

RURAL INSECURITY, WOMEN'S PROTEST AND AGITATION IN NIGERIA: A CATALYST FOR DEMOCRACY

Millicent Nwamaka Ogenyi

Department of Political Science

Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu

[\(nwamakamillicent@gmail.com\)](mailto:nwamakamillicent@gmail.com)

Abstract

It has been a normal story over the way and manner of the killings in the south-East and other parts of Nigeria which started slightly in 2015 and from 2020 became intense with so many killings and kidnappings for ransom till date. Rural insecurity in Nigeria has become a recurring decimal with its continuing attacks on its citizenry. This security challenges in Nigeria manifest itself in the loss of lives and property worth millions of naira on daily basis. This has drawn the emergence of militancy in those areas. Moreover, the phenomenon of nomadic Fulani herdsmen onslaught on communities are not only obtainable in the South-East alone but also in the whole parts of the North central and South, particularly against peasant farmers in those areas. This has assumed frightening dimensions and they are rarely apprehended by security operatives. Combined with these are armed robberies, rising rate of unemployment among youths leading to restiveness, corruption and increasing inequality, leading to chaos everywhere in the country. The effect of this insecurity is a threat to democratic governance and cannot be undermined hence; this paper examines rural insecurity,

women's protest and agitation in Nigeria: a catalyst for democracy as well as its multifaceted manifestations.

Keywords: Women's Protest, Agitation, Democracy, Rural insecurity, Fulani Cattle headsmen, Unemployment

Introduction

It is perturbing that Nigeria has been witnessing a drastic and frantic rural security challenges that have kept persisting till date. This crisis is in various forms; communal, religious, political and socio-economic with varying degree of casualty, mostly on innocent citizens. Some see this phenomenon as a calculated attempt by the international community to divide the country while others believe it is the phantom sectarian violence that is responsible. The most alarming fact is that this incessant violence apart from killing and maiming innocent souls has imprinted agony, tension and aggression in the minds of Nigerians. Today, we live in absolute suspicion and constant presentiment of an impending disaster. Most economic activities have come to a halt and private businesses are crippling with the result of the inability of employers to pay their employees. There has been a rural-urban drift taking place publicly compared to the previous years. All these are the direct aftermath of rural insecurity in the country that has deprived democratic governance in Nigeria.

The idea of democracy derives its moral strength and popular appeal from two key principles:

1. **Individual autonomy:** The idea that no one should be

subjected to imposed rules by others. People should be able to control their own lives (within reason).

2. Equality: The impression that everyone should have the same opportunity to influence the decisions that affect people in society. However, a "democracy" is also incomplete without a thorough growing respect for human rights. Taking part in government, in a genuine way, is almost impossible to do without people having other basic rights being respected. (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/democracy#:~:text=The%20word%20democracy%20comes%20from,the%20will%20of%20the%20people>).

The strength of democracy is drawn from the fact that it is supposed to be the product of the will of the majority of the people. Government is held in trust for the people. As shareholders of the common wealth, the citizens will not only avoid such behaviours that hurt and sabotage the system, but join forces to resist any such attack on the collective interest of the people. This will enhance the real basis for the development of grand tactic, the mobilisation of the entire national asset for the protection of the nation, which can work best in democracy (Adejumo, 2009).

After sixty-five years of nationhood, Nigeria still ranks among the poorest countries in the world; ranks low in all socio-economic indicators such as life expectancy, death rate, access to water, poverty rate, mortality rate, and crime rate, and still carries the tag of a developing economy. Nigeria is a classic illustration of an oxymoron, a poor country in the midst of abundant human and natural resources. This scenario has contributed to security

challenges that have bedeviled the country since independence till now with grave consequences for socio-economic development. There is no nation that can achieve socio-economic development in an environment of socio and physical insecurity. The increasing challenge of insecurity in Nigeria has also been linked to failure of leadership to deliver good governance, and secure the welfare of persons on the principles of freedom, equality, and justice. The ruling elites in Nigeria in both the military and democratic dispensation are dependent, parasitic, and very corrupt in nature, and mal-administration (Ali, 2013).

In 2024-2025, Nigeria was ranked 147 out of 163 countries, indicating that Nigeria is among the least peaceful countries in the world with this low score on the index whereas, Ghana was identified as the most peaceful country in West Africa followed by Sierra Leone and Liberia (2024 Global Peace Index; National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS)). Despite the plethora of security measures taken to address the daunting challenges of insecurity in Nigeria, government efforts have not produced the desired positive result. This has compelled the Nigerian government in recent time to request for foreign assistance from countries such as USA, Israel, and EU countries to combat the rising waves of terrorism and insecurity.

It is the duty of the government to take care and safeguard the life of every citizens. This can be found in Chapter IV of the 1999 Nigerian constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of citizens. According to Section 33(1), every person has a right to life; Section 34(1) every

individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person; Section 35(1), every person shall be entitled to his personal liberty; Section 36(1) in the determination of his civil rights and obligations, including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair hearing; Section 37(1), the privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence is hereby guaranteed and protected. Against this background, this paper therefore seeks to examine the pertinent issues of rural insecurity, Women's Protest and Agitation in Nigeria: A Catalyst for Democracy; using Eha-Amufu community as a test case for insecurity, protest and women agitation. This study is anchored by the following research questions to guide the study:

- i. What are the causes of rural insecurity, women's protest and Agitation in Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent has the role of women's protests and agitation contributed in shaping democratic governance in Nigeria?
- iii. What measures would curb Rural Insecurity, Women's Protest and Agitation in Nigeria?

The Objectives of this study are thus to:

- i. examine the causes of rural insecurity, women's protest and Agitation in Nigeria.
- ii. analyze the role of women's protests and agitation in shaping democratic governance in Nigeria.
- iii. proffer solutions to curb Rural Insecurity, Women's Protest and Agitation in Nigeria.

The *scope* of this study focuses on the interplay between *rural insecurity, women's protest and agitation*,

and democratic governance in Nigeria using Eha-Amufu community as a test case. Meanwhile, Eha-Amufu is in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area in Enugu state Nigeria. It examines how insecurity in rural area manifested through banditry, herders–farmers conflicts, kidnappings, and communal clashes that affects community life and compels women to engage in protests and other forms of agitation. The study situates women’s responses as not only coping strategies but also as mechanisms that influence governance and democratic consolidation. Geographically, the study is limited to selected rural communities in three communities in Eha-Amufu; namely Mgbuji, Abor, and Aguamede. These are the prevalent areas that suffer most when it comes for herders-farmers clash, where insecurity has significantly disrupted livelihoods, social harmony, and food production. While the findings may have implications for urban areas, the primary concern is with **rural contexts** where insecurity is most pronounced and where women’s voices are often marginalized. *Thematically, the study is restricted to three main areas:*

1. The nature and extent of *rural insecurity*.
2. The role of *women’s protests and agitation* as responses to insecurity and as expressions of democratic participation.
3. The implications of these protests for *strengthening democratic governance* in Nigeria.

The study does not attempt to provide an exhaustive account of all forms of insecurity or all women’s movements across the country. Instead, it focuses on

representative cases and patterns that illuminate the broader relationship between rural insecurity, women's activism, and democracy. The time frame of the study covers *2015 to present*; a period marked by both heightened insecurity and increased women's mobilization in democratic struggles.

Rural Insecurity in Eha-Amufu.

Despite the protest the killings have become unabated. Barely few months of the protest by the women in that community, people are still being killed in their farms. According to the report from the natives during an interview, they complained that on 9th June 2025 about 5 men were killed again in Mgbuji and on 21st June, 2 men was also killed in the same area making a total number of 8 from the same community. They said that the set of people killed was because they went to get some food items in their farms. More so, that the killing continued to their neighbouring community Agu-Amede, where 9 able young men were killed on 15 June 2025. The communities are of the view that the government or top men in the country has hand in the killings. They stated that: "It is so shocking that each time a helicopter flew to the farm settlement area, there must be death of innocent souls. They said that the helicopter flew into the farmland (farm settlement area) and dropped arms and ammunitions to those terrorists who used their weapons to kill and chase innocent souls out of their land'. (live interview with Mgbuji and Agu-Amede Community by the researcher)

The question here is, where are the helicopter coming from and who owns the helicopter? The local council and Enugu state government have an answer to these questions. Where is the protection of these people by the government of Enugu State? Does that mean that there are less human beings and superior human beings? Why is it that government of Enugu state allowed the entrance of helicopter in the state without enquireing where it comes from? Where on earth can this happen if not only in Nigeria where human lives do not matter, more especially the life of these peasant farmers that have no access to any neccessities of life; No good road, electricity, pipe born water, health facilities or good schools; these communities do not have any of these mentioned. These are the people that are in their farm lands just to make ends meet. What offence have they committed to be butchered like animal? Why can't the government provide them with security to end this menece happening in Eha-Amufu in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State. All these questions are thrown open for the public. The issue of insecurity in Eha-Amufu has lingered so much with so many stories behind it. Presently the Fulanis in that community are of two types. First the Fulanis in the bush and secondly the other Fulanis in the house (indigenous people, paid by the original Fulanis for information and operation) most dangerous!

The affected people narrated that the Fulanis in the home are more dangerous than the Fulanis in the bush. Reasons; whereas, it is the home Fulanis that give information to the bush Fulanis who in colaboration with the home Fulanis attack the community, it was noted that the home Fulanis

cover their faces while attacking the people while that of the bush Fulanis don't cover their faces when they attack. Based on the information gathered from the farm settlers, most of them are of the opinion that unless the home Fulanis are addressed properly, the conflict will continue to linger for eternity, and as long as there is hunger and starvation, insecurity must continue in the area. One of the persons interviewed stated that things are very hard in the country and that the bad eggs among the community must continue to exploit their brothers in order to survive. That people have sold their conscience to the devil and can do anything to survive. Moreso, that what is happening in that area is the survival of the fittest. There are lots of kidnappings going on, of which the home Fulanis joined hands with the bush Fulanis to perpetuate and collect ransome before releasing their victims.

The most annoying part is that the Fulanis use farmers' farm products to feed their cows. In a situation where rice, cassava, yam, wateryam, potatoes etc are now left to be used to feed animal is a critical condition that government has to urgently look into it. The people are dieing of hunger, sicknesses most especially having spent so much money for farming and cannot have access to the farm is enough to kill most of them. Some borrowed money from the banks and cooperatives and cannot find any means to pay back. It is quite unfortunate that government has neglected the people.

All these have made our democracy unstable. A situation where democratic government cannot provide and Source:



WhatsApp Photo March 4th 2025 *Eha-Amufu Women Protest against rape, killing of their children, husbands, relatives and most of all destroying their crops by the Fulani Cattle herdsman in their own fathers land!*

safeguard the lives and property of the people is a big shame.

It is important at this juncture, to note that several factors have been identified as being responsible for the increasing level of insecurity in Nigeria. Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2013) identified ethnic and religious affiliations

as the determining factor of who gets what in Nigeria. Since identity politics is taken as the main viable means of access to power or to enjoy other privileges, crisis situations become inevitable. Where the weak is unable to have his voice heard, violent conflict becomes frequent. Politics is one of the most important triggers for insecurity. Various modes of politics, different political ideologies, goals and targets, produce varying forms of engagement or contestation with the state. The most significant of these in Nigeria have been the women's anti-tax revolts of 1929 (Aba Women's riot of 1929); the Abeokuta Women's revolt in 1947; the Egba women's revolts in 1958; protest against rejection of gender equality bills in 2022; There was also the protest of women from Eha-Amufu over rape and killings of their children and husband by Fulani cattle herdsman on Tuesday 4th March 2025. These protests highlight women's roles in fighting for political rights, demanding social justice in order to promote and reinstall true democracy in Nigeria.

The Impact of Herdsmen's Act of Violence in Eha-Amufu

Eha-Amufu that used to be one of the food baskets in Isi-Uzo and Enugu state, popularly known for producing rice, garri, yam, potatoes etc has since the crisis started, been faced with scarcity of food. The people can no longer go to their farms because of the fear of the cattle headers who have been killing and maiming the farmers and also destroying their cultivated food items by their cows. This has made the prices of food ultra – expensive. Before, a tin of rice used to be sold in a cheaper price of three thousand

to five thousand naira, (~~₦3,000~~–~~₦5,000~~), later increased to five thousand to seven thousand naira (~~₦5,000~~ – ~~₦7,000~~), a basket of potatoes, five hundred to one thousand naira (~~₦500~~ – ~~₦1,000~~) and one piece of big yam five hundred to one thousand (~~₦500~~ – ~~₦1000~~). Recently a basin of garri is sold between twenty-eight thousand-to-thirty-five-thousand-naira,(~~₦28,000~~ ~~₦35,000~~) while, one big piece of yam sold at four thousand to five thousand naira (~~₦4000~~ – ~~₦5000~~) and a basket of potatoes sold at ten to fifteen thousand naira (~~₦10,000~~ – ~~₦15,000~~). It will take some years for the people to recover from the destructions of the cattle headsmen and for them to live their normal life.

The study adopted the theory of frustration - Aggression theory. The original formulation of the frustration–aggression theory was propounded by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Searsin 1939. They are of the view that “the occurrence of aggressive behavioural ways presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some forms of aggression.” The context of Frustration according to some of the scholars was not understood as an emotional experience but as “aninterference with the occurrence of an instigated goal response. Frustration was defined as an event instead of an affective state. Based on the original definition by Dollard and the colleagues, one might criticize their claim to universal validity, by taking verbatim, the occurrence of aggressive behaviour that always presupposes the existence of frustration which suggests that aggression does not occur without any form of prior frustration, and the assertion that frustration always leads to some form of aggression, implies that

aggression is a certain outcome of any frustration. These deterministic assumptions were some what accepted in a 1941 publication by the same authors in which they stated that “frustration produces instigation to aggression but this is not the only type of instigation that it may produce”(Breuer and Elson 2017).

In relating frustration-aggression to this topic under study, we were made to understand according to Dollard and co, that aggression cannot occur without frustration; therefore, the main instigator of aggression is when one is frustrated from happenings around the individual or community. We can see already that there was already on ground *rural insecurity that caused women to protest and agitate thereby standing as a catalyst to democracy*. For democracy to thrive there must be peace and harmony in the area. Nigerians are frustrated because of the Fulani headers that destroy their farm products, thereby causing hunger and starvation, bringing hardships to the people and they have no choice rather than showing their grievances which is aggression. Aggression is a dangerous poison and an aggrieved nation cannot progress as it is right now in the country that has continued to go backwards instead of moving forward.

This study bridges the fields of *security studies and gender studies* by examining the intersection between rural insecurity and women’s activism. While insecurity in Nigeria has been widely studied, little attention has been given to the way women’s protests in rural communities serve as mechanisms of democratic engagement. This study therefore advances an interdisciplinary

understanding of how insecurity generates new forms of gendered political participation. And again, the study re-conceptualizes the role of women in democratic governance. Rather than portraying women as passive victims of insecurity, it demonstrates that women are *active agents of democratic change*, whose protests and agitation contribute to accountability, justice, and participatory governance. This shifts the discourse from women as marginalized actors to women as catalysts of democratic consolidation. More so, the research contributes new *empirical evidence from rural Nigeria*, a context often overlooked in studies that focus predominantly on urban centers or elite political actors. By highlighting the experiences of rural women, the study fills a critical gap in the literature and foregrounds the importance of grassroots agency in shaping governance outcomes.

The *research design* of this study is descriptive survey research design, of both quantitative and qualitative approach to data analyses which are based on primary and secondary sources like questionnaire, journals, historical textbooks, newspapers and online publications. To what extent has the role of women's protests and agitation contributed in shaping democratic governance in Nigeria? Target population of this study is 450 respondents drawn from the population of Eha-Amufu which is 70,779 according to 2016 population census. The major villages involved in insecurity are Mgbuji, Abor, and Aguamede. From the population, a total number of 450 subjects drawn from different sectors were purposely selected for sampling. 150 respondents came from each community,

making a total sampling size of 450 from the main population of 70, 779. Data were collected with the use of questionnaire, instruments structured by the researcher. A 4-point Likert scale was used to rate the responses from the respondents. Data collected were presented in Tables, Frequencies and Percentage and analyzed by using mean.

Frequency table were used in the analysis of data obtained from the field. In the main study, the data collected for the study were subjected to statistical analysis using procedures like frequencies in the measurement of the respondents' opinions. The mean score for each item were obtained by multiplying the frequency of each response category with the appropriate nominal values as obtained and dividing by the total number of respondents to the item using this formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{n}$$

Where $\sum$ = Summation x = mean
 x = cardinal value of each response
 f = frequency of each response made
 n = number of total respondents

The mean scores were interpreted based on the boundary limit of the point assigned to each response category. The bench mark here is that any mean value of each questionnaire item that is up to 2.5 and above was considered as agreed for confirming the position of the respondents on the issue while that which is from 2.5 down was considered as disagreed that formed the decision rule.

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected for the study. The analysis is guided by the three research questions formulated to investigate the causes of rural insecurity, women's protests and agitation, their role in shaping democratic governance, and strategies for curbing these challenges in Nigeria. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in frequency tables with corresponding mean scores and decision rules.

Table 1

RQ1: What are the causes of rural insecurity, women's protest and Agitation in Eha-Amufu?

<i>S / N</i>	<i>ITEM</i>	<i>Responses</i>						
		<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M(X)</i>	<i>Decision</i>
1	Poor government presence in rural areas	250	190	5	3	448	3.53	Agree
2	Farmers–herders' conflict	221	207	12	09	449	3.43	Agree
3	Banditry and kidnapping	220	178	26	21	445	3.34	Agree
4	Inability to include women in governance fuels protest and agitation.	300	140	02	01	443	3.67	Strongly Agree

5	Government failure to adequately protect rural communities.	192	180	40	33	445	3.19	Agree
6	Poverty and unemployment	249	191	05	02	447	3.54	Agree
7	Community marginalization	111	100	13 9	95	445	2.51	Agree

Interpretation

All the listed items have mean scores above 2.5, indicating that respondents agreed that they are significant causes of rural insecurity, women's protest, and agitation in the area.

The top three strongest causes were:

1. Inability to include women in governance ($X = 3.67$)
 2. Poverty and unemployment ($X = 3.54$)
 3. Poor government presence in the rural areas ($X = 3.53$)
- Farmers–herders' conflict, banditry, and government's failure to protect rural communities also emerged as major contributing factors.

Although, community marginalization was acknowledged by some respondents (111 strongly agreed, 100 agreed), a significant proportion disagreed (139) or strongly disagreed (95), thereby lowering the mean score. This suggests that while marginalization may play a role in some contexts, it is not widely perceived as a primary cause compared to other factors such as exclusion of

women from governance, poverty, unemployment, and weak government presence in rural areas. The implication is that grievances leading to insecurity and agitation are seen as stemming more from direct socio-economic and governance-related deficiencies than from broad perceptions of marginalization.

From the analysis, it can be deduced that rural insecurity and women's protest in Nigeria are not merely caused by immediate violent incidents but are rooted in broader structural and systemic challenges. The exclusion of women from governance, widespread poverty and unemployment, weak state presence in rural areas, recurrent communal conflicts, and the increasing wave of banditry collectively contribute to an atmosphere of fear, frustration, and agitation.

The findings therefore suggest that addressing insecurity and protest in rural Nigeria, requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond security interventions to include inclusive governance, poverty alleviation, rural development, and stronger state protection mechanisms. The data in Table 1 show that all the items had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.5. This implies that the respondents generally agreed that the listed factors are significant causes of rural insecurity, women's protest, and agitation in Nigeria.

Among the causes identified, the inability to include women in governance recorded the highest mean score ($X = 3.67$), indicating that gender exclusion in decision-making is perceived as a very strong factor contributing to

women's agitation. Poverty and unemployment ($X = 3.54$) and poor government presence in rural areas ($X = 3.53$) also received high ratings, reflecting that socio-economic deprivation and neglect of rural areas remain critical drivers of insecurity and unrest.

Analysis and Interpretation

The results in Table 1 indicate that respondents generally agreed on a number of major causes of rural insecurity, women's protest, and agitation in Nigeria. The most highly rated cause was the exclusion of women from governance ($X = 3.67$), suggesting that political marginalization of women is a strong trigger for organized agitation. This was followed by poverty and unemployment ($X = 3.54$) and poor government presence in rural areas ($X = 3.53$), both of which point to socio-economic neglect and weak state engagement as significant contributors to insecurity and unrest.

Farmers-herders' conflict ($X = 3.43$) and the menace of banditry and kidnapping ($X = 3.34$) were strongly acknowledged as major threats to rural peace and stability. Likewise, government failure to adequately protect rural communities ($X = 3.19$) was seen as a significant cause of persistent insecurity.

Table 2

RQ2: To what extent has the role of women's protests and agitation contributed in shaping democratic governance

<i>S / N</i>	<i>ITEM</i>	<i>Responses</i>						
		<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M(X)</i>	<i>Decision</i>
1	Women's protests promote accountability in governance	199	199	27	23	448	3.28	Agree
2	Women's involvement in protest strengthens democracy in Nigeria	230	185	17	13	445	3.42	Agree
3	Women's protest challenged unjust political system and reforms	244	134	32	35	445	3.32	Agree
4	Women's protest created awareness about social justice and rights	202	198	16	29	445	3.29	Agree
5	Women's protest encouraged inclusivity and political participation	88	50	28 0	27	445	2.45	Disagree

6	Women's agitation pressured govt. to adopt Gender-Sensitive policies	55	55	17 3	16 2		2.01	Disagree
---	--	----	----	---------	---------	--	------	----------

Analysis and Interpretation:

Findings reveal that women's protests have significantly contributed to shaping democratic governance by promoting accountability ($X = 3.28$), strengthening democracy ($X = 3.41$), challenging unjust systems ($X = 3.32$), and creating awareness on social justice and human rights ($X = 3.29$). However, respondents disagreed that women's protests have substantially encouraged inclusivity in governance ($X = 2.18$) or pressured government to adopt gender-sensitive policies ($X = 1.98$). This suggests that while women's protests have had symbolic and mobilizational impacts, their influence on institutional reforms and policy inclusivity remains limited.

Table 3

RQ3: What Strategies would curb Rural Insecurity, Women's Protest and Agitation in Eha-Amufu (Nigeria).

S / N	ITEM	Responses						
		SA	A	D	SD	N	M(X)	Decision

1	Strengthening women in political participation can reduce insecurity.	194	163	46	42	445	3.14	Agree
2	Reformations of security sectors in rural communities	180	170	50	45	445	3.09	Agree
3	Dialogue, conflict resolution and mediation	188	190	50	25	453	3.19	Agree
4	Land reformations and agricultural modernization	220	169	29	27	445	3.31	Agree
5	Job creation, amenities, cooperatives & microcredit for women	201	190	28	26	445	3.27	Agree
6	Civic education and creation of awareness	103	107	16 6	69	445	2.55	Agree (weak)
7	Inclusion of women in governance	159	174	86	26	445	3.05	Agree

Analysis and Interpretation

Respondents strongly endorsed a combination of socio-economic and governance reforms as strategies to curb

insecurity and agitation. Land reforms and agricultural modernization ($X = 3.31$), job creation and empowerment ($X = 3.27$), and conflict resolution/dialogue ($X = 3.19$) were rated highest. Political inclusion of women ($X = 3.14$) and reforming rural security ($X = 3.09$) were also considered effective. Civic education ($X = 2.55$) received the lowest score, though still slightly above the decision threshold, suggesting respondents prioritize structural and economic interventions over awareness campaigns.

The findings of this study reveal that rural insecurity, women's protests, and agitation in Nigeria are deeply intertwined with structural governance failures, socio-economic deprivation, and gender exclusion. From Research Question One, the results show that rural insecurity is driven by poor government presence, poverty and unemployment, farmers–herders' conflicts, banditry and kidnapping, and the exclusion of women from governance. This aligns with Akinwale (2020), who argued that insecurity in rural Nigeria is primarily a product of weak state institutions and the absence of responsive governance structures. The finding that exclusion of women from governance fuels agitation also resonates with Odejide (2019), who emphasized the link between political marginalization and women's collective resistance.

With respect to Research Question Two, the findings demonstrate that women's protests have historically played a critical role in shaping democratic governance. Respondents agreed that women's agitation has promoted accountability, strengthened democracy, and raised

awareness on social justice and human rights. However, there was weaker agreement on whether these movements have effectively pressured government to adopt gender-sensitive policies or significantly encouraged inclusivity in governance. This reflects findings by Mama (2018), who noted that while women's activism has been successful in mobilization and awareness creation, its translation into concrete policy outcomes remains limited.

Research Question Three highlighted strategies for curbing insecurity and agitation. The most strongly endorsed strategies include land reforms and modernization of agriculture, job creation and economic empowerment for rural women, security sector reforms, dialogue and mediation, and the inclusion of women in governance. These findings support the work of Olajide & Abdulrahman (2021), who stressed that peacebuilding in rural Nigeria requires both socio-economic empowerment and institutional reforms. The relatively lower rating for civic education suggests that while awareness creation is valued, respondents prioritize more direct interventions that address livelihood and governance gaps.

Collectively, these findings emphasize that sustainable peace and democratic consolidation in Nigeria depend on addressing socio-economic deprivation, promoting inclusivity, and strengthening state institutions to meet the needs of marginalized rural populations.

The findings demonstrate that rural insecurity and women's agitation are deeply tied to systemic governance failures, socio-economic hardship, and political exclusion.

Exclusion of women from governance was rated the highest cause of protests, confirming earlier arguments by Odejide (2019) that gender marginalization drives women to collective resistance. Poverty and unemployment also emerged as central, consistent with Akinwale (2020), who linked rural insecurity to economic neglect.

Women's protests were shown to promote accountability and awareness but had limited impact on inclusivity and gender-sensitive policy adoption. This mirrors Mama (2018), who observed that women's activism often generates symbolic visibility but rarely translates into institutionalized reforms.

Respondents strongly endorsed strategies such as land reforms, agricultural modernization, and economic empowerment as sustainable measures. This agrees with Olajide & Abdulrahman (2021), who emphasized socio-economic empowerment and institutional reforms as pathways to rural peace. The endorsement of women's inclusion in governance also supports the global push for gender mainstreaming in political structures.

Conclusion

Across the three research questions, the study establishes that rural insecurity is caused by poverty, exclusion, poor governance, and violent conflicts; women's protests have historically promoted accountability and strengthened democracy; and effective solutions must combine economic empowerment, agricultural reforms, women's inclusion in governance, and security sector reforms.

Taken together, the findings suggest that women's protests serve as both a reaction to marginalization and a catalyst for democratic accountability. However, long-term peace and stability require holistic reforms that address governance gaps, economic deprivation, and gender exclusion.

The study concludes that rural insecurity in Nigeria is not merely a product of violent conflict but a manifestation of structural neglect, socio-economic deprivation, and political exclusion. Women's protests have been effective in drawing attention to injustice and holding governments accountable but have had limited impact on policy inclusivity. Sustainable peace and democratic consolidation require multi-dimensional reforms economic, social, political, and institution that prioritize inclusivity, empowerment, and accountability.

Recommendations

The study recommends to Strengthen Governance in Rural Areas by providing infrastructure, social services, and security services. This will bring development and peace in the area. It will also attract people from all over the country to come and settle for business or agriculture.

Women should be included in political participation by promoting Women's political inclusion through quotas, leadership training, and gender-sensitive policies.

They should be empowered for rural women development to be raised at a higher standard with microcredit, cooperatives, and job creation initiatives.

It is the duty of government to see that women are not marginalized in terms of comfortable lives.

They should also implement gender-sensitive policies that respond to women's demands and strengthen inclusivity and expand civic education and awareness to build democratic culture and informed women fully participation in politics by having a favourable ground to play.

For the sake of farmers in the area there should be reform and modernize agriculture via land reforms, mechanization, and improved technologies. This will help farmers to grow and have enough food to sell and feed their family members.

The security sectors should effectively tackle rural banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts. Also, should Adopt dialogue and mediation mechanisms for resolving farmers-herders' and communal clashes/disputes.

References:

Anadolu Agency. (2025, March 6). *Thousands of Enugu women protest herdsman terror in Nigeria*. Anadolu Agency. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/thousands-of-enugu-women-protest->

[herdsmen-terror-in-nigeria/3502161](#)

Anikwudike, C. N., & Agabi, P. T. (2024). *Effects of insecurity on the socio-political and economic development of Nigeria's rural environment: An appraisal*. University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy, 14(1) <https://www.unjpe.com/index.php/UNJPE/article/view/253>

Anikwudike, C. N., & Agabi, P. T. (2024). *Effects of insecurity on the socio-political and economic development of Nigeria's rural environment: An appraisal*. University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy, 14(1). Retrieved from <https://www.unjpe.com/index.php/UNJPE/article/view/253>

Associated Press. (2025, December 8). *Nigerian soldiers open fire on protesters in the northeast, killing nine, witnesses say*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/6e656a2599f60fddb048c5a8781a1db0>

Associated Press. (2025, December 8). *Nigerian soldiers open fire on protesters in the northeast, killing nine, witnesses say*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/6e656a2599f60fddb048c5a781a1db0>

Bamidele, S. (2026). *Climate change, resource conflicts, and rural women's empowerment in Nigeria amid democratic erosion: A feminist political economy perspective*. Women's Studies International Forum, 115, Article 103270. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2025.103270>

Bamidele, S. (2026). *Climate change, resource conflicts, and rural women's empowerment in*

- Nigeria amid democratic erosion: A feminist political economy perspective.* Women's Studies International Forum, 115, Article 103270. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2025.103270>
- Daily Post Nigeria. (2025, April 9). *Women protest against rising insecurity in Kogi community.* Daily Post Nigeria. <https://dailypost.ng/2025/04/09/women-protest-against-rising-insecurity-in-kogi-community/>
- Daily Post Nigeria. (2025, April 9). *Women protest against rising insecurity in Kogi community* .<https://dailypost.ng/2025/04/09/women-protest-against-rising-insecurity-in-kogi-community/>
- P.M. News Nigeria. (2025, October 17). *Insecurity threatens livelihoods, women farmers cry out.* <https://pmnewsnigeria.com/2025/10/17/insecurity-threatens-livelihoods-women-farmers-cry-out/>
- P.M. News. (2025, October 17). *Insecurity threatens livelihoods, women farmers cry out.* P.M. News Nigeria. <https://pmnewsnigeria.com/2025/10/17/insecurity-threatens-livelihoods-women-farmers-cry-out/>
- Punch Nigeria. (2025, April 10). *Ogun women protest herders' attacks, demand urgent govt action.* Punch NG. <https://punchng.com/ogun-women-protest-herders-attacks-demand-urgent-govt-action/>
- PunchNG. (2025, April 10). *Ogun women protest herders' attacks, demand urgent govt action.* <https://punchng.com/ogun-women-protest-herders-attacks-demand-urgent-govt-action/>
- Wikipedia contributors. (2025). *Ugbokpo, Nigeria.* In

Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ugbokpo%2CNigeria>

Yahaya, R. M. (2025). *Challenges of rural women in community development: Evidence from Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria*. *International Journal of African Sustainable Development Research*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.70382/tijasdr.v09i2.045>

Yahaya, R. M. (2025). *Challenges of rural women in community development: Evidence from Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria*. *International Journal of African Sustainable Development Research*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.70382/tijasdr.v09i2.045>