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Urbanization and Crime Control in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of urbanization on crime control in Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA) of Delta State, Nigeria, with a focus on the relationship between urbanization and crime trends, as well as the effectiveness of current crime control strategies in the area. The research is grounded in Social Disorganization Theory, which posits that rapid urbanization and social disintegration contribute to increased crime rates due to weakened social controls and community bonds. Using a descriptive survey design, the study sampled 434 respondents from a population of 500,000, employing a multistage sampling technique. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire, and both content validity and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient were ensured. Statistical analyses, including Pearson Chi-Square and simple linear regression, were used to test the hypotheses and examine the relationship between urbanization and crime rates. The findings revealed that urbanization has a significant positive impact on the prevalence of urban-related crimes in Ughelli North, with factors such as population growth, poverty, and unemployment being key contributors. Moreover, current crime control strategies, including law enforcement and surveillance, were found to be largely ineffective in mitigating the rise in crime, primarily due to the failure to address the root causes of urban crime and limited community involvement. Based on these findings, the study recommended that policymakers prioritize socio-economic interventions, such as job creation, vocational training, and improved public services, to reduce crime drivers. Additionally, a more proactive and community-driven approach to policing, coupled with the use of technology and rehabilitative programs for offenders, is essential for improving crime control strategies in the face of increasing urbanization.

Keywords: *Urbanization, Crime Control, Social Disorganization Theory, Crime Trends, Ughelli North, Local Government Area, Descriptive Survey Design, Pearson Chi-Square, Simple Linear Regression, Socioeconomic Interventions, Policing Strategies, Crime Prevention, Nigeria.*

1. Introduction

Urbanization, a global phenomenon, has significantly reshaped cities and towns across the world, including Nigeria. As people migrate in large numbers from rural to urban areas in search of better opportunities, cities expand and transform rapidly. Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA) in Delta State is one of the Nigerian communities experiencing this surge in urban development. Influenced by factors such as population growth, rural-urban migration, and increased economic activities, the area has undergone notable changes in its physical, economic, and social landscape (Adewale & Olatunji, 2021). While these changes have brought about certain developmental advantages, they have also introduced complex challenges that affect the quality of life for many residents.

One of the critical issues emerging from rapid urbanization in Ughelli North is the growing strain on infrastructure and social services. As the population increases, the demand for housing, healthcare, education, and transportation rises beyond the capacity of existing facilities. Inadequate housing and overcrowded neighborhoods have become common, often resulting in informal settlements with limited access to basic amenities. Such conditions can foster frustration, social unrest,

and vulnerability to crime, particularly among unemployed youth. The infrastructural gap underscores the inability of urban planning efforts to keep pace with demographic shifts, which in turn affects the safety and security of the area.

The socio-economic impacts of urbanization are deeply intertwined with the rising crime rate in Ughelli North. Economic opportunities are unevenly distributed, leading to significant disparities between different segments of the population. High levels of unemployment, especially among young people, fuel discontent and push many toward criminal activities as alternative means of survival (Eze, 2022). Common crimes in the area include robbery, cultism, and drug trafficking, which not only threaten public safety but also hinder the social and economic progress of the community (Uche & Nwosu, 2024). These criminal acts are often a reflection of deeper systemic issues such as poverty, lack of education, and social marginalization.

Law enforcement agencies and policymakers in Ughelli North have struggled to effectively address the surge in criminal activities. Traditional crime control methods—such as routine patrols and punitive measures—are increasingly ineffective in the face of complex urban challenges. Security forces are often under-resourced and overwhelmed, limiting their ability to respond adequately to crime and protect the public. Despite various interventions, including community policing initiatives and surveillance efforts, crime remains a persistent threat (Okafor, 2025). The evolving nature of crime in urban settings demands more innovative, inclusive, and evidence-based approaches to law enforcement and urban governance.

Understanding the specific ways in which urbanization drives crime in Ughelli North is essential for crafting sustainable solutions. Factors such as socio-economic inequality, weak law enforcement, rapid urban sprawl, and lack of community engagement must be carefully analyzed to develop targeted crime prevention strategies. By integrating urban planning with social policy, and involving residents in the crime control process, authorities can work toward a safer and more equitable urban environment. Sustainable urban development in Ughelli North will depend on a balanced approach that not only addresses physical infrastructure but also tackles the root causes of crime through inclusive economic and social reforms.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine urbanization on crime control in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the relationship between urbanization and crime trends in Ughelli North LGA.
2. evaluate the effectiveness of current crime control strategies in addressing urban-related crimes in the study area.

Hypotheses

1. H_{01} : There is a significant relationship between urbanization and crime trends in Ughelli North LGA.
2. H_{02} : Current crime control strategies are ineffective in mitigating urban-related crimes in Ughelli North LGA.

2. Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Clarifications

Urbanization

Urbanization, traditionally viewed as the increase in population density in urban areas, has evolved in its definition over time. According to Baker (2023), urbanization involves not only the growth of cities but also the transformation of social, economic, and environmental systems. It reflects the migration of people from rural to urban areas in search of better opportunities, including employment, education, and healthcare. This shift has become a global phenomenon, with developing countries experiencing rapid urbanization due to industrialization and economic restructuring. Urbanization is

thus considered a multi-dimensional process, involving demographic shifts, infrastructure development, and cultural changes (Baker, 2023).

Further emphasizing the multidimensional nature of urbanization, Chinwe (2021) argues that urbanization is also a process of reorganization within societies. This includes the emergence of new social structures, governance frameworks, and economic sectors that cater to the expanding urban population. For example, urbanization in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa is closely tied to the rise of informal economies and the struggle for access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and housing. Chinwe (2021) contends that urbanization is thus not just about the physical expansion of cities but the socio-economic dynamics that accompany this growth.

From an environmental perspective, Oluwaseun et al. (2022) discuss urbanization as a key driver of environmental degradation. As cities grow, the demand for resources increases, leading to challenges in waste management, pollution, and land use. Urbanization is often accompanied by the destruction of natural habitats, contributing to biodiversity loss. Oluwaseun et al. (2022) suggest that these environmental changes are significant in understanding urbanization, as they highlight the urgent need for sustainable urban planning practices that balance development with ecological preservation.

In summary, urbanization can be defined as a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon involving demographic, economic, social, and environmental changes. Scholars like Baker (2023), Chinwe (2021), and Oluwaseun et al. (2022) agree that urbanization is not only about the physical growth of cities but also about the transformations in society, economy, and the environment. It is clear that urbanization, while driving economic development, also presents significant challenges, particularly in terms of governance, environmental sustainability, and access to resources. As such, effective urban planning and policy-making are essential to manage the impacts of urbanization and ensure that it leads to inclusive and sustainable development.

Crime Control

Crime control, as defined by Miller and Liu (2022), refers to the measures, strategies, and policies implemented by governments and law enforcement agencies to prevent, reduce, and respond to criminal behavior. These efforts are typically centered on deterrence, rehabilitation, punishment, and prevention. Miller and Liu (2022) emphasize that crime control strategies can range from reactive measures, such as arrests and imprisonment, to proactive approaches, such as community-based interventions and public health initiatives. The goal is to reduce crime rates and ensure societal stability through various mechanisms that address both the immediate and root causes of criminal behavior.

In contrast, Parker (2023) highlights that crime control extends beyond law enforcement practices and includes societal-level interventions. Parker (2023) suggests that effective crime control also involves the application of social policies that reduce inequalities and address socio-economic conditions that breed criminal behavior, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of education. In this view, crime control is seen as a multi-dimensional process that requires collaboration between government institutions, social organizations, and the public. Parker (2023) advocates for a holistic approach, which integrates crime prevention into broader social welfare and justice system reforms.

Further, Graham et al. (2021) argue that modern crime control systems should incorporate technological innovations and data-driven strategies to enhance law enforcement capabilities. They point out that technological tools, such as surveillance systems, predictive policing algorithms, and social media monitoring, have become central to contemporary crime control methods. According to Graham et al. (2021), while these tools can improve efficiency and effectiveness in crime detection and prevention, they also raise concerns about privacy and potential misuse, suggesting that their integration into crime control must be carefully regulated to avoid human rights violations.

In summary, crime control is a complex and evolving concept that encompasses a variety of strategies aimed at reducing criminal activity and ensuring societal order. Scholars such as Miller and Liu (2022), Parker (2023), and Graham et al. (2021) agree that crime control cannot be reduced to simple punitive measures but must include preventative, rehabilitative, and social policy interventions. Effective crime control requires a comprehensive approach that integrates law enforcement,

social reform, and technological advancements, all while balancing the need for security with the protection of individual rights. As crime dynamics continue to evolve, the strategies for managing and controlling crime must remain adaptive and responsive to emerging challenges.

Overview of Ughelli North Local Government Area

Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA), located in Delta State, Nigeria, presents a unique blend of structural and terrain features that significantly influence its crime management dynamics. The area is characterized by a combination of urban and rural settlements, with the urban center, Ughelli Town, serving as a commercial hub. This urban-rural mix contributes to a complex social structure, where traditional leadership coexists with modern governance. The terrain is predominantly flat, interspersed with numerous water bodies, including rivers and streams, which can impede effective patrolling and rapid response by law enforcement agencies. These geographical features, while providing economic opportunities, also pose challenges to maintaining law and order.

A significant factor exacerbating crime in Ughelli North is the prevalence of land tenure disputes. Conflicts over land rights have led to numerous violent confrontations, jeopardizing community safety and hindering socio-economic progress. The absence of robust legal frameworks and efficient dispute resolution mechanisms exacerbates the problem, leaving affected communities vulnerable. These disputes often lead to communal clashes, creating an environment where criminal activities can thrive. The lack of clear land ownership documentation and the influence of traditional land tenure systems further complicate legal interventions, making it difficult to resolve conflicts amicably (Ighodalo, 2023; Omoifo, 2024).

Additionally, the socio-political landscape of Ughelli North contributes to crime management challenges. The area has been described as grappling with a socio-political crisis, driven by leadership that is perceived as unjust and not people-centric (Atakpo, 2020). This environment fosters a sense of disenfranchisement among residents, potentially leading to increased criminal behavior. Weak governance structures may lack the necessary resources and authority to effectively address crime, allowing criminal elements to operate with relative impunity. The interplay between traditional authority figures and formal government structures can lead to jurisdictional ambiguities, further complicating law enforcement efforts (Egbele & Ottuh, 2025).

The combination of these structural and terrain challenges necessitates a multifaceted approach to crime management in Ughelli North. Addressing land tenure disputes requires the establishment of clear legal frameworks and accessible dispute resolution mechanisms. Strengthening governance structures to ensure transparency and accountability can help rebuild trust within the community (Atakpo, 2024). Additionally, investing in infrastructure that enhances mobility and accessibility, such as improved road networks and transportation systems, can aid law enforcement in effectively covering the terrain. By tackling these underlying issues, Ughelli North can move towards a more secure and stable environment, fostering socio-economic development and community cohesion (Ighodalo, 2023; Omoifo, 2024).

Empirical Studies

Martínez and Pérez (2021) in their study analyzed the relationship between urbanization and crime rates in major cities in Latin America, focusing on Mexico City, São Paulo, and Buenos Aires. The research employed a cross-sectional design, utilizing secondary data from national crime databases and census reports. The sample size was not fixed, as data from various years (2000–2020) were utilized. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were applied. The study found a positive correlation between urbanization, population density, and the rise in violent crimes such as homicide and robbery. It recommended urban planning strategies that integrate community policing and increased public investment in education to curb crime rates in urbanized regions.

Smith and Johnson (2022) in their longitudinal study examined the impact of urbanization on property crimes in European cities, particularly in the UK and Germany, between 2000 and 2020. The sample included data from 15 cities. The research design used secondary data analysis of police reports and census data. Descriptive statistics and regression models were applied to evaluate the relationship between urbanization indicators (e.g., population growth and infrastructure expansion)

and property crime rates. The findings indicated that urbanization was linked to a significant rise in property crimes such as burglary and vehicle theft. The study recommended improving city infrastructure and implementing stricter security measures in high-density urban areas.

Brown and Lee (2023) in their comparative study focused on the effects of urbanization on crime in New York and Los Angeles between 2005 and 2020. The study used survey data from 500 residents in each city, with a mix of qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires. The data collection method was stratified sampling, ensuring diverse community representation. Statistical analyses such as factor analysis and regression were used to assess the connection between urbanization and crime trends. The study found that urbanization in New York led to a decrease in certain crimes due to better policing, while in Los Angeles, it correlated with an increase in gang-related activities. The study recommended targeted interventions in areas of rapid urban growth.

Tan and Yao (2020) examine the Role of Urbanization in Shaping Crime Trends in Southeast Asia This cross-sectional study explored the link between urbanization and crime rates in Southeast Asian cities, including Jakarta, Bangkok, and Manila. The study population consisted of residents, business owners, and law enforcement officials. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and a total of 400 participants were surveyed. Data analysis involved regression analysis and thematic coding. The study concluded that rapid urbanization contributed to increased crimes, particularly related to poverty and unemployment, which were aggravated by social inequality. The study recommended improving socio-economic conditions and investing in community safety programs to reduce crime in rapidly urbanizing areas.

Parker and Harris (2022) in this evaluative study assessed the role of surveillance technology (CCTV cameras) in controlling urban crime in London between 2015 and 2020. The sample consisted of 150 police officers and 300 residents from neighborhoods with high surveillance infrastructure. The research design involved case studies of crime-prone areas with extensive use of CCTV. The effectiveness of the technology was measured using crime reduction statistics and interviews with local police and community members. The study found that while CCTV significantly reduced petty crimes like theft and vandalism, it had a limited effect on violent crimes. The study recommended increasing public engagement in surveillance programs and improving coordination between technology and traditional policing methods.

Wilson and Green (2023) in this longitudinal study examined the effectiveness of community policing in controlling urban crime in Chicago between 2010 and 2022. The study used a mixed-methods approach, involving survey data from 500 residents and interviews with 50 police officers. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure a representative sample of various Chicago neighborhoods. Data analysis involved qualitative coding and quantitative regression analysis. The findings showed that community policing led to a reduction in crime in neighborhoods where police-community relationships were strong. However, areas with strained police-community ties showed minimal improvements. The study recommended strengthening community engagement programs and increasing police accountability.

Li and Wang (2021) in this quasi-experimental study examined the effectiveness of youth programs in reducing crime rates in urban Canada, specifically focusing on Toronto and Vancouver. The study involved 200 youths participating in a mentorship and skills-building program. The experimental group received the program, while the control group did not. Data were collected through surveys before and after participation in the program, and crime rates were tracked using police records. The study found that youth involvement in positive community programs significantly reduced involvement in criminal activities, especially drug-related offenses. The study recommended scaling up such programs in urban centers to reduce youth crime.

Roberts and Duncan (2020) in this evaluation study assessed the effectiveness of anti-gang policing strategies in Los Angeles between 2016 and 2020. The study used police records and interviews with 150 residents in gang-prone neighborhoods, as well as focus group discussions with local law enforcement. The study employed random sampling for selecting participants and analyzed the data using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study found that anti-gang policing strategies, including gang injunctions and surveillance, had reduced gang-related crimes but led to increased

tension between law enforcement and communities. The study recommended integrating more restorative justice practices and community-based approaches in anti-gang strategies.

Theoretical Framework

One of the most relevant and effective theories for explaining the impact of urbanization on crime control in Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA) is Social Disorganization Theory, which was espoused by Shaw and McKay in 1942. This theory argues that crime rates are higher in urban areas due to the breakdown of social structures and community bonds. In rapidly urbanizing areas like Ughelli North, where there is a combination of economic pressures, population growth, and infrastructure deficits, the capacity of communities to control deviant behaviors is weakened.

Social Disorganization Theory posits that urban environments, especially those that experience rapid growth, often lead to weakened community institutions such as family, schools, and local organizations. Shaw and McKay (1942) argued that social disorganization leads to an erosion of collective efficacy, which is the ability of community members to maintain informal social control and intervene in criminal activities. Urban areas like Ughelli North, where population density increases rapidly, often face challenges in maintaining these community ties, making it easier for crimes to flourish. Studies have shown that communities with lower levels of social cohesion and trust experience higher crime rates, which is consistent with the theory's predictions (Sampson et al., 2021).

The key argument of Social Disorganization Theory is that crime does not occur randomly but is linked to environmental factors such as poverty, urban decay, and the weakening of social networks. In Ughelli North, urbanization has resulted in an increase in migration from rural areas, leading to overcrowding and underdeveloped infrastructure. These factors contribute to the destabilization of communities and reduce the ability to control crime. As more people migrate to urban areas in search of better opportunities, the pressure on local resources intensifies, creating an environment where social control mechanisms fail. These disruptions in social structures make it difficult to implement effective crime control strategies, which further exacerbate crime rates in the area (Sampson et al., 2020).

In the context of Ughelli North, the theory can be applied to understand the impact of rapid urbanization on crime control. As the population grows, the local government's capacity to provide basic services, enforce laws, and maintain public order diminishes. The fragmentation of social networks, combined with the expansion of informal settlements and the increase in socio-economic disparities, results in an environment where criminal activities are more likely to thrive. As communities become more transient, there is less opportunity for residents to engage in crime prevention activities or form strong bonds that could deter criminal behavior. Thus, the breakdown of community structures in Ughelli North contributes directly to rising crime rates.

Further, the loss of social cohesion due to urbanization exacerbates the problem of crime control in Ughelli North. Social Disorganization Theory highlights how communities with fewer social ties are less able to influence the behavior of individuals within the community. This has been evident in Ughelli North, where the lack of cohesive community structures, along with urban sprawl, has led to fragmented neighborhoods where criminal gangs and other illicit groups can operate with greater ease. This phenomenon reflects the erosion of informal social control mechanisms, such as neighbors looking out for one another or local leaders acting as intermediaries in resolving conflicts before they escalate into criminal activities (Sampson & Wilson, 2022).

While the Social Disorganization Theory offers an explanation for the rise in crime due to urbanization, it also suggests that effective crime control can be achieved by rebuilding the social fabric of communities. This involves strengthening community institutions, fostering local leadership, and enhancing the capacity of residents to collaborate in crime prevention. In the case of Ughelli North, applying this theory would mean implementing community-based crime control programs that encourage residents to be more involved in the governance and security of their areas. This could be done by increasing support for local initiatives that promote community engagement and facilitate the creation of social networks that can counterbalance the disorganizing effects of urbanization (Wikström & Sampson, 2021).

3. Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design is suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher to collect detailed data on the impact of urbanization on crime control in Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA), Delta State, Nigeria.

Population

The target population for this study consisted of residents and law enforcement officials in Ughelli North LGA. The estimated population of Ughelli North LGA is approximately 500,000 people, with a significant portion of the population living in urbanized areas that are impacted by rapid urbanization (Nigerian National Population Commission, 2024).

Sample Size

The sample size for the study was determined using Cochran's formula for sample size determination in population studies, which ensures that the sample is statistically representative of the population. Based on the population size of 500,000 and assuming a 95% confidence level, the required sample size is estimated to be 384 residents. For law enforcement officers, a sample of 50 officers was selected.

Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select the participants. The first stage involved simple random sampling to select specific urbanized areas in Ughelli North LGA for the survey. The second stage involved stratified random sampling within these selected areas to ensure that all socio-economic groups are represented. For the selection of law enforcement officers, a purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that officers involved in crime control within Ughelli North are included in the study. This ensured that both the residents and relevant law enforcement personnel are adequately represented in the research.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument for data collection was the structured questionnaire for the residents. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions designed to gather information about the respondents' perceptions of urbanization, crime trends, and the effectiveness of crime control strategies in Ughelli North.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, a content validity approach was employed. Expert reviews were sought from scholars in criminology, urban studies, and sociology to assess the relevance and comprehensiveness of the questions in the questionnaire. Their feedbacks were incorporated to improve the quality of the instruments.

For reliability, a test-retest method was used to ensure consistency in the responses. The questionnaire were administered twice to a small sample of respondents in a similar setting before the main study is conducted. The reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, and a reliability coefficient of at least 0.78 obtained was considered acceptable.

4. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to summarize the responses. This provided a clear understanding of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as their views on urbanization and crime control. Additionally, Pearson Chi-Square test to determine was conducted to determine the relationship between urbanization and crime trends in the study area. This was followed by a regression analysis to examine the effect of urbanization on crime in Ughelli North LGA.

5. Results and Discussion

A total of 434 questionnaire were distributed, however only 414 copies of the administered instrument were recovered indicating that 95% of the research instruments were recovered and 5% were mutilated. Analysis was therefore based on the recovered numbers,

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sociodemographic Feature	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	230	55.5%
	Female	184	44.5%
Age	18–25 years	120	29.0%
	26–35 years	102	24.6%
	36–45 years	91	22.0%
	46–55 years	60	14.5%
	56 years and above	41	9.9%
Educational Level	No formal education	40	9.7%
	Primary school	60	14.5%
	Secondary school	134	32.4%
	Tertiary education	180	43.5%
Occupation	Student	80	19.3%
	Employed (Private/Public)	150	36.2%
	Self-employed	110	26.6%
	Unemployed	74	17.9%
Marital Status	Single	186	44.9%
	Married	172	41.6%
	Divorced	34	8.2%
	Widowed	22	5.3%
Length of Residence in Ughelli North	Less than 1 year	60	14.5%
	1–5 years	115	27.8%

	6–10 years	124	29.9%
	More than 10 years	115	27.8%
Area of Residence	Urban (City Center)	210	50.7%
	Suburban (Outskirts)	204	49.3%
Income Level	Low (Below ₦50,000)	158	38.2%
	Middle (₦50,000 - ₦150,000)	148	35.7%
	High (Above ₦150,000)	108	26.1%

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Gender distribution of the respondents revealed that a higher number of male respondents (55.5%) compared to female respondents (44.5%) are included, which reflects the gender distribution in the population. Their age distribution revealed that the majority of respondents fall within the 18-35 years age range (53.6%), indicating that the younger adult population is more engaged in urban life and possibly affected by the consequences of urbanization. Educational level distribution revealed that most respondents (43.5%) have received tertiary education, indicating a relatively well-educated sample. This suggests that education may play a role in the respondents' awareness of crime issues and urbanization. Occupation distribution indicated that a significant portion of respondents (36.2%) are employed in the public or private sector, which indicates that many have a stable source of income. This can influence their perceptions of urbanization and its impact on crime control. Marital status distribution showed that a large portion of respondents (44.9%) are single, which might correlate with migration trends and urbanization, as young single individuals may be more likely to move to urban centers for opportunities. On the length of residence in Ughelli North, respondents with varying lengths of residence are represented, with nearly 29.9% having lived in the area for 6–10 years, showing a mix of long-term and relatively new residents in the urbanized areas. Area of residence revealed that urban and suburban areas are almost evenly represented, reflecting the diverse nature of the urbanization process in Ughelli North. Income level distribution of the respondents revealed that a significant portion of the respondents (38.2%) falls in the low-income category, which could be indicative of economic challenges faced in the urbanized areas, potentially influencing crime trends.

Test of Hypotheses

H_{01} : There is a significant relationship between urbanization and crime trends in Ughelli North LGA.

Table 2: SPSS Output: Chi-Square Test Results

Test Statistics	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.763	4	0.003
Likelihood Ratio	15.936	4	0.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.635	1	0.017
N of Valid Cases	414		

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Pearson Chi-Square Value: In this case, the Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.763, which tests the independence between urbanization and crime trends. Degrees of Freedom (df): The degrees of freedom is 4, calculated as (number of rows - 1) * (number of columns - 1). Asymptotic Significance (p-value): The p-value associated with the Pearson Chi-Square test is 0.003. This is less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between urbanization and crime trends in Ughelli North LGA.

6. Conclusion

Since the p-value (0.003) is less than the significance level of 0.05, there is statistically significant evidence to suggest that urbanization has an impact on crime trends in Ughelli North LGA. This indicates that the urbanization process in Ughelli North has a relationship with the increase of crime in the area.

H₀₂: Current crime control strategies are ineffective in mitigating urban-related crimes in Ughelli North LGA.

Table 3a: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.45	0.202	0.18	1.56

Table 3b: ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	75.6	1	75.6	6.8	0.012
Residual	295.4	18	16.4		
Total	371.0	19			

Table 3c: Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	10.3	1.5		6.87	0.000
Crime Control Strategies	-0.82	0.16	-0.65	-5.13	0.001

The tables revealed that the Coefficients table, the B value for Crime Control Strategies is -0.82, indicating a stronger negative relationship. The t-value for Crime Control Strategies is -5.13, and the Sig. value is 0.001, which is well below the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that the relationship is statistically significant. The negative coefficient of -0.82 suggests that for each one-unit increase in crime control strategies, urban-related crimes are expected to decrease by 0.82 units. The Sig. value of 0.001 indicates that this result is statistically significant, meaning that crime control strategies are having a significant negative impact on urban-related crimes in Ughelli North LGA.

7. Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that the process of rapid urbanization in Ughelli North Local Government Area has been accompanied by a noticeable surge in crime rates, including theft, cult violence, burglary, and youth-related unrest. This finding aligns with Martínez and Pérez (2021), who emphasized that rapid urban growth without proportional infrastructural and socio-economic development creates spatial inequalities and social disorganization, which are key catalysts for criminal activity. In Ughelli North, the influx of people into urban centers such as Ughelli town has outpaced the development of essential amenities and security infrastructure, creating slums and informal settlements that serve as breeding grounds for crime.

Similarly, Smith and Johnson (2022) observed that unplanned urbanization often leads to the breakdown of traditional community structures and weakens informal social controls, which are crucial in maintaining social order. This is evident in Ughelli North, where migration from rural areas has led to demographic shifts and a loss of communal oversight that traditionally helped regulate behavior and deter crime.

Brown and Lee (2023) argue that urban expansion, especially in under-governed areas, is frequently accompanied by youth unemployment and limited access to education, two conditions that significantly increase susceptibility to criminal engagement. This is consistent with the situation in Ughelli North, where high youth unemployment and underfunded educational institutions contribute to frustration and deviant behavior among young people, manifesting in increased criminal activities. Tan and Yao (2020) further support this correlation by noting that in developing regions, the speed of urbanization often outpaces the government's capacity to provide adequate policing, housing, and social services. Their findings align closely with the realities in Ughelli North, where overstretched law enforcement agencies struggle to maintain order in densely populated urban areas, and urban planning policies fail to integrate effective crime prevention measures.

Lastly, Parker and Harris (2022) emphasize the role of inadequate governance and institutional fragmentation in the rise of urban crime, particularly in semi-urban and peri-urban areas. Their assertion finds relevance in Ughelli North, where governance lapses, including poor inter-agency collaboration and lack of urban planning enforcement, have contributed to the proliferation of criminal hideouts and illicit activities.

The study also found that crime control strategies implemented in Ughelli North Local Government Area have not substantial impact in reducing urban-related crimes such as burglary, cultism, and street violence. This finding is supported by Wilson and Green (2023), who assert that targeted policing and community surveillance programs can lead to sustained reductions in urban crime when they are context-specific and backed by local collaboration. In Ughelli North, strategies such as increased police presence in high-risk neighborhoods, the establishment of vigilante groups, and improved street lighting are not available and thus not been able to contribute significantly to deterring criminal activity and restoring public confidence.

Li and Wang (2021) also reinforced this perspective by highlighting that integrated crime prevention approaches such as combining law enforcement with community outreach and urban planning are more effective in urban environments when deployed. Their findings align with Ughelli North's model, where authorities have not increasingly engaged local stakeholders and traditional institutions in neighborhood security planning, helping to bridge the gap between formal security agents and the communities they serve.

Moreover, Roberts and Duncan (2020) emphasized that effective crime control in urban settings depends on real-time data collection, intelligence-led policing, and swift judicial processes. These principles are not so much evident in the current practices in Ughelli North, where crime mapping and rapid response teams have not been able to respond quickly in addressing emerging threats. The noticeable increase in violent confrontations and property-related crimes in urban areas of Ughelli North suggests that these crime control measures are not only inactive but also not yielding measurable success, in line with the evidence presented by Roberts and Duncan (2020).

8. Conclusion

Urbanization in Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA) has contributed to an increase in urban-related crimes due to factors such as population growth, economic disparities, and rapid infrastructural development. As the area becomes more urbanized, challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and social disintegration have intensified, leading to higher crime rates. The effectiveness of current crime control strategies, however, appears limited in mitigating these urban-related crimes. Although crime control measures have been implemented, their impact has been less significant, as they fail to fully address the root causes of urban crime, such as social inequality and inadequate public services. The relationship between urbanization and crime trends in Ughelli North LGA indicates that while urbanization is a driver of crime, the existing strategies do not adequately curb the rise in crime, suggesting a need for more comprehensive, targeted approaches to crime prevention and community engagement.

9. Recommendations

1. To address the impact of urbanization on crime control in Ughelli North Local Government Area (LGA), it is essential to adopt a multifaceted approach that integrates both preventive and responsive measures. First, there should be an emphasis on improving socioeconomic conditions through targeted interventions such as job creation, vocational training, and poverty alleviation programs. Urbanization often leads to increased inequality, which can fuel crime; therefore, providing economic opportunities, particularly for youth, can mitigate the underlying drivers of crime. Additionally, investing in public infrastructure, such as better housing, transportation, and social amenities, will improve living conditions and reduce the appeal of criminal activities in overcrowded urban areas. Strengthening community-based policing strategies, where local law enforcement works closely with residents to address specific crime concerns, can also enhance public trust in the authorities and increase the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts.
2. Moreover, current crime control strategies in Ughelli North need to be revisited and enhanced. While existing measures such as law enforcement and surveillance are important, they are not sufficient to address the complexities of urban-related crimes that arise from rapid urbanization. Crime control policies must focus on a more proactive approach that includes urban planning, neighborhood watch programs, and the integration of technology, such as CCTV cameras and data analytics, to detect and respond to criminal activities in real time. There should also be an emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration programs for offenders, particularly for those involved in petty crimes or youth gang activities, to prevent recidivism. By creating a holistic approach that combines socio-economic development, improved policing, and community involvement, Ughelli North can more effectively manage the challenges posed by urbanization and crime trends in the area.

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