

EVALUATING THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ADDRESSING INSECURITY IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. In recent years, insecurity in Nigeria has increased, manifesting in forms such as kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, and communal conflicts. These have negatively affected social and economic developments as well as public trust in government institutions. While conventional security measures remain important, there is growing emphasis on non-kinetic approaches such as strategic communication and public relations in addressing the challenges. This study investigates how public relations strategies can enhance public awareness, improve communication between the government and citizens, and promote community engagement in security management. The study adopted a survey research design, with a census method involving investigating the entire population. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentages. The findings revealed that most respondents were aware of public relations' strategies and perceive them as effective for curbing insecurity. The study further showed that effective communication between the government and citizens significantly influences security outcomes, while community engagement enhances cooperation and crime prevention. However, challenges such as misinformation, lack of trust, and poor communication channels were identified. The study recommends improved communication, public awareness, and community participation to enhance security in Kwara State.

Keywords: Communication, community, insecurity, Public Relations, strategies

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, insecurity has emerged as one of the most pressing challenges confronting Nigeria, with far-reaching implications for national development, social cohesion, and economic stability. From armed robbery and kidnapping to communal conflicts and terrorism, the growing wave of insecurity has disrupted daily life and weakened public confidence in governance structures. Although states in the North-Central region, including Kwara State, have historically been considered relatively peaceful, recent developments indicate a rising trend in criminal activities, thereby necessitating proactive and multidimensional approaches to security management (Adebayo, 2020)

Kwara State, often referred to as the "State of Harmony," has not been immune to the security challenges affecting the broader Nigerian society. Incidents of kidnapping, banditry, and inter-community conflicts have increasingly been reported in parts of the state, raising concerns among residents, policymakers, and security agencies. These developments have underscored the limitations of relying solely on conventional security measures such as military and police interventions. As a result, there is a growing recognition of the need for non-kinetic strategies, including effective communication and stakeholder engagement, in addressing insecurity (Ojo, 2019).

Public relations (PR), as a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics, plays a critical role in shaping public perception, promoting trust, and facilitating dialogue (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). In the context of insecurity, public relations can serve as a vital tool for disseminating accurate information, countering misinformation, and fostering cooperation between the government, security agencies, and the public. PR practitioners can influence public attitudes and behaviors in ways that contribute to crime prevention and peace building (Nwosu, 2017).

Furthermore, effective public relations strategies can enhance intelligence gathering by encouraging citizens to share timely and relevant information with security agencies. When trust is established through transparent and consistent communication, communities are more likely to collaborate with authorities in identifying and addressing security threats. Conversely, poor communication and misinformation can exacerbate fear, mistrust, and social tension, thereby undermining security efforts (Olagunju, 2021). This highlights the importance of integrating public relations into broader security frameworks in Kwara State.

Despite the recognized importance of public relations in security management, its potential remains underutilized in many parts of Nigeria, including Kwara State. Government communication is often reactive rather than proactive, and there is limited coordination between public relations practitioners and security agencies. This gap has contributed to the persistence of insecurity and the

spread of rumors and misinformation, particularly through social media platforms (Ezeah, 2020).

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study aims to explore how strategic communication can be leveraged to enhance public awareness, build trust, and promote community participation in security initiatives. By doing so, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on non-military approaches to security management and provides practical recommendations for policymakers, communication professionals, and security stakeholders. Insecurity has become a persistent and growing challenge in Nigeria, affecting both urban and rural communities and undermining national development. Kwara State, once regarded as relatively peaceful, has in recent times experienced increasing cases of kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, and communal conflicts. These security challenges have created fear among residents, disrupted economic activities, and weakened public confidence in government institutions and security agencies.

Despite various efforts by the government and security agencies to address insecurity, the problem persists, suggesting that conventional approaches alone may not be sufficient. One major gap identified is the inadequate use of strategic communication and public relations in managing security issues. Poor communication, lack of public awareness, and the spread of misinformation have further worsened the situation, leading to distrust between citizens and security agencies. Without effective public relations strategies, citizens may be reluctant to cooperate with authorities or provide useful information that could help prevent crime.

Furthermore, there appears to be limited engagement between government authorities and the public in Kwara State regarding security matters. This lack of engagement reduces the effectiveness of community participation, which is essential in intelligence gathering and crime prevention. As a result, insecurity continues to thrive due to weak communication channels, insufficient awareness campaigns, and poor stakeholder collaboration. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria, with a view to identifying how strategic communication can enhance public awareness, foster trust, and improve cooperation between the public and security agencies. The main objective of this study is to examine the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. As a result of this aim, the research will carry out such specific objectives as; assess the level of awareness of public relations strategies in addressing insecurity among residents of Kwara State; examines the effectiveness of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State; determine the influence of communication between government and citizens on security outcomes in Kwara State and

evaluate the role of community engagement in reducing insecurity in Kwara State.

This study examined the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. It specifically explores how strategic communication, public awareness campaigns, and community engagement can contribute to reducing insecurity in selected areas within the state. It is limited to Kwara State, with particular attention to selected urban and semi-urban communities where issues of insecurity, such as kidnapping, armed robbery, and communal conflicts have been reported repeatedly.

The study also covers key stakeholders involved in public relations and security management, including residents of Kwara State, public relations practitioners in government institutions, media practitioners, and security personnel such as the police and the civil defence corps. These groups are considered important because they are directly involved in communication processes and security operations within the state. Their perceptions and experiences provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of public relations strategies in addressing insecurity.

In terms of content, the study is limited to the concepts of public relations, insecurity, security communication, and community engagement. It examines how these concepts interact to influence public perception and cooperation in security matters. .

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Public Relations

Public relations (PR) is widely recognized as a strategic communication function that focuses on building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics. According to Grunit and Hunt (1984) public relations involves the management of communication between an organization and its stakeholders with the aim of fostering understanding, trust, and cooperation. Similarly, Black describes PR as a deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish goodwill and mutual understanding. (Black, 1992) These definitions emphasize that PR is not merely about publicity but about long-term relationship management.

In modern governance, public relations have evolved into a vital tool for managing public perception, especially in situations of crisis and uncertainty. It encompasses a range of activities such as media relations, public enlightenment campaigns, crisis communication, and reputation management. In the context of insecurity, PR becomes particularly important as it helps governments and security agencies communicate effectively with citizens. Through timely and transparent dissemination of information, PR helps reduce panic, clarify misinformation, and provide guidance on safety measures (Nwosu, 2017).

Furthermore, public relations plays a proactive role in shaping attitudes and influencing behavior. It helps to mobilize public support for security initiatives by fostering trust and encouraging citizen participation. For instance, awareness campaigns on crime prevention, emergency response, and community vigilance can significantly contribute to reducing insecurity. When effectively utilized, PR not only strengthens institutional credibility but also promotes collaboration between authorities and the public, which is essential for maintaining peace and security.

Concept of insecurity

Insecurity refers to a condition characterized by fear, uncertainty, and exposure to threats that endanger human lives, property, and societal stability. It is a multidimensional concept that includes physical, economic, social, and psychological aspects of safety. According to Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro (2013), insecurity arises when individuals and communities lack adequate protection against risks and threats. This condition often results in widespread anxiety, displacement, and disruption of normal life.

In Nigeria, insecurity has taken various forms, including terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, and communal clashes. These challenges have significantly impacted national development by discouraging investment, disrupting economic activities, and weakening governance structures. Although Kwara State has historically been regarded as relatively peaceful, recent trends indicate increasing security concerns, particularly in areas prone to criminal activities. This shift highlights the dynamic nature of insecurity and the need for continuous and adaptive responses (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014).

Beyond its physical implications, insecurity also has psychological and social consequences. It erodes public trust in government institutions and creates a climate of fear and suspicion among citizens. Communities affected by insecurity often experience reduced social cohesion and increased tension. Addressing insecurity, therefore, requires not only military and law enforcement strategies but also social and communicative approaches that rebuild trust, promote unity, and encourage collective action.

Security and communication today

Security communication refers to the strategic process of disseminating information related to safety, risk management, and crisis response to the public. It involves the use of various communication channels to inform, educate, and influence people's behavior in ways that enhance security and prevent threats. According to Riel (1995), effective communication is central to building trust and maintaining a positive relationship between institutions and their stakeholders, especially during crises.

In the context of insecurity, security communication plays a vital role in shaping public awareness and preparedness which is essentially needed in Nigeria today.

It includes activities such as public service announcements, emergency alerts, press briefings, and community outreach programs. These communication efforts ensure that citizens are well-informed about potential threats and appropriate safety measures. For example, timely warnings about security risks can help individuals take preventive actions, thereby reducing the likelihood of harm (Olagunju, 2021).

Moreover, security communication is essential for combating misinformation and rumors, which can exacerbate insecurity. In today's digital age, false information can spread rapidly through social media, creating panic and confusion as seen in various parts of Nigeria. Effective PR strategies help to counter such misinformation by providing accurate and reliable information. By maintaining transparency and consistency in communication, authorities can build credibility and encourage public cooperation, which is crucial for effective security management.

Community engagement for security

Community engagement refers to the active involvement of individuals and groups in decision-making processes and initiatives that affect their lives. It emphasizes participation, dialogue, and collaboration between authorities and the public. Arnstein (1969), through her "Ladder of Citizen Participation," highlights different levels of engagement, ranging from passive involvement to active citizen control. This framework underscores the importance of empowering communities in addressing societal issues.

In the context of insecurity, community engagement is a critical component of effective security strategies. It enables security agencies to build trust and establish strong relationships with local populations. When communities are actively involved, they are more likely to share information, report suspicious activities, and support law enforcement efforts. This collaborative approach enhances intelligence gathering and improves the overall effectiveness of security operations.

Additionally, community engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens. It encourages individuals to take an active role in promoting peace and security within their communities. Public relations plays a key role in facilitating this engagement by creating platforms for dialogue, organizing awareness campaigns, and ensuring that community voices are heard. Through sustained engagement, trust is built, social cohesion is strengthened, and collective efforts to curb insecurity are enhanced.

Theoretical framework

This study was anchored on two theories namely the excellence theory of Public Relations and **social responsibility theory of the media**. The excellence theory of Public Relations, developed by Grunig and his associates, emphasizes the importance of two-way symmetrical communication in achieving effective public relations. This theory posits that organizations should not only disseminate information but also listen to and engage with their publics in a mutually beneficial manner. It highlights transparency, dialogue, and feedback as key elements of successful communication (Grunig, 1992).

The theory is particularly relevant in addressing insecurity, as it promotes trust and cooperation between authorities and the public. In Kwara State, the application of this theory would involve creating channels for continuous interaction between government, security agencies, and citizens. Such engagement ensures that public concerns are addressed, and security policies are informed by the needs and perspectives of the people.

Furthermore, the excellence theory underscores the importance of ethical communication and accountability. By adopting a two-way communication approach, public relations practitioners can enhance credibility and foster long-term relationships. This, in turn, encourages citizens to collaborate with security agencies, thereby improving the effectiveness of efforts to curb insecurity.

On the other hand, the social responsibility theory of the media, propounded by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (1956), asserts that the media have an obligation to serve the public interest by providing accurate, balanced, and ethical information. The theory emphasizes that freedom of the press must be accompanied by responsibility to society.

In relation to insecurity, this theory highlights the role of the media and PR practitioners in shaping public perception and influencing behavior. Responsible reporting of security issues helps to inform the public without causing unnecessary panic or fear. It also ensures that information disseminated is factual and reliable, thereby preventing the spread of misinformation.

Moreover, the Social Responsibility Theory advocates for the promotion of societal values such as peace, unity, and justice. By adhering to ethical standards, media organizations and PR practitioners can contribute to national stability and security. In Kwara State, responsible communication can play a significant role in curbing insecurity by fostering public awareness, encouraging cooperation, and supporting government efforts to maintain peace and order.

Empirical review

Nwosu (2017) conducted a study on public relations strategies and national security in Nigeria. Using a survey research design, the study found that effective communication between government agencies and citizens significantly

enhances public cooperation in security matters. The findings revealed that awareness campaigns and consistent information dissemination help reduce crime rates by encouraging vigilance and reporting suspicious activities. The study recommended that PR units in government institutions should be strengthened to improve security outcomes.

Olagunju (2021) examined the role of information dissemination in national security in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey method and found that timely and accurate information reduces panic and prevents the spread of misinformation during crises. It concluded that poor communication contributes to increased insecurity due to confusion and fear among the public. The study emphasized the need for coordinated communication strategies among security agencies.

Adebayo (2020) explored the impact of insecurity on business activities in Nigeria. The study employed a mixed-method approach and found that insecurity discourages investment and disrupts economic growth. Importantly, it revealed that effective public communication and stakeholder engagement can mitigate these effects by restoring confidence among investors and the general public.

Ezeah (2020) studied the influence of social media on public relations practice in Nigeria. The findings indicated that social media platforms are powerful tools for disseminating security information and engaging the public. However, the study also noted that misinformation on these platforms can exacerbate insecurity if not properly managed. It recommended the use of digital PR strategies to counter fake news.

Okereke (2017) conducted a study on media coverage and national security in Nigeria. The findings showed that responsible media reporting plays a significant role in shaping public perception and promoting security awareness. The study recommended ethical journalism practices to prevent sensationalism and panic.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design was adopted because it enabled the researchers to systematically collect data from people who understand the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. The survey allows researchers to examine the opinions, perceptions, and attitudes of people on a social phenomenon. The population of the study comprises all members of Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) Kwara State, Nigeria. According to the information from NIPR Kwara State Chapter, the professional body has one hundred and fifty (150) active practitioners, as such, the researchers applied census method which entailed studying the entire population. The questionnaire was used as the instrument for the data collection, and 150 copies of it were administered to the respondents, and only 140 copies were successfully retrieved and found valid for

analysis, representing a 93.3% response rate. The high response rate indicates a high level of participation as well as sufficiency of the data used for the findings and conclusions at the end of the study. The questionnaire consists of both closed-ended questions with some Likert-Scale items to elicit the relevant data. The questionnaire was administered physically and, where possible, electronically for a quicker reach to the respondents. Respondents were given clear instructions and assured of confidentiality to encourage honest and accurate responses. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency tables, and percentages. The analysis presented in this section is therefore based on the 140 copies of the completed and returned questionnaire.

Table One: Socio-Economic Demographics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	82	58.6%
	Female	58	41.4%
	Total	140	100%
Age	18–25	30	21.4%
	26–35	48	34.3%
	36–45	36	25.7%
	46 and above	26	18.6%
	Total	140	100%
Occupation	Civil Servants	40	28.6%
	Business Owners	32	22.9%
	Students	28	20.0%
	Security Personnel	20	14.3%
	PR/Media Practitioners	20	14.3%
	Total	140	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The demographic data presented in Table I shows that male respondents (58.6%) are more than female respondents (41.4%), indicating a slightly higher male participation in the study. This may be attributed to greater male involvement in security-related discussions or accessibility during data collection. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents fall within the 26–35 age bracket (34.3%), followed by those aged 36–45 (25.7%). This suggests that the study largely captured responses from active and economically productive individuals who are more likely to be aware of security issues and public relations activities in their environment.

The occupational distribution reveals that civil servants constitute the largest group (28.6%), followed by business owners (22.9%) and students (20.0%).

This diversity ensures that the study captures a wide range of perspectives on insecurity and public relations. Importantly, the inclusion of security personnel and PR/media practitioners (28.6% combined) adds professional insight into the subject matter, thereby strengthening the reliability of the data collected.

Table Two: Awareness of Public Relations Strategies in Curbing Insecurity

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Aware	50	35.7%
Moderately Aware	60	42.9%
Not Aware	30	21.4%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The results show that a majority of respondents (78.6%) are either highly or moderately aware of some selected public relations strategies in addressing insecurity in Kwara State. This indicates that PR efforts such as awareness campaigns, media engagements, and public enlightenment programmes are reaching a significant portion of the population.

However, 21.4% of respondents reported being unaware of such strategies. This suggests a gap in communication coverage or effectiveness, implying that some segments of the population may not be adequately reached by PR initiatives. This lack of awareness can hinder the effectiveness of public relations in curbing insecurity, as uninformed citizens are less likely to participate in security efforts.

Table Three: Effectiveness of Public Relations in Curbing Insecurity

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Effective	52	37.1%
Effective	58	41.4%
Not Effective	30	21.4%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The data in table three reveals that 78.5% of respondents perceive public relations as effective or very effective in curbing insecurity. This suggests that PR plays a significant role in influencing public behavior, promoting awareness, and encouraging cooperation with security agencies.

The perception of effectiveness may be linked to visible efforts such as media campaigns, public announcements, and community sensitization programs. These initiatives help to inform the public about security risks and appropriate responses, thereby contributing to crime prevention.

On the other hand, 21.4% of respondents believe that public relations is not effective. This perception may stem from inadequate communication, lack of

trust in government institutions, or insufficient implementation of PR strategies. This indicates the need for more consistent, transparent, and impactful communication efforts.

Table Four: Impact of Timely Communication on Security Outcomes in Kwara State

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	60	42.9%
Agree	50	35.7%
Disagree	20	14.3%
Strongly Disagree	10	7.1%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The findings show that a significant majority (78.6%) of respondents agree that communication between the government and citizens positively influences security outcomes. This indicates that when information is shared effectively, citizens are more likely to trust authorities and cooperate in security efforts. Effective communication fosters transparency and reduces suspicion, which is crucial in building public confidence. It also enables the timely dissemination of information, helping citizens to take precautionary measures against security threats.

However, 21.4% of respondents disagreed with this view. This may reflect concerns about poor communication practices, lack of feedback mechanisms, or limited access to reliable information. These challenges can weaken the relationship between the government and the public, thereby affecting security outcomes.

Table Five: Role of Frequent Community Engagement in Reducing Insecurity

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	65	46.4%
Agree	45	32.1%
Disagree	20	14.3%
Strongly Disagree	10	7.1%
Total	140	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The data on table five indicates that 78.5% of respondents agree that community engagement contributes significantly to reducing insecurity. This demonstrates that involving local communities in security efforts enhances vigilance, intelligence gathering, and cooperation with law enforcement agencies. Community engagement creates a sense of ownership and responsibility among

citizens, making them active participants in maintaining peace and security. It also strengthens trust between the public and security agencies, which is essential for effective crime prevention.

Nevertheless, 21.4% of respondents disagreed, suggesting that some communities may still be passive or disconnected from security initiatives. This could be due to lack of awareness, poor communication, or distrust in authorities. Addressing these issues is crucial for improving community participation in security management.

Discussion of findings

Based on the data presented and analyzed in this study on the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria, several key findings emerged. These findings provide insight into the effectiveness of public relations strategies, the level of public awareness, and the importance of communication and community engagement in addressing insecurity.

Firstly, the study found that there is a relatively high level of awareness of public relations strategies among residents of Kwara State. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that they are either highly aware or moderately aware of public relations activities such as public awareness campaigns, media engagements, and government communication initiatives. This suggests that public relations efforts are reaching a considerable portion of the population. However, the presence of respondents who are not aware of these strategies indicates that there are still gaps in communication coverage, particularly among certain segments of the population. This implies that more inclusive and widespread public enlightenment efforts are needed to ensure that all citizens are adequately informed. This corroborates Adebayo (2020)'s views as informed by his finding that effective public communication and stakeholder engagement can mitigate the effects of insecurity by restoring confidence among investors and the general public.

Secondly, the findings reveal that public relations is widely perceived as an effective tool in curbing insecurity. A majority of respondents agreed that public relations plays a significant role in enhancing security by promoting awareness, encouraging vigilance, and fostering cooperation between citizens and security agencies. This positive perception indicates that strategic communication is valued as a complementary approach to traditional security measures. However, a minority of respondents expressed doubts about its effectiveness, which may be attributed to inconsistent communication, lack of trust in government institutions, or inadequate implementation of public relations strategies. This highlights the need for more consistent, transparent, and credible communication practices to strengthen public confidence. It also corroborates Okereke's (2017) findings, which showed that responsible media reporting plays a significant role in shaping public perception and promoting security awareness.

Thirdly, the study established that effective communication between the government and citizens has a strong influence on security outcomes. Most respondents agreed that when the government communicates clearly and regularly with the public, it enhances trust, improves understanding, and encourages citizens to support security efforts. This finding underscores the importance of transparency and openness in governance, as well as the need for the timely dissemination of accurate information. On the other hand, the disagreement expressed by some respondents suggests that communication gaps, delays, and misinformation still exist. These challenges can weaken public trust and limit the effectiveness of security interventions, thereby emphasizing the need for improved communication systems and feedback mechanisms. Olagunju (2021)'s views align with the foregoing assertion when he submitted that poor communication contributes to increased insecurity due to confusion and fear among the public. The study emphasized the need for coordinated communication strategies among security agencies.

Furthermore, the study corroborates earlier views from scholars such as Adebayo (2020), Okereke (2017) and Olagunju (2021) by revealing that community engagement plays a crucial role in reducing insecurity. A significant majority of respondents agreed that when communities are actively involved in security efforts such as reporting suspicious activities, participating in awareness programs, and collaborating with security agencies there is a noticeable improvement in safety and crime prevention. This finding highlights the importance of grassroots participation in security management. Community engagement fosters a sense of ownership, strengthens trust, and enhances intelligence gathering, all of which are essential for effective security management. However, the findings also show that some respondents believe community engagement is still inadequate, possibly due to lack of awareness, weak communication channels, or distrust between citizens and security agencies.

Additionally, the study identified several challenges affecting the effectiveness of public relations in curbing insecurity. These include misinformation and fake news, poor communication channels, lack of trust in government institutions, and limited public participation. Among these, misinformation appears to be the most significant challenge, particularly in the age of digital communication where false information spreads rapidly through social media.

Conclusion

This study examined the role of public relations in curbing insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that public relations is a vital non-kinetic approach to addressing insecurity through effective communication, public awareness, and community engagement. The study established that a significant

proportion of respondents are aware of public relations strategies and perceive them as effective in enhancing security outcomes. It further showed that communication between government and citizens plays a crucial role in building trust, encouraging cooperation, and improving the overall effectiveness of security operations.

The study also highlighted the importance of community engagement in security management, as active participation by citizens enhances intelligence gathering and supports law enforcement efforts. However, despite these positive findings, challenges such as misinformation, lack of trust in government institutions, and inadequate communication channels were identified as major constraints limiting the effectiveness of public relations in curbing insecurity.

In conclusion, public relations serves as an essential tool in bridging the gap between the government, security agencies, and the public. Its effectiveness depends largely on transparency, consistency, and inclusiveness in communication. Therefore, integrating robust public relations strategies into security management frameworks will significantly contribute to reducing insecurity in Kwara State and Nigeria at large. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government and security agencies should establish and maintain efficient, transparent, and accessible communication channels to ensure the timely dissemination of accurate information. This will help build public trust, reduce misinformation, and enhance cooperation between citizens and security institutions.
2. There is a need to intensify public relations campaigns aimed at educating citizens on security awareness, crime prevention, and the importance of reporting suspicious activities. These campaigns should utilize both traditional and digital media platforms to reach a wider audience across Kwara State.
3. Government and security agencies should actively involve community members in security initiatives by creating platforms for dialogue, collaboration, and feedback. Community-based security programs should be encouraged to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility in maintaining peace and security.
4. Efforts should be made to counter misinformation and fake news, particularly on social media platforms, by providing accurate and timely information. Additionally, government institutions must work towards building public trust through accountability, transparency, and consistent engagement with the public.

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Authors' Contributions:

Raphael Ogbonnaiye initiated the idea of the paper, coordinated the data gathering, whereas Greg Ezeah did the proofreading and reworked the paper based on the comments from the reviewers.

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There is no conflict of interest with any sources or persons from the beginning of this paper to the end of it.

Ethical clearance

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