1.88	0.73
4	I control my emotions when making decisions and judgement while facing security challenges	15	26	44	37	1.57	0.72
5	I use emotional intelligence to manage volatile situations to secure the community and its environs.	9	7	41	63	1.24	0.66
		1.65					0.69

Table 2 shows the Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of impact of emotional intelligence of members within vigilante groups on their effectiveness in maintaining community security. Results show that at the sample size of 120 respondents, the average mean value is 1.65 and a standard deviation of 0.69. The average mean of 1.65 is lower than 2.50 implying the impact of emotional intelligence of members within vigilante groups on their effectiveness in maintaining community security is Low. This simply indicates that the inability of the vigilante to manage their emotions within themselves might have potentially hindered their capacity to navigate in conflict situations peacefully. Since emotional intelligence is linked to understanding and empathy, a lower mean score implies that lack of understanding and empathy might have affected the ability of the members of the group to relate with the community.

# 5.3 Research Question Three:

What role does emotional intelligence play in mediating the relationship between vigilante group members' psychopathic characteristics and their detention terms of property offenders?

Table 3: Respondents' Views on the Role of Emotional Intelligence in Mediating the Relationship between Vigilante Group Members' Psychopathic traits.

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD
6	With emotional intelligence, I can dictate when VGN member and other people's character trait is psychopathic.	7	8	30	75	1.14	0.63
7	Emotional intelligence helps mitigate psychopathic tendencies among individuals within our custody.	7	11	40	62	1.24	0.64
8	Emotional intelligence mediates the connection between psychopathic characteristics and the duration of detention terms for property offenders.	33	15	15	58	1.60	0.94

9	I engage in supportive and rehabilitative measures for individuals with psychopathic traits due to my emotional intelligence.	47	22	15	37	1.95	0.93
10	Emotional intelligence influences decision- making related to the detention and release of property offenders.	18	15	22	65	1.38	0.82
		1.46					0.79

Table 3 reveals the mean scores and standard deviations of the role that emotional intelligence plays in mediating the relationship between vigilante group members' psychopathic characteristics. Results show that at the sample size of 120 respondents who responded to the questionnaire, the average mean value is 1.46 and the standard deviation is 0.69. The average mean of 1.46 is less than 2.50, implying that on the side of mediation, the vigilante groups lack emotional intelligence in mediating relationships between the groups and the psychopathic characteristics of the people of Jos South. Since emotional intelligence is vital to interpreting and managing emotional indications, lack of emotional intelligence among the vigilante group members may increase the risk of misunderstanding the behaviours and intentions of community members with psychopathic characteristics, this could result in inadequate or inefficient reactions to problems that might escalate conflicts.

### 6. Conclusion

This study investigated the effects of emotional intelligence on community security, a case study of the vigilante group in Jos South, Jos, Plateau State. The findings of this study showed that emotional intelligence influences communication effectiveness, strategic alignment, and interpersonal communication within the vigilante groups, also the inability of the vigilante to manage their emotions within themselves might potentially hinder their capacity to navigate in conflict situations peacefully. On the mediation perspective, the vigilante groups lack emotional intelligence to mediate relationships between the groups and the psychopathic characteristics of the people of Jos South. Given these results, it is critical to acknowledge the role that emotional intelligence plays in the efficient operation of vigilante organisations. Improving members' self-efficacy and emotional stability can help with communication, strategic alignment, and community security. Future initiatives should focus on providing these groups with specialised training to enhance their ability to apply their emotional intelligence effectively in their tasks, as this could promote a more peaceful and successful approach to community security.

# 7. Recommendations

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

- The government through the ministry of defence should organise regular training, workshops and seminars to enhance the emotional
  competency of vigilante members. This program should focus on enhancing emotional awareness, affective emotion, regulation skills,
  empathy and interpersonal skills.
- Vigilante leaders should collaborate with community heads/leaders to organise dialogue platforms, town hall meeting, and community
  discussing programs to promote deeper understanding of the challenges within the community thereby ensuring collaboration among the
  vigilante group and the community members.
- The government should make effort to integrate psychosocial support services within vigilante groups. This could entail establishing
  partnerships with mental health professionals to deliver training sessions focused on identifying and addressing individuals facing mental
  health challenges, by adopting emotional intelligence strategies in managing such situations. Vigilante groups can actively contribute to deescalating conflicts, improving peacebuilding and promoting overall community safety.
- Emotional Intelligence should also be incorporated into the training modules of all the security agencies in the country and in their curriculum
  to enhance effective security training and peacebuilding strategies. This will heighten capacity building and increase the confidence of the
  citizenry in the security personnel in the country.

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