THE GOVERNANCE OF PERMEABLE BORDERS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN SECURITY IN EMERGING ECONOMY: A MIXED METHODS OF IBARAPA, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

Lawal A. BAKARE PhD
Department of Public Administration
Faculty of Management Sciences
Osun State University, Osogbo

Leke K. ONABANJO PhD
Department of Public Administration
Faculty of Management Sciences
Osun State University, Osogbo

Oluwafisayo O. FALOWO PhD
Department of Public Administration
Faculty of Management Sciences
Osun State University, Osogbo

Abstract: *In the recent past, Nigeria has experienced a significant decline in domestic security, with permeable borders becoming a vital channel for transnational criminal organisations. Notwithstanding increasing subregional and multinational partnerships to combat illicit cross-border activity, borderland communities persist in facing risks to human security. This study rigorously analyses the relationship between border porosity and human security in Ibarapa, a pivotal border area in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study utilised a mixed-methods technique within a survey research design, collecting quantitative data using structured questionnaires distributed to 400 purposively selected people of Ibarapa's border towns. Qualitative insights were obtained from key informant interviews and observations. Descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis were employed to analyse the data. Findings reveal that porous borders in the Ibarapa region have facilitated the influx of undocumented migrants and enabled the proliferation of transnational crimes including human trafficking, arms smuggling, cattle rustling, and cross-border terrorism. These dynamics have significantly undermined the human security of residents by eroding public safety, exacerbating socio-economic vulnerabilities, and weakening institutional control. The study underscores the need for a multidimensional policy response that strengthens both formal and informal governance institutions. It recommends enhanced border governance through the deployment of advanced surveillance technology, inter-agency cooperation, and the harmonisation of traditional and statutory security mechanisms. Ultimately, a shared institutional vision and strengthened value systems at border interfaces are imperative for safeguarding human security and promoting regional stability.*

Contact details of the author(s): Email: lawal.bakare@uniosun.edu.ng
leke.onabanjo@uniosun.edu.ng
oluwafisayo.falowo@uniosun.edu.ng

INTRODUCTION

Across the world today, there has been noticeable increase in the rate of migration from one country to another. This is not unconnected to peoples' desire to fulfil their socioeconomic needs. As crimes and terrorist attacks rise around the world, so does the significance of securing borders. The total land area enclosed by Nigeria's borders is 4,047 kilometres and 853 kilometres (453 nautical miles). The colonial powers partitioned the region at the 1884 Berlin Conference (Onyekwelu, 2017). The territorial and administrative boundaries of a state are established by its international borders. It might be managed in whole or in part, at a single location or at multiple locations spread out over the country. When it comes to combating global security threats, especially those associated with arms smuggling and terrorist acts, border security and management must be at the top of any country's list of priorities (Dolliver, Ericson, & Love, 2018). The inadequate demarcation and naming of territory by the government of Nigeria has contributed to the porous boundaries that exist between Nigeria and its surrounding countries. Similar to other West African countries, Nigeria has had to deal with transnational crimes that pose a serious threat to national and community safety. Many unlawful activities, such as those involving drugs, people, money, or weapons, are examples of this. Border porosity has emerged as a major issue, contributing to the spread of weapons along the border and undermining human safety.

It has been documented in literature that all sorts of aberrant transnational criminal and illegal activities are possible through Nigeria's open borders. Despite the best efforts of the Immigration Services, Customs Service, Nigeria Police, Department for Security Services, etc. to secure the country's designated border locations, criminal activity continues to be a problem. Human trafficking and the illegal arms trade continue to pose a serious danger to global safety. These actions impact the country's political climate as well as its social and economic indicators. Civil wars, organised criminal violence, insurgency, terrorism, and human security may all be fueled by a rise of illicit guns in circulation, making this the most pressing security threat to individuals, society, and nation-states today. Sustainable peace, security, and economic development in border communities and the nation as a whole would be hampered by these trends (Bashir, 2018). Because of the prevalence of ethnic militias, youth unrest, terrorism, and other transnational crimes, a country's image as a corporate and independent entity is sometimes tarnished as a result (Lalonde, 2017).

Border porousness has existed for as long as there has been a country known as Nigeria. Despite a lack of supporting data, it grew more noticeable in the 1980s and 1990s. Various types of criminal

markets, including those dealing in large-scale financial fraud, arms proliferation, human trafficking, and cybercrimes, have flourished in recent years thanks to increased border porousness. The Nigerian government has prioritised the management of illegal arms movements due to the extraordinary consequences of such transfers (Nelson, 2019).

Over the past decade, Nigeria's domestic security has deteriorated. Cross-border criminal activity is still a major contributor to instability in Nigeria and the rest of Africa, despite growing regional and international cooperation to combat it. Along with a growing commitment to free trade agreements and the free flow of products and people within the West African sub-region (Anyanwu, Erhijakpor, & Obi, 2016), the complexity of transnational organised crime (TOC) has risen sharply in recent years.As one example, transnational crime is rampant, especially in and around border towns like Ibarapa. Small arms and light weapon smuggling, drug and human trafficking, armed attacks at border areas, and similar actions all fall under this category. Most of the time, the only reason these crimes are withdrawn is to avoid being prosecuted by international security agencies (Adeolu & Fayomi, 2018). Weak governance and porous borderlines among communities that share borders with other nations may be to blame for the emergence of transnational crimes. This is unmistakably reflected in the way the country's borders look. Sossou-Agbo (2016) claims that crime has been on the rise in the rural areas around Nigeria's major cities and in the towns and villages located near the country's borders. This study focuses on the empirical analysis of border porosity and its implications on human security in Nigeria. this is achieved by focusing on one of the areas called Ibarapa town which is one of the border areas of the country. The broad objective of this study is to investigate the effect of border porosity on human security in Ibarapa community of Oyo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to examine the thread of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community; and assess the effect of border porosity on human security in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria.

MAIN TEXT
Review of Literature

Border

The concept of a state's boundary is crucial to the functioning of both national and global legal and political structures (Sandor, 2016). According to O'Dowd (2010), borders are strategic intersections for a wide range of actors, both legal and illicit, seeking to further their own economic and political goals. When describing border regions, Brown (2013) divides them into four categories: open border,

provincial, intermediate, and border. According to Kahiya, and Kadirov (2020), borders are areas where unofficial economies, such as the informal, underground, parallel, unrecorded, or second economies, coexist with formal economies.

Newman (2003) explain that borders serve two primary functions: providing security from both external and internal threats and defining territory. Zartman (2010) argues that borders are not drawn through physical features but rather through people. They are depicted as thin lines on maps, but in reality they have many more dimensions. In the borderlands, no one ever truly feels at home since they are "boundaries in depth" (Ramutsindela, 2017) comprehending boundaries and the peripheral links between the nations and cultures contained within them is impossible from a human perspective without first comprehending what it is like to live along them (Zartman, 2010). The elimination of restrictions on the international movement of capital; a substantial rise in foreign direct investments; globalisation of culture in the form of prominent consumer products and communications networks; and the broad adoption of neoliberalism are just some of the factors that have contributed to the growing significance of borders. For obvious reasons, states set up boundaries to ensure the safety of areas that are important to them, either because of the people who live there or the resources they contain. These borders may serve as reminders of the antagonism between states or as symbols of the state's eminent domain and the stability of its ties with its neighbours. According to O'Dowd (2001), borders exist everywhere because people always want to feel safe, secure, and included. Borders are defined in different ways depending on who you ask: Physical features such as border stones, walls, and fences, or natural features such as rivers, mountain ranges, and even trees, grow endowed with human-constructed meaning as border markers; Oladapo, Aladejebi and Ayeni (2021), as a means for recognising areas where state sovereignty continues to exist; Slack, Martinesz, Lee and Whiteford (2017), as an essentially unchanged system of territorial demarcation. The basic purpose of geographical boundaries is to clearly define and divide up different areas.

Border Porosity

Porosity at the border can be thought of as a leaky or broken border that facilitates the undocumented passage of people, goods, and weapons across international borders. Border porousness has grown significantly since the advent of globalisation (Shanas et al., 2011). As the world's nations have opened their borders in response to globalisation, new regional arrangements and transnational activities have evolved, each with its own distinct political, cultural, and socio-economic sector.

Africa's porous borders date back to the colonial era, specifically the second administration, when several African countries gained their freedom from colonial rule. Before African countries gained their independence, Africans were more preoccupied with demarcating territory than they were with building a political and economic circle of dominance. However, the boundaries that were established by the colonial administration did not take into account the socio-cultural basics of the African people and did not provide any explanations for why Africans were dispersed across borders (Akinyemi, 2013). However, when the Cold War ended, a new phenomena emerged in the international community, and porous borders and the reoccurring crimes related with them have been prominent among these developing issues. This endangers international stability and peace. With the rise of globalisation, the scope and velocity of transnational crimes have grown (Shanas et al., 2011). As a result, this factored into the push for global borderless travel. As a result, countries with diverse levels of socioeconomic, political, and cultural development are combined in some regional arrangement or another, which has aided in the facilitation of transnational criminal operations (Aduloju & Opanike, 2015).

Safety of the Nation

When it comes to protecting a nation, security is defined by Adebakin and Raimi (2012) as any action that does just that. The public and its assets are safe against any and all potential dangers in the future. Protecting people and communities against unnoticed threats and unwanted intervention is what we mean when we talk about safety. A nation's safety includes safeguarding its environment, ensuring its citizens have access to adequate food and social services, and preventing domestic unrest. Without these protections, the system can devolve into military, economic, intellectual, cultural, or even personal disorder, turmoil, and eventual dissolution.

National security, therefore, is obviously crucial to a nation's economic growth and progress. Abdullahi and Gawi (2021) stated that for decades, concerns over national security have dominated thoughts of development policy. Since the conclusion of the Cold War, numerous scientists have been at the forefront of the security discussion by redefining the very meaning of security itself. The idea of security is being expanded from the national to the societal and personal levels, and from the military to the non-military spheres. This concept is often associated with the prompt and efficient removal of any potential threat to something of value. In this context, "national security" refers to

efforts to ensure the safety of all Nigerians, preserve the country's borders, and help the country's economy thrive in a way that benefits both Nigerians and the country's international allies.

Safety also includes the avoidance of overt threats and the neutralisation of disruptive influences in one's personal, professional, and social spheres. According to Evetan and Urhi (2018), security is best defined as the absence of fear for one's own safety or the safety of others, as well as the safeguarding of one's community's human and material resources. It's important to think about safeguards that can protect people from the most pressing dangers that stand in the way of them achieving their full potential. There will be anarchy, bloodshed, upheaval, and possible disintegration if lives and property are not adequately protected. Conflicts can also be economic or ideological in nature. People need to be safeguarded against external threats as well as internal shocks including poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, disease, lack of education, lack of shelter, pollution, and social and economic inequality. According to Riva (2017), peace, stability, and long-term growth can't be achieved without strong national security.

Theoretical Model of the Securitization Process

The theory of securitization is a school of thought within international relations that aims to explain how politicians and other decision-makers formulate policies about national security. This theory was developed in the 1990s by the Copenhagen School under the guidance of Barry Buzan, as the majority of the articles were published at the Conflict and Peace Research Institute around that time. When it comes to national security, political challenges are among the most pressing, as stated by Eroukhmanoff (2018). For an actor with the institutional and social clout to advance an issue beyond politics, ignoring political considerations is risky, frightening, scary, and alarming.

Considering the permeable nature of borders as an example, security issues went from being of low political priority to being of high political significance, necessitating immediate action (Abdulhamid, 2018). The usual understanding of security holds that labelling a problem as one relating to security automatically elevates the level of that issue to that of a security concern, hence this approach runs counter to that. Here are a few of the most basic assumptions that underpin securitization theory. Here are some of them: After the end of the cold war, ideas about security grew to encompass more than just political and military forms of danger. that feminism was playing a significant role in the production of security, and that gender and security were intertwined; that theory identified the societal, military, economic, environmental, and political sectors of a country; and that this

broadened security encompassed regional security, human security, and concepts of identity as well as culture.

Nigerian and African Borders

Walls and partitions are examples of international boundaries; however, state boundaries are artificial and serve to demarcate the territory that belongs to one state from that of another. States have been drafting and designing their territories as part of their independence from colonial rule ever since they achieved political independence. As a result, in international relations, states have made border security—preventing outside interference in their affairs and preventing aggression against the state—the central focus of their national interests. This is also the case in Africa, where nations only recently gained political independence from their former colonial masters.

Africa has 109 international borders, but only 25% of them have been demarcated, leaving a lot of room for porous borders (Okumu, 2011). There are also only 414 roads connecting the African states, of which 69 have no customs at all. As the largest country in Africa, Nigeria has long land boundaries with several of its neighbours. This is especially true in the West African region. The distance between Nigeria and Benin Republic is 773 kilometres, between Nigeria and Niger Republic is 1497 kilometres, between Nigeria and Chad is 87 kilometres, and between Nigeria and Cameroon is 1690 kilometres (Babatola, 2015). The porous borders between Nigeria and Benin Republic pose serious challenges and security dangers, especially to the Ibarapa people. The porousness of these borders has resulted in several dangers to Nigeria's national security. One practise with a lengthy history is human trafficking. This practise dates back millennia and has developed from a bonding relationship. The United Nations Protocol to Avoid, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Including Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol, declared the practise illegal worldwide in 2000 in response to the epidemic. Since then, concerns regarding trafficking in persons among scholars and professionals have gained traction due to the increased political understanding of the risks and mortality of victims borne by the conflict.

Although Nigeria is the most populous and prosperous nation in West Africa, its porous borders with Niger Republic have been used by slave traffickers to bring young girls to Europe. This is because Nigeria is so economically, demographically, and militarily dominant in the region that its neighbours are forced to depend on it. Nigerians cannot afford to stop working towards global peace and security once they have achieved it at home (Akinyemi, 2013). Until the existing global order

disadvantages us, convergence and cooperation are also vital in the globalised 21st century. Africa's porous borders seem to encourage continual action of weaponry expansion, human trafficking, and lack of effective protection and identification measures, and the high levels of poverty in neighbouring nations only add fuel to the fire. The region is also notable for its porous borders and cross-border connectivity as a result of the development of ethnolinguistic ties between people in places like Nigeria and the Niger Republic following the unilateral redelineation of national borders by European interests in the late nineteenth century, separating ethnic groups (Eveslage, 2013).

C Methodology

This study will cover Ibarapa Community of Oyo State Nigeria which is one of the border communities in Oyo State. The justification for choosing this border community is owing to the in-depth understanding of the environment and social landscape. This border community comprises of eighteen (18) communities and villages namely: Eruwa, Lanlate, Igboora, Idere, Ayete, Tapa, Iganga, Itabo, Molete and Idere villages, Onigbio and Oke-Oba, Apa and Koso, Iberekodo I and villages, Iberekodo II and villages, Idofin and Saganun villages, Pako and villages, Isale-Oba and villages, Oke-Iserin and villages, and Oke-Odo and villages. Ibarapa Community will be delimited to a manageable methodological scope by selecting nine (9) out of the eighteen (18) communities and villages, thus representing 50% of the total eighteen (18) communities and villages in the study area. Hence, this study will be carried out in the selected nine communities and villages and its findings will be capable of providing information on situation analysis of the border porosity and human security in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. The time frame for this study is the period between 2019 and 2022. The choice of this period is because the issue of attack and invasion by banditry on communities and villages across Ibarapa Community caught the attention of the world in 2021, and since then, integrated efforts have been on-going to deploy more troops and collaborations between government forces (NIS, NCS, among others) and local securities forces (vigilantes).

The variable scope of border porosity in the context of this study will be confined to the porous spot at the border communities and villages in Ibarapa Community such as Igangan among others. On the other hand, the scope of arms proliferation and human security are within the range of their dimensional components enlisted in the outline of ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP). Since the focus of the study is on participants, outcomes, and methods, a survey research design seems acceptable.

Multistage sampling technique was employed for this study. At the first stage, Ibarapa Community was stratified into three axes, i.e. Ibarapa Central Local Government, Ibarapa East Local Government and Ibarapa North Local Government due to their geographical closeness and proximity. At the second stage, Eruwa, Lanlate, Igboora, Idere, Ayete, Ayete, Iganga, Itabo, Molete and Idere villages, Onigbio and Oke-Oba, Apa and Koso, Iberekodo I and villages, Iberekodo II and villages, Idofin and Saganun villages, Pako and villages, Isale-Oba and villages, Oke-Iserin and villages, and Oke-Odo and villages were carefully picked along each of the three dimensions. The goal of this selection is to provide a balanced representation of the three axes in each of the three municipalities. Third, using simple random sampling, one community and one village from each of the three local governments involved in the study were selected, for a grand total of three communities and three villages.

At the fourth stage, Taro Yamane Simplified formula for proportions was adopted to determine the study groups, thus;

$n = N/1 + N (e)^2$

n = Sample Size

N = Population Size

e = .05 level of precision at 95% confidence level

Therefore;

n =? N = 322, 297; e = .05

$n = 322,297/1 + 322, 297(.05)^2$

By implication, **(400)** respondents were selected for the sample size. Data were systematically collected through questionnaires and interviews for this in-depth study, and then presented and evaluated to describe the connection between porous borders and human security in the region. The data collected from both primary and secondary sources, were analysed using appropriate descriptive statistics as well as content analysis.
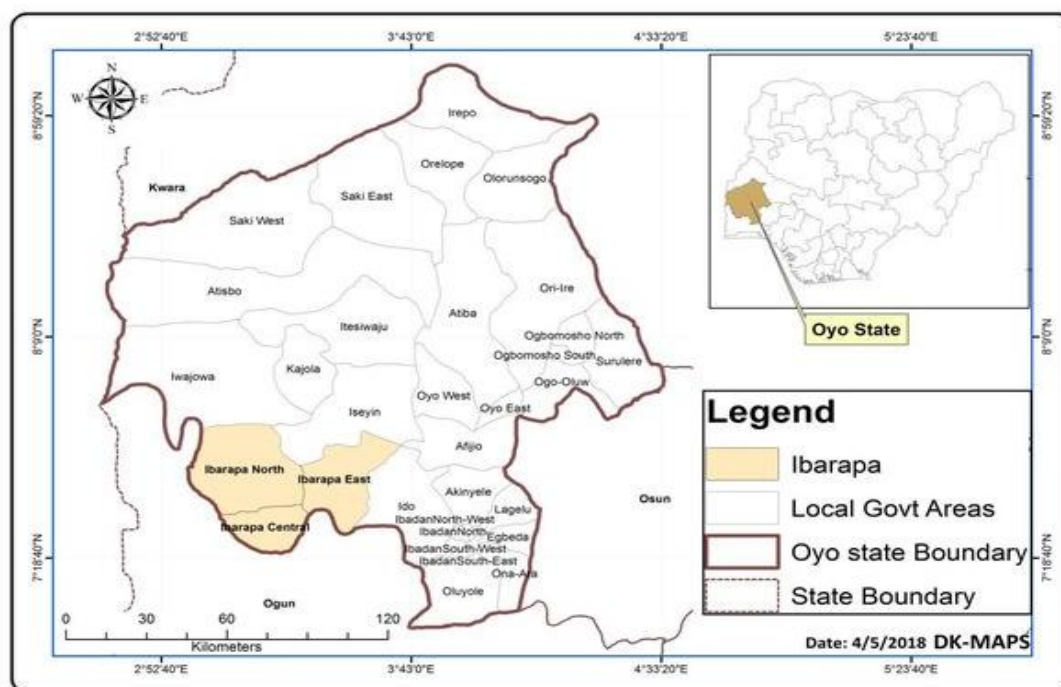
Figure 1: Map of Oyo State
 Source: Author's Compilation, 2025

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 286 copies of questionnaire were retrieved from the field out of 400 copies distributed. This represents 71.5% of the total questionnaires distributed.

The threat of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria

Based on the data in Table 1, titled *"The threat of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria"*, a deep, critical and scholarly interpretation reveals a troubling picture of systemic border vulnerabilities, institutional failures, and heightened human insecurity in the study area. The findings underscore multiple overlapping dynamics, reflecting both structural and operational threats to national and local security.

The assertion that "Border communities are used as transit for smuggling arms by smugglers" garnered a significant agreement rate, with 60.5% agreeing and 18.9% strongly agreeing, yielding a mean score of 2.08. Although this is slightly below the neutral midpoint (mean = 2.5), the substantial agreement suggests that border porosity remains a conduit for illegal arms inflow. This aligns with Onuoha (2013) who warned that Nigeria's vast and poorly monitored borders have become pipelines for arms trafficking, further exacerbating internal insecurity.

Similarly, the assertion on "absence of successful monitoring by security agents" received the second-highest agreement (42.7% agree; 21.0% strongly agree; mean = 2.25), reinforcing the perception that state security mechanisms are either underfunded or structurally incapacitated. Akinyemi and Olaniyan (2022) support this in their study on border security, showing that weak

inter-agency coordination, logistical gaps, and politicization of border policing compromise Nigeria's territorial integrity.

The "corrupt engagement of security personnel" shows a higher mean value of 2.55, with 44.4% agreeing and 30.8% disagreeing. This indicates that while some respondents are skeptical, a majority perceive corruption among border officials as a driver of insecurity. This finding is echoed in Uzochukwu (2020) who argues that corruption among security agents significantly facilitates trans-border criminal activities, from human trafficking to arms and drug smuggling.

On "lack of clear border delimitation", 46.2% agreed and 13.3% strongly agreed (mean = 2.38), suggesting that unresolved demarcation issues in Ibarapa communities contribute to tensions and jurisdictional ambiguity. This is a structural problem that has long plagued Nigeria's border towns, as shown by Eze (2017), who notes that boundary disputes and vague borderlines in West Africa often fuel cross-border skirmishes and informal security arrangements.

Concerning the assertion that "foreign criminals enter Nigeria, adding to crime in Ibarapa", 46.9% agreed and 18.2% strongly agreed, yielding a mean = 2.26. The perceived impact of foreign actors underscores the transnational dimension of insecurity, confirming Alemika (2021)'s observation that porous borders have transformed Nigeria's local security challenges into regional security threats.

The assertion referencing 2014 and over 1,400 unofficial entry points into Nigeria had a mean = 2.20, showing that the historical context of border porosity is well known among residents. Sahara Reporters (2014) and Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (2015) document similar figures, confirming the factual basis of this claim. The historical memory of such vulnerability remains embedded in the local consciousness.

Regarding "globalisation's influence on open borders", the mean score of 2.36 with a 46.9% agreement rate reflects ambivalence but recognition of external economic and political pressures that weaken border controls. Held and McGrew (2007) point out that globalisation facilitates both legitimate and illicit flows, thereby complicating border governance in fragile states like Nigeria.

The assertion on "rise of trans-border crimes" with a mean of 2.45 and a relatively high standard deviation (.91) shows variance in perception, though a sizable portion agrees. This supports the growing literature, such as Adebayo (2019), that documents increased cattle rustling, kidnapping, and drug smuggling linked to unregulated cross-border movements.

The statement "migration and human trafficking are rising at an alarming rate" had the highest mean value at 2.74, indicating broad consensus. This supports UNODC (2022) findings that Nigeria remains both a source and transit country for human trafficking. The high disagreement (29%) also reflects a tension between lived experiences and media/institutional narratives.

Finally, the claim on "illegal routes created by smugglers in connivance with security personnel" had a mean = 2.51, reflecting strong perception of complicity. This supports findings by Ibrahim and Igbokwe (2020), who highlighted how informal arrangements between smugglers and officials undermine border management strategies.

The data illustrates a complex security ecosystem shaped by institutional weakness, corruption, unregulated migration, and historical neglect. Porous borders have become both physical and symbolic manifestations of Nigeria's fragile state capacity. A deeper intervention would require not just militarised responses, but also administrative reforms, bilateral cooperation, and grassroots surveillance systems. These findings align with and extend prior scholarship on border security and human security in Nigeria, offering evidence-based insights for policy and academic engagement.

Table 1. The threat of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria

Assertions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response	Descriptive Statistics N = 286	
	f (%)	F (%)	F (%)	f (%)	f (%)	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
Borders community was used as transit for smuggling arms by smugglers.	54 (18.9)	173 (60.5)	36 (12.6)	21 (7.3)	2 (.7)	2.0845	.77953
Absence of successful monitoring by security agents.	60 (21.0)	122 (42.7)	74 (25.9)	28 (9.8)	2 (.7)	2.2465	.89905
Corrupt engagements of the security officials at the borders community.	21 (7.3)	127 (44.4)	88 (30.8)	43 (15.0)	7 (2.4)	2.5484	.84201
Lack of clear delimitation and demarcation create tension within the borders community in Ibarapa area.	38 (13.3)	132 (46.2)	77 (26.9)	34 (11.9)	5 (1.7)	2.3808	.86655
Foreign criminals easily enter the country, adding to the already terrifying crime rate in Ibarapa and the rest of Nigeria.	52 (18.2)	134 (46.9)	66 (23.1)	30 (10.5)	4 (1.4)	2.2624	.88197
In 2014, criminals used over 1,400 unofficial entry points into Nigeria to smuggle in a wide variety of weaponry.	60 (21.0)	126 (44.1)	70 (24.5)	24 (8.4)	6 (2.1)	2.2071	.87577
The emergence of globalisation pushed governments to open their borders.	37 (12.9)	134 (46.9)	79 (27.6)	29 (10.1)	7 (2.4)	2.3584	.84000
The rise of trans-border crimes.	42 (14.7)	113 (39.5)	87 (30.4)	41 (14.3)	3 (1.0)	2.4488	.91482
Migration and human trafficking are on the rise at an alarming rate.	30 (10.5)	95 (33.2)	77 (26.9)	83 (29.0)	1 (.3)	2.7474	.99260
Increasing in numerous	45	103	82	55	1	2.515	.97717

illegal routes created by smuggling entrepreneurs in connivance with security personnel.	(15.7)	(36.0)	(28.7)	(19.2)	(.3)	8	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The effect of border porosity on human security in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria

The data presented in Table 2 critically explores the effects of border porosity on human security in the Ibarapa community of Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings strongly suggest that porous borders significantly undermine local safety, economic stability, and intergroup relations. The respondents' perceptions, measured on a Likert scale, reveal consistent agreement across multiple dimensions, with most mean scores falling between 1.7 and 2.4. These values imply a general consensus among participants about the negative implications of border porosity, despite slight variations in intensity across the statements.

The first assertion, that porous borders have enabled illegal trade including human trafficking, received a mean score of 1.74 with a low standard deviation of 0.67, indicating strong agreement and homogeneity of responses. This reflects the embedded nature of transnational criminal networks in the border area, corroborated by Adeola and Fayomi (2012), who argue that the lack of effective state control over Nigeria's western borders facilitates trans-border criminality and informal economic networks that thrive on porous boundaries.

The influx of undocumented migrants posing threats to Ibarapa villages is also widely acknowledged, with a mean of 2.14. Respondents believe this has strained local resources and exacerbated insecurity, echoing Nte (2011), who observed that migration through uncontrolled routes in West Africa heightens tensions in already fragile communities. The perception that the government has failed to act effectively against these threats is evident in the response to the statement on deaths and abductions, which has a mean score of 2.19. This is critical, as it indicates both a security vacuum and a failure in institutional response, aligning with Ojebode and Akingbulu (2016), who highlight governance gaps in Nigeria's rural border regions.

Citizens' growing sense of fear and need for heavy self-protection (mean = 2.15) reflects a breakdown in public trust in the state's ability to secure lives and property. The situation has driven the rise of informal protection measures and vigilante groups, which may further erode the state's monopoly on violence and legitimacy, as noted in Olanrewaju and Folarin (2021). Similarly, the persistent attacks on border communities (mean = 2.29) and conflicts between Fulani herders and local host communities (mean = 2.24) underscore the ethnic dimension of the insecurity crisis. These findings are consistent with Suberu (2020), who argues that Nigeria's failure to implement a comprehensive pastoralism policy has worsened intergroup conflicts in agrarian communities.

The highest mean score (2.44) was recorded for the statement on conflict between farmers and herders due to cattle encroachment on farmlands, which reflects not only increasing hostility but also the ecological and livelihood dimensions of border insecurity. The wide standard deviation (.91) further suggests that while the trend is recognized, its manifestations vary widely across respondents, likely due to location-specific factors or proximity to direct conflict zones.

Collectively, these findings illuminate the multidimensional threat that border porosity poses to human security—affecting safety, economic productivity, social cohesion, and trust in governance. They point to the urgent need for integrated policy responses that combine security enforcement, community-based peacebuilding, and border governance reform. The data also validates previous scholarly assertions that unless Nigeria addresses the root causes of insecurity and enhances border

integrity, the cycle of fear, displacement, and underdevelopment in communities like Ibarapa will persist.

Table 2: The effect of border porosity on and human security in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria

Assertions	Strongly agree F (%)	Agree f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Strongly Disagree f (%)	No Response f (%)	Descriptive Statistics N = 286 Mean Value	Standard Deviation
Due to porous borders, illegal trade has flourished, including the trafficking of people.	103 (36.0)	157 (54.9)	18 (6.3)	6 (2.1)	2 (.7)	1.7430	.66788
The influx of unchecked and undocumented migrants has continued to pose unsalutary effects on Ibarapa communities and villages.	45 (15.7)	164 (57.3)	63 (22.0)	11 (3.8)	3 (1.0)	2.1413	.72039
Many deaths, abductions, and displacements have occurred because the government has done little to stop it.	37 (12.9)	176 (61.5)	47 (16.4)	22 (7.7)	4 (1.4)	2.1915	.75849
Increasing in citizens' fear and heavy protection.	49 (17.1)	156 (54.5)	65 (22.7)	14 (4.9)	2 (.7)	2.1549	.75935
The incessant attack on various border communities.	44 (15.4)	136 (47.6)	80 (28.0)	23 (8.0)	3 (1.0)	2.2898	.82565
Constant conflict face-off between host communities and Fulani Herder in Ibarapa community.	47 (16.4)	142 (49.7)	74 (25.9)	21 (7.3)	2 (.7)	2.2430	.81556
Incessant conflicts between the cow herders and farmers as a result of cattle encroaching on farmlands.	40 (14.0)	124 (43.4)	78 (27.3)	44 (15.4)	- (-)	2.4406	.91477

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Qualitative Analysis: Interview Report

The general response from the key respondents on the thread of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria is attributed to the rise of trans-border crimes. This, according to the key informants was a general trans-border quagmire in the entire country. All states of federation were all subjected to lack of clear delimitation and demarcation.

Mr. Kounwi Adeogun in his submissions stated that;

> It is not easy to curb trans-border activities but to me I think they have tried because for the time being I think they have been able to stop some people I think I have some friends who are into smuggling business because they say there is no way, road is

> tight . For example within this axis here ehn some weeks ago arms came through water but because of the cost of involve in moving them, they have not been able to cross one single riffle. The government should do more by giving security agencies enough equipment to match up with these smugglers.
> (Male/Ibarapa/Feb. 2025)

This perspective was equally supported by Alhaji Akanmu Erinola

> Nigeria security agencies at border communities critically contribute to suppressing smuggling activities in the border communities despite the challenges of all border areas in Nigeria, although the Nigerian security agencies are critically contributing to reduce to the barest minimum activities arms smugglers in the border communities.
> (Male/Ibarapa/Jan. 2025)

The implication is that Despite the challenges faced by all border areas in Nigeria, the Nigerian security agencies at border communities are making a critical contribution to suppressing smuggling activities in the border communities. Additionally, the Nigerian security agencies are making a critical contribution to reduce to the barest minimum the number of activities arms smugglers engage in within the border communities.

Discussion of Findings

From the first objective all the respondents acknowledged that to curb thread of border porosity, light arms proliferation and human security along Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. The study found out that borders community was used as transit for smuggling arms by smugglers; absence of successful monitoring by security agents; corrupt engagements of the security officials at the borders community; lack of clear delimitation and demarcation create tension within the borders community in Ibarapa area; foreign criminals easily enter Ibarapa and the rest of Nigeria, adding to the region's already terrifying crime rate; Over 1,400 unlawful border crossings were reported in Nigeria in 2014, through which criminals smuggled in a wide variety of weaponry. The rise of globalisation pushed the opening of borders of countries throughout the world. the rise of trans-border crimes; high increase in smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons; increasing in numerous illegal routes created by smuggling entrepreneurs in connivance with security personnel; and high rate of transnational organised crimes carried out along the borders of the country. However, as identified by Maetens (2007), which concern is to develop approaches in addressing border porosity, light arms proliferations and human security within the region; this statement was supplemented by Mark and Iwebi (2019) which emphasised on the Nigerian security agencies, and other joint border security patrol are constantly running battles with smugglers, traffickers especially in making sure that the environment are free of despicable activities.

The terrible truth that Nigeria's borders are incredibly porous is staring everyone square in the face. It's puzzling that no government has done much to address this issue over the years (Punch, 3 March 2022). The government's inaction is especially troubling given evidence that illegal arms proliferation has been aided by the porous borders, especially in the northeast, southwest, and northwest, and that criminals from all over the world can easily enter the country without being stopped. This is facilitated in large part by the fact that as of 2014, Nigeria has over 1,400 illicit border ways via which criminals brought in a wide variety of weaponry. Many people have been killed, kidnapped, and displaced as a result of this, while others can simply not be located. Only the wealthy minority in Nigeria doesn't have to live in constant fear.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results of the data analysis revealed that border porosity had negative effect on human security at border communities in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. It was also found that border porosity has highly contributed to increasing in cross-border criminalities which range from cattle rustling, automobile theft, and smuggling of arms, ammunition and commodities, human trafficking, terrorism among others.

On the effects of border porosity on human security in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria, it was found that the influx of unchecked and undocumented migrants had continued to pose unsalutary effects on Ibarapa communities and villages. It was also found that boundary porosity had strengthened unlawful commercial interactions such as the trade of human beings. The study showed that there was increase raping of women and abduction of people at gunpoint in Ibarapa community. The influx of unchecked and undocumented migrants had continued to pose unsalutary effects on Ibarapa communities and villages. The study concluded that border porosity on arms proliferation had negative effect on human security at border communities in Ibarapa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. Government should strengthen the capacity of deciding institutions with necessary equipment so as to facilitate their efficient discharge of the official administrative procedures. Formal and informal institutions in border towns need be united under a shared vision. This would, in turn, beef up the value system of the institutions. Institutions need contextual knowledge of their contexts in order to effectively combat smuggling.

REFERENCES

Abdulhamid, N. A. (2018). The Securitization of Immigration in the European Union: A New (Cultural) Racism. *Potentia: Journal of International Affairs*, *9*, 46-56.

Abdullahi, A., & Gawi, Y. A. (2021). The Effects of Border Porosity on Nigeria's National Security: A Study of Nigeria's Northeastern Border to Cameroon. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, *5*(05), 442-450.

Adebakin, M. A., & Raimi, L. (2012). National security challengesand sustainable economic development: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, *1*(1).

Adeolu, L.G., & Fayomi, O. (2012). *The political and Security Implications of Cross Border Migration.*

Aduloju, A., & Opanike, A. (2015). ECOWAS protocol on free movement and trans-border security in West Africa. *Covenant Univ J Polit Int Aff*, *3*(1), 41-7.

Akinyemi, O. (2013). Globalization and Nigeria border security: Issues and challenges. *Globalization*, *11*, 96-117.

Anyanwu, J. C., Erhijakpor, A. E., & Obi, E. (2016). Empirical analysis of the key drivers of income inequality in West Africa. *African Development Review*, *28*(1), 18-38.

Babatola, J. E. (2015, March). Challenges of Nigeria's borders and frontier-security. In *Seminar paper of Department of History and International Relations, Ekiti State University*.

Bashir, U. K. M. (2018). *Challenges Facing Somali Women Refugees In Dadaab Refugee Camp, 1991-2016* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Brown, C. (2013). The borders of (international) political theory. In *Political theory in transition* (pp. 190-208). Routledge.

Dolliver, D. S., Ericson, S. P., & Love, K. L. (2018). A geographic analysis of drug trafficking patterns on the tor network. *Geographical Review*, *108*(1), 45-68.

Eroukhmanoff, C. (2018). Securing diplomacy in the war on terrorism: a critical perspective. Stanford University Press.

Eveslage, B. S. (2013). Clarifying Boko Haram's transnational intentions, using content analysis of public statements in 2012. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *7*(5), 47-76.

Kahiya, E., & Kadirov, D. (2020). Informal cross border trade as a substratum marketing system: a review and conceptual framework. *Journal of Macromarketing*, *40*(1), 88-109.

Lalonde, P. C. (2021). Border Security Meets Black Mirror: Perceptions of Technologization from the Windsor Borderland. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 21(1) 1-22.

Mark, K. C., & Iwebi, J. C. (2019). Border control and arms smuggling in Nigeria: Glitches and diagnoses. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, *4*(6), 903-910.

Nelson, R. L. (2019). Pitas and Passports: Arab Foodways in the Windsor-Detroit Borderlands. *Mashriq & Mahjar: Journal of Middle East and North African Migration Studies*, *6*(2).

Newman, D. (2003). On borders and power: A theoretical framework. *Journal of borderlands studies*, *18*(1), 13-25.

Oladopo, S. O., Aladejebi, D. T., & Ayeni, A. O. (2021). The Porous Border on Nigeria Economics and Security Implications. *Randwick International of Social Science Journal*, *2*(3), 335-340.

Okumu, W. (2011). Border management and security in Africa. *Concordis Briefing*, *4*(4), 1-18.

Okwara, E. (2021). Cross Boarder Crimes and the Need for Effective Policing: The Nigerian Perspective. *Public Policy*, *4*(2).

Onyekwelu, O. O. (2017). Cross Border Crimes in West Sub-Region: Implication for Nigeria's National Security and External Relations. *Global Journal of Human-social Science: F Political Science, 14*(3), 23-47

Sandor, A. (2016). Border Security and Drug Trafficking in Senegal: AIRCOP and global security assemblages. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *10*(4), 490-51

Ramutsindela, M. (2017). Greening Africa's borderlands: The symbiotic politics of land and borders in peace parks. *Political Geography*, *56*, 106-113.

Riva, S. (2017). Across the border and into the cold: Hieleras and the punishment of asylum-seeking Central American women in the United States. *Citizenship studies*, *21*(3), 309-326.

Shanas, U., Galyun, Y. A., Alshamlih, M., Cnaani, J., Guscio, D. U., Khoury, F., ... & Ziv, Y. (2011). Landscape and a political border determine desert arthropods distribution. *Journal of arid environments*, *75*(3), 284-289.

Slack, J., Martínez, D. E., Lee, A. E., & Whiteford, S. (2016). The geography of border militarization: Violence, death and health in Mexico and the United States. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 7-32.

Sossou-Agbo, A. L. (2016). Dynamique territorial à la frontière bénino-nigériane: rôle des marchés du Sud-Est, Conférence Les Frontières Mobiles, 11e rencontres du Réseau BRIT, Geneva/Grenoble.

Zartman, I. W. (Ed.). (2010). *Understanding life in the borderlands: Boundaries in depth and in motion*. University of Georgia Press.