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## Exploring Citizen Security in the Nigeria Federated State: Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in Perspective

Adesoji Olaitan Ogunsanya  
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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Exploring Citizen Security in the Nigeria Federated State: Lagos State Neighbourhood

Safety Agency in Perspective

by

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MSC, University of Ilorin, 2009

BSC, University of Ilorin, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration (General)

Walden University

August 2021

## Abstract

The research problem of this study was centered on the state of insecurity in Lagos State and the intervention of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. Evidence from previous studies supported the use of community policing, police reform, training of security personnel, and collaboration amongst security agencies as measures to address issues of insecurity in Lagos State. The purpose of this qualitative research was to examine the impact of the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Agency on the security challenges of the state and generate additional discourse. Institutional theory was used as the theoretical foundation for this research with a purposive sampling strategy for data collection. The key research question focused on the experiences of Lagos State residents on the impact of the Neighbourhood Safety Agency on security and how to improve the measures currently adopted. A purposive sample of 20 participants was selected from both Lagos Mainland and Lagos Island locations for primary data collection. Relevant themes were coded during data analysis to address areas of interest in the research question. The result of the study indicated that the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency has not been adequately equipped to combat insecurity in the state due to lack of proper recruitment process, inadequate training of security personnel, misplaced priority of personnel of the agency, and dearth of modern security equipment. The study drives positive social change through recommendations on effective recruitment process of personnel into the agency, training and re-orientation on operational processes, and adequate funding for modern security appliances to promote a more secured community from the grassroots in Lagos state.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to God Almighty, who gave me the strength and sound mind to complete this academic pursuit. To my lovely wife, Oluwatosin, and the children, Adebani, Araoluwa, and Ewaoluwa, thank you so much for your understanding, sacrifices, prayer, and encouragement shown all these years despite daunting challenges. I also appreciate my siblings, Adedayo, Adefunke, and Oluwaseun, for your support. To my beloved parents, Elder Adetunji Ogunsanya and Mrs. Agnes Ogunsanya, thank you for your understanding over the years when the rigors of this program kept me from visiting home. Thank you for being great inspiration of godly character and dedication to work. To my prayerful mother-in-law, Mummy Ajani, thank you for all your support.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

Citizenry security has remained the central concern of every government across the globe, as any act of insecurity is seen as a major threat to the whole system and structure of governance. The concern with high insecurity within a state is the likelihood of it degenerating into a state of anarchy when citizens realize that they cannot be protected by constituted authority. The issue of insecurity in Nigeria has led to the proliferation of sectional security bodies across the country. This has created a situation whereby organized groups within the state have had to initiate processes to establish security outfits for the safety of their lives and properties. Insecurity remains the most discussed issue in Nigeria today, given the different dimensions it takes daily. Every region of the country is having terrible experiences of insecurity with reports on loss of lives and properties. The Northern region of the country is faced with attacks from Boko Haram and Islamic militias, while the Southern region is dealing with cases of kidnapping from bandits and attacks on security personnel by unknown gunmen. It is more worrisome that the government seems to be short of tactics to tackle the overwhelming security challenges. This study is crucial to the understanding of how the Nigeria federated structure, with a focus on Lagos State, promotes a unified security policy for citizens, given the high rate of crime within the state. The research question, therefore, addressed the experience of Lagos State residents on the level of security within the state using the Neighbourhood Safety Agency as a case study. The study adopted institutional theory for effective analysis of the state of security provided by the

established authority of the federated units and Lagos State residence. A qualitative approach was embraced for this research to analyse the perception of Lagos State residents of the effort of Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity in the state. The findings of this behavioral inquiry will be useful for policy change and social transformation that may improve the system of governance in Nigeria.

### **Background**

Historically, the issue of citizenry insecurity in Nigeria has revealed that the country has been plunged into severe violence emanating from organized forces since independence in 1960. The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria in 1914 by the British Colony did not effectively unite the various disparate groups that constitute the Nigerian state. The first major taste of citizenry insecurity nationwide was the Nigerian Civil War experienced between July 6, 1967 and January 15, 1970. During this war, lives and properties were destroyed, and the scourge of insecurity within the state continued long after the war. Although the war has been labeled as “no victor, no vanquish,” people in some regions in Nigeria still feel highly alienated and may no longer trust the central government to adequately provide them with security of lives and properties. It is therefore imperative to deliberately design structures for a truth and reconciliation process. The level of distrust, coupled with various effects of economic downturns in the system, has increased rates of violent crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping, political assassination, and terrorism. This has also led to the emergence of various violent groups within the state with different affiliations and interests. Adejumo and Faga (2016) stated that these groups “have



undermined the internal security and public safety in such a way that the corporate existence of Nigeria as one indivisible and indissoluble nation is under serious threat having regard to their modus operandi” (p. 70). These organized groups, through gruesome activities such as kidnapping, assassination, and bombing, have threatened the peaceful coexistence of the citizenry while repealing various interventions from security agencies. It therefore became imperative for federated units within the state to decipher means of protecting their constituencies from unwarranted criminal activities. The creation of several law enforcement agencies by Lagos State in particular was initiated to support the federal security apparatus in mitigating the menace of security challenges.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem of states’ insecurity in Nigeria has continued to generate serious apprehension that could plunge the nation into political instability if not given the required attention. Since the advent of the democratic regime in the country in 1999, a series of insecurity issues have made citizens question the ability of the government to ensure adequate safety of lives and property. The country currently has 36 states, and the multiethnic division of these states with over 250 ethnic groups has in recent times ignited the concerns of citizens over the federal government’s commitment or ability to provide national security. This sense of inadequacy of the federal structure, coupled with incessant cases of insecurity, have led to agitations of various states to institute autonomous security agencies.

Historically, high crime rates led to the creation of organized vigilante groups amongst the three dominant ethnic groups in Nigeria. In the Northern part of the country,

which is predominantly Hausas, there was the establishment of the “Hisba police,” a pro-sharia organization to combat crime and social decadence in the form of morality police. In the Western part of the country, the Odua People’s Congress (OPC) was formed to fight crime on Yoruba land. In the Eastern part of the country, the Bakassi Boys were established in the wake of gruesome cases of armed robbery, rituals, and kidnapping in most states. The Bakassi Boys successfully curbed the heightened crime rate in Abia and Anambra States, leading the states’ Houses of Assembly to legitimize the groups and rename them as Abia State Vigilante Services and Anambra Vigilante Services, respectively (Spencer, 2017). These groups enjoyed state support despite being at loggerheads with the federal police over allegations of violence and human rights violations.

Generally, the level of insecurity in Nigeria is high, and Lagos State, being the commercial capital of the country, seems to have the highest record of crime. According to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) crime reports, Lagos State has the highest percentage share of total cases reported, with 50,975 (37.9%) cases out of the 36 states in Nigeria with one Federal Capital Territory (NBS, 2017). Lagos crime data for 2017 further indicate that offences against persons accounted for 18,926 cases, offences against property accounted for 24,989 cases, and offences against lawful authority accounted for 7,060 cases, for a total of 50,975 cases. Offences classified as against persons include murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, suicide, attempted suicide, grievous harm wounding, rape, indecent assault, kidnapping, and so forth. Offences against property include armed robbery, theft/stealing, burglary, forgery, arson, and receiving stolen

properties, while offences against lawful authority include forgery of currencies, perjury, bribery, corruption, and escape from custody (NBS, 2017).

The current population of Lagos State is over 17 million people, and federal security personnel could be overwhelmed in dealing with the high level of insecurity faced by this state. The federal authority has not given any positive response to the consistent clamor for state police by some of the federating units. The Lagos State Government established the Neighbourhood Safety Agency in September 2016 to collaborate with federal police and other security agencies in combating crime in the state.

Effort has been made by scholars to study cases of insecurity in Lagos State, but there remains a need to connect research to community policing for a sustainable Nigerian federal structure. Kasali and Odetola (2016) stated that the lack of alternative security policies in the form of community policing is a source of insecurity in the country. The need to explore the impact of and reinstitutionalize the community security agencies is therefore suggested as a panacea to the problem of insecurity in Lagos State, as opposed to the use of private militia and vigilante groups. This is particularly important given the resources voted upon for security by the federal government, which have had minimal results in dealing with the situation. Moreover, the action of both the federal and state governments in the past for the provision of adequate security has involved a taking reactive approach after occurrences rather than a proactive approach that would forestall imminent violence. Community security agencies should be well institutionalized, given that previous efforts that witnessed the inauguration of task forces

by the government whenever there was violence seemed not to yield the most effective results. This research project, therefore, was conducted to provide fresh perspectives on insecurity issues in Lagos State while making contributions that might positively impact policy makers and expand the body of knowledge. The research expands the body of knowledge through novel findings at the conclusion of this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This phenomenological study focused on the examination of citizen security in the Nigeria federated states with the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency as a case study. I adopted a qualitative research design that embraced the use of interviews after the recruitment of respondents and acknowledgement of their consent to participate in the study. The collated data were used for the analysis of the sampled population on security issues from the Lagos metropolitan area, which was divided into Mainland and Island areas. The nexus between citizen security and Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency was explored because this area had not been fully reviewed in existing research. Significantly, much research had been conducted on national security, including the impact of governance on the effectiveness of the police and armed forces. However, there had been little study on the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency since its establishment in 2016.

### **Research Question**

The research question for this qualitative study was the following:

RQ 1: What are the experiences of Lagos State residents on the Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state?

### **Theoretical Framework**

I applied the institutional theory of DiMaggio and Powell as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory focuses on the structural characteristics of the political system and its influence on public policies. The conduct of the government is regulated by policies, and this affects the lives of citizens directly or indirectly. Regulations on security measures in any sovereign state are not void of legislation from the established constituted authority of that state. The theory of institutionalism was developed to involve both behaviorism and rational choice analysis (Peters, 2019). The nature of my research, which involved an examination of a government agency in relation to citizen security, made the institutional approach appropriate as a theoretical framework. My study focused on the Lagos State government's responsiveness through the Neighbourhood Agency to security issues, citizens' perceptions about the agency, and the country's structural formation in relation to the state of insecurity. It was anticipated that the study outcome would contribute to the body of knowledge and influence policy formulation on national security in Nigeria.

### **Nature of the Study**

The need to build a structure for research necessitates the quest for an appropriate design for a research study. The research methodology for this study was qualitative, given the research focus, which centered on the governance structure and reaction of citizens to a state of insecurity. The qualitative method is appropriate for exploring social phenomena and human behavior because such areas of inquiry cannot be subjected to laboratory experiments. This is not, however, to assert that there is no social science

research that does not utilize the quantitative method. The primary factor for selecting the qualitative method was the nature of the research topic and the questions that I sought to answer.

When a researcher is dealing with social research of a complex nature, the qualitative methods tends to be useful in approaching issues from holistic perspectives. As Marshall (1996) explained, “Qualitative studies aim to provide illumination and understanding of complex psychosocial issues and are most useful for answering humanistic why? and how? questions” (p. 522). The “why” and “how” factors in my research were evident in the concern for citizen insecurity in the Nigeria federated state. The issue being considered in my research was largely based on human interactions within the state, and this required a nonexperimental design process that could not be adequately measured by a mathematical tool. The outcome of human experiences can be circumstantial, and an attempt to understand such experiences with a statistical lens may generate a certain level of limitation. A policy analysis design was used for this study to enhance an objective inquiry into complex human experience in relations to the government-established institution. A qualitative design was adopted as an inquiry was launched into the relationship between a government structure and citizens.

The sampling process in research is essential for the selection of units from a population of interest to arrive at a generalized result. The population considered for interviews in this research was drawn from representatives of the Lagos Island and Mainland metropolitan areas. Residents of the state were summarily classified as those who lived on the Island and the Mainland. A total of 20 participants was considered, with

10 participants each from the Island and the Mainland, with an age bracket of between 25 and 40 years old. The sampling frame was built around academia, security personnel, and professional bodies, given the need to draw opinions from an informed population whose members could objectively and professionally relate to issues of state insecurity.

Beyond dealing with an informed population, it is important that the representation and opinions generated in a study are well distributed and balanced in perspective. One of the issues that arose from data collection in my research was the inability to have a generalized opinion from all respondents due to their perspectives on state security agencies. Significantly, respondents could have been influenced by their ethnic background, education, profession, and area of interest. Simon (2011) stated that “In quantitative research, reliability refers to the ability to replicate the results of a study. In qualitative research, there’s no expectation of replication” (p. 1). The need to generate value-free judgment from the participants might not have been totally eradicated, but it was mitigated when such responses were further reviewed for analysis to make final research recommendations.

Another critical ethical issue was the informed consent and oath of confidentiality. To address this issue, the consent of all respondents was received, and I ensured that no participant was coerced into participating in the study. The essence of this effort involved establishing clear expectations that were collectively agreed upon by all respondents before the commencement of the exercise.

## Definitions

*Federal structure:* A federal structure is described as a system of government whereby the power of the state is divided between the central and the federating units. This system has been adjudged as the most ideal for Nigeria, given the level of ethnic diversity. Fabella and Daway-Ducane (2019) stated that “at the core of the federalism debate is decentralization, both fiscal and constitutional” (p. 2). The peculiarity of the Nigerian state, where the existence of regionalized polarization has taken on a critical dimension due to security issues, clearly calls for a system of government that can accommodate major ethnic concerns. A system of federalism was adopted by many African countries in the postindependence era with the expectation of effective management of cultural diversity. However, this experience was short lived in some African states, such as the Congolese (Zaire) federation of 1960–1965, Uganda federal system of 1962–1966, and Cameroonian federation of 1962–1972, to mention a few (Burgess, 2012). Nigeria has remained one of the African states practicing a federal structure despite a series of failures in other African states.

*Citizenry insecurity:* *Citizenry* could be explained as a group of people who are connected by sovereign identity in a state. The expectation of citizens in any sovereign state is that the security of their lives and property will be guaranteed by the government. The government’s inability to meet this expectation could generate gross distrust from citizens, and this could ultimately erode confidence in the country’s security agencies. The clamor for regional security in Nigeria has been more pronounced with the advent of “Amotekun,” which is the local name for “leopard” in the South Western region of



Nigeria. Before the “Amotekun” agitation came into the limelight, there were operations of organized security groups in Northern Nigeria known as the Hisbah police. This was positioned by some of the South Western agitators to justify their regional security body. Although the provision of adequate security of lives and property for the citizenry is the responsibility of the federal government, the ability of the federal government to provide security is being threatened daily by vicious attacks on innocent citizens by several organized crime bodies. The fiber of the country’s political formation is being weakened by these attacks, which have led to the loss of lives and properties, an increased number of internally displaced people, and a downturn of both foreign and local investments. In ensuring the provision of adequate security in the respective regions, especially at the federated units, the Lagos State government established the Neighbourhood Safety Agency.

*Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency:* The Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency was established in 2016 by a Lagos State House of Assembly law to support the police and other security personnel in maintaining law and order in the state. The state has 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) and 57 Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs). The security personnel of this agency are known as the *Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LSNC)*, and they are recruited from all 20 LGAs and 57 LCDAs. The deliberate engagement of the locals in these LGAs/LCDAs is for gathering relevant grassroots security intelligence that can further improve the safety of lives and property in the respective neighborhoods.

### **Assumptions**

It was assumed that it is a general concern of every citizen that a constituted authority is able to provide adequate security of lives and property. This assurance was premised on the assumption of a social contract between the government and the governed.

The rationale for drawing responses from residents of Lagos Island and Mainland was that it was necessary to gain a holistic viewpoint reflecting the experiences of major stakeholders related to citizenry insecurity in Lagos State while focusing on the Neighbourhood Safety Agency. The choice to sample from Lagos Island and Mainland residents was made to ensure a balance of opinions and eschew subjective findings for research validity and reliability.

The assumption for the selection of participants, which was drawn from academia, security personnel, and professional bodies, was to consolidate the integrity of the research. Because human perception cannot be limited to a laboratory experiment, a qualitative research design and methodology was assumed to be appropriate for this study. The findings from this research will be useful for policy formulation, which may aid social re-engineering of the security outfit across the country and in Lagos State in particular.

Finally, the findings from various respondents are assumed to proffer insight into novel military intelligence and strategies for social change that will improve security in Lagos State. This is based on the position that participants were effectively briefed on the

research expectations, understood what they were meant to contribute, and objectively provided answers to all interview questions.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study explored the impact of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on the mitigation of citizenry insecurity in the state. The study involved a retrospective analysis of the various security challenges in Lagos State vis-à-vis government efforts in providing solutions. To inquire into the major security challenges in the federated unit, the study considered past and current security situations with a critical representation of major stakeholders' perspectives among residents of Lagos Island and Mainland.

A qualitative method of data collection and analysis was used for this study. The scope of the study encompassed corporate, academic, and military populations from the identified areas in Lagos State. The opinions of ordinary citizens whose roles did not fall within the corporate, academic, and military populations were not considered for the research. The reason for this omission was premised on the need to draw data from a coordinated and informed population due to the sensitive nature of the study area. This was also due to the need to come up with reliable data that could be used for reference by policy makers in creating agendas for social change.

### **Limitations**

One of the potential limitations of this research was the representative level of the sample to be drawn from the population. Because the perspectives of residents of Lagos Island and Lagos Mainland were drawn from 20 respondents, the opinions may not reflect the general viewpoints of all Lagos State residents. Further, the perspectives of

ordinary citizens who do not fall within academic, security, or professional environments are not represented. The personal biases of the selected sample may also not be value free due to certain interests or affiliations. However, other supportive documents from various sectional research on security issues within the state may be used to complement the research findings for further validation of facts. In dealing with my personal bias, I widened my range of possibilities by examining various facts and ideas from other contributions related to the research. A triangulation approach to data sources was embraced to overcome my personal bias regarding the research.

Another challenge was the limited literature on the relationship between citizenry insecurity and the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. However, this was approached as an opportunity to advance a novel method into the study which will be further developed by subsequent research.

### **Significance**

The safety of lives and property is a strong indicator of good governance, and any nation that can no longer fulfill this obligation will definitely experience political instability. The problem of insecurity, with records of various crimes across the country in general and Lagos State in particular, has remained a hard nut for the federal government to crack. Given this situation, the need for collaborative security agencies is becoming nonnegotiable for a sustainable federal structure in Nigeria. Eke and Christopher (2019) buttressed this position by submitting that the peace of the country had never been this threatened for the past two decades with the emergence of militant groups and frequent kidnappings with demands for ransom (pp. 17-18). The security

challenges in the country continue to be fluid in nature, and effort must be made to find solutions from an entirely new perspective. Bonditti et al. (2015) and Coleman and Rosenow (2016) stated that the concept of security is diverse in knowledge and practice. There is essentially a need for fresh perspectives in analyzing and proffering solutions to security challenges.

My study explored the Lagos State initiative being the commercial hub of the country on Neighbourhood Safety Agency to address the security challenges in the state and its impact on the federal structure as a whole. The feedback collated from the sample aided the validity of this paper and improved the research quality of the final submission. The final outcome may be useful in addressing the increased security issues in Lagos state and may suggest credible guidelines for policy makers. The suggested guidelines will presumably reduce drastically the scorching effect of insecurity in the state.

### **Possible Types and Sources of Data**

The data for this study were generated from the following:

- in-depth interviews with the selected sample
- web-security-related content on recent developments in connection with the activities of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency
- local newspaper reports
- state statistics on crimes
- academic journals
- the Walden University library

### **Summary**

This chapter presented an introductory examination of citizen security in the Nigeria Federated State with a focus on the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. Past and recent incidents of violence perpetrated by various organized groups in the country have led to general concern regarding the ability of the federal government to measure up in meeting the security challenges in the country. The confidence invested in the government's ability to secure lives and property is dwindling daily with records of high crime rates in Lagos State compared to other federated units in Nigeria. This research study emphasized the need to draw references from major stakeholders on the current state of citizenry insecurity in Lagos State by examining the impact of the state-established Neighbourhood Safety Corp. Institutional theory was identified as the foundation of this study to explore the nexus between the state-established institution and citizenry security. Given the ethical consideration and generalization constraint that may be associated with the study, the qualitative method used drew sample representations from all major stakeholders, such as members of the corporate, academic, and military populations residing in Lagos Mainland and Island between the ages of 25 and 40 years. The chapter also contained definitions of key terms, as well as descriptions of the assumptions, scope, and significance of the study.

### **Transition**

In the second chapter, I examine relevant literature on the Lagos State Neighbourhood Corp with associated security-related issues. The literature review addresses relevant academic works such as textbooks and peer-reviewed journal articles

from databases such as Sage Premier, Emerald, Academia, and ProQuest Central. This literature provides a deeper view into the study and an effective structure for detailed research analysis. A review of institutional theory is presented to build the required validation for the study.

In the third chapter, I reiterate the purpose of the study using a qualitative research design with a population drawn from among residents of Lagos Island and Mainland with 20 respondents from these locations. The respondents were drawn from academic, security, and professional environments. As a means of data collection, a semistructured interviewing method was used for all of the represented population with boundaries between the ages of 25 and 40 years. This age bracket represents the largest active and informed population in Lagos State, given the country's demographic formation. The category falls within the tertiary education population and the working-class group both in the private and public sectors.

Chapter 4 gives a detailed account of the research findings from the study and an analysis of the data collected. The validity and reliability of the research are authenticated at this stage given measures that were introduced to derive value-free representation.

Chapter 5 gives an overview of the study through a summary, recommendations for social change, and conclusions based on the research outcome.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Protecting people and society from both internal insurgencies and external aggression is a nonnegotiable task of a federal government. The responsibilities of an established authority in building capacity for machinery that can forestall intending crises and suppress violence are within the constitutional domain of the government. To build this capacity, every government maintains well-equipped military organizations that are especially designed to protect against external invasion and to take other security measures to enforce internal law and order. Omede (2005, p. 95) stated that the role of the military involves keeping custody of the country's defense by protecting its people, institutions, and territorial boundaries, and by taking action against intrusion from both internal and external forces.

The enormous security challenges in Nigeria have led the military to support the police over the years to curtail civil unrest initiated by political and electoral violence, ethno-religious crises, and other forms of internal insurgencies. The issue of internal security in Nigeria, therefore, requires a collaborative effort of the military and other security establishments to support the police. A spate of violent attacks on lives and properties of citizens in Lagos State has generated many concerns for the government. It has therefore become the central focus of every government regime in Lagos State to ensure that the issue of security is given uncompromising attention.

The influence of an effective security structure in any sovereign environment obviously transcends the safety of lives and property but the overall development of the



state. The connection between security and societal development in relation to human security is interlinked with environmental security, and security and development should be viewed as two sides of the same coin (Akinyode, 2012; Zabadi, 2007). A secured environment will ultimately promote an atmosphere for sustainable growth and development. Omotosho and Aderinto (2016) suggested that security covers several areas, which include industrial and civil safety, economic and general infrastructural security, environmental security, and other proactive measures for crime prevention rather than reactive effort. This study provides a detailed analysis of the Lagos State security system with a critique of the Neighbourhood Safety Agency, which was established by the state to maintain law and order within the state in collaboration with other security agencies.

In this chapter, I explore related literature and the theoretical framework for the study. Additionally, I examine the literature on historical security challenges in Lagos State and identify gaps in previous research.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

A literature review gives a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest in a study, along with an account of the sequential processes of planning, organizing, drafting, editing, and redrafting the findings (Galvan, 2017, p. 6). Hart (2018, p. 3) perceived literature search as a systematic exploration of accredited study materials drawn from both printed and electronic sources that are relevant to the research area. I reviewed scholarly materials on security issues on the Nigerian system in general, with a focus on inherent challenges in Lagos State. An effort was also made to explore the

concept of a federated state and how stability could be impacted by a high level of insecurity. I used relevant regulatory and institutional materials on the formation, structure, and operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency.

During the literature search, I used the Walden University Library to locate and retrieve relevant peer-reviewed scholarly articles and journals. In addition, I used other reputable databases such as ProQuest Central, SAGE Premier, JSTOR, Academia search engine, Google Scholar, and EBSCOhost to access papers for the review. Based on the nature of my study, previous and recent books published on Nigerian security issues with institutional materials were reviewed in the course of this study. The keywords used in the search were *Nigerian society*, *Nigerian Federated States*, *Lagos State*, *citizen*, *security*, and *Neighbourhood Watch Safety Agency*.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The validation of every research work is rooted in an established theory that is used to further increase the understanding of the study. A theoretical framework, therefore, explains the structure of a preferred theory in research after its appropriateness and relevance have been established. A theoretical framework can be expressed as the structure or frame of a particular study (Amfara & Mertz, 2014). To Grant and Osanloo (2014), a theoretical framework is the “blueprint” of research work that the researcher uses in navigating the study to reach a particular finding. A theoretical framework guides the researcher with the analytical lens required for the scholarly study of a phenomenon. Brondizio et al. (2014) also confirmed that a theoretical framework deals with theory or theories related to a research focus that can be used to study events. As further explained

by Imenda (2014), research without a theoretical framework lacks the ingredients required for appropriate direction and scholarly literature for a study. Adom et al. (2018) agreed that theoretical framework channels the path for a research work to be grounded “firmly in a theoretical construct.” My theoretical foundation for this research was institutional theory due to the focus of the study. I have considered this theory appropriate for the analysis of how the Lagos State Government established a security structure to maintain law and order within the state.

### **Institutional Theory**

The concept of an *institution* can be understood as encompassing the beliefs, rules, people, and functions that can independently affect organizational formation (Scott, 1991, p. 165). The institutionalization of an organization should be considered if there is general acceptability of their usage with no underlying concerns over its relevance as a dogma (Davis et al., 1994; Greenwood et al., 2008). The traditional perspective of institutional theory involves analysis of the ways through which various organizations align in a given environment and adapt to dynamic societal conditions (Martinez & Williams, 2012, p. 46). David et al. (2019) stated that institutional theory, which has its roots in Max Weber’s principles of legitimacy and authority, involves the acceptance and spread of formal organizational structures. This could be in the form of written policies and established standards that are bound by certain cultural values and shared expectations.

In the post-World War II era, especially in the United States, the individualistic assumption of behavioralism and rational choice was de-emphasized the institutional

theory. In the 1980s, however, the important roles played by structures in public sector and institutional explanations of policy and governance studies led to increased interest in institutional theory (Peters, 2019). Since the 1970s and early 1980s, institutional theory has been adopted as a method for social research. In line with this position, Scott and Amarante (2016) opined that institutional theory has been a relevant tool in academia due to its applicability to behavioral complexity in organizations. It is useful for laying a research foundation in social inquiry. Scholars across the intellectual community have adopted the theory to analyze organizations for better understanding of how actors such as individuals, firms, and entire stakeholders attain or maintain legitimacy (Scaraboto & Fischer, 2012). The concept of legitimacy is considered to be central to institutional theory in relation to “regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive” areas (Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy in institutional theory refers to standards for what all stakeholders regard as proper in an environment (Glover et al., 2014).

Institutional theory has been explored by various scholars over the years (Aldrich, 1994; Dacin, 1997; Lawrence et al, 2001; Zilber, 2012). There is still, however, an opportunity to explore other areas of research using the theory in relation to organizational and societal change. Palthe (2014) explored institutional theory in relation to organizational change within the framework of regulative, normative, and cognitive elements (p. 60). This, therefore, provides that institutional theory creates a framework through which organizational change process can be initiated and implemented. The regulative perspective relates to policies and work rules; the normative perspective deals with work norms and habits; and the cognitive perspective involves beliefs and values.

The concept of institutional isomorphism was considered to cause organizational resemblance of others with a trend of gravitating from diversity to homogeneity in a society (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio (1988) critiqued the position of neo-institutionalism as lacking agency understanding based on the argument that organizations become isomorphic after a period of time. This critique was presumably initiated to correct the perception of organizations as prisoners of their institutional environment (Sudabby, 2010). As a further contribution to institutional theory, Sudabby and Tsujinguchi (2018) emphasized that change is constant in institutions and that attention should be given to the cultural element of change.

The three mechanisms that cause changes under the concept of institutional isomorphism are coercive pressures, mimetic pressures, and normative pressures. Coercive pressures arise from regulatory influences on the organization. As Chaturangani and Madhusanka (2019) explained, coercive pressures deal with regulatory compliance with existing regulations, which are enforceable by “political influence or legitimacy problems” (p. XX). Mimetic pressures are related to technological influences. Mimetic pressures occur as a result of responses to an uncertain situation that eventually leads to organizational change. Finally, normative influences arise from communicated standards, which can be in form of organizational training and education. Normative pressure is considered to arise from two forces of professionalism, which are education and professional networking.

Institutional theory is primarily concerned with the conformity of groups and organizations to the established rules and regulations governing society. Institutional

theory also suggests that the relationships of social networks and their behavior within the organization in which they operate are not only dyadic, but also connected to institutions and organizational networks (Lin & Sheu, 2012).

From Willmott's (2015) perspective, institutional theory cannot be considered as critical in that power is not central to institutional analysis and theory lacks reflectivity in terms of its conservative nature and research philosophy. This opinion was challenged by Lok (2019) when he argued that the concept of criticality must be understood before asserting that institutional theory is not critical. In his submission, critical approaches tend to expose, disrupt, and change institutional arrangements for the improvement of humanity while also dealing with issues of oppression and societal inequalities. Munir (2019) concurred that institutional theory cannot be confirmed as less critical by merely tagging it solely to power, (p. 5). It was, however, further opined by Munir that for institution theory to be more critical, its proponents need to acknowledge power differentials by explaining structures of oppression and models for deposing those structures.

The choice of institutional theory as a theoretical lens for this study was premised on its usefulness in analyzing the methods through which organizations such as political, economic, social, and educational bodies act jointly to adapt to societal changes of regulatory, cognitive, and normative conditions (Martinez & Williams, 2012). The establishment of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Agency aligns with institutional theory as the agency is regulated by law with the mandate for maintenance of law and order while collaborating with other security institutions in the state. This was necessitated by

the urgent need to intervene in the growing security challenges in the state, which had not only led to loss of lives and properties, but also depleted resources that could have been used for developmental projects. The provision of the law governing the operations of the agency empowers it to enforce law and order in the state. To buttress this position, Webb et al. (2011) explained that because the establishment of institutions is governed by rules and regulations, the legitimacy of their activities and popular compliance will not be questioned.

### **Thematic Clarification**

The conceptual framework was premised on the need to explore the state of citizenry security in Lagos State with an examination of Lagos State Neighbourhood Agency as an institution established by the state with the potential of reducing insecurity of lives and property within the federating unit. The qualitative approach used for this research will describe related concepts and investigate the impact of state intervention on security matters using the Neighbourhood Agency as navigation. This study built on existing work while drawing data from relevant published databases and responses from open-ended interviews. The recommendations that were drawn from this study will be a resource for progressive inquiry.

### **Nigerian Federalism**

The formation of the Nigerian state came as a result of the British perceived ideal system of governance through the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Directorates of Nigeria in 1914. Akinrinade (2003) considered the amalgamation project as “an administrative–colonial project rather than a political project” (p. XX) due to the

non-compliance of disparate groups within the community being seen collectively as a common society. Prior to colonial dominance, traditional societies in Nigeria were more inclined toward communalism, and this defined their political, social, and economic relationships (Isike, 2005). The precolonial Igbo and Tiv acephalous societies had a decentralized political system where individualism was embedded in collectivism. The Hausa/Fulani and Benin practiced a more centralized structure, while the checks and balances in the Yoruba structure made it more democratic in nature.

Additionally, precolonial Nigeria had kingdoms, empires, and caliphates with complex administrative structures independent of colonial influence. Among these were the Kanem-Borno Empire, Oyo Empire, Sokoto Caliphate, Ife Kingdom, and Benin Kingdom (Musa & Hassan, 2014). The communal bond was quite visible despite the type of political system, with a strong feeling that the well-being of everyone depended on how each person filled their roles in a chain of responsibilities (Claude, 1996, p. 6).

Nigeria has been adjudged as one of the most ethnically diverse nations across the globe, with over 250 ethno-linguistic groups (Ojo, 2009). Majekodunmi (2015) stated that the multiethnic formation of the Nigerian structure did not made the adoption of federalism by the colonial administrator a necessity, but as a result of different administrative design for the Northern and Southern Protectorate. This invariably reflects that the birth of federalism in Nigeria was premised on the need for British administrative convenience rather than being the ideal structure for the country's multiethnic formation. Adetokunbo (2017), argued that the economic interest of the British Government was also pronounced when the country experienced civil war in 1967–1970 and the British



Government was unwilling to supply the country with ammunition to suppress the Biafra army. It took the intervention of Russia, which not only supplied ammunition, but also deployed military and technical personnel to stop the seceding Biafra Army (p. 481).

The concept of federalism was described by Olu-Adeyemi (2017) as a mixture or compound form of government that combines both the federal government and subregional governments in a political system. This perspective aligns with the renowned definition of Wheare (1953), who stated that federalism is “the method of dividing power so that general and regional governments are each within a sphere coordinate and independent” (p. xx). As a criticism on Wheare’s position, Abah and Monday (2017) opined that the concept of federalism should not be restricted to legal and constitutional terminologies but should reflect political, economic, social, and cultural forces. In the view of Okoli (2004), federalism is simply a system of government that enhances shared powers amongst the federating units. The principle of federalism, according to Agbu (2013), is the formation of a political system amongst territorial diversity within an emerging society through mutual consensus for a coordinated authority with a defined authoritative mode of political and legal administration. William (2014) submitted that the whole essence of a federal structure is not about the constitution or the institution but the federal qualities inherent in the society itself. It is, therefore, possible to have an acclaimed federal structure without a federal practice. Launi and Umar (2018) stated that federalism is a unique system of government that promotes unity amongst diverse national entities without necessarily losing the identity of the federating units. The system has been considered as the ideal structure in a situation of existing ethnic pluralism. In the

same vein, Nwafor-Orizu et al. (2018) described federalism as a political system characterized by clear-cut division of power with a laid-down constitution specifying how power is shared among levels of government. They further submitted that true federalism should possess as core features a written constitution, supremacy of the constitution, equality of power between levels of government, equality in ethno-regional representation, fiscal autonomy, autonomy of each government, and division of power and responsibilities. These features could be seen as undeniable factors in determining true federalism, which was explained by Okolie (2019) as a system that protects the fundamental rights of both individuals and the federating states.

The Nigeria colonial experience was accompanied by series of political and constitutional changes of about 40 years' period (1914 – 1950). After the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorate in 1914, the Nigerian Council was established in 1916 and a new constitution was introduced in 1922. In 1939, a pseudo-Federation was attempted and the Richard constitution of 1945 was introduced before Marcherson came on board in 1951. The short-lived Marcherson constitution was later replaced by the Lyttleton constitution of 1954 (Dudley, 1974; Joseph, 1999; Mou, 2014, and Ugiagbe, 2018). The evolution of Nigeria federalism is evidently the imposition by the British Government for ease of administration and this system has been arguably ideal for heterogeneous population with large political, geographical, cultural and religious setting (Ali & Ahmed, 2019). Kendhammer (2014) averred that the focus of Nigeria's post-war federalism is "ethno-territorial" with the intent of balancing minorities' recognition amidst the proliferation of larger ethnic groups into states. The Nigeria federal structure

has a tripartite power sharing among the federal government, state government and local government. The federal holds the centre with a total of 36 states (37 with the Federal Capital Territory) and 774 local government areas. Shehu (2017) however opined that Nigeria political system is far from being federal given the seemingly unitary arrangement that constitutionally empowers the central government above others in fiscal matters. A study by Dada et al. (2017) further explained that local governments in Nigeria sole dependence on allocations from state and federal has given them less autonomy.

Kromtit et al. (2017) expressed that Nigerian federalism is lopsided over the years due to the challenges associated with revenue allocation amongst the three tiers of government, (p. 1). The issue of fiscal federalism in the country remains cautious amongst major ethnic groups as he who controls the center ultimately possess the privileged compass in navigating revenues to an area of interest. To support this argument, Moghalu (2018) and Ofuebe (2018) explained that the current composition of the Nigerian federal structure does not reflect true federalism as the central government has continued control over major resources while the component units are left with few. It was submitted that this absolutely negates the principle of federalism and can hinder sustainable development and economic growth. Raji et al. (2019) described fiscal federalism as a framework for assigning responsibilities amongst the three tiers of government with mechanisms for executing the responsibilities. In explaining Nigerian federalism further, Achinike and Ogbonna (2016) examined four incontrovertible areas of Nigeria federal structure. The first observation was that the federal structure was not the

aftermath of social contract or plebiscite but an isolated decision of few political leaders at the pre-independence London constitutional conferences. Secondly, the Nigerian federal structure was opined to be lopsided with over-concentration of power on the federal government. The third is the mirage of national integration, which has become a major national issue after years of independence in 1960. The last submission was the pronounced injustice in the Nigerian federation.

The post-civil war Nigeria federalism witnessed the invasion of military government and power resided in Lagos State being the then capital of Nigeria. The country experienced long military rule during which the constitution was suspended as military government rule by decree. The military changed the country's federal, regional structure to 12 states federation with an appointed military administrator for each state. The adverse effect of civil war was aggravated by the regional structure which promoted the clamour for secession from the eastern region. The proliferation of states will make the constituent units less powerful to confront the federal might both in terms of financial and military resources (Orluwene, 2018). The State structure was maintained even when the country returned to stable democratic civilian government in 1999. The States in Nigeria have increased from the 12 states creation to 36 federated units in the country. The structural formation of stronger federal government at the center compared to the federated units is still maintained in the country. The structural arrangement of stronger federal government has been able to hold the system from strong agitation for succession that could degenerate into full war. The other side to this formation is the zero-sum practice of major ethnic groups in the country with desire to control the center. This is the

reason for consistent agitations for true federalism that will promote some level of autonomy in the federated unit without going cap-in-hand to the federal for allocations.

### **Citizenship and Security**

The concept of citizenship and security has been given several interpretations by scholars in the past and recent times. Manby (2010: IX) viewed citizenship as being a member or belonging to a political community while also enjoying all the rights that such community brings as well. From the law perspective, it could be seen as relationships between the state and individual connected by legal bond. Russo (2018) explained citizenship as a system through which the rights and duties of individuals are placed in padlocks of commitments which are linked to both State (vertical structure) and the society (horizontal structure), (P. 46). In the same vein, Stevenson (2001) suggested that citizenship is majorly about membership, belonging, rights and obligations, (p. 1). Gabrys, et al. (2016) adopted a rather different approach to the concept of citizenship, (p. 2). They explored the perspective of citizenship as data-related engagements that promote political subjects in relations to environmental problems. This succinctly place citizens as useful resource for generating useful data that can be use as problem solving tools for environmental transformation. From this stance, citizens are at the center of social change and organizational transformation.

In their study, Cunha et al, (2016) argued from the perspective of conferring citizenship to people within the state. This is considered as membership bestowed on individuals that resides within the confine of a 'politically articulated community' with certain rights and obligations, (p. 330 -331). Citizenship affiliations have been extended

beyond the local, regional and national perspective to cover global influences. Marc (2008) also stated that the issue of national citizenship is connected to popular sovereignty, equality and self-determination (p. 24). In another perspective, Nils, et al. (2000) considered citizenship as an institutional control mechanism that regulates the sharing of rights and obligations in a society with decision making authority of state resources. Dimitry (2019) gave a different perspective to the concept by explaining that it goes beyond the mantras of “sovereign equality”, “political participation”, and “self-government” that is mostly attached to it. He therefore submitted that the core rights of citizenship lie in the ability to reside in one’s country without the risk of being deported, immunity from constant humiliation and lack of discrimination of being a foreigner, (p. 16).

From another perspective, Bloemraad (2017) considered citizenship from the angle of membership through claims-making. The ability and right to make claims to certain request from the polity, community, people and the government validates the citizenship status of an individual in that society. The right to the make such claim is also regulated by dogma that governs the interrelationship of citizens in a geographical location. It places less emphasis on the status of individual as a citizen but the power and legitimacy citizenship bestow on individual in the society. This power and legitimacy are not however absolute as there are legal restrictions placed by institution of the State for effective governance.

Security is critical for the survival and development of any country to forestall any form of lawlessness, chaos, and total disintegration of the system, (Odeh & Umoh,

2015, p. 413). Nwolise (2006) viewed security from the holistic angle as comprises of safety by networks of military, police and other security agencies with a guaranteed democratic and patriotic government. The issue of security was not limited to protection from external attacks but also from the effects of internal crises such as unemployment, diseases, pollution, environmental degradation and socio-economic injustices. Cosmos et al. (2013) also argued that security is not necessarily the absence of threats or societal challenges, but the ability to forestall and prevent the impact of such challenges. They therefore explained security as any measure adopted to protect area of interest to individuals, organization or government, lives and property.

Security could be explained as a situation whereby there is an assurance of safety of lives and property in an environment. Ozoigbo (2019) described security as a deliberate action to protect the people, information and property against external hostile influences. Security could be confirmed when people in a given geographical location are free from both internal violence and external aggression. Given that conflict is inherent in every society, there is a need for an organised body to regulate behaviours of individuals in a given community. This is where the principle of social contract addresses security challenges in a given environment. When the public trade their right to an established government, it is done in expectation that the security of their lives and properties will be guaranteed.

Odeh and Umoh (2015) further gave two contending perspectives to the concept of security as the Realist/Strategist Perspectives and the Non-Strategic Perspectives. The Realist/Strategist perspective conceptualizes security from the angle of deterrence of

aggression through arms acquisition by the military. This perspective considers conflict to be inherent between men and states with centrality of power and resource control. The implication of adopting this perspective is that many expectations are placed on the armed forces as the independent agency to provide security and higher resources are usually allocated to them above other sectors in the state. The Non-Strategist on the other hand gravitates from the state-centric security to society and individuals while embracing both military and non-military interventions on security issues. The fulcrum of this perspective hinges on national security, human right and national development.

The consensus of these two perspectives were given by Adebakin and Raimi (2012) when stated in their study that security has always dealt with the safety and the survival of a sovereign state including its citizens from any form of dangerous threats or harms. They further identified 7 critical dimensions of national security as Economic Security, Food Security, Health Security, Environmental Security, Personal Security, Community Security and Political Security. Zabadi (2007) also admitted that the social contract which created the state has not only given it monopoly of legitimacy but also the responsibility of ensuring and guaranteeing citizenry security, (p. 128). This invariably suggests that the citizens also gave up their right to arm for self-security, and leave it to the established institutions for the public good. It therefore aligns with the realist perspective that equates state security to individual security. Buzan (1983) identified three levels of security analysis as individual, state, and international. He further conceded that a consideration of security from individual level alone may not be all-encompassing, the values individual attempts to secure is the same with both state and



international levels. These values include life, health, wealth, status, and freedom. In explaining security, Mangold (2013) stated that it is only assured when the adversaries have been curtailed. This aligns with the middle ages' perception of the phenomenon where conquest of the adversary is seen as guaranteed security, (p. 29-84).

Gilles et al. (2017) explained citizen security as responsiveness to statehood and active citizenship for the purpose of achieving public safety. It also comprises of several ideas and activities designed for public security, justice, and reinforcement of mutual rights and obligations between the citizenry and the state. While admitting that there is no absolute approach to conceptualize citizen security, Robert and Katherine (2018) interpreted it as policies and programs that is channelled towards safety, security, and the rights of state residents as enshrined in government responsibilities. Citizen security involves a chain of responsibilities and activities that cut across security policies, social justice, safety interventions and governance structure. Robert and Katherine further expressed that citizen security covers other area of ideas and practices channelled towards violence prevention and reduction, public security promotion, healthy social cohesion, and fair access to justice within a defined territory. Hossain and Adams (2017) avers that security of individuals has moved from the United Nations initial perspective of "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" to United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) seven security perspectives which are economic, environmental, personal, political, food, health, and community. Olajide et al. (2018) concurred that the security of the citizens within the state and society should be given utmost concern while not relenting on the protection of territorial integrity, (p. 177).

Cano and Rojido (2016) confirmed the growing acceptance of effective and efficient frameworks for security and public safety as a sine qua non for guaranteeing citizen rights and guard against perceived violence. Contrary to the orientation that setting up effective security framework could be expensive, Chioda (2017) opined that strategic investment in security with conscious fostering of social co-existence is more cost-effective in comparative terms. The cost implication of having to deal with a violence-prone community or society has more negative impact on the nation's resources. Another perspective is the reconciliation of human security issue with policy framework such as Security Sector Reform (Ansorg, 2017). In the same vein, Cross (2016) recognized non-state actors as vital in the establishment and administrating of security and policing structure. This is a postmodernist approach that displaced the opinion of state being the sole provider of security in an organized environment, (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013, p. 286).

Insecurity on the contrary could be simply described as the converse of security explained above. Insecurity in the State become more pronounced when the government could no longer curtail the spark of violence which consistently threatens the peaceful co-existence of the citizens. Adofu and Alhassan (2018) viewed insecurity as a state of vulnerability of people to harm, loss of lives and properties. There is insecurity when the government and the people of the State are incapacitated from defending themselves against latent or manifest danger. To a significant extent, the ability of the State to deal with the challenges of insecurity across the globe has been one of the major yardsticks of considering both a failed and successful state.

From the foregoing, it could be explained that insecurity is the presence of threat to lives and properties in a given environment. The exposure to external hostility and internal insurgency without any form of commensurable resistance either by the people or the government clearly presume the existence of insecurity in a state. Abubakar (2020) further alluded that insecurity did not only involve the presence of threats to lives and properties, but also to the existence of any society. The position of Nigeria as the most populous black nation should come with some levels of potentials. However, high rate of insecurity in the State aggravated by poor economic factors, have continued to downplay the potentials within and outside the country.

### **Security and the Nigerian Federated Unit**

As every society experience growth and development, changes will occur with its attendant challenges given the inherence of conflict in human nature. It is therefore imperative for government to ensure that novel approach is given to societal security challenges by widening safety needs to cover economic, communications and environmental security, (Odinkalu, 2004). Over the years, the population of Nigeria had witnessed consistent growth across various regions with its attendant security challenges (Jatto & Stanislas, 2017). The recent repeated occurrences of kidnapping, robbery, and terrorist activities perpetuated by Hausa-Fulani nomadic herdsmen and other organized groups across many states are pointers of serious security issues, (Ajayi, 2015; Adebayo, 2015). Nigeria is divided into the following six geological zones: North Central, North East, North West, South-South, South East, and South West. The country is currently confronted with a lot of security challenges which range from the Boko Haram

insurgency in North East with some spread in North West, militancy issue in the South-South, Biafra secession agitation in the South East, Islamic fundamentalist in the North Central, sectional violence and robbery cases in the South West.

In the Northern part of the country, violent conflict majorly between the Muslim Fulani herders and farmers who are predominantly Christian results to the killing of over 2,500 people in a year. This is different from those rendered homeless and killed by Boko Haram Islamic Insurgency in the region and this has also amounted to about 4.5 million people lacking sufficient food. Both the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) committed response plan of US\$1.05 billion and €143 million support package respectively as an intervention for the crises ridden areas in 2017 but frequent attacks by terrorist insurgency has made access to needy region impossible (International Crises Group, 2017). There are reports that 117 people were killed with several houses, farms and live stocks destroyed in Kaduna State, Kajuru and Kachia areas in particular. Also, Zamfara state has been bedevilled by attacks from armed bandits, cattle rustlers and militias with civilians' death of about 497 and 385 kidnappings between January and April, 2017, (UN Security Council, 2019, p. 4-5).

In the southern region of the country, there are records of political violence between the two dominant parties which is APC and PDP during the gubernatorial election in Nembe, Bayelsa states which led to one death and several supporters of both parties wounded, (ACLED, 2019). The most recent occurrence of this menace in the South East is the activities of bandits' attack on government institutions. Specifically, police stations were burnt with prisoners released while arms were carted away. As a

major threat to the country's power transition process, Independent Electoral Commission offices were also razed down by bandits in the region. Apart from the loss of properties, several security personnel also lost their lives during the attack between March and May, 2021. The Niger Delta region has also been marked by the violent activities of militants such as vandalizing of oil infrastructures, oil bunkering, kidnapping and political violence (Ploch, 2013).

In Lagos State, a south western region of Nigeria, there was a cult clash on March, 2020 that led to the death of three (3) people in Ajegunle. Another case in Lagos was a communal clash in Ajah on June 2019 and eleven (11) people were killed in the violence. In another crisis between hoodlums and traders in Lagos on April 5, 2018, fifteen (15) people reportedly lost their lives. Another reported case on June 24, 2016 of clashes between militants and some communities in Lagos led thirty-four (34) deaths. During the clash between the Custom and Smugglers in Lagos at Seme border on May 1, 2016, a total number of thirty-five (35) people were killed, (Nigeriawatch, 2020).

The ravaging activities of some youths in Lagos State have generated serious concern as they are being used as instrument of violence by corrupt politicians especially during elections. The ugly activities of these untamed youths have eaten deep into societal fabrics with negative impact on mutual co-existence of citizens. This is contrary to the expectation that youths are the fulcrum of development and social transformation. The rise of organized violent groups in Lagos like the "Onyabo group", "Eiye Fraternity", "Aiye Fraternity", amongst others, have recorded serious casualties and death of several innocent people, (Mudashiru & Fatai, 2019). Also, kidnapping is another

common crime which is presumably worsens by absence of security agents that can easily connect with the grassroots people in ensuring safety of lives and properties. A critical example of Lagos kidnapping case that made major headline in national dailies was the arrest of Evans, a notorious kidnapping gangster who had perpetrated several crimes before he was captured, (Attoh & Fapetu, 2018:132). Ezemenaka (2018: 236) confirmed that Lagos among other states like Bayelsa, Yobe, Borno, Kogi, and Delta have the highest record of kidnapping cases between the periods of 2014 – 2016.

The Lagos State Government in the past and recent times had come up with initiatives to combat the endemic crime rates within the state. In 2007 for example, the Lagos State Government established the Lagos State Security Trust Fund (LSSTF) to provide finance and deploy security equipment in the state while making provision for training of security personnel. In a recent development, the State Government banned the operations of motorcycles (Okada) and tricycles (Keke Napep) in major highways across the state. This was done to curb activities of criminals who used the two means of transportation to rob and cause chaos within the city. Oguntunde et al. (2018) described crime as any act leading to offences that is punishable by law. In September 2017, the Lagos State Government officially launched a DNA and Forensic centre known as the Lagos State DNA & Forensic Centre (LSD&FC). This was initiated by the need to have an infrastructure that can aid the collation of forensic evidence as part of mitigation against unprosecuted crime cases (Ajayi, 2018: 89). Lagos metropolis is strategically located in Nigeria and the state remains the populous city in the country. The city occupies about 1,800 square kilometres of the country's geographical terrain, (Osaghae et

al., 1994). The state currently inhabits over 14 million people according to the 2020 World Population Review for Lagos State and still remains the country commercial hub. Makinwa-Adebusoye (1984) explained that as far back as early 1970s, 38 percent of all the industry in Nigeria is located in Lagos with 45 percent of all industrial employment and 50 percent of total output.

The experience of electoral violence in Lagos has been a major hindrance to free and fair elections in the state. Obakhedo (2011) expressed that this is one of the greatest problems in the country as a whole with recorded violence of both intra-party and inter-party loyalist (p. 99). Sesan (2012) identified electoral violence as the major factor for citizen disenfranchisement in Lagos state during electoral process, (p. 7). Remarkably, the 2011 and 2015 general election in the country recorded low turnout of voters in most Local Government Areas (LGA) in Lagos State with only 35 percent of the 70 million registered voters participating in the exercise nationwide. Kalu and Gberevbie (2018) avers that electoral violence has heightened the level of insecurity through aggrieved politicians' sponsorship of thugs and hooligans to disrupt peaceful electoral conduct, (p. 66). This violence occurs despite deliberate engagement of all stakeholders for peaceful and credible elections by the Lagos State Independent Electoral Commission (LASIEC) in collaboration with Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC). The situation is further degenerated due to inadequate security personnel deployed across various polling booths within the state.

Abiodun (2016) admits that the surge of security challenges in the Nigerian federated units will continue to be increase unless intelligence gathering cooperation

exists amongst statutory agencies like the armed forces, police force, state security services, and the para-military operatives. Abiodun et. al. (2019) explained that agencies like the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), State Security Services (SSS), Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Army (NA) and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) needs to cooperate for successful implementation of any strategic policy on security, (p. 545). The collaboration drive was further widened by Lagos state in setting up institutions like the Lagos State Neighbourhood Agency with the uniformed security arm known as the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corp (LNSC).

### **Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corp**

The Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corp (LNSC) is the uniform armed of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Agency saddled with the responsibilities of maintaining law and order in the state with presence in all the 57 Local Government Area (LGA) / Local Council Development Area (LCDA). The officers are recruited from the indigenous residents in various LGA/LCDA in order to leverage on their environmental astuteness for grass root intelligence gathering and policing at the community level. The details of their functions as outlined in the Agency's official website (<https://lsstf.lagosstate.gov.ng/lagos-neighborhood-safety-corpslpsc/>) are stated as follows:

- Gathering information about crimes, crime in progress, suspicious activities and crime suspects among other things.



- Making available such relevant information on crimes, crime in progress, suspicious activities and crime suspects to the police or other security agencies that require it.
- Putting structure in place to ensure that hoodlums and cult groups do not have the opportunity to operate.
- Undertaking routine motorized patrol day and night.
- Reducing the crime rate and ensuring that offenders are identified and made to account for their misdeeds.
- Following up on arrest of offenders to the court and ensuring justice.
- Timely reporting of suspicious activities and crimes in progress to the police or other security agencies and improving relationship between the police and the community as it concerns law enforcement.
- Contributing to maintaining community peace

### **Synthesis of Literature Related to the Problem Statement**

The relationship between previous literature and citizen security in Lagos state with proposed intervention are examined in the following submission.

Osakede et al. (2016) in their study confirmed that the challenges of the police in dealing with insecurity situation in the country is due inefficiency of the Police force, corruption, extrajudicial killings, and inadequate security personnel amongst other issues. The focus of the study was built on Ikorodu and Badagry Local Government areas in Lagos state in respect to criminal activities reported by the community vigilante group. The community was task with the supportive task of detecting, preventing and controlling

crime in the society. They proposed functional community policing with grass root security agency, neighbourhood watch, vigilante groups and continued public engagement as panacea to insecurity situation in the state.

Arisukwu (2017) carried out a study to assess community policing-oriented program in Benue and Lagos State due to increased crime rate in the region. The poor police-public relations were identified as part of the reasons for insecurity and community policing advocacy by the public. He explained that formation of Lagos as a mega city has a unique security challenges given the diverse population in Lagos state. The state is populated by people with different ethnic and religious backgrounds which can be fuel insecurity in the state. He concluded with the recommendation for an instituted community policing with a structured training with community-based curriculum.

Soyombo (2016) conducted a survey on community safety and community policing in Lagos State given the insecurity challenges that have defiled several interventions to curtail it. The survey was conducted using response time to distress call, crime prevention, crime detection, respect for citizen right, equal and fair treatment, and community relationship management. It was drawn from the study that the poor perception of security agencies in the state has led to high distrust and confidence in security agency to guarantee the protection of lives and properties. He finally submitted that community policing will enhance community safety. To effectively achieve this, Soyombo recommended training and orientation of community policing officers, funding

and logistic support, strategic foot and street patrol, community citizen and police relationship, discipline and effective monitoring.

Ordu and Unam (2017) studied the impact of community policing which was considered as another perspective to Neighbourhood Watch, on the overall public safety. It was their opinion that the criminals, security agents and other members of the public belong to the same society. The institutionalization of community policing in form of neighbourhood watch will help to identify, analyse, and incisively proffer solutions to societal problems through collaborative effort between security agency and the police. They further identified bribery and corruption, human rights abuse, and lack of visionary scheme as part of the issues bedevilling the successful security interventions in the state. Mutual community policing was postulated as a panacea to the contending security challenges.

Kasali and Odetola (2016) in their study examined the philosophy of grassroots security from the angle of alternative security option to further build additional capacity against security challenges. They averred that if people in the community are given the opportunity to be part of policy and decision-making process on security, the rate of community crime will reduce in the state. Nigeria is enmeshed in insecurity because of the obvious information gaps on security issues between the community and the police. They also confirmed that the previous attempt by the country to embrace community policing failed as a result of poor implementation by policy makers. As a final submission, inter-agency co-operation, open door policy of security agencies, and

exchange of internal communications at the lower level for flawless spread of information.

Nwogwugwu and Odedina (2018) explored the policy framework community and state policing as an option to combat the rising security challenges in Nigeria. They reviewed the various security crises ranging from militancy in South-South geo-political zone, terrorist insurgency in the North East geo-political zone, general rise of insecurity across the country as a result of increased rate of bandit attacks, kidnapping and robbery cases. Nwogwugwu and Odedina (2018) argued that the security agencies approach is rather reactionary rather than proactively detect an intending crime and nip it in the bud. The centrally controlled policing system in the country was faulted on the ground of inefficiency and corrupt practices. This have led to several clamour from citizens in federated state for a decentralized policing system in the country. They suggested a decentralized police system in the state, community policing, and the creation of a platform for citizens to provide intelligence information that could forestall threats to security.

In the same vein, Ikedinma (2018) concurred with the position above on the need to decentralize the police system. He considered the centralization of the police as antithetical to community policing which is a necessity for security in the state. He appraised the prevalent nature of centralized police structure in Nigeria and the limitation it poses to effective security of lives and properties. It was later concluded that fragmentation of police structure and support for community policing is essential for interventions on the state of insecurity. A constitutionally recognized structure of

Neighbourhood Watch was recommended for the maintenance of law and order in collaboration with other agencies. It is my opinion that the decentralization of police institution will enhance better security in the state. This should however be regulated by common rules, principles and shared value given the peculiarity of the Nigerian heterogeneous society.

Adejoh (2019) studied the safety perception of residents in the Lagos metropolitan as related to the interventions of security agencies. In order to critically navigate through the study, seven hypotheses were tested on the research focus. The first is the relationships between the perceived level of crime in Lagos state and feeling of safety. Secondly, the relationship between perceived frequency of crime in residents' neighbourhoods and feeling of safety was examined. Another perspective was the relationship between experience of criminal victimization and feeling of safety amongst residents in Lagos state. The relationships between presence of police patrol teams in neighbourhoods and feeling of safety among residence in Lagos state was also examined. The fifth hypothesis identified the relationship between the level of confidence in the police and feelings of safety among residents in Lagos state. There was also an examination of relationship between satisfaction with the performance of the police and feelings of safety. Lastly, the relationship between neighbourhood disorderliness/incivility and Residents' feeling of safety was also considered. The outcome of the study revealed significant statistical relationship levels on some of the tested hypothesis. He therefore recommended neighbourhood intelligence as part of the panacea to increased perception of citizen's safety.

Abiodun et al. (2019) in their study explored security intelligence cooperation and coordinated effort of all security agencies in the state as solutions to mitigate impacts of insecurity in the state. They further reviewed the constant clashes amongst the security agencies as it continues to cripple the effective initiative for curtailing crime in the society. It was suggested that mutual relationships among the security agencies should be strengthened especially in the area of intelligence cooperation. They proposed both formal and informal approach to enhance intelligence cooperation and coordinated effort against insecurity. The proposed interventions are improved welfare packages, media tone down of such conflict, retreat and sport, joint training for all security agencies, clear communication, and mutual respect for one another.

Omilusi (2020) studied the Lagos state government initiatives in making the state a Mega-City using a Conformist and Reformist approach. As part of the security challenges in the state, influx of criminals that are motivated by desperate move for survival made it difficult for the existing security personnel to curtail crime. This situation was argued to have made Lagosian assume personal responsibilities for their safety while disdaining government capacity for proper intervention. The increasing population of the state with perceived vacuum in security institutions created a pool of personnel to be recruited for cult gang, criminals, and vigilante groups, (Omilusi, 2020). The need for collaborative effort between the government and the governed was advanced as the required solution while placing emphasis on building strong institutions rather than individuals or office holders.

Ruwan et al. (2020) in their research reviewed the prevalence of violent crime in Lagos state especially on armed robbery and murder cases between 2015 and 2019 using data generated from the Nigerian police. They averred to the claim that the widespread of crime in the country urgently requires the intervention of the policy makers. There was also an alignment with Osawe (2015) position that crime is an indication of the government inability to provide secured and non-violent environment citizen safety and economic growth. Several laws made by the Lagos state government to reduce crime like a ban of commercial motorcycle (okada riders) on major roads seem not to reduce the crime rate. As a recommendation to the crises, community policing and building of citizen trust for increased crime reportage.

Ebobo (2016) examined the increased crime rate of youths in Lagos State as a result of unemployment. The desperation to live their pre-determined dreams has led several unemployed youths and young adults into criminal activities. As part of the aftermath of unemployment, youths are being used as the available army for political thuggery, armed robbery, urban urchins (known as area boys in Lagos), assault, adoption and kidnapping, and various other anti-social activities. The study further submitted that institutional reform and transformational economic interventions should be adopted for addressing the issue of insecurity amongst the youth.

### **Significance of Study to Justify the Findings**

The significant findings of this study are related to the issue of societal development, establishment of fundamental human rights in terms of humanity and security, and issues on nationhood in Nigeria. The general spate of insecurity has

continued to feature as a front burner on national dailies and this has justified the inquiry into citizenry security in the Nigeria federated units using the lens of an established security institution. The inalienable constitutional obligation of government in any sovereign state to provide adequate security for the citizen will continue to unearth new interventions for the safety of lives and property. Every nation with constant state of insecurity will divert government developmental initiatives towards heavy security investment which may be detrimental as a result of neglect of other transformational agenda that could forestall the spark of insecurity arising from various social vices.

According to Jegede (2019) the perennial incident of violence in the Nigeria has claimed several lives with loss of properties. There were records of 4,177 deaths with extensive destruction of property during the December 1980 Maitatsine sect riot in Kano State. In 1982 during a clash between two sects in Borno State, 118 people lost their lives with several properties damaged. Over a thousand lives were also lost in 2000 during the religious crises between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna State. In 2013, Boko Haram dressed in military uniform killed 143 people in Borno State, (p. 53). These situations have further threatened the stability of political structure, socio-economic development, and peaceful co-existence of people within the community especially religion related crises. It is therefore difficult to advance developmental course in Nigeria when fabrics of political, socio-economy, and religious institutions are being weakened by insecurity. Douglas (2008) also reported a case of religious conflict in Lagos state between the Yoruba and Hausa traders in Ketu market that led to death of over 100 people, (p. 38).



These are part of the issues that continues to generate concerns amongst various ethnics and religious groups over the constituted structure of governance in the state.

In the same vein, Mou and Mou (2017) posited that peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria must be pursue in consideration of social cleavages in Nigeria such as ethnic and religious affiliations. It was opined that one of the appropriate approaches to understand the issues of insecurity is to consider several factors such as religious harmony and socio-political accommodation. The complex nature of insecurity in Nigeria requires a multi-dimensional approach rather than been viewed from a single perspective. The assumption of military and armed forces being the major determinant of security was faulted given the recognition of economic potential to tackle insecurity, social mobilization level and political stability in the state. Security therefore does not lie with sophisticated military defence but political, social, and economic development of the state. In ensuring these developments, the government must consciously create institutions that can connect to the people at the grassroots in the area of security.

Okokhere (2020) stated the enormous security challenges in Nigeria has created avenue for lawless people to unleash violence on the society, (p. 46). These challenges have affected the national life by adversely impacting on the political, social, economic, commerce, trade and every other sector in the country. To tackle this threatening security issue, it is not enough for the government to have a political will but also adopt a knowledge-based approach towards instigation, formulation, execution and valuation of transformational policy. It is quite unfortunate that despite the country's mass natural and

human resources, the problem of insecurity in Nigeria still remain a hard nut to crack by the government. Okokhere (2020) also submitted that in spite of all these resources, the country is still one of the most insecure and underdeveloped in the world as given by human development indexes report, (p. 58).

Maiangwa et al. (2018) submitted that the pre-colonial structural formation of Nigeria has direct link with the issue of insecurity as the country never saw itself as a nation despite the proclamation of the colonial government. It was argued that the country was never envisioned to operate as indivisible entity which makes post-colonial era violence and communal disintegration absolutely inevitably. In addressing the current security challenges in Nigeria, the root of the problem must be clearly understood. The effort to re-work solutions to these challenges should be seen from the angle of inclusive governance or citizenship, (p. 17).

Also, Olanrewaju et al. (2017) explained the interwoven relationships among the concepts of national peace, security, and sovereignty. Apart from globalization that seems to have interfered with sovereignty in some instances, high level of insecurity has weakened the primacy of legitimate control, preservation, and prevention of the Nigerian sovereign state against internal insurgency and external aggression. It is therefore critical that the government tighten its territorial borders against ill-intentioned illegal immigrants while promoting collaboration with the neighbourhood state security agencies. It was finally recommended that government invest in quality trainings for security personnel in the country with provision of sophisticated modern weapons to fortify the armed forces.

Ukpong-Umo (2016) laid a foundation of insecurity in Nigeria and its attendant challenges on the ugly historical event of the Nigerian Civil War when proliferation of arms and ammunitions in private hands was grossly unchecked. After the war, most of the acquired weapons were not retrieved and these equipped ill-intentioned people to further engage in several social vices. The situation was presumably aggravated by austere economic situation which drove many unemployed youths into criminal activities. This led to a convulsive social scenario vices such as armed robbery, cultism, kidnapping, and murder. The need to strengthen the nation's security network urgently requires a combination of grassroots collaboration on one hand and government provision of infrastructural development on the hand.

Olajide and Lizam (2016) examined the challenges of residential neighbourhood security with a review of adopted prevention concepts and techniques. In most urban areas, the negative impact of neighbourhood crime has led to the loss of several lives and property. The increasing trend of crime has made many nations across the globe to increase the number of police for internal peace and armed forces for external aggression. The recruitment of more police and armed forces over the years has not stopped the increasing rate of crime and social disorder. The "panel system, crime prevention through environmental planning and crime prevention through social development" was identified as various neighbourhood crime prevention techniques. The Crime Prevention through Environmental Planning (CPTED) and Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD) was recommended for more effective solutions.

Bako et al. (2018) submitted that urbanization is intertwined with neighbourhood security given the consistent search for the protection of lives and property, and containment of violence. With urbanization and development, there is usually high rate of insecurity due to mass exodus which leads to increased residential neighbourhood. The challenges with urbanization are the influx of people from rural areas in search of better lives without consideration of the city's capacity to accommodate them and meet their desired expectations. The disappointment associated with inability to achieve desired prosperity in the urban region easily degenerates into desperate criminal activities of the migrants. These are the vices an urban area like Lagos State will have to combat with its existing security challenges. As a suggested solution, urban residential neighbourhood security requires a holistic approach involving police, judiciary reform, economic development and social safety net programs with citizen collaboration using all the tools of advanced technology was advocated.

### **Synthesis of Study in Relation to the Research Question**

In my study, I observed the relatedness of available literatures with the issues of insecurity in Lagos state and the collaborative community-oriented measures taken to address them. Osakede (2016) reviewed the security concerns of the state from a multiple point of view by admitting that security challenges should be blamed on the government, security agencies, and the community. They further explained that while the community complain of police connivance with some criminals by parading innocent people as armed robbers with the real culprit walk around freely, the police on the other hand blame lack of resources from the government as part of major factors hampering their

productivity. Given this situation, most of the security intervention strategies such as indigenous vigilante, neighbourhood watchnight personnel, and other security measures for law and order are personally motivated. In their study, institutionalizing of community policing was advocated as a remedy to the issue of insecurity in Lagos state.

Ogunmefun and Okuneye (2020) claimed that the increasing rate of insecurity in Lagos state is associated with the alarming unemployment rate. The youth population are considered as bedrock of development in any nation and they unfortunately constitute the highest of victims of crime profile in Lagos state. This was reported by the former Lagos state Commissioner of Police in 2010 during the Youth and Policing Summit in the state. They explained further that the state government has the duty and responsibility of fostering peaceful co-existence as expected in social contract, they should make provision for infrastructural development and job creation. It is therefore opined that once such provisions are made, the issue of insecurity will be reduced.

Ordu and Unam (2017) in their study submitted that police-community relationship will strengthen the neighbourhood security network by sharing vital information that can reduce criminal activities. Apart from the mutual trust it builds, partnership of the public and police have over time led to crime prevention. They further explained that community policing otherwise known as neighbourhood watch is both a pragmatic and philosophical approach to crime prevention and control in the state. The proactive approach of community policing to combat crime has made it particularly important for stakeholder's partnership and security collaboration.

Mohammed and Oladimeji (2017) examined the symbiosis of the State, Governance, and Insecurity in Nigeria. The study delved into an inquiry on the effect of governance on the Nigerian security using the Marxian theory of the State as a theoretical lens. They argued that the issue of insecurity could be related to the inadequacy of governance in Nigeria over the years. The synergy of the State, Governance and Insecurity in Nigeria is experienced in the level of disconnection between the government and the citizens. Historically, political leaders were seen to be close to the masses during electoral campaign and the gap gets widened after gaining political power. Poor governance due to corruption of politicians in the state increased insecurity in the state as resources meant for the equipment of security agency were misappropriated.

Ilori (2020) explored the menace of jungle justice as one of the major challenges of neighbourhood insecurity in Lagos metropolis. Often times, the people caught in between this crisis are innocent people whose activities are mistaken for criminal acts. The delay in rapid response by security operatives coupled with citizen lack of trust in law enforcement agents further fuelled the constant occurrence of jungle justice. He reported that in some neighbourhood in Lagos state like Mushin, Oshodi, Orile, etc., mob lynching is a usual occurrence for suspects as a form of jungle justice. It was later established that citizen education on civility and police-community relationship should be further enshrined in the state to curb the peril of jungle justice.

Abah (2019) studied the essence of citizenship in relations to the efficiency of the Nigerian Police in maintaining law and order in the state. The inability of the Nigerian Police to provide adequate security has made them come under severe criticism by the

public. This has resulted into several clamours for police reforms which range from decentralization to structural reform of the security agency. It was also stated that the inadequacy of the Police has led to the established case for creation of parallel police institutions such as Neighbourhood Watch, National Guard, and even state and religious police. He opined that the National Assembly should enact the alternative of community policing into law and ensure leadership compliance from the federated units.

### **Rationale to Fill Identified Gaps in Previous Research**

It has been established that several literature has been submitted in respect of gross insecurity in Lagos State. The verse areas covered by existing literature touched on critical issues on Lagos State security as related to development, humanity, community policing, police reform, and social transformation. There is, however inherent gap in the study of an institutionalized government security agency channelled towards addressing insecurity from the grass-root level. The institutionalized government agency was established to collaborate with the existing state security agencies as deliberate measures to curtail insecurity in the state.

The failures of the state security agencies were expressed in previous research with recommendations on how to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. This research will bridge the critical analysis gaps by not just identifying problems and make recommendations, but also engage major stakeholders on the effectiveness of Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC). Over time, there have been studies around all major security agencies but there seems to be less work on the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corp impact in curbing insecurities within the state. Unlike other security agencies

in the state that operates mainly with vehicles and bikes, LNSC operates with bicycles and skates apart from vehicles and bikes. This is to allow them to get deep into the nooks and crannies of the neighbourhood in the state.

Olanrewaju, et al. (2017) considered the impact of insecurity on the nation's sovereignty and admitted that beyond the influence of globalization, insecurity can easily weaken the state legitimacy. As a way of forestalling this ugly occurrence, training of security personnel and stringent border security while partnering with neighbouring states was advocated. The gaps identified is the need to ensure effective internal security which Neighbourhood Safety Corp will provide through shared information on illegal immigrants who eventually beat the border security despite strict measures in place. Ukpong-Umo (2016) also avers that the problem of insecurity in Nigeria could be traced to unchecked retrieval process of proliferated ammunitions during the country's Civil War. Some of the ammunitions have become available tools in the hands of criminals to unleash violence in the country. There is therefore a need for studies that can advocate grassroots security where each community will become watchdogs through a constituted and specialized body different from the tradition police agency that is already pre-occupied with the challenges of several criminal activities.

#### **Summary of What Is Known and Not Known Connected to the Study**

The literature used in this study has enhanced deeper understanding of the State security challenges especially in relations to Lagos State particularly and Nigeria in general. The various interventions by the government have been reviewed in past literature including recommendations on measures that could further enhance safety of



lives and properties within the state. The various social vices resulting from the issues of insecurity in Lagos have been extensively researched as well. However, there is lack of knowledge on the impact of Lagos State established Neighbourhood Safety Corp in curtailing insecurity issues in the state. In this research, I explored institutional framework to review the impact of the agency in combating insecurity issues within the state. The research further gives consideration to the perception of Lagos residents on the activities of the agency in providing neighbourhood safety.

In examining the issue of insecurity in Lagos State, I considered it appropriate to explore neighbourhood security from the angle of government established institution that is different from the armed forces. Since the establishment of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in 2016 by the law of State House of Assembly, there has not been any major study on their impact in the state or an assessment of their performance against the purpose of its formation. This study therefore inquiries into the unknown areas from an intellectual lens rather than daily media reports on curtailed criminal activities. It will ultimately expose areas in need of improvement for efficient and effective administration of the agency.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

In the course of this literature review, I examined major-related concepts to the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on maintenance of law and order such as Nigeria federal structure, citizenship and security with a focus on Lagos state, and the institutional approach to security issues. The synthesis amongst the various concepts was also reviewed using relevant literature to establish the existing knowledge in the area

of study. Given this, I observed that there has been a plethora of empirical findings on security issues in Lagos State, but none directly addressed the impact of the state established Neighbourhood Watch Agency in curtailing insecurity issues since its establishment in 2016.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory research was to examine the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on resident security. Every form of crime is perpetrated by people who belong to one community or another. The drive to explore the impact of a security agency on the enactment of law and order from the grassroots significantly points to the fact that every individual belongs to one community or another. More often than not, the perpetration of crimes involves insiders' information, and so does effective management of such crimes in the community. The exploration of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency using a qualitative framework is quite essential for drawing validated feedback for a more effective security network and stabilizing peaceful coexistence within the society.

This chapter addresses the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, and issues of trustworthiness, concluding with a summary. As a representative sample of the wider population, 20 participants were considered for this study based on their residence in the Mainland and Island regions of Lagos State.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The essential purpose of research design is to enable the researcher to navigate a study in order to arrive at a given solution. The theoretical foundation is important to every research work, given the role of theory as a standardized principle through which the relationships between two or more variables can be explained (Rahi, 2017). For social research, it is important to align the study to the substantive theory that can be used in

addressing the identified research question. The research question ultimately addresses the purpose of the research by ensuring that the inquiry into a study has been objectively satisfied. As identified by Leavy (2017), every social research is primarily conducted for exploration, description, explanation, community change or action, evaluation, and evocation or provocation purposes. The research question identified for this qualitative study was the following: What are the experiences of Lagos State residents with the Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state?

### **Central Concepts**

This study was centered on the exploration of citizen insecurity in the Nigeria federated unit using Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency as a case study. I used the conceptual framework to study and explain various security challenges in the federated units within the country. Several factors were identified as being major causes of insecurity in Lagos State. Previous studies identified some of these factors as citizens' lack of trust in the security agencies, lack of community policing, corrupt practices of law enforcement agencies, inadequate training for security personnel, and unchecked arm proliferation, amongst others. They further submitted that the conscious interventions required for tackling issues of insecurity is collaboration among all security agencies, citizenship reorientation, economic intervention with infrastructural development, community policing, and tight border security (Abiodun, et al., 2019; Kasali & Odetola, 2016; Nwogwugwu & Odedina, 2018).

The issue of insecurity in Lagos State is peculiar to the strategic position of the federated unit in being the commercial hub of the country and the most populated state in

the country due to constant rural migration. It is therefore my position that the agency established by the state to enforce grassroots or community security while in collaboration with other security agencies should be examined for its level of impact. This will further unearth areas where necessary intervention could be made by policymakers for improved performance and better results. This should eventually result in social transformation as major economic developments rely on a good security situation.

### **Research Tradition**

I used a qualitative approach to explore citizen insecurity in the Nigeria federated unit with focus on the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. Qualitative research is simply described as a method that focuses on data collection for understanding social phenomena through consideration of people's perceptions and why such perceptions are prevailing. It could be suggested, therefore, that this approach does not end only with what participants in a sample population feel about a social event, but also with why they have such perceptions. Ritchie, et al., (2013) submitted that the qualitative approach provides a holistic approach to understanding the interrelatedness of people's lives through the views and actions of research participants. This approach has been seen as an ideal method for overcoming perceived barriers in social inquiry. As further argued by Corbin and Strauss (2015), qualitative research makes the researcher collect data and interpret them while being part of the process with participants. Merriam and Grenier (2019) also agreed in their study that qualitative researchers are interested in the way people that understand their environment using an inductive process. This process is

considered to be more ideal for social inquiry, which is different from the statistical deductive approach used for quantitative study. King and Horrock (2010) also agreed that qualitative research, unlike quantitative inquiry, does not involve making generalizations about research findings from statistical data drawn from a population sample.

I embraced a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design due to its relevance in gathering detailed data for social inquiry that could sufficiently address my research question. Belk (2006) stated that the qualitative approach is entrenched in social interactions and strongly linked to participants' everyday life. In this way, qualitative research is conducive to the development of a deeper understanding of social research and ease of navigating through an objective inquiry. The research provided a platform to investigate the activities of Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) in curbing the menace of insecurity or existing security in the state. An in-depth interview was used to draw data from residents who understood the intricacies of community security and had encounters with the LNSC in their environment.

Qualitative research has gained wider acceptability as a systematic approach that guarantees data integrity. Creswell (2013) stated that constructivist philosophy was consistent with the use of a qualitative approach due to the adoption of methods such as case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and so forth.

### **Role of the Researcher**

In my role as a participant-observer researcher, I ensured that the process of my interview was conducted according to best practice. An open-ended question was administered to the relevant population while ensuring that the opinions and rights of the

participants were respected. Prior to the commencement of the interview process, I explained the purpose of the research to all respondents and obtained their due consent. All information gathered in the course of this research were treated in strict confidence, and the outcome will only be used for the purpose of this inquiry. Every respondent was treated as anonymous, as their identity was not revealed to protect their privacy; this approach gave them an avenue to provide uncompromised responses. I embraced the tenet of neutrality in shielding participants from threats within the society because they resided in the research environment.

Additionally, the research question in my study informed the interview pattern and content in such a way that it addressed core areas of inquiry. My interview process was professionally relational and upheld a value-free process as much as possible. I collated and analyzed data drawn from interview respondents to address the research questions and provide objective content that will be useful for further literature searches for related studies. I made appropriate field observations while conducting the interviews to ensure that all gaps were duly covered. Yin (2011) averred that while many qualitative research data come from listening, asking good questions helps researchers to eschew extraneous information and take note of critical information. In order to engage in a deeper level of conversation with the participants, probing questions were initiated for more objective viewpoints. I explained the study to the participants in an objective manner to ensure that my personal biases did not manifest in the search. The data that I collected was analyzed, interpreted according to the design, and presented as the final submission.

### **Personal and Professional Relationships**

For a researcher, building strong relationships with participants can create an atmosphere for objective findings. I was part of the community being studied, and the participants were drawn from among my professional colleagues who resided on the Mainland and Island of Lagos. I currently work in a financial institution with office branches at various strategic locations in Lagos State. Every local government in the state has a branch at least situated of the financial institution. I have several colleagues residing in those areas as the organization considered proximity to the residence in posting some operations staff. Additionally, I engaged a few of my former colleagues in the academic environment and some security personnel to gain a balanced opinion of the research findings. Given the participants' stake in the state of community security, I was able to draw out in-depth information that was relevant to the study. I adopted active listening skills in ensuring that all of the opinions of the participants were well captured as usable information within the considered community. The interview questions were structured in a manner that extricated an avenue for participants' biases.

### **Researcher Biases**

The power relationship with the participants was considered mutual and balanced given the common interest in Lagos State security challenges. Participants were not negatively influenced to subjectively submit to biases but gave information on their perceptions, experiences, and observable realities of the state security situation. Given the diverse perspectives of all participants, there was a balance that was void of personal differences while ensuring that contributions from each participant counted. I ensured



that information collected was not based on my relationship with the participants but reflected their unfettered opinion on the study being conducted. I complied with all ethical standards associated with this research while adopting a concerted and bias-free study. The selection of participants from diverse teams with different backgrounds and orientations minimized the groupthink phenomenon where there is the possibility of individual opinion being silenced in a group.

### **Applicable Ethical Issues**

The envisaged ethical issue was the participants giving wrong information that might hamper the validity of this research. Given that this study addressed a sensitive topic, participants who were political-party card carriers might not have divulged the true state of security in the state. There are two major political parties in Nigeria currently, and these are the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC), which is the ruling party. It is, therefore, not unusual to be faced with an APC loyalist giving positive comments while the PDP wings condemn government initiatives on security.

Apart from political affiliations, people who are strong religious devotees might have allowed their belief system to influence their submission. In extreme cases of religious bigotry, every experience of effective security by citizens is attached to divine protection rather than credible measures adopted by the security agency to engineer the safety of lives and property. In ensuring that these concerns were properly checked, pragmatic measures were put in place to ensure that credible research with participants was not drawn from a population that was myopic in the study area or ignorant of the

current security realities. The information that I collected was not lopsided, as participants represented various locations and professional affiliations. The engagement of participants was voluntary, and no incentives were given to aid the research outcome, save the cost of logistics in ensuring a seamless and impeccable process.

### **Methodology**

In this study, I used an exploratory qualitative research method for data collection and analysis of the findings. The choice of qualitative research was influenced by its relevance to the study in conducting an in-depth inquiry in a complex environment. This preference was in consonance with the five significant features of qualitative research identified by Yin (2011):

- It studies the meaning of people's lives within a real-world situation.
- It represents the views and perspectives of the participants in a study.
- It covers the contextual interpretation of people's habitation.
- It gives insights into existing or emerging concepts for understanding human behavior.
- It uses multiple sources of data to generate study outcomes rather than a source.

The qualitative study ensured pragmatic interview sessions with all participants to collect data from populations whose members had dealt directly with the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC). It provided a range of perspectives within a natural setting from participants to critically understand the social phenomenon.

### **Participant Selection Logic**

The research involved the use of purposive sampling to select participants who were knowledgeable in the research area and had encountered the agency that was the focus of the study. This decision was premised on the quest to ensure that every input into the study could be validated and objectively submitted. All of the participants being considered resided in Lagos State and fell within the age bracket of 25 to 40 years. The choice of residence was carefully selected to ensure that all of the research areas were duly represented and covered. There were 20 respondents, with 10 each drawn from the Mainland and Island areas of Lagos State. The operations of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency and Lagos residents were largely covered in both Mainland and Island area of the state. Specifically, samples were drawn from the academic environment, professional environment, and security personnel. In dealing with personal biases, I used the triangulation method for data sources.

The location and age of participants were premised on the need to ensure that I attained a satisfactory level of data representation in the study. As explained by Ravitch and Carl (2016), data saturation is achieved in a study when there are repeated findings on an inquiry without new information or data being received from the participants. The limit of 20 participants was purposeful to ensure a detailed interviewing process and establish follow-up sessions to reiterate the initially given facts, as this would further validate the research outcome. The preference for the interview sampling method in this study was based on its suitability to give a detailed and individualized opinion on the

research focus. The participants were critically examined to represent the wider population because it was not possible to gain access to all residents in Lagos State.

### **Instrumentation**

Instruments in research are tools that are developed and used in collecting data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Some examples of data collection instruments used in research are questions, prompts, and any procedures that determine data collection in a study. It is vital to note that the participants' experience in responding to interview questions is as sacrosanct as the quality of data. The observation of the researcher in the field could also be captured as an instrument. Observation as an instrument, just like an interview, must be carried out according to the guidelines of the research questions.

The primary source of data that I used for this research was a semistructured interview instrument. This was to ensure uniformity of interview outcomes across participants while making sure that the participants were not coerced into submitting subjective responses that might be associated with an extreme formal interview format. This was to also ensure that any form of ambiguity that could emanate from the research question was adequately forestalled while the participants were flexible and would not have to adhere strictly to a sequence of questions. As further agreed by Adhabi and Anozie (2017), the semistructured interview technique is less rigid, and the research data are mainly reliant on the responses of the participants in line with the questions administered by the researcher. Roulston and Choi (2018) also stated that semistructured interviewing creates a participant-led sequence of questions with the provision for

follow-up questions or probes by the researcher based on what the participants have earlier stated.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The deliberate collation of data requires the use of appropriate tools and techniques for quality output especially in a semi structured interview as a primary source. I ensured that the recording tools are tested with user's acclimatization to the tool before the live recording of the procedure. Apart from generating high level of confidence in the functionality of the tool, the participants will also be more comfortable responding to the interview questions. Data collection process through interviews involving participants has been considered as the most direct and forthright approach to gathering comprehensive information in a study (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). Face-to-face interview techniques which is part of the major data collection have changed over the years due to advanced technology. Several other available options are telephone interview, videoconferencing, emails and text messages (Oltmann, 2016; Hawkins, 2018). The digital social experience further advanced by the global COVID 19 pandemic has necessitated the use of several virtual tools such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc. for various meetings in both professional and academic environments. I utilized these tools for interview in my research given the limitation that was posed by COVID -19 pandemic. The primary data collection process lasted for 3 weeks and 4 days with recruitment contingency plan arranged to forestall any situation of having too few participants for the study.

In a qualitative data analysis, there is no single approach that could be considered as absolute. The determinant factors for choice of analytic method are the types of data collected, nature of research questions, selected participants for the study, and the context of the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldana & Omasta, 2018). Amongst several qualitative data analysis methods are content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, grounded theory, and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). I explored the interpretative phenomenological analysis due to the need to understand the positions of participants' experience in relation to the focus of this study. Pringle et al. (2011), in their study, explained that interpretative phenomenological analysis embraces a holistic approach to understanding an individual's account of a phenomenon. Alase (2017) avers that IPA enables researchers to examine and understand the depth of "lived experiences" of the research participants. The NVivo software was used for data analysis. The approach is a participant-oriented model which allows the interviewees to express themselves without any form of distortion.

### **Issue of Trustworthiness**

The issue of trustworthiness in qualitative research requires conscious effort to diverse perspectives while respecting the opinions of all participants. Stewart et al. (2017) admitted that trustworthiness in research focuses on detailed account of data generated from interviews and observations starting from the planning stages. The creation of trustworthiness in research is premised on research credibility built upon transparency and adherence to evidence. This could also be considered as a process through which the researcher takes deliberate effort to understand the culture of the research environment,

build trust, and ensure reflection on any potential distortions that comes from both the researcher and participants (Amin et al. 2020). Kyngas et al. (2020) explained that qualitative researchers generally do not have common opinions, but credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity are the major determinants of trustworthiness in research. This position concurs with Cresswell's opinion that reliability and validity in research should be substantiated by credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

### **Credibility**

The credibility of qualitative research resides in the integrity of data generated from the participants. To establish credibility in this research, member checking will be introduced as an internal validity technique. As explained by Amin et al. (2020), member checking is a process whereby the data collated is sent to the participants to verify that the documented outcome reflects the perspectives of the participants. Triangulation is another measure that my study will adopt for research credibility as it ensures that findings are drawn from more than one perspective. The approaches to this concept can be categorized into methodological, data, investigator, theoretical and environmental triangulations (Patton, 2015). Other methods that will be explored for credibility are peer debriefing, negative peer analysis or analysis of deviant case, and reflexivity. The focus of the research is to ensure that optimal saturation of all identified sample in the study is achieved in relation to the research questions.

**Transferability**

Qualitative research outcome needs to be validated with facts that are replicable and could be transferred for further studies as a form of external validity. Given (2008) stated that transferability indicates that a result from one study can be transferred to another context or situation outside the scope of the original research. The factors to be considered in adopting transferability are the extent to which participants are linked to the study and the findings contextual boundary. As expressed by Collins and Cooper (2014), transferability enables researchers to apply the findings from the study in another research. Although there is no static point in social research, it is important that the conducted study could be further advanced to accommodate realities of other studies as related to the period being considered. In providing fact based transferable result for this research, there were graphical representations of detailed information, raw data, and contextual analysis. One of the challenges of transferability is the possibility of restrained information from the participants due to the sensitive nature of the study. In dealing with this threat, the confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed, and a purposeful sampling technique informed their selection process.

**Dependability**

Dependability as part of the major element of trustworthiness in research ensures that the integrity of a study is validated through the replication of findings. In order to establish this in my study, there was effective documentation of fact generated from participants and the outcome of research analysis. This also involved the use of triangulation and audit trail in the study. Forero et al. (2018) explained that the purpose of



dependability is to ensure repetitiveness in the outcome of qualitative inquiry within the same sphere of participants and context. There is a need for clarity of the research questions and their alignment with the study design when considering dependability in qualitative research (Tamarinde & Leonie, 2019). The truth of every research data is affirmed by constant dependability validation.

### **Confirmability**

Confirmability ensures that the confidence of the research could be further collaborated by another finding. To effectively establish this, methods of reflexivity and triangulation could be used as an instrument of validation. I adopted the two methods in ensuring that the quality of data generated in this study is significantly value free and not compromised. Since data objectivity is essential for confirmability, responses from the participants will be guided by detailed understanding of research focus and the need for unbiased submission. The true opinions and experiences of the participants did not only count but also be counted for the research submission. The audio recordings were reviewed more than once and compared with the transcript to establish confirmability of all information.

### **Ethical Procedures**

All ethical concerns were addressed in this study to align with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) standard in all aspects of data collation and validation. The participants will be detailed on the expectations of the study and their consent confirmed before commencing the data collation exercise. The informed consent of all participants was sought to affirm their readiness and acceptance to participate in the study. The

materials to be recruited for the interview process also received the IRB approvals. Confidentiality of data and identity of the participants was guaranteed. The participants were treated as anonymous, and every information provided were used strictly for research purpose. There is no intention to pay participants for their service, but everyone was treated with the utmost respect and were made comfortable in the research environment.

### **Summary**

This chapter examined the methodology, data collection process, data analysis procedures, participant's recruitment and selection process, and issues of ethical procedure in the research. The eligibility criteria for the study and issues of trustworthiness were also considered. The semi-structured interview was considered for primary data collection due to the nature of the study. At the end of collated data from an inquiry on citizen insecurity in the Nigeria federating unit using Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency as a case study, the data were analysed using the approved IRB standard.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Analysis**

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on Lagos resident security. The continued population increase in Lagos State due to rural migration and urban development has made security issues all-embracing, touching every aspect of human lives and properties (Omosho & Aderinto, 2016). The question that I answered in this research concerned the experiences of Lagos State residents involving the Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state. In this chapter, I provide responses drawn from the findings for subsequent analysis. The chapter also describes the settings of this research with details of criteria for participant selection and involvement. The demography of all participants is explained to reflect the nature of the study. The process of data collection is explained, along with analysis of the collected data.

### **Setting**

The setting of this research was Lagos, Nigeria, which was categorized into Lagos Island and Lagos Mainland for the sake of this study. Lagos State is located in the South Western region of Nigeria, with an estimated population of 20 million people. With an area of 3577 km<sup>2</sup>, Lagos remains the most populous city in Africa and the most densely populated state in Nigeria (Mogaji, 2020). Lagos State is the commercial hub of the country, and this has led to a challenging increase in the urban population.

The crime rate in Lagos has grown with the surge of population growth without a commensurate intervention for adequate security agencies to curb the menace of assault,

armed robbery, banditry, and kidnapping. In examining this position, Ruwan et al. (2020) submitted that among areas in Nigeria, Lagos ranked second for kidnapping, 20th for robbery, seventh for physical assault, fourth for mobile phone theft, and third for car theft. Despite several efforts of successive governments to address the problem of insecurity in Lagos State, it is apparent that the state of insecurity is extremely overwhelming in relation to the solutions being proffered.

This situation, therefore, calls for an effective security network, especially from the neighbourhood perspective. As part of the measures taken by citizens to curb insecurity in Lagos State, communities introduced street gates, engagement of local vigilantes, and other several measures (Bamiteko & Adebisi, 2020). This largely informed the creation of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency to reduce the crime rate in the state through collaboration with other security agencies. It is therefore essential to explore the activities of the agency within its sphere of operations, which is Lagos State. Participants were drawn from among residents of the two categorized areas for this study, which were Lagos Island and Mainland.

The participants were duly briefed on the research purpose and requirements for their involvement in the study, with emphasis on the voluntary nature of the exercise. I assured volunteers of their privacy, as all data generated would be treated with utmost confidentiality, and I informed them that they could exit the process at any time. As a result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, I embraced options other than physical interviews by using the Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms to engage participants.

### Demographics

The 20 participants for this study consisted of 10 males and 10 females for gender balance among residents of Lagos Island and Mainland. All participants resided in Lagos State and fell within the age bracket of 25 to 40 years. Participating residents were deliberately selected to cover the areas of focus for this research. Table 1 represents the distribution of respondents in various categories of age, career segmentation, and location of residence.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of Respondents*

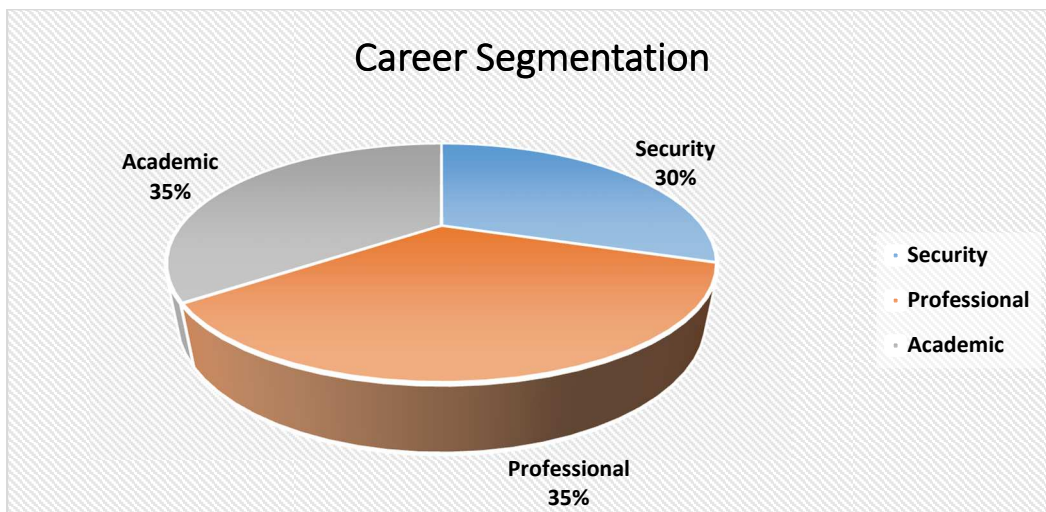
| S/N | Gender | Age | Location       | Career segmentation |
|-----|--------|-----|----------------|---------------------|
| 1   | Male   | 27  | Lagos Island   | Professional        |
| 2   | Female | 28  | Lagos Mainland | Professional        |
| 3   | Female | 35  | Lagos Mainland | Security            |
| 4   | Male   | 27  | Lagos Island   | Security            |
| 5   | Female | 40  | Lagos Mainland | Security            |
| 6   | Male   | 37  | Lagos Mainland | Security            |
| 7   | Male   | 26  | Lagos Mainland | Professional        |
| 8   | Female | 28  | Lagos Mainland | Academic            |
| 9   | Male   | 26  | Lagos Island   | Professional        |
| 10  | Female | 26  | Lagos Island   | Professional        |
| 11  | Male   | 28  | Lagos Island   | Academic            |
| 12  | Female | 28  | Lagos Mainland | Academic            |
| 13  | Female | 26  | Lagos Mainland | Professional        |
| 14  | Female | 29  | Lagos Mainland | Academic            |
| 15  | Male   | 31  | Lagos Mainland | Academic            |
| 16  | Male   | 25  | Lagos Island   | Security            |
| 17  | Female | 26  | Lagos Island   | Academic            |
| 18  | Female | 28  | Lagos Island   | Academic            |
| 19  | Male   | 29  | Lagos Island   | Professional        |
| 20  | Male   | 27  | Lagos Island   | Security            |

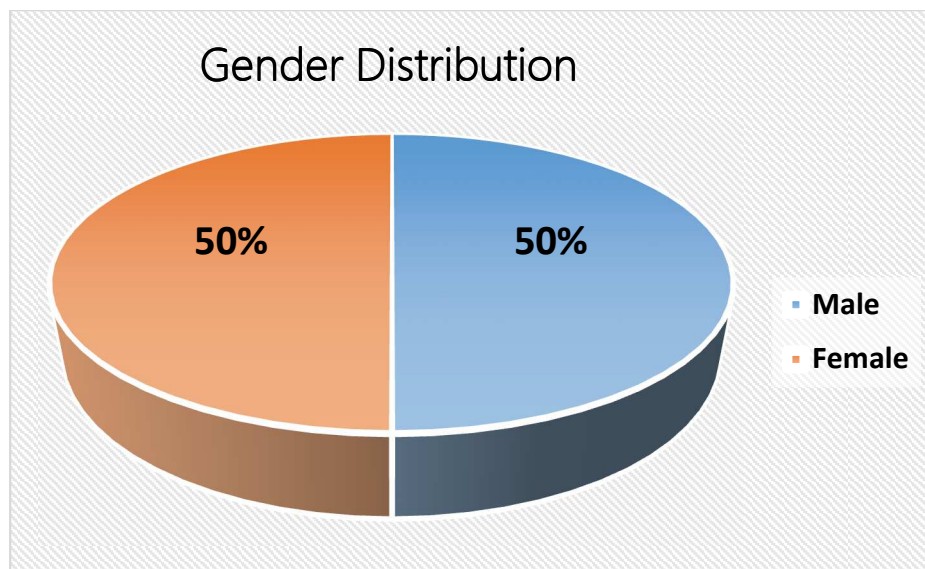
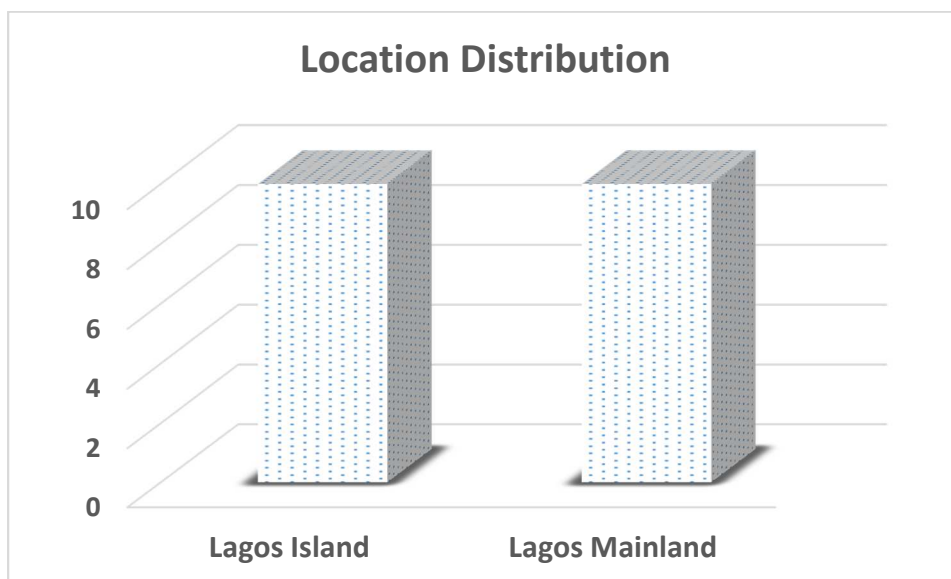
Figure 1 is a pie chart depicting the career segmentation of the respondents.

Figure 2 is a pie chart showing respondents' gender distribution. Figure 3 shows the distribution of respondents by their locations, and Figure 4 is a bar chart representation of respondents' ages.

**Figure 1**

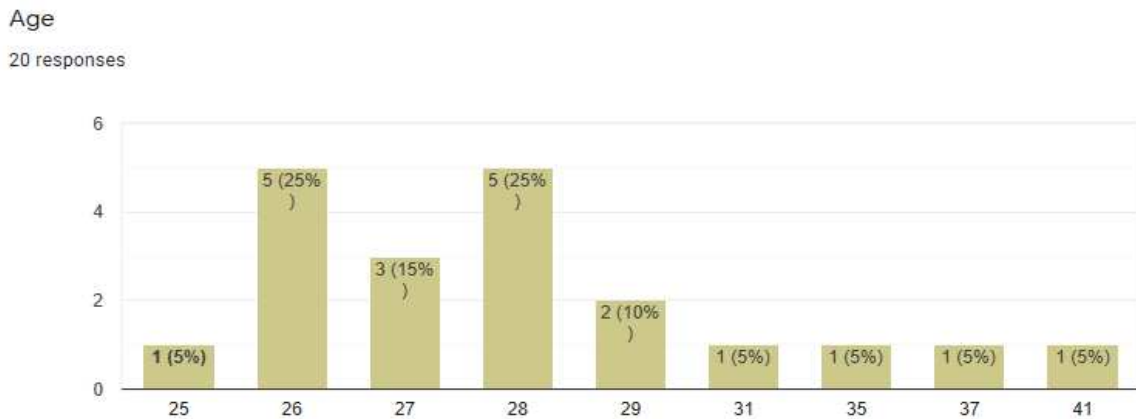
*Career Segmentation*



**Figure 2***Gender Distribution***Figure 3***Location Distribution*

**Figure 4**

*Age Distribution*



**Data Collection**

The total of 20 participants were recruited after I had received IRB approval with code number 03-12-21-0551944. The distribution of the respondents aligned with the stated numbers in Chapter 3. This included 10 males and 10 females for gender balance, 10 residents each from Lagos Island and Lagos Mainland, an age bracket of 25 to 40 years for the participants, and career segmentation covering professionals, security, and the academic environment.

The interview process took 3 weeks and 4 days based on different schedules given to respective participants and their response time to the consent form for confirmation of interest and availability. I scheduled appointments with all participants in Lagos Mainland and Island based on their preference, with a minimum of a 40-minute interview session allotted for each respondent. The interview sessions were between 38 minutes and 1 hour, with an average of 49 minutes per respondent.



There was a positive response from all participants, though a few respondents from the security and academic career segments were not as swift to give their consent as those in the professional segment. This was partly due to their work schedule, which also included weekend shifts. Those in the security segment, for example, worked every day during the week with a shift schedule arrangement. They had to use the few available free periods for family demands and personal engagements. This was quite similar to the situation of the academic career respondents, but their work schedule was much more flexible.

Out of the 20 volunteer participants, 18 preferred a virtual interview session while the remaining two opted for physical interviews. The COVID-19 reality coupled with government regulations on social distancing made virtual interviews the most preferred option for participants. Given this reality, I held interview sessions through the Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms with video options enabled to allow me to connect effectively with respondents. I administered the same open-ended question to all participants to enable them to give their responses based on independent opinions. I also ensured that the sessions were held in an atmosphere conducive to conversation using the virtual channel most preferred by the participants. The whole data gathering process for all 20 participants took a total of 3 weeks and 4 days.

I archived the collected audio data in my device for safety and used Google Forms to transcribe the audio interview feedback. The transcribed word document was saved in my laptops for reference purpose. A copy of this feedback was made available to all participants by sending their respective transcripts to them. This also made them reaffirm

their positions on areas of inquiry and ensured that I captured every opinion as a form of member-checking process. None of the participants updated their earlier responses or changed their initial submissions. I further requested that participants make a second review to ensure that their decisions were not influenced by external factors and make changes on the document if necessary. There was no complaint from any of the participants after their review of the transcribed feedback. Given this position, I was able to confirm that all of the submissions had been validated by respondents.

### **Data Analysis**

A semistructured interview technique was deployed for my qualitative research as planned and outlined in the previous chapter. The face-to-face interviews and virtual sessions proposed were used, although most of the respondents opted for virtual interviews through Zoom and Microsoft Teams due to COVID-19 social distancing protocols. As explained by Barrett and Twycross (2018), the most direct and forthright approach in gathering data from participants is through the interview process. The transcribed document was made available to all participants to view their respective submissions for validation of intent and opinion. NVivo II software was used to code the data gathered for ease of analysis and identification of correlations. Feng and Behar-Horenstein (2019) considered NVivo a powerful tool for computer-assisted analysis for qualitative research, as it allows the researcher to analyze responses from interviews, surveys, and other text data. To interpret the results of participants during the study, I captured the responses to each interview question by all of the respondents.

## **Results**

After conducting interviews with the 20 selected participants, I was able to draw the following outcomes based on the 10 questions administered to the participants. The summary of their responses to the respective questions are given as follows.

### **Summary of Interview Question 1**

Interview Question 1 was the following: How would you describe the position of citizen security in Lagos State? Over 70% of the respondents believed that the government had not done enough to promote an effective security system in the state, while less than 30% were of the opinion that the state had made significant moves to curb the menace of insecurity. There was a perception that residents of expensive areas in both Lagos Mainland and Island were more secure compared to those in areas occupied by low-income earners in the state. This, however, was not attributed to government contributions but communal arrangements by residents of those locations for additional security personnel. They engaged private security bodies and also paid for state armed personnel to patrol their estates at regular intervals. Residents in low-cost areas do not have the financial capacity to engage both private security agencies and armed security personnel. It was also assumed that 40% of the security operatives in the state worked for the economic and political elites, given the strategic position of Lagos State as the commercial hub of the country. Some of the crimes identified as critical in Lagos State are burglary, theft, kidnapping, armed robbery, violence among localized gangs (area boys), cult group clashes, and inferno.

### **Summary of Interview Question 2**

Interview Question 2 was as follows: In your opinion, what are the major causes of insecurity in Lagos State? The summation of the reasons given by the respondents for the causes of insecurity in Lagos State can be categorized into three major areas, which are political factors, economic factors, and the lack of professionalism amongst security personnel. On the political factors, about 30% of the respondents blamed insecurity on corrupt practices of politicians in using political thugs as tools for their personal gain. It was submitted that this led to access to armed weapons by the thugs to cause mayhem in society. Unfortunately, after electioneering or associated factors, these arms were not retrieved from the thugs by the politicians.

Second, on economic factors, over 50% of the respondents admitted that there was a high rate of unemployment in the state, uneven wealth distribution, and overpopulation due to the general influx of people into the city in search for opportunities. The overpopulation crises were considered to have led to insecurity due to inadequacy of proper urban demographic planning.

Third, unprofessional conduct of security personnel was considered as another limiting factor to an effective security system in Lagos State. Some of the security personnel were not adequately trained to combat insecurity in the wake of obvious security challenges within the state. A poor security network and excessive delays in response times when crimes were reported were other major factors, as opined by some of the respondents.

**Summary of Interview Question 3**

Interview Question 3 was the following: To what extent has the creation of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency improved security within the state? There were divided opinions amongst the respondents on the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on their impact towards improved security in the State. About 60% responded that situation could have been worse without their presence in the community as this gives a sense of security in the Neighbourhood. The remaining respondents were of the opinion that they are not visible enough, and their activities are more pronounced in the area of traffic control rather than providing the needed security surveillance at the grassroots for intelligence report that can forestall crime in the state. It was also observed by the respondents that the Neighbourhood Safety Watch personnel closes after 6 pm, which is the period when criminals usually start their operations.

**Summary of Interview Question 4**

Interview Question 4 was the following: What would you consider as the reasons for creating the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency? There was a general consensus on the reasons for the creation of the agency by the Lagos State government. The various reasons given are the need to improve the security system in the State, bridge the gaps in areas where the police and other security agents are not covering, to undertake routine motorized patrol with the State, and gather security information for further escalation to higher security agencies in the State.

**Summary of Interview Question 5**

Interview Question 5 was as follows: What are your thoughts on the recruitment of manpower into the Agency? According to the respondents, the recruitment process of manpower into the Agency is a good initiative by the government to ensure that the State has adequate security personnel due to its population. However, over 80% submitted that the process had been politicized as rewards to the loyalist of political leaders. This has not created enough room for merit in the engagement of personnel into the agency.

**Summary of Interview Question 6**

Interview Question 6 was the following: How would you rate the visibility of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency within your residence? On the visibility of this Agency, 10% of the respondents indicated that they are not seen in their areas but other parts of the state. Therefore, they believed that they are not visible enough in all areas of the state. The general opinion of the remaining 90% of the respondents was 40% visibility on a scale of 100. It is, therefore, a call for more recruitment of personnel and effective deployment to cover all the Local Government Areas in the State.

**Summary of Interview Question 7**

Interview Question 7 was the following: Has there been any proof of positive impact of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps (security personnel of the Agency) in your area of residence? The respondents noted that there has been some significant improvement in security in the State since their establishment, especially in the area of daylight armed robbery. According to one of the respondents, "YES, to some extent. regions where they're more deployed you barely hear any instance of arm robbery

and my region happens to be one of the areas who had benefited” (Respondent 8, Academic, Female, 28, Lagos Mainland). In this case, it could be deduced that they are more effective in some areas than others. To further confirm this, another respondent stated that “I am yet to notice especially as people get robbed at Ajah under the bridge every now and then” (Respondent 19, Professional, Male, 29, Lagos Island). The location of reference by the respondent, ‘Ajah’ is one of the popular areas in Lagos Island.

### **Summary of Interview Question 8**

Interview Question 1 was as follows: How sustainable is the impact of the Agency in maintaining citizen security? According to the respondents, their activities will still require further improvement to be able to meet up with the enormous challenges. The framework of the agency is quite good but there is need for more engagement with their immediate community where they are deployed to have a sustainable impact. To one of the respondent, “not too sustaining but it'll be inuring of me to stand and say that there's no improvement on things”, (Respondent 11, Professional, Male, 28, Lagos Island). The submission of most respondents was that the impact is sustainable as long as the agency stays aligned with its purpose of establishment.

### **Summary of Interview Question 9**

Interview Question 9 was the following: What are your thoughts on the challenges confronting effective operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency? After reviewing the positions of all the respondents, it was evident that the three (3) major factors considered to be affecting the effective operations of the agency are lack of adequate training of manpower, recruitment error of some of the personnel, and dearth of

modern security equipment. As stated by one of the respondents, “Surveillance and intelligence gathering are some of the sophisticated methods that law enforcement authorities use to tackle security challenges. These help them gather information sufficient to prevent a crime that is yet to be committed, intervene in one that is being committed or investigate a crime that has been committed, so if this agency cannot afford this, it will be a challenge in achieving the target” (Respondent 11, Academic, Male, 28, Lagos Island).

### **Summary of Interview Question 10**

Interview Question 10 was as follows: What are your recommendations for the effective operations of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency to provide security within the state? The respondents provided several recommendations for the effective security operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency and these are given as improved recruitment and training process, effective reward and recognition process, adequate remuneration and provision of enhanced technological driven security gadgets. In the view of a respondent, “surveillance and intelligence gathering are sophisticated methods that law enforcement authorities can use to tackle security challenges. These help them gather information sufficient to prevent a crime that is yet to be committed, intervene in one that is being committed or investigate a crime that has been committed” (Respondent 17, Academic, Female, 26, Lagos Island).

In examining the outcome of data collated in relations to the research question, which is “what are the experiences of Lagos State residents with Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state?”, it was observed that there are



discrepancies in the opinions of all respondents. I could draw from the data that while all residents in both Lagos Island and Mainland admitted to the existence and importance of the agency, there were divided opinions on their impact in respective locations. Another area of congruence in opinions is the need to empower the agency with the required competency and equipment to function more effectively.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

The evidence of trustworthiness in this research was built on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as stated earlier in chapter 3. Stewart et al. (2017) stated that trustworthiness in research is premised on giving details of data collated from interviews conducted and observations made at the commencement of the process. The exercise was absolutely voluntary as participants were neither coerced to participate in the study nor interfere in their respective responses to the interview questions. This is to ensure the integrity of the data and draw originality from the various opinions of all respondents. The process was void of ambiguity that can make the participants erroneously give responses to research inquiries. I ensured that every part of the questions was given in simplified and clear terms to aid effective understanding of the research focus. There was an option of either virtual or physical interviews for the participants due to COVID 19 restrictions. Out of the 20 respondents, only 2 opted for the virtual interview process. To the best of my knowledge, the research is void of any process that can invalidate the findings given the choice of interview environment as preferred by the respondents. The research is fact-based with the transferable outcome for further study in related areas. The data generated are participants driven without

disruption from the researcher and interference from the external environment during the interviews. As stated in my methodology, the 20 participants were residents of both Lagos Mainland and Island between the ages of 25 and 40 with career segmentations as professionals, academics, and security personnel.

### **Credibility**

I was able to establish a credible research process through active engagement of all respondents to build confidence and earn their trust. To ensure data saturation, the population covered both the Lagos Island and Mainland residence which equal gender distribution of both male and female amongst other criteria as stated in chapter 3. Member checking technique was used for internal validity of the research findings. I made the transcript available to the participants to review for confirmation of their actual intent and responses to the interview questions. This process was initiated by me to build a credible research that is void of my personal biases. It eradicated the possibility of interpreting research data based on the assumptions of the researcher. This aligns with Amin et al. (2020) position that the member checking process promotes an atmosphere whereby the collated result is sent to the participants to validate the interview outcome as the representation of their thoughts.

### **Transferability**

One of the fundamental indicators of effective qualitative research is the ability to replicate and transfer the research outcome for further studies. Transferability was guaranteed in my research with effective documentation of the research findings and making it accessible for further academic inquiry. There is no static point to the research

finding, and the result collated from this exercise could be applied to related academic studies either as a novel inquiry or a developmental study. I provided details of the participants' locations, career segmentations, genders and age brackets for future research reference. In the future, the researchers and readers can access the study materials for knowledge sharing and related inquiry in a larger population (Marshall et al., 2013).

### **Dependability**

This aspect of research trustworthiness lays emphasis on the consistency and reputability of the study findings. In ensuring this, I documented the research process and outcome so that data generated could be reviewed by other researchers to confirm the similarity of interpretation and outcome drawn from the research. It is important to establish the objectivity of the researcher's findings through the lens of external researcher for validation. Tamarinde and Leonie (2019) explained that dependability in qualitative research is premised on clarity of questions and alignment with the study design. I communicated the intent and content of the research to the participants in an understandable simple language. Given the saturation of the research population, I observed replicated responses from various participants.

### **Confirmability**

I ensured that reflexivity and triangulation were used for instrument of validation as outlined in chapter 3 to confirm the objectivity of the research. I listened to the recorded responses from the participants over again after the session. To confirm the correctness of their responses, the participants were given the transcript to re-validate the submission and ensure that it was not influenced by my personal biases. I followed the

required ethical standard for the research to promote a value-free judgement in the final outcome.

### **Result Summary**

The identity of all respondents on this research was treated with utmost confidentiality and their participation was absolutely voluntary. All the respondents gave their opinions to various interview inquiries designed to provide answers to the experiences of Lagos State residents with the government established Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state. The general perspective on the creation of the Agency as drawn from the collated data was quite positive with recognition and appreciation of such initiative. The activities of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency through the Safety Corp could be felt in some areas in Lagos State as testified by some respondents residing in both Lagos Island and Mainland. It was also observed that the presence of the agency in some areas gave sense of security to the environment and it was presumed that this has discouraged some criminal activities in the neighborhood.

However, there was a general opinion that the Agency has not fully discharged their duties in collaborating with other state security operatives either from the area of security intelligence or forestalling criminal practices in crime infected areas of the state. Some of the areas known as crime zone in the state were considered by respondents as lacking the presence of security operatives especially the Neighbourhood Watch Safety Corp which should be felt in every Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the State. The recruitment and training of personnel in the Agency was also faulted as the former was

seen as a channel to reward political loyalists. This has attributed to recruiting less qualified personnel for the Agency which invariably led to incompetence in the discharged of their duties. The other related issue is lack of proper training on security acumen and anti-crime intelligence that could upskill them for better performance. Lack of modern security equipment is also a clog in the wheel as they are not allowed to carry arms like other security agencies in the State.

It was therefore suggested that the Agency should not be eliminated but empowered through effective training and re-orientation of their responsibilities. There should be an awakening call to responsibility of the Neighbourhood Watch by the government and other stakeholders. The recruitment process should be based on merit rather than connections to have a better performing Agency. There is also a need to recruit more manpower given the increasing population of the State. Human rural migration to the State in seeking for the golden fleece has opened up some areas that were not hitherto occupied by residence have been developed for habitation. This has made it difficult for the few security personnel to adequately patrol every neighborhood and curb crime in those areas.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter showed the result of 20 participants to 10 interview questions in providing answers to the research question, “What are the experiences of Lagos State residents on Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state?”. The study provided a novel perspective and insightful submission to the operations of the Agency as experienced by engaged Lagos State Residence of both Lagos Island and

Mainland areas. Being a fresh area of research, it has provided a good foundation for developmental research in a related study. The results and recommendations were presented and interpreted based on the submissions of participants. Some of the responses given were quite expected given several opinions in the public parlance while a few were entirely new and could be overlooked. In Chapter 5, I provided an overview of the study, further interpretation of the findings, implication on social transformation, and recommendations for social change.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The focus of my study was exploring the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency on Lagos residents' security. This qualitative study was carried out as a result of the threatening state of insecurity in Nigeria despite several efforts by successive regimes to address the situation. This led to an inquiry into the state of security in Lagos State as one of the federated units in Nigeria with a research lens on the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. The goal of the study was to draw informed perspectives from stakeholders in the security, academic, and corporate professional career segments on the impact of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the state. Several studies have been conducted on security issues in Lagos State, but there has not been much research on the critique of the Neighbourhood Safety Agency. I collected data through semistructured interviews with 20 participants whose residences were on Lagos Mainland and Lagos Island.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The data for this research were gathered from 20 participants with 10 interview questions each. The gender equation for the respondents was 10 males (50%) and 10 females (50%). On career segmentations, I engaged seven respondents (35%) from academia, seven respondents (35%) from the professional population, and six respondents (30%) from the academics. The residential distribution was 10 respondents from Lagos Mainland and 10 respondents from Lagos Island. The study outcome shows that the increased rate of crime in Lagos State was partly attributed to mass migration of

citizens from other parts of the country to the State as the economic hub of Nigeria in the expectation that this would bring a better standard of living. This finding aligns with the submission of Bako et al. (2018) that urbanization is linked with mass migration of people into the city and the challenges of neighborhood security. Given this position, it was observed from the research outcome that the opinion of respondents coincided with the existing literature on one of the reasons for insecurity in Lagos State.

Further, the data drawn from the respondents indicated that the creation of the Neighbourhood Safety Agency had significantly improved security consciousness in the environment based on their presence. This confirmed the position of Ordu and Unam (2017) that Neighbourhood Watch remains an active and deliberate measure to tackle insecurity in the state as everyone is part of one community or another. The effort of Neighbourhood Watch in providing community surveillance will ultimately lead to intelligence reporting that can effectively forestall criminal activities. To support this position as well, Abiodun (2016) averred that the surge of insecurity in the federated units will continue in Nigeria until there is a collaborative effort toward intelligence gathering amongst security agents in the country.

From the data analysis report, 48% of the participants identified unemployment and lack of proper engagement of youths in Nigeria as being among the major issues that increased insecurity in the country. This concurs with Ogunmefun and Okuneye's (2020) submission that insecurity in Lagos State is a result of the alarming rate of youth unemployment in the state. It is a major concern given the large population of youth involved in criminal activities in the state. These unemployed youths should form the



bedrock for national development in the country. The existing peer-reviewed literature correlates with the opinions of respondents on the causes of insecurity in Lagos State.

The findings also supported the recommendations made in the existing literature on how to improve security in Lagos State. The submission of most of the respondents was that there was a need for proper and adequate training for the personnel of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency. It further established the findings of Soyombo (2016) after conducting a survey on community safety and community policing in Lagos State. The outcome of the survey came with recommendations for effective training, adequate funding of security agencies, and reorientation on the purpose of their assigned responsibilities.

The study followed the principle of institutional theory by explaining the influence of a government-established institution on the citizen. As expressed by Chaturangani and Madhusanka (2019), institutional theory's coercive pressures ensure compliance with the existing regulations in a society. The enforcement of societal compliance to rules and regulations is premised on legitimacy and political influence. The Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency, despite not carrying arms, was able to enforce some level of citizenry compliance to the established rules and regulations as an institution of the state.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The earlier identified limitation to this study was the sample's representativeness of the whole population. The qualitative research made use of 20 participants to collate primary data for analysis. This may not reflect the general opinion of the public,

especially in Lagos State, with an estimated population of over 14 million people. In dealing with this concern, respondents were drawn from the two major residential classification areas of the state, Lagos Island and Lagos Mainland. For the purpose of saturation, samples were drawn from people in the academic, professional (corporate environment), and security sectors. There was also gender balance of male and female participants, as well as an age bracket of 25 to 40 years. This was based on the need to engage participants from the population of informed and active residents in Lagos State.

Another limitation was the tendency of biased opinions in the respondents during the interviews. It was not unlikely that some of the participants would not divulge the truth about the security situation of Lagos State, especially among the security personnel from the population. Associated with this limitation was the social-desirability bias from the respondents, which could have made them respond positively to questions while denying the real situation. It could have taken the form of overreporting the positive aspects of the research inquiry or underreporting the negative aspects to give their organizations or affiliated bodies a positive image. In order to forestall this, I ensured that the identities of all participants were coded and that the responses that were submitted treated with utmost confidentiality. A member-checking process was also initiated to validate responses of the participants and observe whether there would be a disparity in the earlier submitted data.

Lastly, personal preconceived opinions on security challenges in the state were a potential bias limitation to the study. Having lived in Lagos for over 35 years, I had witnessed several attacks on the lives and property of citizens, with one personal

experience in a supposedly secure environment on Lagos Island. However, I was able to exonerate my personal values from the research outcome by not influencing any of the participants' opinions. The findings from the research did not eventually reflect some of my preconceived opinions on security issues in Lagos State.

### **Recommendations**

The result from the interviews showed the need to come up with strategies that could aid an effective security system in Lagos State. My first recommendation is the institutionalization of community policing in the state. Addressing the issue of community policing in Nigeria is long overdue, given several security issues bedeviling the federated units, which include armed robbery, banditry, and terrorist attacks. This advocacy has been positioned by previous research given the need to build an effective security intelligence structure from the grassroots (Kasali & Odetola, 2016; Ordu & Unam, 2017; Nwogwugwu & Odedina, 2018). Although the establishment of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency has created a platform for the state to build community policing, it is important that the federal government passes a bill institutionalizing community policing in all federated states in Nigeria. The Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency could therefore be empowered and equipped to function in this capacity effectively.

Additionally, the recruitment of personnel into the agency should be handled independently of government influence. The process of being employed in the agency should not be a platform to reward political party loyalists, as this was identified as one of the major reasons for their inefficiency. There are several human resources (HR)

professional bodies and consultants in the country who could partner with the Lagos State government in shortlisting qualified candidates and selecting the best from the pool of applicants given the high rate of unemployment in the country. After the selection process, these consultants or HR professional bodies could also provide 2 to 3 weeks of intensive training before integrating them into the system. This training would be a form of acculturation program into the value system of the Agency with sessions on soft and technical skills. With this process in place, the challenges of getting to recruit mediocre people into the Agency would be reduced. The prequalification exercise should not be reduced to the selection of people with low academic credentials.

The activities of the agency should be redefined to focus on the security of Lagos State rather than being seen as spare machinery for traffic control duties. In some of the areas where their presence is more pronounced, personnel of Neighbourhood Safety Corps are seen regulating traffic while traffic officials are in the same location. The over-concentration of manpower in areas that could be effectively handled by one or two officers has made the visibility of the agency less pronounced in some areas. Their personnel should be deliberately deployed to cover every LGA of the state, with their patrol officials moving into various streets at intervals. This should be a thoughtful effort to restore public confidence in state security personnel, especially the Neighbourhood Safety Agency. Because some of their officials use bicycles and skates, they can easily move into various streets within their assigned LGAs at various patrol times in a day. Some criminal surveillances are done during the day before the actual activities occur at night. Lagos, being the commercial center of the country, mostly witnesses tranquility in

some residential areas during working hours as people have gone to their various places of work. It is therefore essential that periodic patrol into various streets is given priority and required attention.

State security is obviously a collective responsibility that should not be limited to the hands of security operatives. The Neighbourhood Safety Corps should relate directly with the residents of the areas where they are assigned. It will be a good initiative if they can have meetings with the community leaders on a monthly basis to discuss their security concerns and report any suspicious movement within their areas. Apart from the police toll-free numbers, the agency should provide toll-free numbers to communities under their watch in case of emergency. Most locations in Lagos State have Landlord Associations or appointed community leaders to deliberate on issues affecting their environment. The agency can leverage this established structure to penetrate various communities and partner for intelligence gathering, which could be used to forestall ugly security situations.

Because the agency cannot function in isolation, there is a need for the government to invest in technologized security equipment that can aid effective communication with other security agencies in the state. There should be more installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in the state that can record footage of activities because most criminal attacks are sudden. It will significantly help the agency to be effective in its operations because its personnel are not allowed to carry arms like police and other security personnel in the state are. The major support that they can provide is security intelligence to other security agencies within the state. In as much

as crime thrives on information, such could also be forestalled through effective communication networks among security personnel with the aid of enhanced technology-driven security equipment. The need for strong collaboration among the security agencies in the state must be given priority for a healthy relationship, as this will promote an effective network for combating insecurity.

In addition, the agency should be well remunerated to get personnel motivated while performing their duties. Lack of adequate funding has been one of the major issues faced by the security sector. Although Lagos State has an established State Security Trust Fund, there is a need for more funding from the government apart from public donations into the fund. While this is quite commendable, the government has the responsibility of ensuring that the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency is well funded with good welfare packages for security personnel.

### **Implications**

The study provides extensive implications for social change at the individual, family, organizational, and societal levels. It also gives fresh perspectives for policy review for improved security interventions to curb criminal activities within the state. An effective relationship between the agency and the general public will breed an atmosphere of trust and harmony that is germane to security intelligence gathering. Everybody obviously comes from a family, and the perpetrators of crime belong to one community or another. Strong collaboration will provide information about people, and security agencies can leverage this feedback to track criminal activities in the state.

As recommended in this study, recruitment policy for the agency should be reviewed by engaging professionals or consultants. Once this policy is embraced, it will create an avenue to employ qualified residents who are currently unemployed in the state. It is easier for crime to increase when there is a high rate of unemployment, as the unengaged population will be a prepared ground to recruit gangs for social vices. Associated with professional engagement is quality training for security personnel. It will be a platform for building skilled human capital that can come up with novel ideas in tackling immense security challenges.

Insecurity has a strong negative effect on organizations and society as a whole. A state with a high level of insecurity will experience instability, which will affect existing businesses while discouraging new ones from springing up. This will further lead to a high cost of living, low standard of living, and increased rate of unemployment. A reformed Neighbourhood Safety Watch Agency equipped with modern security technology will ultimately improve the security atmosphere in the state. This will improve the effectiveness of the existing businesses while encouraging other investment windows from new organizations. Job creation is an important aspect of social change, especially in an environment where there is a high rate of unemployment.

### **Methodology and Theoretical Implications**

The qualitative research method was considered appropriate for the study given the nature of the social inquiry. The data collection process through semistructured interviews enabled me to draw objective conclusions from respondents. In ensuring research validity and reliability, the opinions of the respondents were not influenced by

personal biases, with a member-checking process administered to ensure that all submissions not only counted, but also were counted. The outcome of the interviews produced raw feedback on the activities of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in the effort to curb insecurity in the state. It helped in drawing recommendations for positive social change from the inside-out perspective rather than the outside-in approach to proffering solutions.

The adoption of institutional theory for this study is relevant for social research, especially when dealing with behavioral complexities in society. The implication of this theory is the concept of legitimacy on the research focus. The research inquiry into Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety was premised on the legitimacy of the establishment as an institution of the state. The applicability of the institutional approach in this research is centered around the legitimacy of the case study. Previous related research on institutional theory also made reference to the principle of legitimacy as central to the approach (Glover et. al., 2014; Scaraboto & Fischer, 2012; Suchman, 1995).

### **Recommendations for the Practice of Positive Social Change**

The final outcome of this study revealed the need for positive social change recommendations. From the findings, it was observed that a dearth of adequate training has hindered effective operations of the agency. A practical step has been recommended through the engagement of HR professionals or consultants. They would provide both recruitment and training services to the agency as a way of getting qualified manpower and bridging knowledge gaps to meet current security challenges. This will give the



government a proactive approach to equipping the agency rather than waiting for the public to report their inefficiency before coming up with interventions.

Also, the visibility of the agency is critical for its success in its respective areas of deployment. One of the concerns raised by participants from the study was the lack of presence of the Agency personnel in their neighbourhood. As a practical step to remedy this, the personnel of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency should be clinical and deliberate in their patrol activities by going into every street at various intervals each day. They can run a shift arrangement of personnel to ensure that all areas are duly covered. This should be accompanied by regular meetings with community leaders and street associations. One of such viable associations is the Landlord Association in each vicinity. This will promote the required security network within the neighbourhood and bring improvement to security awareness amongst major stakeholders. This practical step will lead to positive social change by ensuring that the required synergy is built between the community and Neighbourhood Safety Agency in curbing insecurity within the State.

### **Conclusion**

This study was centred on the exploration of citizen security in the Nigeria Federated State with the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in perspective. The purpose of the study was to give a critical assessment of the Agency's activities in curbing insecurity issues in the State. The institutional theory was used as the theoretical framework to navigate through the study, and a qualitative method was used to gather data from 20 participants interviewed who reside on the Lagos Mainland and Island of the State. A semi-structured interview was used to draw data from participants using

sample metrics of the age distribution of 25 to 40 years, the equal gender distribution of males and females, and career segmentations into professional, security and academic environment.

In this study, I was able to examine various pieces of literature from scholars on approaches to curb the high crime rate in Lagos State. The problems identified as causes of security breaches in the State are lack of collaboration amongst various security agencies, lack of public trust in the police force, lack of community policing, unskilled security personnel, high rate of unemployment, corrupt practices of law enforcement agencies, and societal, economic inequality. In relating this to the primary data collated from the semi-structured interview, the reasons drawn for insecurity in the State strongly aligned with the existing peer-reviewed literature. However, there was limited academic literature on the impact of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency in enforcing a secured and safe environment in the State. This research was intended to close the gap in the understanding of the impact of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency, while the findings from this study could be a viable foundation for developmental research in similar area of research inquiry.

Finally, in this research, I provided several recommendations for effective operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency based on the identified problems from the research. The suggested submissions include the use of independent professionals or consultants in the recruitment and training of manpower into the Agency, provision of adequate funding for sophisticated security equipment, deliberate and clinical collaboration with the community leaders in the neighbourhood for visibility, and

institutionalization of community policing at the federal level to further establish and empower the Agency to act in such capacity. It is hope that the recommendations made from the outcome of this findings will be embraced for policy reform on the enhanced operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency.

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## Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the position of citizen security in Lagos State?
2. In your opinion, what are the major causes of insecurity in Lagos State?
3. To what extent has the creation of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency improve security within the state?
4. What would you consider as the reasons for creating the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency?
5. What are your thoughts on the recruitment of manpower into the Agency?
6. How would you rate the visibility of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency within your residence?
7. Has there been any proof of positive impact of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps (security personnel of the Agency) in your area of residence?
8. How sustainable is the impact of the Agency in maintaining citizen security?
9. What are your thoughts on the challenges confronting effective operations of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency?
10. What are your recommendations for the effective operations of Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency to provide security within the state?

## Appendix B: List of Acronyms

1. CPTED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Planning
2. CPSD – Crime Prevention through Social Development
3. EU – European Union
4. IPAC – Inter Party Advisory Council
5. LASIEC – Lagos State Independent National Electoral Commission
6. LCDA – Local Council Development Areas
7. LGA – Local Government Area
8. LSD&FC – Lagos State DNA & Forensic Centre
9. LSNC – Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corp
10. LSSTF – Lagos State Security Trust Fund
11. NBC – National Bureau of Statistics
12. NDLEA – National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
13. NIA – National Intelligence Agency
14. NSCDC – Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps
15. OPC – Odua People’s Congress
16. SSS – State Security Services
17. UN – United Nations
18. UNDP – United Nations Development Program