

# Covid-19 Pandemic and Mobility Elasticity of Crime in Lagos Metropolis

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on crime rate in Lagos Metropolis. The study identified the common crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown, identified the key perpetrators of the identified crimes, assessed the roles of the Nigerian Police force in curbing the identified crimes in the course of the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos state and the effects of the identified crimes on the rate of crime in Lagos state.

The study was hinged on structural-functionalism, social learning theory and social contract theory. Exploratory research design was adopted. The study was conducted in four purposively selected communities in Lagos state and data were collected through primary (Indepth interview) and secondary sources. Indepth interview was content analysed.

The study found out that invasion of homes and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, are common crimes in the study areas; and the One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities, Police Officers as key actors; the crimes were committed at night and late hours operation as a result of negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon, massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants.

The study concluded that the implications of these crimes on the residents of the selected communities showed that these include crimes having huge implications on the Lagos residents, exposure of weak security architecture and the call for state police, it has mandated everyone to resort to self-security using personal means and recommended that government should also identify with the community leaders in addressing indigene clashes with security operatives with a view to having a collaborative forum to resolve such crises.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Crime, Lockdown, Metropolis, Security

## I. INTRODUCTION

On the 30th of March, 2020, the federal government of Nigeria announced a total lockdown in the country. This was due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) across the major states of the country. Lagos state, Ogun state and Abuja, the federal capital territory were singled out for rigid security architecture in the first few weeks to restrict individual and vehicular movements based on the increased rate of infected individuals recorded in the areas and because they are central to the entry points of immigrants from the red zone countries where COVID-19 has become a threat to the lives of humanities. This restriction initially affected many social service providers as well as everyday wage earners on the streets of Lagos. The aftermath of the restriction brought about the emergence of neighbourhood crimes in selected parts of Lagos state.

Crime is a common phenomenon universally (UNODC, 2015; Akinpelu & Agbeyangi, 2013). According to Aborisade (2016), crime is generally considered as harmful not only to some individual, but also to the community or the state. As a result, several countries of the world are not spared by the incessant prominence of diverse and emergent crimes which have been documented in literature (Aborisade, Crime and Delinquency: A Sociological Introduction, 2016; Clark, 2007). But in spite of the numerous contributions of scholars on the complexities of crime in the world, most especially in Africa, crime still persists and proliferates within and across every known society (Okeshola, 2008). The case is not different in Nigeria as several studies on crimes have failed to yield any obvious decline. Rather, crime rate is becoming alarming on daily basis.

Crime and society have indivisible partnership (Olotola, 2020). In Lagos, Nigeria, studies on urban criminology have but not exclusively explored areas such as deviant behaviours, juvenile delinquency, civil unrest, suicide, homicide, community policing, commercialization of sex, border town crimes as well as industrial crimes such as blue collar and

white collar crimes among others (Abdulazeez & Temitope, 2018; Adegoke, 2014). However, street crimes have not enjoyed much attention unlike other aspects of criminology aforementioned. Also, the emergence of young criminally minded individuals who formed hub of groups to disturb the peace of the public in motor parks and market during the day as well as residential houses at night in the course of the COVID\_19 have not been subjected to any empirical inquiry (Nnadozie, 2020).

Prior to the emergence of COVID\_19 pandemic and the total lockdown which became imperative as a result of the rapid spread of the virus beyond the controllable domain of the government, street crime is not alien to urban areas of Nigeria, most especially, Lagos state. Previous studies on crime in Lagos, Nigeria have been conducted in areas such as the Nigerian prisons (Ijaiya, 2009; Udegbe, 2013), neighbourhood crimes (Fabiya, 2004), Lagos highways' crimes (Klein, 1994), Nigerian police force (Osinubi, 2017), Nigerian border communities (Chung, Ekundayo, Oyewole, & Abdulazaiz, 2011) and other multiple organized crimes in Lagos, Nigeria (UNODC, 2015).

The focus of this study is on Lagos, Nigeria. This is because previous studies have shown data on pre-COVID-19 crime research of Lagos, Nigeria while the COVID-19 and post COVID-19 crimes have not received sufficient attention. This is because there were insinuations that several lives and properties were lost in the cause of the compulsory lockdown. There were rumours of deliberate sabotage of security networks within the state and most security agents of the state were alleged to be in connivance with the perpetrators of the terrible happenings which negatively affected many lives in some parts of Lagos state. However, despite the claims reported on several social media with video-recorded, audio-recorded and pictorial evidences of the atrocities committed on law abiding citizens who stayed indoor with their families, research has not focused on these criminal activities and the likely implication they have on the society.

Similarly, the pathetic security situation of the policing system in Lagos state saddled upon with the protection of life and property in the course of the lockdown was questionable because reports claimed that most of the atrocities would have been successfully committed and the victims left to their fate before the arrival of the Nigerian police force. This shows absence of prompt reaction to distress call by the Nigerian police force. Meanwhile, as substantial as these claims

appears, there have been no empirical inquiry to ascertain the genuineness of the information from either the victims of the occurrence or the officers of the Nigerian police force. Hence, this study aims to examine the mobility elasticity of crime in Lagos state in the course of the COVID-19 lockdown.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

When the federal government of Nigeria issued a lockdown order in Lagos and Ogun states as well as Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, the expectations of many is that there will be full security architecture to ensure compliance of the order, protect lives and property, be on alert to thwart emergency life threatening occurrences and ensure that fundamental human rights not tied to the lockdown order is not denied. However, there are insinuations that crime was at its highest ebb in Lagos state during the period of compulsory lockdown which harmed many individuals in their houses and neighbourhood. Although, these crimes are not empirically accounted for, but reports from government owned and privately owned media suggests that these crimes thrived in areas very close to police stations and police check-points. As a result, this study aims to identify the common crimes that were perpetrated in Lagos during the lockdown period.

Also, reports showed that there was emergence of several occultic groups which threatened the public peace and wrote letters to visit and revisit areas they deemed fit to ransack valuable items from the residents (Falaye, 2020; Odekunle, 2020). Despite this outcry, there have been covert reactions to bringing the perpetrators to justice to calm the nerve of the burgled and repose security confidence in the residents of Lagos state. This spur the research to seek the identification of the key actors of crimes in the period of lockdown in Lagos state and the methods deployed in perpetrating the acts.

In Lagos state during the lockdown, it was observed that the Nigerian police have been terribly embarrassed by the public with physical and social media handles on negligence of duty and deliberate connivance with new group of young criminals who operated at creeks and ghetto part of the state to disturb public peace and inflict pains on the Lagos residents. Meanwhile despite this, the Nigerian police force remains the most reliable source of security for the citizenry. This study also aimed at assessing the coping mechanisms adopted by the officers of the Nigerian police force when reports of increasing criminal activities were reported to their various stations.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review explored the previous studies on Concept of COVID-19 pandemic, concept of Crime, Common Crimes in Lagos, Nigeria. On theory, the study was anchored on Albert Bandura Social learning theory, Talcott Parsons structural functionalist theory and Thomas Hobbes Social Contract Theory. The Structural functionalist theory because crime activities is systemic and can be best understood on a macro scale level. Social learning theory was adopted because crime is learned in the urban communities. The learning involves the society members which overtime becomes a normal phenomenon. Social Contract Theory explains the roles expected of the government to the citizenry and likely implications emanating from refusal to fulfill the expected obligation by the government which often resort to the kind of crime found in Lagos state in the course of the COVID-19 lockdown.

### 2.1 Concept of COVID-19 Pandemic

Coronaviruses is of the Orthocoronavirinae sub-family in the Nidovirales order. Corona has crown-like spikes on the outer surface of the virus; thus, it was named a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are minute in size (65-125nm in diameter) and contain a single-stranded RNA as a

nucleic material (Perlman, 2020). World Health Organization (WHO) described the coronavirus disease as COVID-19 to reflect the year of the outbreak.

Although COVID-19 location and origin is not in doubt, however the natural reservoir of the virus is still subject of various interpretations. While some believed the virus is zoonotic and bats may be the culprits because of sequence identity to the bat-CoV. (Zhu, Zhang, Wang, Li, Yang, & Song, 2020; Perlman, 2020), there is also the view that it was a laboratory genetically modified compound. Meanwhile WHO believes COVID-19 may cause various symptoms such as pneumonia, fever, breathing difficulty, and lung infection. It is spread primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes [www.who.int](http://www.who.int). It is believed that most people infected with COVID-19 will be asymptomatic while others will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness. However older from age 65 and especially those with underlying medical challenges like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness with fatal consequences in some cases.

The first laboratory-confirmed case of 2019-nCoV infection was on December 1, 2019 in Wuhan, China. The outbreak was said to have occurred in a local market, the Huanan Seafood Market (wet-market), with at least 41 cases reported (Huang, Wang, Li, Ren, Zhao, & Hu, 2020). It was also reported that live animals such as bats, frogs, snakes, birds, marmots and rabbits are frequently sold at the Hunan seafood market (Wang, Horby, Hayden, & Gao, 2020).

As at the time of conducting this study, there is no known accurate cure or vaccine for COVID-19. However, some effected persons have being treated with a combination of therapies and thereafter tested negative and discharged to go home. Subsequently, people have been given doses of vaccines to boost immune system. Meanwhile, to prevent and slow down transmission, WHO and Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) advocated regular washing of hands with detergent, using alcohol-based sanitizers, maintain social and physical distancing and robust public awareness about the virus.

Meanwhile, the virus has created a total disruption of the world order with almost all countries of the world including Nigeria imposing a total lockdown of upwards of 21 days in some selected states. A lockdown of any country certainly will come with severe political, economic and social consequences both on the short run and long run. One of the social consequences is the emergence of household, street or neighbourhood crimes by selected groups of young individuals who are alleged to have caused numerous damages of looting, arson, rape and sexual abuse, bodily injury to victims and cause of panic in previously known peaceful entities of Lagos state (Falaye, 2020).

### 2.2 Concept of Crime

According to Oyafunke-Omoniyi (2014), crime is generally considered as an act harmful to individuals, communities or state. Crime refers to those activities that break the law of the land and are subject to official punishment (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). In his conceptualization of crime, Durkheim posited that crime is inevitable and normal aspect of social life. Crime is present in all types of society and often times higher in more advanced, industrialised countries. According to Durkheim, crime is an integral part of all healthy societies. It is inevitable because not all members can be equally committed to the collective sentiments (the shared values and moral beliefs) of society (Durkheim, 1938).

The comprehension and definition of crime is a complicated process, and that is why lots of different disciplines such as Psychology, Sociology, Medicine, Philosophy, Anthropology, Economics, and jurisprudence work together on crime studies. According to McGuire, crime can be easily defined as any activity publicly proscribed by the written laws of a society (McGuire, 2004). Some specific acts – theft, fraud, criminal damage, are defined as a crime; because they are prohibited by laws. However, there are complex relationships between victims, police, criminals, courts, and penal system. The perception of crime can change from society to society. Time and current conditions also shape the definition of a criminal act, and there is not a behavior which is always criminal in everywhere; because crime is a social product and socially constructed phenomenon.

Different perspectives are used to provide a general crime definition. The consensus, conflict, and interactionist views of crime are the most popular perspectives on crime studies (Siegel, 2006). The consensus view supports that society is an integrated structure and all people decide what will and will not be tolerated or accepted by society. Crime is an act that is not accepted by society and capable of being followed by criminal proceedings having one of the types of outcome (punishment, and so on) known to follow these proceedings (Kenny, 1936). The act must be legally forbidden, and there must be a criminal intent. Researchers claim that crimes are simply acts that are believed to be repugnant of various elements linked to society. The laws and punishments reflect beliefs, norms, opinions, and values of the large portion of society. There are strong relations among the definition of the crime, legal system, and social values. The consensus is an important part of this view; because it means the agreement among a large part of society. Siegel (2006) also suggests that consensus view is necessary for a fair legal system; because all types of people within all classes adequately involve rule or lawmaking process, and laws represent all classes.

Crime is normally considered as a deviant behaviour which violates the prevailing norms (the cultural standards that prescribe how humans living in a particular society are expected to behave) of a particular society. Hence, the sociological approach to studying crime considers the complex realities that surrounds the concept of crime and seeks to understand how the changing social, political, economical and psychological conditions may affect changing definitions of crime and how society members perceive it. As such, there is no universal and any generally acceptable definition of

crime. Also, crime is interpreted in its widest sense, so as to include minor as well as major law breaking and also conduct which can be regarded as law breaking.

### 2.2.1 Common Crimes in Lagos state, Nigeria

According to Aborisade (2016), crime in Nigeria is multifaceted and can be categorised under different levels. This is because of the mellange of increase experienced in the types, rates, dimension and intensity of crime in the country and which prompts recent efforts by researchers to examine the trends and patterns of criminal activities in the country. These trends and patterns of crime in Nigeria are categorised under property crime, trafficking crime, victimless crime, person crime, fiscal crime and white collar crime.

#### Property Crime Armed Robbery

Armed robbery is defined as the unlawful taking or attempt to take something of value from another person or persons, by using some type of violent force or threat of force. It involves direct confrontation between offender and the victims. According to Allen (2005), robbery is defined as taking the property of another, with the intent to permanently deprive the person of that property by means of force or fear. Literature revealed that armed robbery emerged from different organised gangs headed by different individuals who lead their troupes to terrorise homes of individuals and groups of people (Fabiya, 2004). However, since emergence, armed robbery has become a serious security challenge that has proven very difficult for the Nigerian police and other security agencies.

#### Carjacking

Carjacking is an unlawful seizure of an automobile of another person. Aborisade (2016) described it as armed assault if the car is being occupied the period it was being stolen because the act is always executed with the use of force and arms. In Nigeria generally, carjacking has become one of the most prevalent and dangerous crimes against persons and property. Meanwhile, there have been several approaches adopted by the security agents to nab the suspects of this crime through tracking devices, car alarms and immobilizers but these have altogether not been a successful venture.

#### Juvenile delinquency

Juvenile Delinquency refers to the antisocial and criminal behaviour involving individuals below the age of 18. Juvenile

Delinquency has consistently been a problem in urban communities; Lagos, Nigeria is not an exemption. According to Oyafunke-Omoniyi (2014), juvenile offenders are expected to be treated differently from adults but the case in Lagos Nigeria is different. There are insinuations that juvenile delinquents in Lagos state, Nigeria are more than those found in other states in the southwest region

### **Theft and Stealing**

Stealing according to section 382 of Nigerian criminal code is when a person fraudulently takes anything capable of being stolen, or fraudulently converts to his/her own use or to the use of any other person capable of being stolen. It can be further explained as the taking over of another person's consent with the intent to deprive the rightful owner. Someone who carries out an act of or makes a career of stealing is known as a thief (Allen, 2005). Theft on the other side is a name of a statutory offence in Nigeria. Types of stealing common to Nigerians are embezzlement, theft of public fund, fraud and crude oil theft. According to Aborisade (2016), these types of stealing have accounted for the loss of several billions of dollars which could have been used to improve the economy of the country.

### **Trafficking Crime**

#### **Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking has been described as the fastest growing form of criminality and the third most profitable international criminal business after drugs and arms trafficking (Aborisade, Crime and Delinquency: A Sociological Introduction, 2016; Olabiran, 1990). This has equally affected Nigeria's international integrity because the nation has acquired unenviable reputation of being the leading African country with the highest records of human trafficking both internally and across borders.

#### **Child Trafficking**

Literature revealed that across Nigerian borders, there are several cases and reports of child trafficking for sexual exploitations into other West African countries, across Africa and Europe (Anyebe, 2011).

#### **Drug Trafficking**

The fact that there is huge sum of money invested in drug trafficking has attracted interests from several quarters and created tremendous increase in illicit trafficking in narcotic within and across borders. In Nigeria, there is huge investment

in Indian hemp because there are several hectares of lands dedicated to the planting of such in the southern and middle belt areas of the country (Yishua, 2011).

### **Victimless Crime**

#### **Prostitution or commercial sex work**

Prostitution has been traced to have existed for a very long time and as such is not peculiar to any specific society. Literature revealed that it had existed long before civilization as it has economic, religious and historical nexus. Prostitution can be described as the exchange of money or goods for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally involving female, male and transgender adults, young people and children where the sex worker may not consciously define such activity as income-generating (Makinde, Popoola, & Ologunde, 2008).

#### **Suicide**

This is the deliberate act of killing oneself. According to Aborisade (2016), it is one of the most underreported crimes in Nigeria. This is because of the religious and cultural beliefs which clouds the act generally and which makes it to be perceived as taboo. However, literature revealed that several Nigerians are unaware that it is a crime to commit suicide in Nigeria (Anyebe, 2011; Okafo, 2011).

#### **Drug Abuse**

Drug abuse means the non-medical ingestion of drugs that are intended for legitimate medical treatment and also to the misuse of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. Drug abuse is currently a common phenomenon in Nigeria which is gradually being perceived as a norm mostly among the younger generation. Abuse of drugs is generally conceived among human societies as deviance, a social problem and a teleological force in social disorganization in some societies since the earliest times in history (England, 2018). In Nigeria, it is criminal and an offence punishable by imprisonment to use dangerous drugs as stipulated in Indian Hemp Act of 1966 and Decree No. 20, 1984. The imprisonment ranges from six months to life duration in the legal framework and provisions of Decree 48, 1989.

### **Person Crime**

#### **Rape**

The Penal Code and the Criminal Code under the Nigeria law defined rape as an offence. The Penal Code examined rape from the

perspective of a man having sexual intercourse with a woman in situations where it is carried out; against her will; with her consent when her consent has been obtained by putting her in fear of death or of hurt; with her consent when the man knows that he is not her husband and that her consent is given because she believes he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married; with or without her consent where she is under fourteen (14) years of age or of unsound mind. In the same vein, the Criminal Code, section 357 explains that any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girl without her consent or with her consent if the consent is obtained by force or means of threats or intimidation or any kind or by fear of harm or by means of false and fraudulent representation as to the nature of the act of in the case of a married woman by personating her husband is guilty of an offence called rape.

#### Types of Rape

**Acquaintance Rape:** this kind of rape is that which involves someone known to the victim. It often occur between two people who know one another usually in social situations, or who were once in a dating relationship and had consensual sex in the past, or between two people that are just casual friends.

**Date Rape:** This involves non-consensual sex between two people that are in a dating relationship. This is often referred to as hidden rape because it is often not considered as a rape by the offender and members of the public, while the victims usually would rather not report because they are dating. According to Yishua (2011), this type of rape is very common in Nigeria. Other types of rape as identified by Aborisade (2016) include: stranger rape, gang rape, spousal rape, rape of children and rape by deception.

#### Murder/Homicide/Manslaughter

As obtainable in other countries of the world, Nigeria also took a strong position that it is unlawful to kill any person unless such killing is authorised or justified or excused by the law. This is based on the universal belief that life is sacred. Hence, the willful termination of someone's life is a grievous offence. Manslaughter is an unlawful killing of another person in circumstances that will not constitute murder.

#### Kidnapping

Kidnapping is regarded as taking away of a person against the person's will, usually for ransom or in furtherance of another crime.

#### Fiscal Crime

##### Money laundering

According to Aborisade (2016), money laundering ranks among other forms of economics and financial crimes that are ravaging the socio-economic wellbeing of Nigeria. This is because money is laundered in Nigeria through currency exchange houses, banks, stock brokerage houses, casinos, trading companies and automobile dealership.

##### Fraud

Any act of dishonesty, deceit or trickery and imposture is regarded as fraud. This is further enshrined in the Criminal Code Act in section 418. This states that any representation made by words, writing or conduct of a matter of fact, either past or present which representation is false in fact, and which the person making it knows to be false or does not believe to be true.

##### Tax Evasion

One of the greatest challenges confronting Nigerian tax system is the problem of tax evasion and tax avoidance. While tax evasion is the willful and deliberate violation of the law in order to escape the payment of the tax which is unquestionably imposed by the law of the tax jurisdiction, tax avoidance is the active means by which the tax payer seeks to reduce or remove altogether his liability to tax without actually breaking the law.

##### White Collar Crimes

These are offences committed by people while acting in their legitimate jobs and professions. These include bribery, blackmail, bank fraud, computer fraud, counterfeiting, embezzlement, extortion, forgery, insurance fraud and securities fraud among others.

#### 2.3 Theoretical Review

##### 2.3.1 Structural Functionalist Theory

The Proponents are Auguste Comte (1798 – 1857), Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917), Talcott Parsons (1920 – 1979) and Robert King Merton (1920 – 2003). The structural-functionalist school of thought views the society as a system with a set of interconnected parts which together form a whole. The basic unit of analysis is society and its various parts are understood primarily in terms of their relationship to the whole. The classical theorists often draw an analogy between society and an organism such as the human body. They revealed that an understanding of any organ in the body involves the understanding of its relationship to other organs (Alliyu, 2003). Robert K. Merton in

his contributions to structural functionalist theory distinguished between manifest and latent functions. According to Merton, manifest functions are those known to, and intended by the participants in a specific type of social activity but by contrast, latent functions are unconscious or unintended functions.

Meanwhile, Schaeffer (2009) revealed that the emphasis of structural-functionalists is on what maintains a system and not on what changes it. However, the works of Talcott Parsons on equilibrium model suggests that as changes occur in one part of the society, there must be adjustments in other parts. If this does not take place, such society's stability will be threatened and strains will occur. Parsons (1951) maintained that four processes of social change are inevitable in every society. First, differentiation which refers to the increasing complexity of social organization. Second is adaptive upgrading which means that social institutions become more specialized in their purposes. The third process is inclusion of groups into society that were previously excluded because of social related factors and finally, Parsons contends that all societies experience value generalization, the development of a new value that tolerate and legitimate a greater range of activities.

In application to the study, Structural-functionalism theory proposes that the structures of the society exist is to sustain the society and when crime thrives within any society, such society is no longer immune against social disorder. The theory explains that the dysfunctionality of a section of the structure (the security system) forms the fracture experienced by the weak security in the state. Functionalists' theory however has its weaknesses on the selected communities in Lagos state where crime thrived because it did not consider the implication of diffusionism which may usher in non-state resident to foment trouble within the state and how incessant transfer of police officers may affect the mastery of the location where these crimes are committed. Also, less emphasis was placed on the social motivations and psychological make-up of the actors of the crime in the selected communities of Lagos state.

### 2.3.2 Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura is the major proponent. Social learning theory is based on the idea that individuals learn from their interactions with others in a social context (Bandura, 1977). Separately, by observing the behaviors of others, people develop similar behaviors. New concepts of social learning are being formed as new trends in

patterns of interactions emerge. According to social learning theory, people learn by:

- Observing what other people do
- Considering the apparent consequences experienced by those people
- Rehearsing what might happen in their own lives if they follow other people's behaviour
- Taking action by trying the behaviour themselves
- Comparing their experiences with what happened to other people
- Confirming their belief in the new behaviour

There are three key components to Bandura's social learning theory: observational learning, imitation, and behavior modeling (Bruner, 1990; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). Bandura's social learning theory is based on the idea that observational learning involves the fact that humans often cannot learn for themselves. An alternative theory which is not strictly constructivist or behaviourist is Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

This theory combines behaviouristic reinforcement theory and cognitive psychology to describe the learning process in individuals. Bandura emphasizes the personal or self-system which controls learning by influencing social processes, schematic processing of experiences, memory representation and reconstruction, cognitively-based motivation, emotion activation, psycho-biologic functioning and the ease and skill to which these are employed to deal with everyday life experiences (Bandura, 1977). The learner has the power to influence their own learning in new situations by controlling the environment around them whether that environment is imposed, selected or constructed (Bandura, 1977).

Crime is almost inseparable from human societies. They are initiated, perpetrated and spread by human beings within their communities. As such, crime varies within societies and these are function of the existing ethos of a certain society. And since societies are bred by human interactions encoded in social meanings (Mans, 2007). With this in mind, interaction between urban community residents provides all social learning necessary to instil a new mode of thinking, behavioural patterns and new value system.

This theory explains how influential everyone who interact in Lagos state can be on the determinant of the security state of co-residents and members of their society. The weakness of the theory lies in its overemphasis in justifying individual's motivation for engaging in a certain behaviour rather than group of people which

Sociology mainly focuses. Since actions are learned and transferred, the theory gave little or no explanation on how interaction process metamorphoses into criminal intention.

### 2.3.3 Social Contract Theory

The Social Contract Theory explains the role of government in protecting her citizens is informed by the responsibility of states to protect their citizens rather than leaving them with the task of providing security for themselves. In other words, the state is socially responsible for ensuring that lives and property within its territory are not under any threat that would undermine their existence. According to John Locke, the government is an organization which derives consent from the people, and the social contract exists because citizens are ready to give their consent to the governments (the states) to protect their lives and property. Consequently, the government uses the legitimacy given to act based on a social contract to prevent all forms of insecurity to discourage self-help which could promote anarchy. With the combination of political stability, security and social cohesion which are the ingredients of peaceful coexistence, the government would be able to sustain the social contract (Pires 2012).

But states cannot claim to sustain the social contract when there is a limitation in meeting up with the fulfilment of the obligation of security provisioning (Albert 2017). However, the abuse of the social contract is well documented in Nigeria where security forces often attack and kill the people they are expected to protect, to the extent that some are described as unknown soldiers or apprehended for prosecution. Afeno (2014) identifies low wages, corrupt practices including forceful extortion of bribes, which often results in extra-judicial killings and other human rights abuses as features of law enforcement by security forces in Nigeria where armed gangs and ethno-religious issues cause violence. Mapping the incidents from Nigeria Watch database, the scholar lists the killings by security forces from 2006 to 2014, namely the recorded 7648 fatalities in 529 out of a total of 880 lethal incidents where the army was involved, while 1560 fatalities were linked to the police out of 2694 violent incidents they got involved in, representing an average of 58% of their interventions that caused deaths.

The Social Contract Theory further explains the determination and capacity of the government to preserve life and vitality for its citizens, through policies that provide for the securitization of pandemics, just like COVID-19

which demands changes in budgeting priorities, given urgent attention to the health needs of the society (Ookeditse, 2020). And this must include security during lockdown and lockdown measures. This protection role of the state is also achieved through pandemic legislation/enactment of laws, contact tracing and restriction of movements based on government's responsibility to protect all citizens who are equal before the law. Indeed, increased budget allocations to address the health emergency for unplanned security deployments that were not captured in the country's budget for the year in this COVID-19 era would enhance state capacity to contain the spread of the dreaded corona virus.

Based on this, governments have initiated measures to assist vulnerable households during the COVID-19 lockdown, including distribution of grains to vulnerable households where access to foodstuffs was a challenge (Ayanlade and Radeny 2020). Local and international donors including civil society also supported the government by making financial and material contributions in order to alleviate the sufferings associated with lockdown.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter involves the method used in carrying out the research work. It encompassed the method employed in collecting and analyzing data on COVID-19 pandemic and mobility elasticity of crime in Lagos metropolis. Areas considered under this chapter are the study area, research design, the population, the sample and the technique for its selection, the research instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis, ethical issues and problems encountered on the field

### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted exploratory research design. Exploratory research design was considered because the study was aimed at unraveling crimes peculiar to Lagos west senatorial district selected communities which previous studies have not given much consideration. This study adopted the use of qualitative data to obtain information from executives of selected estates and security operatives in Lagos west senatorial district selected communities.

### 3.2 Study Area

Selected communities in Lagos West were used as the study area. This is because they were the identified communities centrally pervaded by alleged miscreants who harmed the residents who can read and write and can respond to the research



instruments and who have first hand information on crimes related to the selected communities under study.

### 3.3 Study population

The study population was determined by the available information given by the relevant security agencies in the state. This was obtained when a pilot study was conducted. The study population consisted of two (2) community executives were chosen from each of the four (4) estates selected in the four (4) communities adopted for the study and sixteen (16) police officers from the four communities. This implies that 32 community executives were selected in the study and 16 Police officers.

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study. This type of sampling is useful and was considered in this study because the research focused on a targeted population, purposive sampling helped to reach out to the targeted population and also gather information that are relevant to the objective of this study. The inclusion criteria were communities whose executives had been actively in office in the period of the lockdown, who has spent at least five years in the community, can communicate in English language and willing to participate in the study. Also, officers of the Nigerian police force who have spent at least three years in selected areas, was in the community during the lockdown, can communicate in English language and willing to participate in the study and recommended from the higher authority from whom permissions were sought for the study.

### 3.5 Source of Data

Primary and secondary data were utilized in this study. Primary data was gathered through qualitative instruments (in-depth interview). Secondary data was obtained through relevant publications.

#### 3.5.1 Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument of data collection is in-depth interview guide. The in-depth interview (IDI) was for both the estate executives and officers of the Nigerian Police Force resident working in the selected communities while secondary data were obtained through relevant publications. The reason behind the combination of these data collection is to provide strength that counterpoises the weakness of the qualitative techniques of data collection.

### 3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The qualitative data (IDI) was analysed using content analysis while the documentation from the police were used to corroborate the findings of the study.

### 3.7 Ethical Consideration

Based on the required ethical standards of studies involving human subjects appropriate approvals or consents to be part of the sample population were obtained and the privacy of the respondents was protected. Respondents were briefed about the study and its expected outcomes or benefits. Four ethical considerations that were relevant to this study are:

**Beneficence to participants:** There are no direct and immediate benefits for participants in this study.

**Confidentiality of data:** Efforts were made to make the instruments anonymous. The survey instrument did not require participants' names, signatures, addresses or telephone numbers on it. Participants were assigned identification numbers derived from the interview guides numbers in the communities of study.

**Non-maleficance to participants:** There were no physical risks associated with involvement in this study. If participants feel uncomfortable with any of the questions, they are not under any forced obligation to answer such questions.

**Voluntariness:** Respondents' participation in the study was totally voluntary. Respondents can choose to withdrawal from was given to participants detailing consent to participate and right to withdraw from study.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were gathered in stages and with qualitative methods. The analysis was done thematically in tandem with the objectives. The themes include socio-demographic data of the interviewees. The study conducted interviews on interviewees (estate executives and officers of the Nigerian Police force); hence, the socio-demographic data of each category is presented under the relevant theme. Data collected through IDIs and non-participant observations were analyzed using content analysis.

### 4.1 Socio-Demographic Data of the participants in the study areas

**Source:** Fieldwork (2022)

#### 4.1.1 Socio-Demographic Data of the Police Officers in the study area

Sixteen (16) officers from the Nigerian Police were selected and interviewed for the study. Thirteen (13) of the participants were males while three (3) were females. The ages of the participants were between 36 years to 52 years. On religion, eleven of the participants were Christian while five (5) were Muslims. Also, on the participants' educational qualification, data showed that half of the participants (5) had first degree, (4) had masters, two (2) had National Diploma (ND), two (2) had SSCE while two (2) has Higher National Diploma (HND). On marital status, data showed that nine (9) of the participants were married, three (3) were widowed, three (3) were single and only one (1) was divorced. Data on the participants' ranks showed that there were two (2) Superintendents, two (2) Deputy Superintendents, two (2) Assistant Superintendents, seven (7) Inspectors, one (1) Sergeant and two (2) Lance Corporals.

#### 4.2 Socio-Demographic characteristics of the Estate Executives of the study areas

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

##### 4.1.2: Socio-Demographic characteristics of the residents of the study area

The socio-demographic characteristics of the executives of selected estates where crime rate was reportedly high during the COVID-19 lockdown. Twenty-eight (28) of the participants were males while four (4) were females. Data on the participants' age revealed that three (3) participants were between 21-30 years, 31-40 years were twenty-one (21) participants, 41-50 years were six (6) and two (2) participants were between 51-60 years. Data on religion also showed that twenty-five (25) participants were Christians while seven (7) participants were Muslims.

Data on participants' level of education showed that seven (7) participants were SSCE holders, ND/NCE holders were ten (10) participants, twelve (12) of the participants were HND/degree holders while three (3) had postgraduate qualifications. Data on marital status showed that twenty one (21) of the participants were married, seven (7) of the participants were single and four were widowed, divorced or separated. Data on the participants occupation showed that thirteen (13) of the participants were into transport, eight (8) of the participants were into corporate business, five (5) of the participants were into trading, six of the participants were an either civil or public servant.

#### 4.2 Common Crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State

Several criminal activities were identified during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State. This is because these crimes were peculiarly committed when there was a standing order for every Lagos residents to stay indoors. According to the study, the most prominent criminal activities were identified as invasion of homes and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, use of weapon and threat for extortion, rape and sexual harassment, gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm.

Several criminal activities were committed in this street during the lockdown. The most common is invasion of homes by some unknown individuals with weapons to force people to part away with their hard earned money and valuables but apart from that there are cases of security breach through which OBT (obtaining by false presence) occurred. Other common crimes are possession of arms for harassment, street robbery, phone snatching and physical assault on passersby.

##### IDI/Male/Civil servant/37years

Another respondent also revealed that:

As for me, the major criminal act here was robbery. There was almost no day that people weren't robbed during the lockdown. The robbery is not based because young teenage girls were seen in the neighbourhood with different weapons threatening to harass anyone they spot walking by. Even old women were not spared in the robbery exercise as many who left their homes to seek purchase of food and household items became suddenly accompanied on the street by unknown persons who eventually threaten to injure until they successfully obtain.

##### IDI/Male/Married/38years

#### 4.2.1. Invasion of homes and neighbourhood, community and estates

Implicit from the above states that robbery is the dominant crime committed in the selected communities in Lagos state. As a result, respondents' perspectives on the nature of robbery varied. The study showed that despite the strictness of the lockdown order on business, homes and movement, Lagos residents were not fully compliant because there was need to purchase household items, medical items, and sightseeing in the neighbourhood. These acts made many leave their homes. Those who left their apartment with

the hope of getting the items they sought left their doors unlocked with the hope that they would get the needed items in the shops close by but because of varied compliance with government instruction on lockdown, some of the nearby and trusted outlets were closed. The need to get these items made some residents proceed to second, third and fourth streets in some occasions until they get their desired items and before they return, their homes have been burgled by unknown individuals who would have made away with valuable items.

The perspectives of the participants varied on invasion of homes during lockdown. These are captured in the views expressed as:

When peoples' houses are invaded, they are usually done with the knowledge of the victim's itinerary. Most people don't take extra caution of their household safety. Their doors are always left unlocked. Some would even keep their keys in predictable places.

#### **IDI/Male/NPF/50years**

Another respondent also revealed that:

House invasion can never be totally ruled out in this area because many people invited the invaders by themselves. They play loud music always and send signals of being rich. It is expected that some people will be on their trail to find their worth and if they have the opportunity of stealing from them in the process, they will do it.

#### **IDI/Male/NPF/34years**

Some of the residents had apartments which have no strong doors. An example is the man we went to his house last month, his sitting room has padlock which is not really functional. Such person also complained that his house was invaded during lockdown. This is how many houses were poorly constructed and when investigated, we found out that this man's house harboured food items, non-alcoholic beverages and beer, bagged cement, processed vegetable oil jerricans and bags of rice which the invaders parted away with

#### **IDI/Male/NPF/45years**

The perspective of the estate executives did not differ from the above claim on invasion in the selected communities. Their views were captured as follow:

There were serious cases of invasion in the lockdown. I was a victim too. I wasn't even outside my apartment but inside the kitchen when I began to hear strange sound from unknown quarters. The next thing I saw were four young boys who cut through my burglary and started

jumping into my sitting room. They brought out broken bottles and knives and requested that I give them my phone, money and other valuables if I don't want to lose my life. I had to comply and I was locked in the toilet when they were leaving.

#### **IDI/Female/Christian/29years**

My wife and I went to greet a neighbor that just put to bed in the next compound. Before we came back, our room has been burgled and its not like we left the door opened. It was through the ceiling that they gained entrance and carted away my laptop and foodstuff

#### **IDI/Male/Muslim/37years**

So many of my friends experienced uninvited guests in their apartment when we were on lockdown. The most painful was one of them whose daughter was raped.

#### **IDI/Male/Christian/38years**

Implicit from above is that homes were invaded when there was lockdown. Although none of the respondents specifically mentioned arresting any of the invaders but the invasion was largely attributed to weak security apparatus, negligence of the house occupants and show off on the part of some persons which unduly attracted the attention of the invaders.

#### **4.2.2 Harmful attack and Robbery**

Apart from the invasion of homes and neighbourhood which is generally acceptable by virtually all the population of this study, harmful attack and robbery was also identified as a major crime committed in the selected communities by unidentified individuals. This was expressed in the views below:

I was well robbed during the lockdown in the presence of my entire family. Unluckily for me, I was just paid my salary at work and I decided to withdraw everything so that we can buy foodstuff the next day at the market. I didn't know how this dreadful and horrible looking people found out and began to work out their plans on me. All I can remember is that they came into my house with guns, I don't know if it is fake and I was not ready to dare them. Some other ones brought out broken bottles which have blood on it. I was slapped twice when I tried to beg them not to take away my total earning for the month

#### **IDI/Man/Christian/41years**

Another respondents also stated that:

I was attacked on my way to church where I wanted to meet my pastor to help me talk to some

members of our church to help me with something. I had something on my head. I did not wake up until I found myself where people were pouring water on me. I saw pieces of broken bottles on my head and I was so weak. To cut the long story short, my phone and wallet was gone. I was robbed but not without harm

**IDI/Male/Christian/53years**

#### 4.2.3 Robbery with POS

The study further revealed that robbery was committed in some of the selected communities through the use of point of sale (POS) machine. Sophistication was added to the robbery because through previous robbery experience, the criminals did not obtain enough money because most of the victims claimed not to have cash on them. This was affirmed by two of the participants in the study:

I thought it was a joke when they told me that they have POS in case there is no cash with me. Thank God I had three thousand five hundred and twenty naira which they eventually transferred into their account with the POS.

**IDI/Female/Christian/39years**

Another respondent also revealed:

Those at the boys quarters of our estate were robbed with POS. they came prepared for everyone that day. Till date, people have not recovered from the ugly situation and we can't trace the account.

**IDI/Female/Christian/45years**

From the information above, it is important to note that POS was adopted to rob during the lockdown and the account was untraceable by the Nigerian police force till date.

#### 4.2.4 Use of threat and weapon for extortion

The study showed that robbers parted away with victim's properties when they were threatened with weapons. The weapons used were broken bottles, cutlass, knife and pistol. Findings showed that often times, these robberies were carried out few meters away from police officers posts. These were captured in the responses below:

I was robbed in front of the police station. My wife and younger sibling already ran to the station to report and seek refuge but no help came until I was robbed and my shoulder machete and I was bleeding for days.

**IDI/Male/Muslim/39years**

Similarly, another respondent stated that:

I saw plenty young boys with broken bottles, cutlass, knife and pistol robbing people coming into the street from the market. I could not do anything because I could be their major target and I have no weapon.

**IDI/Male/Christian/43years**

#### 4.2.5 Rape and Sexual Harassment

Findings showed that there is high rate of infidelity among certain female teenagers who were part of the squad that robbed and harassed people in the neighbourhood of the selected communities. This was evident in the narrative of the respondents who were estate executives. The ladies were described to be in suggestive clothes, were often seen around evenings with weapons. The researcher further probed to find out why young girls between the ages of 16-20 were part of the gang, the response was revealed as follows:

Ise Asewo ni won n se tele tele (they are prostitutes before) and they are not ashamed of it despite their age. Everybody has to think of how to make money in this country during lockdown. They don't have the means physically and can not raise sufficient capital. So they have decided to use their body to make money everyday from those who want sex but when these ventures became closed down during the lockdown, they became instrument in the hands of a cultist group called Awawa gang who would have had enough of them before using them to get at their potential victims.

**IDI/Male/Muslim/32years**

Another respondent also revealed that:

Some girls were raped in the course of invasion in this estate. I don't want to talk about it because it is a very painful experience.

**IDI/Male/Christian/32years**

Another respondent stated thus:

Most of the girls you see in the streets with skimpy clothes are truly prostitutes who always warm the bed of the people who have as low as #500. They usually have their own lodge where you can go and meet them for short time and even overnight. It depends on your pocket. Everybody here knows them and they are not ashamed to parade their profession mostly in the evening after the daily work. If you want any, it is easy to hook them up.

**IDI/Male/Christian/43years**

Implicit from the above is that rape and sexual harassment is one of the identified criminal activities in the selected communities but which were used on both genders. Teenage females were used to forcibly have sex with identify targets through unprotected sex. The sex is either forced

on the male victim or through drugged drinks which is often forced on them to drink. On the part of the boys, they come in large number to have sex in turn with lady or ladies of their target.

#### 4.2.6 Other criminal activities in the selected communities

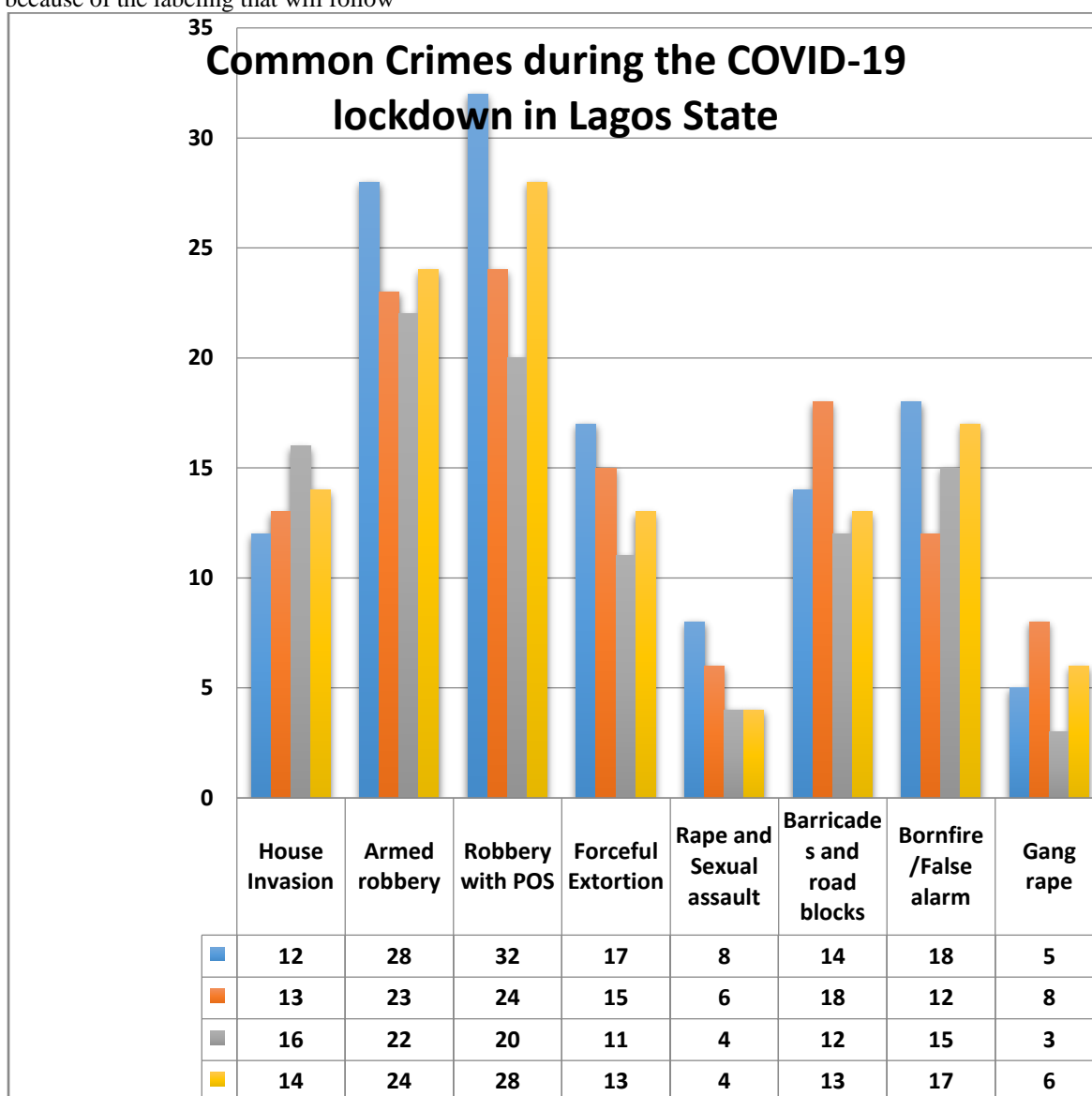
Other criminal activities in the border communities were gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm. These were identified below:

We have cases of ladies who were gang raped while they stayed indoor complying with government's order. The case could not be foated because of the labeling that will follow

#### IDI/Female/Muslim/29years

Some persons took laws into their hands to mount roadblocks and extort money forcefully from passers by and those going about their lawful duty such as those providing social services

Implicit from above is that identified criminal activities as identified by the participants in the border communities were invasion of homes and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, use of weapon and threat for extortion, rape and sexual harassment, gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm.

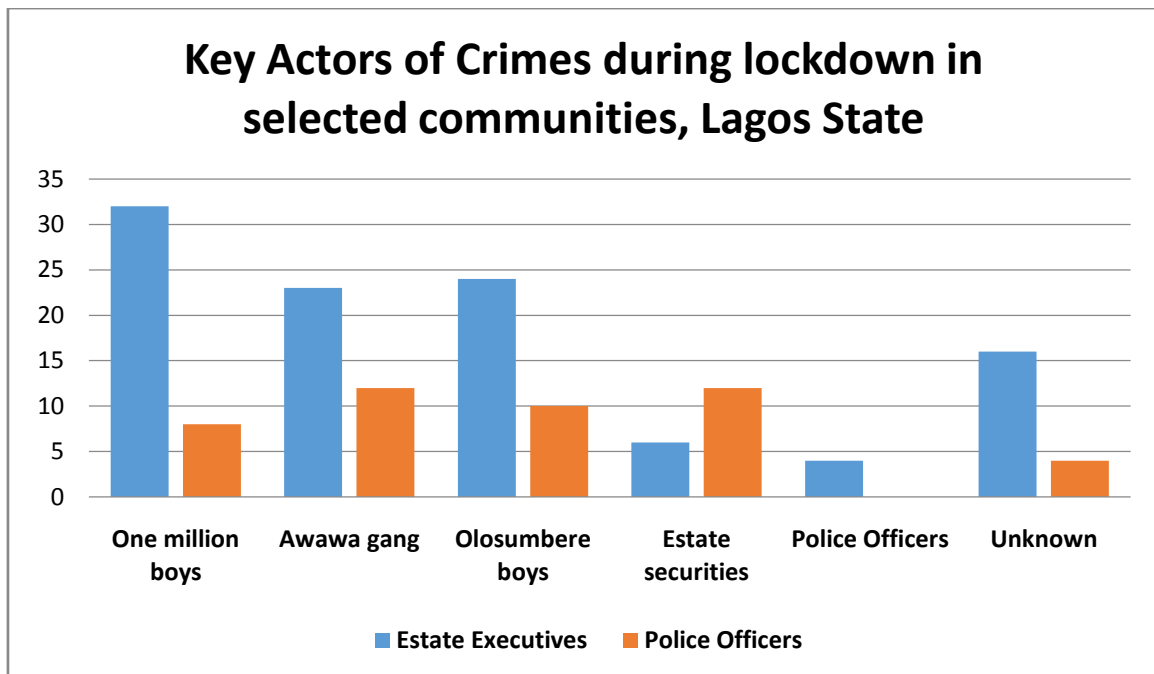


Source: Fieldwork (2022)

From Fig. 1 which represents the prevailing criminal activities in the selected communities, data showed that armed robbery is a prevailing crime in all the communities under study as most interviewees answered in affirmative. Data also revealed that other prevailing criminal activities in the selected communities are robbery with POS, forceful extortion, born fire with false alarm, house invasion, gang rape, rape and sexual assault.

### 4.3 Key Actors of Crimes during lockdown in selected communities, Lagos State

Findings from the study revealed that there are several parties linked to the criminal activities investigated in the selected communities. This was indicated in the response given by the three involved in the study (i.e. the estate executives and the police officers) as captured in the chart below:



Source: Fieldwork (2022)

The Fig. 2 represents the key actors of the criminal activities in the selected communities, data showed that all the parties involved had their fair share of the persons responsible for the criminal activities involved in the study. Findings revealed that the thirty two (32) respondents involved stated that most times, the One million boys (32), Awawa gang (23), Olosumbere boys (24), estate securities (6), Police officers (4) and unknown persons (16) were key actors in the crimes committed during the lockdown in Lagos State. The police officers involved in the study also revealed that the major actors and architects of most crimes committed in the communities were One million boys (8), Awawa gang (12), Olosumbere boys (10), estate securities (12) and unknown persons (4).

The chart revealed that very many actors were involved in the practices of crimes in the communities surveyed were One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities,

Police Officers and unknown persons. These views were captured below:

I did not hear of the One million boys until I saw them march through the next street during the lockdown. They were really much. It was during the estate executives meeting that their nefarious activities were tables alongside some other groups called Awawa Boys.

#### IDI/Male/Christain/44years

Another perspective was given as follows  
 The main actor of crimes here are the Police officers who don't take up their duty as sworn to the Nigerian government. How on earth wont we have an emergency number to call when in distress? The police sometimes deliberately leave the spots for those rascals to rob us.

#### IDI/Female/Muslim/29years

Implicit from above is that One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities, Police Officers and unknown persons have been

identified as key actors in the criminal activities of the selected communities.

#### **4.4 Process of committing crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State**

Findings from the study revealed that process of the criminal activities investigated in the selected communities showed that the crimes were committed using different techniques. These include operating at night and late hours, with connivance of an insider or informant in the estate, through negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon, massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants. This was indicated in the response given by the participants involved in the study:

##### **Operating at night and late hours**

It is common for criminal activities to be held at night. In this study, the peculiarity of the COVID-19 lockdown crime was necessitated by the tiredness people would have experienced as a result of the weakness that would have emanated from excessive sleeping of people. This was captured below:

Most of the operations of the notorious groups which combed estates in the period of lockdown were done at night and odd hours. Their choice of the period is because sometimes, the electric distribution company would have seized power and it would subject many people to darkness and vulnerability to any form of attack.

##### **IDI/Male/Christian/44years**

##### **Connivance of an insider or informant in the Estate**

Several cases of robbery and home invasion were traced to the connivance of an insider in the estate, most especially the security operatives. This was captured below:

Many houses have been burgled because they were sold out by the persons they trusted most. Children connive with their friends or outsiders to steal from their parents but in this case, some of the culprits we have arrested were the estate securities who claimed that their salaries were not enough for them as the reason for involving in the activities.

##### **IDI/Male/Muslim/41years**

From the foregoing, night and late hours operation and an insider in the estate serving as an informant leaked the security details of the estate where the criminal activities took place. Others include negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon,

massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants.

#### **4.5 Implications of these crimes on the residents of the selected communities**

The identified crimes have huge implications on the Lagos residents. These were captured in the views below:

We have lost several of our people to the brutality of these people. The police officers in this community too are not helping matters. They can't resolve issues without being paid a ransom. Very many of our children have fled and are not interested in returning because this place was never safe during the lockdown. This has resulted to brain drain.

##### **IDI/Male/Christian/57years**

Similarly,

The indigenes are seriously angry with the government for the kind of officers being posted here. They don't have human feelings in the way they interact with community members. They have overtime made us to lose our friends and very many acquaintances through their wicked acts. This has made very many of my family members to leave this estate and even Lagos state.

##### **IDI/Male/Muslim/38years**

Other effect of the COVID-19 crime on Lagos state includes increment in crime rate by the youth and adolescent, continuous exposure of the weak state security architecture and the call for state police, it has mandated everyone to resort to self security using personal means.

#### **4.6 Discussion of Findings**

Implication from the first objective is that several criminal activities were identified in the study areas. These include invasion of homes and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, use of weapon and threat for extortion, rape and sexual harassment, gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm. The existence of these crimes were affirmed by the participants interviewed and the findings is in tandem with (Oyafunke-Omoniyi, 2014) that street crimes have taken newer dimensions in several communities of Lagos State.

On the second objective, the study found out that the key actors of the criminal activities in Lagos State were the One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities, Police

Officers and unknown persons. This corroborated the stance of Falaye, (2020) about the roles emerging gangs, groups and cults played in spreading street crime and violence in the course of lockdown in 2020.

The third objective focused on the process of committing crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State. Data showed that night and late hours operation and an insider in the estate serving as an informant leaked the security details of the estate where the criminal activities took place. As well as negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon, massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants. This findings supported the position of Oyafunke-Omoniyi, Adisa, & Obileye (2021) that several negative social behaviours manifested in the society as a result of dwelling at home for longer duration in the course of the lockdown.

On the fourth objective, the implications of these crimes on the residents of the selected communities showed that these include crimes having huge implications on the Lagos residents, exposure of weak security architecture and the call for state police, it has mandated everyone to resort to self security using personal means. This validated the claims of Adegoke (2014) that security depth in both rural and urban areas in Nigeria would be tested by new reality.

## V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter presented the data analyses of the study. This chapter presents the summary, the conclusions and recommendations. The purpose of the study was to examine how COVID-19 pandemic lockdown affected crime rate in Lagos Metropolis. In specific terms, the study sought to:

- To identify the common crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos state;
- To identify the key perpetrators of the identified crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos state;
- To examine how the identified crimes committed during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos state;
- To assess the roles of the Nigerian Police force in curbing the identified crimes in the course of the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos state.

### 5.1 Summary of findings

Several criminal activities were identified in the study areas. These include invasion of homes

and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, use of weapon and threat for extortion, rape and sexual harassment, gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm. The study further revealed that robbery was the dominant crime committed in the selected communities in Lagos metropolis.

The study found out that the key actors of the criminal activities in Lagos State were the One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities, Police Officers and unknown persons.

The study found out that the process of committing crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State revealed that night and late hours operation and an insider in the estate serving as an informant leaked the security details of the estate where the criminal activities took place. As well as negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon, massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants.

The study also found out that the implications of these crimes on the residents of the selected communities showed that these include crimes having huge implications on the Lagos residents, exposure of weak security architecture and the call for state police, it has mandated everyone to resort to self security using personal means.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that the criminal activities identified in the study areas are invasion of homes and neighbourhood, harmful attack and robbery, robbery with the use of POS device, use of weapon and threat for extortion, rape and sexual harassment, gang rape, setting up barricades and roadblocks for forceful extortion and setting up born fires to raise false alarm. The study further revealed that robbery was the dominant crime committed in the selected communities in Lagos metropolis. The study also concluded that the study found out that the key actors of the criminal activities in Lagos State were the One million boys, Awawa gang, Olosumbere boys, estate securities, Police Officers and unknown persons.

The study concluded that the process of committing crimes during the COVID-19 lockdown in Lagos State revealed that night and late hours operation and an insider in the estate serving as an informant



leaked the security details of the estate where the criminal activities took place. As well as negligence and weak home system, infliction of bloodletting injury, use of weapon, massive invasion into selected households, use of face masks, use of females as decoy and dominance of teenagers as key actors and informants. The study further concluded that the implications of these crimes on the residents of the selected communities showed that these include crimes having huge implications on the Lagos residents, exposure of weak security architecture and the call for state police, it has mandated everyone to resort to self security using personal means.

#### 5.4 Contribution to knowledge

The study contributed immensely to crime issues relating to urban communities in Lagos State particularly during crisis such as COVID-19 lockdown. It offered a qualitative and exploratory approach to understanding the selected communities and the counterfactuals related crime management and patterns in Lagos state. The study validates knowledge on the operation and weakness of security operatives on border communities and identified the areas of concerns and compromise from the perspectives of the estate managers and security operatives. This research further contributes to empirical studies on urban communities crime patterns in tandem with the 21<sup>st</sup> century research ideals.

#### 5.5 Recommendations

In view of the findings, the study recommends that government has a very huge role to play in deliberately making available infrastructural facilities which will circulate to the urban communities. The government should also employ more sophisticated security apparatus to save communities from security crises and to engage the youth and disabuse their minds from engaging in criminal activities which has the capacity to get them entangled in the practice of criminal activities. The government should also identify with the community leaders in addressing indigene clashes with security operatives with a view to having a collaborative forum to resolve such crises.

Also, the security operatives (most especially, the Nigerian Police Force) should be taken through community survey to understand the terrain of their operations after postings to reduce the tendency of invading community members' privacy and property in their quest to quell crimes within communities.

#### 5.6 Implication and Suggestions for Further Research

Future research can investigate majorly what insulates criminal activities in Nigerian urban communities and extend the study beyond one state. Not many qualitative and ethnographic studies have been done on street crimes patterns in Nigeria which the study is one of the novel studies looking into the area of crime from ethnographic perspective in Nigeria.

#### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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