

# Urban Crime and Policing Approaches in Nigeria

**ILLAH, Obadiah<sup>1</sup>**

Department of General Studies, School of General Studies and Pre-ND,  
Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia, Nasarawa State –Nigeria

**ONYEGBULEM, Emeka Valentine (Ph.D)<sup>2</sup>**

Department of Sociology, Federal University of Lafia-Nigeria

**Zhebago, Emmanuel Peter<sup>3</sup>**

Department of Public Administration, Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia , - Nigeria.

DOI: 10.56201/ijssmr.v8.no4.2022.pg116.129

---

## **Abstract**

*This article examined the nexus between urban crime and policing approaches in Nigeria. It looked at the reality of urban crime situation and posits that there are a number of obstacles severing crime policing in Nigerian urban centres. Using secondary sources, study found staggered law enforcement efforts, declining family values, fear, and ignorance as obstacles leading to urban crimes in Nigeria. The Routine Activity Approach of crime was adopted in the analysis of identified variables and their consequences within the context of the Nigerian State. In bridging this gap, the study recommends that city residents should restrain from carrying or carelessly displaying objects precipitating to crime in their neighborhoods; government should recruit more hands into the law enforcement agencies so that patrols are extended to all nooks and crannies of the city centres. there is need for individual security consciousness as well as system strengthening enhancement as measures to overcoming the situation.*

---

**Keywords:** *Urban Crime| Urban Centres |Crime control | Policing | Nigeria|*

---

## **Introduction**

From old times up to the modern era, reviews on crime especially urban crime seem to have dominated the hot subject among social thinkers. A discussion on the morphology of urban centres and crime policing is particularly apt given the fact that sociology itself emerged as one of those intellectual interventions associated with urban social pressure accompanying the French and industrial revolutions of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe. Ordinarily, as economic growth and development of a country increase, crime rate should decrease. However, the challenges posed by the nature of growth and development witnessed in urban centres in

contemporary Nigeria are becoming negatively unbearable and daily on the rise. Perhaps very frightening is the rising wave of banditry, advance fee fraud (419 scam), assassination, racketeering, armed robbery, kidnapping, pick-pocketing, rape and prostitution among others. In recent times, urban crimes are becoming hot-beds for human rights abuse and societal decadence. This is certainly why several sociological literatures have established a link between modernization and the increasing level of criminality in cities (Galbraith, 1958 in Illah & Douglas, 2015). Such instances are drawing global attention on policing the growing sophistication of urban crimes since crime breeds the destruction of lives and property as well as intensifying the fear of insecurity. Though urbanization is good in the growth of industries and development in the economy of society, it also encourages crime since crime normally occurs in large cities and in urbanized areas (Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995).

Due to lower population density, criminals tend to have less chances of hiding themselves in rural areas as rural people know each other in close details hence help in effective policing which is not the case with the urban settings. Therefore, not only is more urbanization indicating city growth, it is also a denominator for crime propensity in the cities. Nationally, Numbeo (2016) has pegged the rate of crime at 76.1% in Nigeria and has the tendency to increase in the city areas.

Indeed, three forces industrialization, urbanization and globalization have been evident in the transformation of modern societies since the 18th century. However, fast paced urbanization is said to have generated both opportunities and challenges for policy stakeholders including insecurity which is one form of anxiety that sometimes accompanies fast paced urbanization in Nigeria. Thus, urban crime is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria but tends to have been under-researched. For instance, the study of Dobbs, Smit, Remes, Manyika, Roxburgh, Restrepo, and McKinsey Global Institute (2011) revealed that by 2025, 60% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$64 trillion) will be generated in cities; average per capita income within these cities is expected to rise to \$32,000; and households expect their income to jump above \$20,000 per annum. The implication is that more hands will be living in the cities in the future which will imply much pressure in the cities perhaps in a new dimension.

This paper thus investigates the morphology of urban centres and crime policing approaches with a view to enhancing crime prevention and control mechanisms in Nigeria.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

**Urban Centre:** Refers to a large and densely populated city area with several administrative districts. It is often viewed as a combined concept by size, density and the presence of certain institutions associated with urban lifestyle like town hall, church or chapel, mosque, public plaza, park or cemetery, market place, buildings for trade activities and public buildings like schools, a health centre and library.

**Police:** A police force is a statutory organ of the state empowered to enforce law, protect lives and property and limit civil disorder. In Nigeria, the police is powered by section 214 and section 194 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria as amended.

**Crime:** A crime is any act that is committed in violation of the state criminal law.

### **The Functionality of Crime**

Durkheim viewed crime and delinquent behaviour as normal, functional and a necessary occurrence in the social system (Haralabos & Holbon, 2004). He opined that crime leads to reactions from society and these shared reactions are used to create common consensus of what individuals feel is moral and ethical by which to abide. These commonly held ethics, norms and values are what led to boundaries and rules for the society. For Durkheim, crime was healthy for the society because it is a yardstick for measuring those who keep to the norms, the rules and the laws of the land. It is axiomatic that in any situation where there are rules which define proper conduct, there are always deviants who break such rules.

As people commit crime or deviate from the normative expectations, members of the society would react almost spontaneously to condemn such acts and evoke ways of punishing or stopping a repetition of such acts. A criminal act is like a deafening thunder blast which wakes up members of the community from their sleep (Charles, 2008). It is assumed that the society will be peaceful and harmonious as long as there are no criminals or deviants but realistically, if there were no criminals and deviants, the society would be tempted to sleep and forget the rules of proper conduct since everybody behaves well. However, as soon as somebody decides to behave otherwise, the society will be agog with actions to stem the tides of such occurrence. Therefore, crime arouses collective consciousness in society and reaffirms people's solidarity. In another dimension, crime is said to be functional to society as it provides job opportunities for societal members when they are employed to combat crime. This may have explained the existence of criminal justice institutions such as the police, courts and correctional service as well as other military and para-military institutions operational in Nigeria.

### **Crime causes in Urban Centres**

Just as intelligent led policing theory admonished apt intelligence gathering in crime control operation, statutory organs, particularly crime control institutions must be informed of the concomitant factors relating to crime commission in order to responsively address them. Crime wave and the extent of urban violence in Nigeria is becoming more frequent, more offensive and horrendous owing to the daily report of more violent crimes (Agbola, 1997; Fabiyi, 2004). This unexpected rise in urban crime insecurity tends to associate with aggravated poverty that has become entrenched in most urban centres in Nigeria. Justifying this position, the study by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA, 2011) in Illah and Idom (2017) reports that the rate of poverty in Nigeria is estimated at 70%, and poverty according to Clarck "is the mother of crime." The study of Dambazau (2006) also revealed that a condemned armed robber in Kaduna, 1987 was interviewed on the causes of high incidences of armed robbery in Nigeria and he responded by identifying poverty, poor or lack of education, unemployment and unnecessary arrogant display of wealth by the rich as major factors. Thus, the population of people in poverty has been growing steadily in Nigeria, for example, in 1985, 27.2 percent of Nigerians were rated as poor; in 1990, it was measured as 56 percent; in 2000, it was estimated to be about 66 percent and in 2014, Nigeria was classified as the third poorest country in the world (Federal Office of Statistics, Nigeria, 1999; World Bank, 1999; 2000; and 2014), and in 2021, Nigeria became the world's poverty capital with over 93,9 million people living below the poverty line (Peter, 2021). The study of Fabiyi (2004) also observed the 1966/1970 civil war as another major cause of the increased wave of urban crime in Nigeria. The author opined that the civil war taught Nigerians

how to kill themselves with impunity, to have little regard for human life and to derive joy in shedding blood.

Also reasoning, Onokerhoraye (1995) identified problems associated with urban centres as relating to the fact that many dwellers integrate poorly with the new environment. Author saw this as leading to high rates of crime, unemployment, separation of families, increased instability in marriage and family life, conflict among ethnic groups and juvenile delinquency in urban centres. Thus, Glaeser and Sarcodote (1999) explained that 45-60% of the urban crime effect is related to observable characteristics of individuals and city formation. Bearing in mind the interdependent nature of crime, that is, crime generally operates like a network, controlling a particular crime while leaving the other is as bad as not controlling any. Studies have revealed three main sources (causes) of residential neighbourhood crime in Nigeria and these include: Crime occurring as a result of poor environmental design (Armitage, 2013; Crowe, 2000;) crime occurring as a result of offenders getting ample opportunity without adequate restriction (Felson & Clarke, 1998; Clarke, 1995) and; crime arising from absence of social development which most times appears in the form of poverty, unemployment, homelessness, corruption, poor family and community cohesion among others (Hastings, 2007). On a separate note, Olufolabo, Akintande and Ekum (2015) identified eighteen (18) major category of crimes associated with urban centres. They opined that police department emphasized stealing/theft/burglary as the most committed crime in most cities. They went further to mention illiteracy, broken home, bad company, porous environment and failure of police and other judicial authorities in speedy administration of justice as main causes of urban crime.

In the light of the foregoing, commonest or specific causal factors of urban crimes in Nigeria are further considered and thematically discussed:

#### **a. Declining Family Values**

Today as the country becomes more and more industrialized, there is an evident loosening of family ties - the family gets together less and less as a group, with all members present, except during special events. Each member of the family has his own schedule of activities, his own interests, his own friends. All these factors prevent family members from having opportunities for cooperative activity, preventing the development of strong personal relationships (Clarke, 1995). Several family values that promote and nurture solidarity and love within the family, such as respect for and obedience to parents, tends to be eroding by the antics of modernization. The Western culture is making widespread and deep-seated inroads into Nigerian society through modern communications and the mass media. These lost family values result in many broken homes or families particularly as children are separated from their parents or reared by single parents, they go wayward, become misguided and eventually become criminals or victims of crime

#### **b. Ignorance**

The majority of our urban dwellers are uneducated of the laws in Nigeria and the repercussions they face once they commit violations thereof. They do not know many of their rights, the due process of law and many other related matters. In fact, many of the helpless folks do not know what democracy is all about greater human rights and how they can make it work (Amara, 2015). This results in a “crisis” of citizenship characterized by widespread political thuggery, tools for election rigging, apathy, indifference, “spoon-feeding” syndrome, or lack of discipline and self-restraint. Because of their scanty legal knowledge and lack of awareness of its repercussions,

many criminals, especially first offenders, readily perpetrate crimes based on a mistaken notion and false belief. Many become victims of crime because they are not aware of the modus operandi of crime syndicates and are not crime prevention-conscious (Umar, 2015). Often times, instances of miscarriage of justice on the part of either the offender or the victim, could be blamed on their ignorance.

### **c. Soft law enforcement**

Non-enforcement of several laws and ordinances, massive graft and corruption, absenteeism on the part of government officials or lack of basic services give rise to lack of discipline and low regard for law by the citizenry, which spawn lawlessness and crime (Charles, 2008). Consequently, drivers, passengers and pedestrians alike violate traffic rules and regulations left and right. From minor violations, gradually these offenders commit more and more serious infractions of the laws, thereby abetting crime.

### **d. Fear**

This problem is so pervasive that it affects practically the entire society whether rich or poor. People are afraid, not only while they are on the streets but also right inside their homes. Kidnapping for ransom, banditry, bank robberies/hold ups, murders, homicides, crime against chastity and other heinous crimes urban in nature instill so much fear among the citizenry. Fear is an unseen force that breeds crime in many ways and victims of kidnap for ransom are easily paralyzed into inaction by the kidnappers; such that they will give in to the demands of kidnappers, including that of not reporting the incident to the police (Ugochukwu, 2017). Often time, victims of crime and their witnesses are easily threatened to keep silent and not to file charges and testify in court. Even when not actually threatened, many victims and witnesses refuse to cooperate with the police in solving and prosecuting crimes. As a result, many criminals go scot-free and are emboldened to perpetrate more crimes.

## **Drivers of Urban Crime in some Cities in Nigeria**

### **The case of Abuja**

Abuja, the federal headquarters of Nigeria is a well-planned city. Given its pattern and design, Abuja specifically contains business and residential areas. While its pattern and design conformed to international standards in certain sections of the city, it however imposes considerable environmental challenges ranging from urban sprawl, decaying inner-city, inadequate housing, and heightened incidence of crime among others. Based on findings on the factors that drive crime within the city, the incidences of poverty, unemployment and rural urban drift have contributed largely to the spate of criminal activities within Abuja. It can be said that endemic poverty in the rural areas on the fringes of the city and across neighbouring states as a result of governments' neglect precipitates an unprecedented rural urban migration among the youths into Abuja ((Pérouse de Montclos, 2016). The city has also witnessed a wave of migration triggered by several conflicts in the northern half of the country. There are a few instances when the security forces have intercepted the operations of Boko Haram members and other violent criminals in the Abuja. These experiences have been compounded by the increasing rates of youth unemployment in the city. Apart from the criminal migrants law enforcement stakeholders also observe that most of the migrants in Abuja often resort to unskilled jobs for their livelihood. When the cost of living becomes unbearable for them, they venture into petty and wholesale criminal activities to meet their basics needs for survival in the city. This

observation upholds the findings of a previous study which argued that the twin problem of poverty and unemployment are overstressing the moral and psychological strength of many urban residents in their bid to remain law-abiding citizens (CLEEN Foundation, 2014).

Proliferation of Shanty Settlements, Demolition and Government demolitions have displaced hundreds of thousands of people in Abuja over the last decade. This housing insecurity is not simply the result of urbanization, population growth, or wealth disparities. Rather, it has been attributed on one hand to property rights that perpetuates discrimination by providing special land rights for the early inhabitants of the city, and the failure of the prospective developer to comply with the physical planning standards contained in the Abuja Master plan on the other hands. Over the years, different administrations (both Federal and Local Government) have embarked on demolition exercise which have rendered millions of Abuja residents homeless and provoked economic losses for many families. This structural disadvantage and social disorganization have exacerbated the incidence of homelessness in the city and driven many young people to occupy obscure places which have further made them vulnerable to be recruited into criminal gangs. Abuja was originally conceptualized as a cosmopolitan city which serves as an economic habitat for the larger urbane and educated middle and upper class citizens with varying cultural backgrounds, drawn from the different sections of the country. In a local description and language, most Nigerians have drawn a cliché that suggest that “Abuja is a no man’s land”. This implies that it is a city that belongs to all, wherein no section of the country can claim any form of hegemonic influence over another. However, this idea has rubbed the city a sense of “community ownership” of projects and initiatives which are characteristic of other cities in Nigeria in terms of crime prevention or community organization for any form of advocacy on issues of critical social concerns. This glaring disconnection among the city dwellers provides a leeway for criminals to prey on different households within the city.

### **The case of Kano**

Urban Kano is located at the central part of Kano State’s closed settled zone. It has a high highest density due in part to some measure of industrialization and other economic development in the north. It has also become a cosmopolitan city with a considerable concentration of other ethnic groups in Nigeria as dwellers. The changes in urban character of Kano city over the years has also given rise to the spate of crime unique to other metropolitan cities in Nigeria.

The factor of population upsurge as a driver of crime in Kano is not in doubt and intricately connected to the incidences of poverty and unemployment amongst youths residing in rural areas. There seems to be an existence of neglected street children who have become victims of pervasive inequality in Kano which constitute a vulnerable group that are easily recruited into criminal gangs. This proliferation of street children is also linked to poor parenting and restricted family planning which suggests there is a strong link between uncontrolled population and the rising spate of crime in Kano. Also, emerging realities from Kano indicated there is a conspicuous crack in the family system (Oyeniya, 2013). There is a rising incidence of unstable marital relationships in the Hausa community. In the past, children had the privilege of primary family socialization fitted into broader society and social control was also maintained in this pattern. This ensured that before a young person misbehaves and defies the norms of the society, such individuals would weigh the potential consequences of their actions. Also, the community was homogenous and every member of the community stayed alert and reports any incidence

that would violate societal peace whether gross or in the most minute sense to the appropriate authority.

On another note, Kano tends to have witnessed series of religious riots and violence leading to significant loss lives in the last three decades. According to Jewkes (2002), the perpetrators of religious riots been incited through the extremists preaching of religious fundamentalists in the city. Such preachers twist religious postulations to indoctrinate and incite their followers to attack the adherents of the other faith. Very recently, hate speeches seem to have taken another dimension as major political gladiators and their supporters have resorted to hate speeches to score political points against each other. Thus, it can be said that some political leaders in the city have occasionally mobilized gangs from the LGAs of Kano State to accompany them to political events. Mobilized gangs have been seen carrying lethal weapons such as machetes, knives, bows and arrows in the state.

### **The case of Lagos**

Lagos is a city State of South-West Nigeria. The physical growth and development of Lagos are tied often to its expanding economic and political roles, which aided by its rapid and explosive population growth has been phenomenal. Lagos metropolis by urban operational base suffices the economic and financial capital of Nigeria. The cosmopolitan character of Lagos coupled with population density can also present an opportunity for unprecedented crime challenges. By population growth through intensive migration, Lagos is arguable the commercial capital of West Africa and has a population estimated at 21 million in 2016, which makes it the largest city in Africa (CLEEN Foundation, 2014). The study of CLEEN Foundation also established that a fast-growing population around 600,000 persons are added annually to the population of Lagos. This no doubt imposes a serious constraint on social services such as housing, water and transportation, and pushing Lagos to the edge of the cliff especially through the manifestation of social vices such as crime. The space for economic competition and livelihood security between the city dwellers to a considerable degree can be influenced by the spatial distribution of Lagos population, and migratory flows, which can be correlated with incidence of crime in the city. Recently, Nigeria is witnessing a rising wave of financial scandals and corruption reporting about serving and former political office holders who loot the government treasuries (Federal and State) to the tune of billions of US Dollars. This degree of impunity manifesting by the corrupt officials is setting the tone for grievances and social discontents among the citizens and this is translating to a ticking bomb whereby aggrieved citizens might resort to pick arms against the state and corrupt officials. Apparently, this social malady is also communicating a wrong message to the youths to jettison the culture of transparency, accountability and probity in their quest for a means of livelihood (Kieghe, 2016).

Over the years, street trading has been a contentious issue in Lagos. However the menace of street trading has transformed to different strands of crime incidence in the State. It serves as an impetus for child abuse and children under the age of 16 trade openly and widely on the traffic corridor. This exposes the female hawkers in particular to sexual assault by rapists. Armed robbers also masquerade as street hawkers to prey on unsuspecting commuters in the city.

### **The case of Lokoja**

Lokoja lies at the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers and assumed the status of the capital of Kogi State in 1991. While the Nupe, Hausa, Yoruba, Igala and Ebira are indigenous to the city and surrounding communities, other ethnic groups of Nigeria, including the Igbo, Bini/Edo and Tiv have recently established themselves in Lokoja. Travelers transit through Lokoja to about 23 states on a daily basis. By its location, Lokoja is a pivot city and this unique characteristic has increased the crime rate as a result of dynamic population mobility.

This study found that the higher rate of youth involvement in crime is deeply connected to substance abuse and moreover, alcohol and drug (Tramadol) consumption contribute to youths' propensity to engage in crime in Lokoja.. The consequences of this uncontrolled consumption of alcohol and drug abuse tends to have placed a significant burden on Nigeria's security sector. The North West, North East and North Central geopolitical zones of the country have been bedeviled by the malaise and the wanton abuse of drugs, including Indian hemp, psychotropic substances and solvents (Ellis, 2016). Ellis also established that trafficking often originates from the South East and some parts of South West. In this regard, Lokoja is a pivot city as Kogi State serves as a major transit corridor between northern and southern Nigeria.

The threat and prevalence of crime in Lokoja is largely occurring in an environment characterized not only by widespread poverty, mounting unemployment and drug abuse, a considerable driver is also the high rate of circulation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) (Grant, 2012). Politicians in the quest for power have empowered some youths with ammunitions that law enforcement agents struggle to retrieve. The illicit proliferation of SALW has had a considerable impact on peace and security and increased the incidence of organized crime in the country at large (Ellis, 2016). The state has also witnessed a wave of communal and religious violence. Religious intolerance, fundamentalism and extremism, disruptive modes of worship by the two main religions (Christianity and Islam), disparaging preaching and stereotyping, proselytising, religious marginalization and sensationalism in media reporting are used to fuel tension and associated crime in Lokoja.

### **The case of Port Harcourt**

The selection of Port Harcourt for this study is fundamental to the fact that Port Harcourt is the capital of Rivers State and the pivot of oil sector activities in south-south Nigeria. Over the years, criminal gangs have become a security threat to oil companies as they continue to carry out nefarious activities such as bunkering, extortions and kidnapping of expatriate workers of International oil Companies. The spate and incidence of such crime remain alarming as the city continues to witness the most extremely documented incidences of urban gang violence in the last decade in the country. In Port Harcourt, cults and gangs exist from the street level to the neighbourhood level and even the ethnic militias whose bases are outside the city operate in Port Harcourt for specific violent crimes (Badiora & Afon, 2013).

In the light of the foregoing, it is succinct to say that among the factors that drive crime within the city, the use of armed political thugs is a phenomenon that occurs across Nigeria. This is deeply connected to widespread poverty and unemployment affecting young people, primarily



young men, susceptible to informal "employment" by politicians or their supporters as small armed forces to subdue political opponents.

Unbridled agitation for environmental justice and proliferation of arms across all oil producing states of the Niger Delta region, agitation for environmental, economic and social justice has been at the top of public policy debates. The agitation reached the peak under the leadership of environmental activists such as Ken Saro Wiwa who embarked on nonviolent movement to demand for the cleaning up of the degraded oil bearing communities in the region and the payment of commendable compensation to the indigenous people of the oil producing communities. However, shortly after the execution of the Ogoni-born environmental activist by the military dictator, Sani Abacha in 1996 and the subsequent disbandment of the of the movement, a host of other movements sprung up in the Niger Delta and transformed the non-violent agitation for environmental justice in the region into violent agitation (Alemika, (2013). Several splinter groups have also mushroomed from the region perpetrating violent crimes such as oil bunkering, pipeline vandalism, armed robbery and kidnapping. Due to its pivotal role as the administrative headquarters of Rivers State, the city of Port Harcourt has born the burden of crime more than any other city in the Niger Delta Region.

## Theory Framework

### The Routine Activity Approach

The Routine Activity Theory is a theory of crime events which focuses on explaining why offenders commit crimes rather than how the criminal event is produced. The theory argues that the organization of repetitive activities in urban settings create opportunities for crime. Essentially, within the framework of the theory, three specific criteria must be involved (Felson, 2008). First, there must be an offender who is motivated enough to commit a crime. Secondly, there must be a target against which the motivated offender can strike. And thirdly, a capable guardian for the potential victim must be absent at the place and time when the offender strikes.

Figure 1: The Crime Analysis Triangle



The interconnectivity of these important elements in the plate above cleverly illustrated the idea of Eck (2015) who devised the crime analysis triangle depicted in Figure 5. Henslin (2008)

observed that if you know urban life, you know that impersonality and self-interest are ordinarily characteristic of the city and that these characteristics are carried in extreme. The individual has more freedom to act in any manner he chooses during the 'time gap' between the initial entry point and the point at which he gets established. Thus, crime problems within urban settings happen when offenders are at the same locations as victims, without any effective crime manager. If one or more managers are present, however, the chances of criminal activities are greatly reduced.

### **Approaches to Policing Urban Crime**

Admittedly, urban crime prevention will involve different approaches by different sectors. This study however, dwells more on multi-professional approaches than the traditional thematic schema. In the study of (Adigun, 2013), police approach to crime prevention will involve apt intelligence gathering to beefing up deterrent roles like roadblocks, and visible policing through active patrolling both on foot and vehicle. However, for a social worker, it might mean setting up projects to re-integrate offenders back to society. For the psychologist, it will involve maladaptive behavioural therapy in resuscitating the criminal offender. For the sociologist, it will involve social structure reformation for collective and directed realization of socialization goals. For criminal justice institutions, there should be swift apprehension, investigation, trial, conviction, correction and/or punishment of the criminal (Abdulwahab, 2016). For a government, the handling in justice institutions is critical and in particular, the prosecution stage is critical in the trial of suspected individuals, yet this seems poorly handled in Nigeria. How can the courts expect police sergeants or corporals without legal training to match strategy to the kind of qualified barristers these culprits employ? The result of this mismatch is that many prosecutable crimes end up with the accused going free.

Based on the findings of this study, crime prevention approach is effective in two dimensions. First, the ability of law enforcement agents to make citizens law-abiding by deterring potential offenders and preventing further law breaking by apprehending criminals (Chima, 2016). This could also be done by applying situational crime prevention or defensive measures which operate by attempting to reduce the risk and difficulties of crime control through environmental design and management like putting more locks on doors and iron grills on windows. Second, there is need to correct fundamental social conditions and personal maladjustments which are assumed to be the "seed bed" of crime (Ernest, 2014). This is done by deploying social crime prevention measures to deal with precipitating factors like unemployment, poor education, extreme poverty, inadequate job skills, lack of recreational activities, lack of appropriate role models and ineffectiveness of traditional system of social control.

### **Methodology**

The qualitative research method which involves the use of secondary data accessible from text books, journals, literature, and internet materials was used to generate the information used in the entire work. Since this is an opinion study, this method was found useful because it enables in-depth analysis of issues within the range of documented data sources often understood in the context of their production.

## **Conclusion**

Cumulatively, the above discussions made it clear that crime in urban location generally constitutes a major challenge which will require frantic effort from researchers and governments to control, if not minimize. However, crime prevention and control in urban Nigeria which is the basic concern of this study has been identified as a must-fight war considering its looming adverse impact on human health and productivity as well as the general economy of Nigeria. Also, it was stressed that efforts made in the developed nations toward this is tremendously traceable to government policies/sponsors and research compared to the developing economies. Nigeria as an example of a developing economy has been seen to be devastatingly hit by the impact of urban residential crime of which if urgent measures are not fetched, it may bring the situation to a very dangerous one.

In the findings of this research, issues raised should cater for both short and long term crime prevention mechanisms within urban centres in Nigeria if the frameworks provided can be tenaciously pursued. This research also lends support to the Routine Activity Theory by documenting the need to keep a safe and secured residential neighbourhood globally in general and Nigeria in particular. It also supported the view that policy makers and city officials concerned with urban growth should make crime prevention an important priority.

Additional work on the relationship between the efforts of developed and developing nations within the arena of urban crime prevention should represent an exciting avenue for future research.

## **Recommendation**

In this study, it is recommended that:

- i.** National Orientation Agency and other related organs should sensitize citizens on the need to maintain positive attitude and calmness at any crime alert condition; they must always remain unruffled, steadfast, and help one another especially when there is need for help in their neighbourhoods.
- ii.** Citizens should always mind their own business and also but be cautious and vigilant about all that go around them especially those living in cities.
- iii.** Government across all levels should sensitize citizens to avoid carrying or displaying items that are crime precipitating such as; huge sum of money or attractive items that can invite criminals to their neighbourhoods.
- iv.** More recruitment and efficient security coping mechanism should be taken up by the government and the security agents, such that the police patrols is extended to all nooks and crannies of the city centres.
- v.** A more secured neighbourhoods with abundant opportunities for all ethnic groups in the country should be enhanced by government and other relevant authorities.

## References

- Abdulwahab, A. (2016). *Jungle justice: Law and human rights*. Available on <http://www.vanguard.com>. Accessed on the 27/2/2020.
- Adigun, F.O. (2013): Residential differentials in incidence and fear of crime perception in Ibadan. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3, 96-104.
- Agbola, T. (1997). *The architecture of fear: Urban design and construction response to urban violence in Lagos, Nigeria*. Research Report, IFRA, Nigeria. <http://www.openedition.org/6540>
- Alemika, E.E.O. (2013): *Criminal victimization, policing and governance in Nigeria*. Abuja: CLEEN Foundation.
- Amara O. (2015). *Jungle justice: A vicious violation of human rights in Africa*. nswersafrica.com. 24 July 2015. Retrieved 29 January 2020.
- Armitage, R. (2013). *Crime prevention through housing design: Crime prevention and security management series*. Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England.
- Badiora, A.I. and Afon, A.O. (2013): Spatial pattern of crime in Nigerian traditional city: The Ile-Ife Experience. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 6, 15-28.
- Charles, J. O. (2008). *Sociological theory: A historic-analytical approach on man and society*. Lagos: Serenity printing and publishing co.
- Chima, J. (2016). Jungle justice in Nigeria or elsewhere. *Tanzania Journal of Health Research*. 17(1), 1-8.
- CLEEN Foundation (2014): *Youths radicalization and affiliation with insurgent groups in Northern Nigeria*. Lagos: CLEEN Foundation.
- Crowe, T. D. (2000). *Crime prevention through environmental design: Applications of architectural design and space management concepts*. Revised by Lawrence J. Fennelly. Butterworth-Heinemann. First printed in 1991.
- Dambazau, A.B (2006). *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Ibadan: Spectrum books Ltd.
- Dobbs, R., Smit. S., Remes, J., Manyika, J., Roxburgh, C., Restrepo, A and McKinsey Global Institute (2011): *Urban world: Mapping the economic power of cities*. New York: McKinsey and Company.
- Eck, J.E. and Weisburd, D.L. (2015): Crime places in crime Theory. *Crime and place: Crime Prevention Studies*, 4, 1-33.
- Ernest, A. (2014). *Implications of mob justice practice among communities in Ghana*. Available on: [www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/PPAR/article/viewFile/14387/14694](http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/PPAR/article/viewFile/14387/14694). Accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2017.
- Fabiya, O. (2004). *Gated neighbourhoods and privatization of urban security in Ibadan Metropolis*. IFRA. [www.book.openedition.org/ifra/474](http://www.book.openedition.org/ifra/474). Accessed on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.

- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *Constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria with amendments, 2011*. Abuja: FGN.
- Felson, M. (2008): *Routine activity approach*. in: R. Wortley and Mazerolle, L. (Eds.), *Environmental Criminology and Crime Analysis*. London: Willan Publishing.
- Felson, M., & Clarke, R. V. G. (1998). *Opportunity makes the thief: Practical theory for crime prevention home office, policing and reducing crime unit, research, development and statistics directorate*.
- Federal Office of Statistics, Nigeria, 1999.
- Galbraith, John K. 1985. *The affluent society*. Houghton and Mifflin, Boston.
- Glaeser, E. and Sacodote, B. (1999). Why is there more crime in cities? *Journal of Political Economy*, 107 (6), 87-96.
- Grant, U. (2012): *Urbanization and the Employment Opportunities of Youth in Developing Countries*. Background Paper Prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012. Youth and skills: Putting education to work. 2012/ED/EFA/MRT/PI/25.
- Haralambos, M. & Holbon, M. (2004). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives. 6th Ed*. London: HaperCollins publishers limited.
- Hastings, R. (2007) *Crime prevention through social development and Canadian communities: Coalition on community safety, health and well-being*. Institute for the prevention of crime, University of Ottawa. [www.prevention-crime.ca](http://www.prevention-crime.ca).
- Henslin, J.M. (2008). *Sociology: A down to earth approach*. New York: McGraw Hill
- Illah, O. & Idom, A.O, (2017). *A sociological assessment of capital punishment in Nigeria. African journal of modern society*. 4 (3), 19-38.
- Jewkes, R. (2002): Intimate partner violence: causes and prevention. *The Lancet*, 359, 1423-1429
- Kieghe, D. (2016): *National ambition: Reconstructing Nigeria*. London: New Generation Publishing.
- Mabogunje, L. (1981) "Towards an urban policy" in Sada and Oguntoyibo J. *Urbanization Processes and problems in Nigeria*, Ibadan: The University Press p. 97-200.
- NoiPoll (2014). *Lack of trust in law enforcement agencies blamed for jungle justice in Nigeria*. [Online] Available at: [www.noi-poll.com/...index.php?pid..](http://www.noi-poll.com/...index.php?pid..) [Accessed 128/01/2017].
- NUMBEO (2016). *Crime in Nigeria*. [Online] Available at: [www.numbeo.com/crime/country\\_result.jsp?Nigeria](http://www.numbeo.com/crime/country_result.jsp?Nigeria) [Accessed 24/10/2016].
- Onokerorhaye, A. (1995). *Atraditional African city in transition: Benin*: University of Benin.
- Oyeniya, B.A. (2013): *Internal migration in Nigeria: A positive contribution to human development*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration
- Pérouse de Montclos, M. (2016): *Arguments for a Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis of Violence in Nigeria*. In: M. Marc-Antoine, Ed. *Violence in Nigeria: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis*. Leiden: African Studies Centre.

- Peter, U. (2021). *Nigeria still the poverty capital of the world*. [Online] Available at: <https://allAfrica.com>. Accessed 14/03/2022].
- Shaw, C. and McKay, H. (1942), *Juvenile delinquency and urban area* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ugochukwu. U. (2017). *We will pass anti-hate speech, jungle justice bills to law soon*. <https://thewillnigeria.com/.../well-pass-ant...> Accessed 17/08/2017]
- Umar, S.U. (2015). The socioeconomic causes and effects of armed robbery in contemporary Nigerian society. *Journal of Modern Sociology and Security Studies*, 2(1), 20-32.
- Wekerle, G., & Whitzman, C. (1995). *Safe cities: Guidelines for planning, design and management*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- World Bank (2014). *Nigeria, third on world poverty index*. Available in <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/04/440695>.