

Perceptivity: How Yoruba ‘elder’ farmers use their secret weapons against insecurity in Ondo state, Nigeria

Olutegbe, N. S., Iyiola, T. I., and Joseph, O. C.

Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Ibadan

Correspondence details: siji004u@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

In today’s global landscape, security consciousness is paramount, given the surge in criminal activities often leading to conflicts. Nigeria, notably, has witnessed a distressing rise in insecurity, leading to substantial loss of lives, property, and agricultural assets. This study explores the interplay of security consciousness and indigenous protective strategies in Ondo State’s agrarian communities, Nigeria. The study adopted a multistage sampling procedure, selecting 116 farmers within some selected agrarian communities of Ondo State, Nigeria. Data was collected using a well-structured interview schedule, while analysis used frequency counts, means, factor analysis and multiple regression. The prevalent forms of insecurity incidents which have triggered security consciousness included farmers-herders clashes (mean = 12.36), theft (mean = 9.24), abduction/kidnapping (mean = 7.64) and armed-robbery (mean = 4.01). There was an exceedingly high level of security consciousness among the majority. Vigilante patrol teams (56.9%), local security guards (50.9%), and community rules and regulations (40.5%) were the most utilized communal indigenous measures. Although personal traditional protective measures were less common, they are not completely out of use. Regression analysis indicates that household size and perceived need for improved security significantly influenced respondents’ use of indigenous protective measures. The findings underscore the need to improve the government-controlled security system to safeguard the farming environment and nurture the already challenged agri-food system in Ondo state, Nigeria.

Keywords: Security consciousness; Indigenous protective measures; Farmers-herders clashes; Agrarian communities; Insecurity incidences

INTRODUCTION

Security forms the cornerstone of any society, its establishment, and maintenance intertwined with the political, economic, and social systems of a nation. It stands as a fundamental necessity for the progress and well-being of both individuals and communities. Since gaining independence on October 1, 1960, Nigeria has grappled with a series of coup de tats, civil strife, and persistent ethno-religious conflicts (Eyeh, 2020; Omorogbe and Omohan, 2005). Presently, the nation faces heightened challenges with the Boko Haram insurgency and nomadic crises, surpassing previous years in complexity (Amao, 2020). While extensive attention has been drawn to the Boko Haram insurgency, the resurgence of violent herders, and other forms of insecurity spotlights the overarching struggle to uphold law and order nationwide (Amao, 2020; Maiangwa and Amao, 2015; Oginni, Opoku, and Alupo, 2020). Farmers-herders’ conflicts have drawn condemnation both within and outside the country due to their far-reaching impact on communities (Okoro, 2018; Ahmed-Gamgum, 2018). The North-Central zone, particularly, Benue State, often referred to as the “Food Basket of the Nation,” bears the brunt of the agro-pastoralist crisis, experiencing substantial loss of lives and livelihoods (Amadi and Anokwuru, 2017; Soomiyol and Fadairo, 2020; Peter Yikwab and Tade, 2022; Vanger and Nwosu, 2020). Existing literature underscores the plight of indigenous populations, grappling with

widespread forced displacement and severe humanitarian and human rights concerns, coupled with a food and nutrition crisis of monumental proportions. Presently, over 2.2 million individuals find themselves internally displaced across three states in the northeast, with about 80 percent in Borno state, and about 8.4 million people needing humanitarian programme (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2022).

Beyond the Boko-Haram and banditry, which are most prevalent in the Northern states of the country and farmers-herders clashes which has a wider spread across six geopolitical zones of the country, Ondo State has recently been confronted with more forms of insecurity. One of such is kidnapping/abduction, armed robbery, hired killings, and other local issues, which create sense of insecurity in local communities. One notable incident of banditry was the attempted kidnapping, gunfire, and tragic murder of Mrs. Funke Olakunrin, the second daughter of Afenifere leader, Ruben Fasoranti, between Kajola and Ore. Reported fatalities surged notably in the first half of 2015, particularly in connection with criminal activities such as bank robberies in Owo and Akoko North West LGAs, as well as piracy in Ilaje LGA, resulting in numerous casualties (The Fund for Peace, 2015; Akingbade, 2022; The Punch, 2019). The insecurity situation in the area between 2012 and 2015 was particularly alarming, especially in Akure, the state capital, with the identification of a hotspot called Ijoka

in Akure metropolis where bandits operated unchecked (The Punch, 2019). In response, regional governors in the south-western Nigeria, under the leadership of the Ondo state Governor, summoned a security summit attended by key stakeholders, prompting the inauguration of a security network known as “*Amotekun*” in conjunction with their counterparts (Izuora, 2020; Colman, 2020; Sowole and Kolawole, 2020). The Corps’ mandate is to rid the state of various criminal elements. This all-important agenda was pursued up to the point of all the state government within the zone passing a bill into law which established *Amotekun* as state-level security arms. Although, the federal government opposed this move, arguing that this conflicts with the already existing national security structure, this was not a hurdle sufficient enough to stop the agenda. *Amotekun* has since been empowered by different state governments and have helped to put the activities of major conflict actors in check, with Ondo state being the most successful state in this regard.

In order to compliment the efforts of the state government, the various communities and individuals seem to have become aware of increasing cases of insecurity incidences amidst growing concerns for an improved security system. This has a way of changing the social landscape and given the inadequate presence of security personnel which characterizes the Nigeria, rural people in the agrarian community may have resorted to self-helps either at community or individual levels. One prevalent choice is indigenous or traditional protective measure, which may vary among tribes but are unique to each of Nigeria’s over 250 cultural and ethnic groups (Olufayo and Jegede, 2014; Atolagbe, 2011a). For example, the Yorubas in the past are known to utilize Yoruba indigenous Anti-burglary Devices (YIAD) in diverse forms, shapes, and sizes (Atolagbe, 2011a). These devices are administered through various means, some requiring incantations (*Ofo* or *Ogede*) for potency. They can be hung in different parts of the house, buried at entrances, concealed in ceilings or furniture, consumed, incised into blood circulation, attached to clothing, and more, each attribute contributing to the classification of Yoruba Indigenous Anti-burglary Devices (YIAD). Community security encompasses both group and personal security, aiming to ensure that communities and their members live free from threat, fear, or anxiety and there are also evidences of use of these measures in communities in the zone (Atolagbe, 2011; Olufayo and Jegede, 2014). These actions are in tandem with the age-long tradition of the Yoruba, and this disposition is clear in one of Yoruba’s proverbs, which says, ‘*ifura l’ogun agba*’ meaning, perceptivity is the secret weapon of an elder. Meanwhile, increased modernization and exposure to the western culture seem to have rendered these measures unpopular progressively over the past years. However, given the

worrisome state of security in the state and the need to safeguard life, properties and their livelihood, particularly the agri-food systems, it will be interesting to see the extent to the people’s security consciousness has been awakened, and how much this informs the patronage of traditional protective measure options, either communally or individually. Therefore, the need to document these measures, as well as the key drivers such as different dimensions of security consciousness, informs this study. Hence, this study provides answer to each of the following research questions:

- i. What forms and magnitudes of insecurity incidents which may have triggered security consciousness are common within the rural agrarian communities of Ondo State?
- ii. To what extent are households in rural agrarian communities of Ondo State security conscious?
- iii. How do security consciousness and related variables inform households’ utilization of indigenous protective measures?

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ondo State of Nigeria. Ondo State was created on February 3, 1976, from the former Western State. It originally included the present Ekiti State, which was split off in 1996. Akure is the state capital. Ondo State has its coordinates 70N 5005E. Ondo State is bordered with Ekiti State to the north, Kogi State to the northeast, Edo State to the east, Delta State to the southeast, Ogun State to the southwest, and Osun State to the northwest. Ondo state is primarily inhabited by the Yoruba. Ondo State has a total population of 3,441,024 comprising of 1,761,263 male and 1,679,263 females. Presently, there are 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) across the State. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, and the chief products are cotton and tobacco from the north, cacao from the central part, and rubber and timber (teak and hardwoods) from the south and east; palm oil and kernel are cultivated for export throughout the state. Ondo State is Nigeria’s chief cocoa-producing state. Other crops produced include rice, yam, maize coffee, taro, cassava, vegetables, and fruits. Traditional industries include pottery making, cloth weaving, tailoring, carpentry, and blacksmithing. Mineral deposits include kaolin pyrites, iron ore, petroleum, and coal. There is a textile mill located at Ado-Ekiti and a palm-oil processing plant at Okitipupa. The study population consists of all the locals in the agrarian communities of Ondo State.

A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select respondents for the study. First stage involved purposive selection of four LGAs with highest

occurrence of insecurity. The selected LGAs were Akoko North East, Akoko North West, Ifedore and Akure North. Second stage involved purposive selection of agrarian communities in the selected LGAs. The selected communities were Ise akoko and Auga Akoko (Akoko North East), Ijare (Ifedore), Ilu abo (Akure North) and Ikaram (Akoko North West). The last stage involved numbering of households and systematic random sampling of 20 percent (every 5th house – 20 per cent) was employed and a sample 116 of household heads were analysed, which formed the study sample size.

Qualitative data were obtained from focus group discussion (FGD) and In-depth Interview (IDI) in selected communities, and followed by administration of structured interview schedules for the collection of quantitative data. In addition to socioeconomic characteristics, vital variables relevant to the research questions were also assessed. The forms and magnitude of insecurity incidents were gauged by incorporating questions on different forms of insecurity with response options of either 'yes' (1) or 'no' (0). The occurrence magnitude of these incidents was measured on a three-point Likert scale of 'high', 'low', and 'not at all', with scores of 2, 1 and 0 assigned, respectively.

The dependent variable in this study is indigenous protective measures. Respondents were presented with list of possible indigenous measures sourced from available literature (Atolagbe, 2011) and informed by qualitative data obtained earlier for them to indicate how often they use each of the indigenous measures in

combatting crimes in their area on a three-point scale of 'on every occasion', 'as occasion demands' and 'never' with scoring of 2, 1 and 0, respectively

Security consciousness was evaluated using a scale containing twenty statements, employing a five- point Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly agree' (5) to 'strongly disagree' (1) for both positively and negatively worded statements. For analytical convenience, we conducted a factor analysis using the 'fa' function in the 'GPArotation' package in R studio. The analysis yielded four factors from the twenty items as shown in Figure 1. Items 6, 8, 9, and 10 loaded on Factor 1, items 4 and 5 on Factor 2, and items 16, 18, and 20 loaded on Factor 3. Additionally, items 2, 13, 14, and 15 loaded on Factor 4. Based on a factor loading benchmark of 0.4 (Stevens, 1992), seven items showed no significant correlation with any of the four underlying factors, indicating minimal variance to the construct. In consultation with fellow researchers in rural sociology, each factor was assessed for common attributes and themes, and named accordingly. Consequently, the four factors were designated as follows 'preparedness against various threats', 'community awareness and alertness', 'perceived need for improved security', and 'security practices and restrictions', respectively. The scores for each respondent and for each of these factors were then saved as separate variables and merged with the original dataset using the 'cbind' function from the 'dplyr' package in Rstudio. To enhance interpretation (Upton, Constenla-Villoslada, and Barrett, 2022), factor scores were transformed into percentages.

$$\text{Transformed Score} = \frac{\text{Factor Score} - \text{Minimum Score}}{\text{Maximum Score} - \text{Minimum Score}} \times 100$$

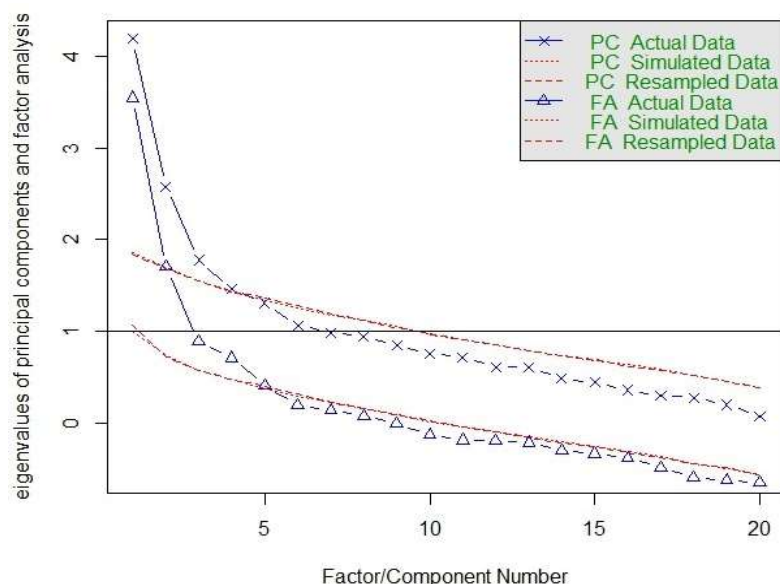


Figure 1: Scree plot showing a four-factor loading from security consciousness scale

The percentage scores obtained were subsequently used in multiple regression analysis to explain the use of indigenous security measures by farmers. We first conducted a multiple regression analysis incorporating all pertinent socioeconomic variables, conflict prevalence, and security consciousness components as explanatory variables for the use of indigenous security measures. Our model specification is shown below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 \dots + \beta_{12} X_{12} + \epsilon, \text{ Where:}$$

Y = Indigenous Security Measures;

β_0 = Intercept;

X_1 = Sex (male = 1);

X_2 = marital status (married = 1);

X_3 = Religion (Christianity = 1);

X_4 = Age (years);

X_5 = Household size (number);

X_6 = Farm size (Ha);

X_7 = Educational attainment (Post-primary education = 1);

X_8 = Conflict occurrence(score);

X_9 = Preparedness against various threats (score);

X_{10} = Community awareness and alertness (score);

X_{11} = Indigenous security measures and satisfaction (score);

X_{12} = Security practices and restrictions (score);

ϵ = Error term

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prevalent forms of insecurity triggering security consciousness

As revealed in Table1, the most identified frequent forms of insecurity incidence in the study's agrarian communities include farmers-herdsmen clash (mean = 12.36), theft (mean = 9.24), abduction (mean = 7.64), and rape (mean = 5.60), ranking 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th, respectively in the last five years. This conforms with earlier studies identifying farmers-herders clashes as a major problems the agricultural and food system is confronted with (Ofoegbu, 2009; Sangotegbe, Odebode, and Onikoyi, 2012; Adisa, 2012; Olutegbe and Ogungbaro, 2020; Vanger and Nwosu, 2020; Oghuvbu and Oghuvbu, 2021; Olaosebikan *et al.*,

2023; Peter, Yikwab and Tade, 2022). The result of the FGD also corroborates this:

"Attack by Fulani is the most severe challenge faced by farmers in this community and Ondo state generally. They destroy our farms in our absence, and sometimes if you are unfortunate to be around while they invade your farm, they may even kill you or injure you badly. This has caused conflicts between farmers and herders more in recent years. Majority of the herders are also involved in kidnapping for ransom and sometimes raping of women." (FGD, Women in Auga community).

The highest occurrence of farmers-herders clash may be attributed to the lack of adequate measures from the federal government to regulate the activities of herders living among farmers. This finding corroborates the assertions of Okoro (2018) who emphasized that these conflicts have taken on a more dangerous dimension, negatively impacting farmers' production output in affected areas. This outcome serves as an early indication in our findings that security concerns are escalating, as what was once a peaceful coexistence among people of different ethnic backgrounds in Nigeria has now shifted dramatically. This represents a departure from the past, as reported by Blench, Dendo, Road, and Kingdom (2003), when many farmers and herders enjoyed a harmonious social and economic relationship. The result, which also ranks kidnapping high, further aligns with Akoni and Olowoapejo (2016) and Osawe (2015) report, highlighting the growing concern among Nigerians, particularly in the South West region. It underscores how this area has emerged as Nigeria's kidnap capital, and emphasizes the alarming rate at which the culture of kidnapping is spreading in a cultural milieu where people once viewed themselves as brothers and sisters (Akoni and Olowoapejo, 2016). Additionally, this finding is consistent with the insights of Adisa (2012), Ofuoku (2009), Sangotegbe, Oguntoyinbo, and Oluwasusi (2015) and Tonah (2000) who have identified social ills such as reprisal attacks on humans, cattle rustling, rape, theft, and kidnapping as secondary consequences of farmer-herders clashes.

Table 1: Prevalent forms of insecurity triggering security consciousness

Variable	Mean	Rank
Banditry	2.81	6 th
Kidnapping/abduction	7.64	3 rd
Farmers-herdsmen clash	9.36	1 st
Cattle rustling	0.24	11 th
Armed robbery	4.01	5 th
Rape	5.60	4 th
Suicide bombing	0.16	12 th
Theft	9.24	2 nd
Cultism	0.69	7 th
Fight of superiority among groups	0.38	9 th
Chieftaincy title clash	0.57	8 th
Infidelity	0.26	10 th

Source: Field survey (2020)

Security consciousness of rural households

The results of the findings as shown in Table 2 reveal that the level of security consciousness was high for all the four domains. However, it was highest with community awareness and alertness (mean = 88.2), followed by preparedness against different threats (89.6). The second domain reflecting the highest level of consciousness was people's preparedness against various threats (mean = 83.5). While results reveal that perceived need for improved security with the value of 65.3 was ranked least, it is an indication of that there is a growing concern for a worsening security situation

in the state and an unhealthy signal for functional and resilient agri-food and livelihood systems. It also suggests that achieving reduced hunger and prevalence of poverty as stipulated under the SDGs (goals 2 and 1) is under the threat of insecurity in Ondo state, Nigeria. This argument is in consonance with Adelaja and George (2019) who asserted that conflict has negative effects on outputs of major staples such as rice, sorghum, soya, yam and cassava in Nigeria. Earlier, similar studies had also linked conflicts to other food and livelihood-related consequences globally and in Nigeria Kah, (2017) and Awodola and Oboshi (2015).

Table 2: Security consciousness of rural households

Security consciousness	Mean	Standard deviation
Preparedness against various threats:	83.51	19.00
Community awareness and alertness	89.62	15.15
Perceived need for improved security	65.33	26.85
Security practices and restrictions	72.52	29.79

Indigenous measures for curbing insecurity

Regarding communal measures to curb insecurity, Table 3 reveals that the vigilante patrol team was the most commonly used, ranking 1st and employed by 56.9 per cent on every occasion. This validates earlier findings that use of vigilante is a commonly adopted protective measure in most communities in Nigeria (Ugwuja, 2020). Similarly, the use of local security guards ranked 2nd, with more than half (50.9 per cent) indicating that it is also used on every occasion. The implications of using local security guards could be attributed to the absence or limited access to conventional security options such as the police and the Nigerian Civil Defense Corpse in rural areas. The finding is further corroborated with the FGD result where one of the discussants remarked:

“The government’s security outfits have failed us in this community, and we now depend on the vigilante group and other local security strategies

for the security of life and properties in our community.” (FGD, Men in Ijare)

Furthermore, the formation of rules and regulations by the community security committee ranked 3rd. This implies that the behavior and activities of the community members are being regulated to guard against insecurity occurrences. This aligns with the argument of Ogunleye (2021) that involving traditional rulers and committees of community leaders will be instrumental in addressing insecurity in Nigeria. Ogunleye (2021) further argues that the inclusion of indigenous security operatives such as the OPC in Yoruba land and the *Bakassi* Boys in the Eastern part of the country in the country's security strategy would be of immense help in combating security challenges. This argument stems from the low number of police and other security operatives relative to the population, and the success that the *Amotekun* Corps have achieved since its inauguration by the South-western states of Nigeria. Nwoko (2021) also

argues that the failure of the central government to secure lives and properties, a breach of its social contract with Nigerians, gave rise to 'self-help' initiatives such as *Amotekun* and other community-based and socio-ethnic security groups. Furthermore, these findings support the assertion of Adeyemi and Olotu (2020) that the use of physical security measures will help to monitor and prevent illegal access of people into schools and communities.

However, there is a low level of patronage of personal protective measures. Table 3 reveals that only 21.6 per cent made use of *gbere* (charm incised into blood circulation) to provide protection against insecurity, ranking number one. This was followed by the use of

Ajesara, *Atola*, or *Atoje* (swallowed charm) used by 15.5 per cent of respondents. Similarly, 14.7 per cent of respondents used *Asoko* (hung charm) to provide protection in the household. Also, the majority (81.9 per cent) of the respondents had never used *Isuju* (De-visioning or Illusion Charm), *Mafenukeje* (Poisonous Weapon), *Eti* (Procrastinator), and *thunderbolt* (magun) to guard against infidelity, respectively. Furthermore, the majority (81.0 per cent) had never used *Ayeta* (bullet deflector), while 79.3 per cent never used *Ayelala* (mump Inducing charm) and 78.4 per cent had never used *Afeeri* (Disappearance Charm) to become invisible while experiencing insecurity challenges.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on community utilization of indigenous measures to curb security challenges

Indigenous measures	On every occasion	As occasion demands	Never	Mean	Rank
Communal					
Use of vigilante patrol team	56.9	41.4	1.7	1.55	1 st
Use of local security guard	50.9	46.6	2.6	1.48	2 nd
Curfew	27.6	69.8	2.6	1.25	4 th
Formation of indigenous security police	33.6	57.8	8.6	1.25	4 th
Oodua People's Congress (OPC) intervention	40.5	42.2	17.2	1.23	6 th
Use of vigilante patrol team	44.0	53.4	2.6	1.41	3 rd
Personal					
<i>Asoko</i> (hung charm) in providing protection in the household	14.7	20.7	64.7	0.50	3 rd
<i>Ajesara</i> , <i>Atola</i> or <i>Atoje</i> (swallowed charm) to curb insecurity	15.5	22.4	62.1	0.54	2 nd
<i>Gbere</i> (charm incised into blood circulation) to provide protection against insecurity	21.6	12.9	65.5	0.56	1 st
<i>Afeeri</i> (Disappearance Charm) to become invisible while experiencing insecurity challenges	10.3	11.2	78.4	0.32	4 th
<i>Isuju</i> (De-visioning or Illusion Charm)	3.4	14.7	81.9	0.26	7 th
<i>Ayeta</i> (Bullet Deflector)	7.8	11.2	81.0	0.27	6 th
<i>Eti</i> (Procrastinator)	5.2	12.9	81.9	0.23	9 th
<i>Mafenukeje</i> (Poisonous Weapon)	6.9	11.2	81.9	0.25	8 th
<i>Gbetugbetu</i> (Defetishing Charm)	6.9	13.8	78.3	0.28	5 th

Source: Field survey (2020)

From these results, it can be deduced that most of the respondents do not make use of indigenous measures to curb security challenges. The implications could be attributed to their religious background or affiliations. However, it is still noteworthy that a few members of the community still made use of some of these traditional indigenous measures. This finding is supported by Arinola (2013) who opined that Christianity and Islam have had their roles in why the knowledge and practice of traditional Yoruba religious beliefs are relatively low.

Security consciousness and related factors as determinants of use of indigenous protective measures

The result of the analysis Table 4 reveals that of all the variables, inclusive of socioeconomic characteristics,

occurrence of conflicts and domains of security consciousness (occurrence frequency, preparedness against various threats, community awareness and alertness and perceived need for improved security), only household sizes and security practice and restrictions have significant effects on respondents' use of indigenous security measures.

This result implies that households with large members used more indigenous measures compared to those with smaller household size. We did not find any direct corroborations of this result from the existing literature. However, our interpretation of this twist is that households with large members are more open to varying options of suggestions for possible consideration and use, and this seems to put them in a vantage position over other households with fewer members. This result seems to validate the relationship

among three types of social capital which include bonding (primarily, the family), linking (from the community) and bridging (outside the community) as three mutually-reinforcing entities. This result concurs with Azad and Pritchard (2023) which reveals that these different types of social capital play mutual roles in enhancing the adaptive capacity of individuals and households to flood hazard. The result is also corroborated by Rustinsyah (2015) and Rustinsyah, Prasetyo and Adib (2021), which both asserted that linking, bonding and bridging social capital rather exist as interdependent than independent entities. There was a relationship between one aspect of security consciousness and respondents' adoption of indigenous security strategies. The findings demonstrate that respondents' perceived necessity for security protocols ($t = 2.234$) significantly influences their utilization of indigenous security measures. This suggests that as individuals perceive greater insecurity in terms of their perceived need for security practices and restrictions, they are more inclined to resort to indigenous measures. This underscores the government's inadequacy in guaranteeing a secure

farming environment and a thriving agri-food system owing to low police-population ratio, amidst other challenges (Nwoko, 2021). This finding further points out the fact that feeling of insecurity, which arouses the consciousness of farmers may have triggered the embrace of unconventional security measures in spite of the perceived civilization and exposure to western education and culture which may have been perceived to have rendered such indigenous practices unpopular. It disagrees with Arinola (2013) which had in an earlier study asserted that western education has its toll on the use of indigenous measures and in general tradition religion and beliefs in Nigeria. This result also represents a different scenario from the one reported by Lafadchan (2019) that continuous patronage of indigenous conflict measures in Talubin, Philippines was because of the deep-seated respect that the people demonstrate on the rituals and non-ritualistic symbols and archetypes. The result also agrees with Omotara and Olutegbe (2015) where education and sex were not instrumental to use of indigenous methods among small ruminant farmers in Osun state, Nigeria.

Table 4: Determinants of Respondents' use of Indigenous Protective Measures in Ondo state

Variable	Coefficient	t Statistic	p value
(Intercept)	8.611	1.770	0.080
Male	1.570	1.287	0.201
Married	-0.451	-0.318	0.751
Christianity	-1.686	-1.568	0.120
Post-primary education	-0.402	-0.303	0.762
Age	0.002	0.036	0.971
Household size	0.391*	1.969	0.052
Farm size	0.054	0.343	0.732
Occurrence frequency	0.005	0.171	0.865
Preparedness Against Various Threats	0.042	1.202	0.232
Community Awareness and Alertness	-0.057	-1.372	0.173
Need for self-help	-0.011	-0.508	0.612
Perceived need for improved security	0.041**	2.234	0.028

*Significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the critical issue of security consciousness in Ondo state's agrarian communities, Nigeria. The findings emphasize the alarming prevalence of insecurity incidents, with farmers-herders clashes, theft, abduction, and armed robbery being prominent challenges. This escalation of security concerns underscores the urgent need for comprehensive security initiatives to safeguard lives, property, and agricultural assets, especially in a region where agriculture forms the backbone of the economy. The research highlights the diverse indigenous protective strategies employed by the local communities. Vigilante patrol teams, local security guards, and community rules and regulations emerged as the most utilized communal measures. These indigenous

methods play a vital role in complementing the efforts of formal security agencies, particularly in the rural areas where access to conventional security systems is limited. However, the study also reveals weak embrace of use of personal traditional protective measures, possibly influenced by increasing modernization and exposure to the Western culture. Nevertheless, few individuals still rely on these practices, indicating their continued relevance in certain contexts.

Furthermore, the research demonstrates that household size and perceived need for improved security significantly influence the adoption of indigenous protective measures. This insight suggests that households with larger members may be more open to considering a range of security options, underlining the importance of social dynamics and

potential impacts on households and individual decision making on security. In the light of these findings, it is imperative that security agencies collaborate closely with local vigilante groups and support the dissemination of effective indigenous security measures. Additionally, cooperative organizations should provide resources and training to empower rural communities in implementing these strategies.

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