

The Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps and Urban Crime in Lagos Metropolis

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Abstract

This qualitative study explored the impact of the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) on crime reduction in Lagos Metropolis, utilising a community policing approach and collaborations with law enforcement agencies. Seven in-depth Key Informant Interviews were conducted with LNSC officials at the agency's headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, providing rich insights into the agency's operations, challenges, and strategies. The study revealed that LNSC's community-focused approach has led to a perceived reduction in crime rates, with respondents citing increased security presence and swift response to criminal activities. The agency's collaborative relationships with other law enforcement agencies were also highlighted, demonstrating a unified approach to combating crime. However, the study also identified challenges that hinder LNSC's effectiveness, including inadequate training, public unawareness, and funding constraints. To optimise its performance, the agency needs to enhance public awareness, training, and equipment deployment. The findings emphasise the importance of community-centred approaches to security and the need for sustained support for initiatives like LNSC, critical in maintaining public safety and security in Lagos Metropolis. By addressing the identified challenges, LNSC can enhance its impact and contribute to a safer, more secure Lagos. This study highlights the potential of community policing initiatives in reducing crime and promoting public safety, providing valuable insights for policymakers and law enforcement agencies.

Keywords: Urban Crime, Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps, Community policing.

Introduction

There has been an increase in crime rates globally, with the more economically advanced and industrialised countries experiencing higher crime rates than less developed nations (Brennan-Galvin, 2002). This increase in crime rates is not limited to a specific type of crime, as both property and financial crimes, such as theft and fraud, have consistently shown higher percentages committed by women and have increased more substantially over time (Kury & Woessner, 2002). Additionally, the speed, extent, and diversity of transnational crime have increased due to globalisation, providing criminals more opportunities and making it easier to hide illicit activities among the expanding licit movement of people and goods (Truman, 2005). The control of crime remains state-based, while criminals and terrorists operate transnationally, exploiting loopholes within state-based legal systems to expand their reach. (Chernoff & Simon, 2000)

Certain factors have contributed to the marginal increase in the global crime rate, particularly between 2012 and 2020, including the impact of cybercrimes, the relationship between inflation and crime rates, the consequences of material deprivation and desperation, the connection between marginality and anomie, and the opportunities for crime created by globalisation (Govender et al., 2021). Inflation was found to have a significant positive effect on crime rates,

mainly theft and violent crimes. Material deprivation and falling below a desperation threshold can drive individuals to engage in risky behaviours, such as theft, to improve their situation (Radkani et al., 2022).

Marginality and anomie contribute to the increase in crime rates, with marginality destabilising social relations and leading to conflicts and offences. Globalisation has provided new opportunities for crime beyond traditional boundaries, transforming crime in scope and victims (Yannakogeorgos, 2012). Some of these reasons can explain the global surge in the crime rate, as seen in Venezuela, with the global highest crime rate of 83.76, caused by corrupt authorities, a flawed judicial system and poor gun control (Crime Rate by Country, 2021). Violence also has become increasingly interpersonal and tied, notably in cities, with criminal activities. According to the UN's Global Study on Homicide, over 500,000 people died from intentional homicide in 2012 across the globe (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011).

Nigeria has witnessed an upsurge in crimes during the past two decades. The increasing incidence of armed robbery has led to a paralysing fear, which has, in turn, affected economic and social life in the country (Alemika et al., 2005). With a population figure of over 206 million (2020 estimate), Nigeria's crime index stands at 64.06 (Crime Rate by Country, 2021) and an average of 60.26 between 2017 and 2019. Lagos, the nation's primal economic centre and the most densely populated city, has recorded a disproportionate crime (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2005). Maintaining law and order is a fundamental government responsibility enforced by the police force. In every state, there exist policing systems and strategies aimed at addressing crimes effectively. The leadership of a modern state places great importance on ensuring domestic security as part of its mandate.

Consequently, the policing framework is structured to uphold the traditional obligation of the state to safeguard and enhance the security of its citizens (Agbibo, 2015). Simply put, the police force functions as a security entity responsible for safeguarding and preserving the safety and security of the citizenry, acting as the primary custodian of public security (Fagbadebo & Oluwalogbon, 2023). In various societies, the creation of police forces stems from the recognition that resolving divergent interests within the boundaries of the law is crucial for promoting the well-being of citizens. In democracies, the police, as an integral part of the state, represent principles of order, tranquillity, and security (Sherman, 2018; United Nations, 2011).

The United Nations (UN) benchmark for the police-to-population ratio is one officer for every 450 citizens (Kimani, 2019). With the ever-growing population of over two hundred million Nigerians and about three hundred and seventy-one thousand, eight hundred (371,800) police officers, the police-to-population ratio in Nigeria is one police officer to five hundred and forty (540) citizens (Kimani, 2019). This ratio is far above the global benchmark and thus can be said to be one of the causes of the surge in the crime rate across Nigeria, specifically in Lagos State. The most significant crimes in Nigeria were recorded in Lagos State in 2017. In the said year, Lagos registered 50,975 crimes, which is by far the highest figure in the country (Statista, 2021). The shortfall in the number of security personnel thus necessitated the establishment of the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) by the then Governor, Akinwunmi Ambode, in 2016. Therefore, this paper seeks to answer the following questions: i. Has the establishment of LNSC reduced the crime rate in Lagos State? ii. How does LNSC work with other law enforcement agencies to mitigate crime in Lagos State? iii. What are the challenges inhibiting the performance of the LNSC in Lagos State?

The Need for Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC)

In Nigeria, as provided for under the constitution of the Federal Republic, 1999, the police and other government security services established by law are under the exclusive legislative list under the federal government's control. However, this is due to the prejudice of state and local governments because the police force is primarily under the jurisdiction of the Inspector General of Police (IGP), who is a President's appointee and so accountable to him. Police personnel are appointed, promoted, disciplined, and retired by a federal agency under the President's direct jurisdiction. Thus, while the commissioners of police assigned to each state of the federation may be obligated to follow governors' orders, their ultimate loyalty is to the President, who is represented by the IGP (Nwafor et al., 2018).

The state governors cannot rely on the police force to effectively maintain law and order in their respective states because of this unusual control approach. As a result, vigilante organisations (also known as informal policing) have sprung up all over the place (John et al., 2013). The idea is that governors have complete authority over these vigilante organisations to preserve peaceful and harmonious order in their states. However, the vigilante groups also understand the local dynamics required for efficient law and order enforcement (Nwafor et al., 2018). The Federal Government has rebuffed the call for the creation of state police. On January 5, 2022, the Federal Government rejected the call to institutionalise state police, saying states do not have what it takes to finance the devolution of powers.

The agitation for the decentralisation of policing in the country, which had been fuelled by increasing insecurity, had also informed the establishment of regional security networks in some regions like the Amotekun in the South West, Ebube Agu in the South East (The Nation Newspaper, 2022). All these, including the shortfall in police officers, also necessitated the creation of the LNSC. The security outfit often provides intelligence reports to the Police in enforcing law and order (Vanguard Newspapers, 2019). They have also been involved in the rescue of victims of explosions over the years, the rescue of victims involved in Lagos building collapse, prevention of tragic events likely to be caused by oil spillage, in the arrest of traffic offenders, street traders and miscreants working closely with agencies like Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Lagos Environmental Sanitation Corps (LAGESC) and Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) among other agencies.

The LNSC was the brainchild of the military government under retired Brigadier-General Buba Marwa, which was issued as Decree No. 12 on October 20, 1996, creating Neighbourhood Watch outfits (Ige et al., 2020). Establishing these outfits complimented the police's efforts at the grassroots level. Subsequent governments, between 1999 and 2015, particularly Governors Bola Tinubu and Babatunde Fashola, consolidated the already existing structure by constructing 33 Neighbourhood Watch posts with 33 repeaters and base stations, patrol vehicles, defensive gadgets and training during their tenures, both local and international. In 2016, the Lagos State House of Assembly passed the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps bill into law, thereby giving the outfit a legal backing by enacting and gazetting the law to establish the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Agency, transforming the unit into a full-fledged agency. (Ige et al., 2020)

The LNSC, as a community policing initiative, was thus established to complement the efforts of the regular Police Force as a measure to improve security in the state by providing helpful intelligence for crime prevention and facilitating the arrest of perpetrators of criminal activities in the state (TELL Magazine, 2017). Thus, officers of the LNSC operate in all the 57 Local Government Areas (LGAs) and Local Community Development Areas (LCDAs) of the state. The Corps is made up of locals from the various LGA/LCDAs where they operate for optimal efficiency. This purposeful choice enables the Corps to utilise its local knowledge to maximise grassroots intelligence gathering and community policing. Specifically, officers of the Corps are empowered to collect data on crimes, crimes in progress, suspicious actions, and crime suspects, among other things, as well as provide police or other security authorities with helpful information about crimes, crimes in progress, suspicious activities, and crime suspects; putting in place structures to ensure that hoodlums and cult groups do not gain a foothold; performing routine motorised patrols at all hours of the day and night; following up on criminal arrests and ensuring that justice is served; reporting suspicious activity and ongoing crimes to the police or other security services promptly, as well as improving the police-community interaction and contributing to the preservation of community peace (LNSC, 2021).

Conceptualising Urban and Urbanization

Urban areas are defined by their spatial concentration of non-agricultural activities, high population density, and social and economic organization. The meaning of urban areas varies by country and can be classified into four categories: political, defined by administrative functions; economic, characterised by people's principal concerns; cultural, defined by urban acculturation; infrastructural, defined by the infrastructure and services required to support modern development (typically used in developed countries). The United Nations reports a significant increase in urban population growth in recent decades, particularly in developing countries: 40% of the population in the least developed countries lived in urban areas in 2000, up from 26.1% in 1975, 34% of Sub-Saharan Africans lived in cities in 2000, a 62% increase from 1995. This rapid urbanisation highlights the need for sustainable urban planning and development to support the growing urban population.

In Africa, urban regions are defined differently across countries and even within countries. Traditional African perspectives often define human settlements based on the presence of an influential leader. However, Western-based disciplines like sociology, economics, and geography may not apply to the African context. To address this, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa provides a standardised definition: A megacity is defined as a place with 500,000+ residents; a city, on the other hand, is a place with 100,000-499,999 residents, an urban centre has between 20,000 - 99,999 residents, while a rural locality less than 20,000 residents. According to this definition, any community with 20,000 people is considered urban. This standardisation helps to clarify the concept of urban regions in Africa.

The definition of urban centres in Nigeria has evolved. Before colonial rule, urban centres were defined by political and cultural status, not population size or density—traditional rulers' status distinguished towns from rural areas. During colonial rule, administrative centres were considered major metropolitan centres, and towns like Jos, Enugu, and Port Harcourt became urban centres due to their economic and administrative importance. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, no official definition of urban centres has existed. According to Mabogunje (1974), urban centres should be defined by their ability to provide essential community services funded

by their residents. In Nigeria, like other African countries, a population size of 20,000 is the standard threshold distinguishing urban centres from rural communities.

Urbanisation is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses economic, social, and cultural transformations. It involves the movement of people and processes from rural to urban areas, expanding urban populations and processes (Gottdiener, 2015, Shaw et al., 2020). The demographic approach is preferred, defining urbanisation as an increase in a country's population living in urban areas (Preston, 1979). Modern urbanisation is a complex process of socio-environmental metabolisms shaped by geographical factors (Swyngedouw, 2006).

Urbanisation is the process of people transitioning from agricultural to industrial work, leading to urban living. It is a shift to urban areas, increasing urban population, processes, and economic activities. While urbanisation has benefits, it also introduces new challenges like crime, insecurity, and urban violence. Globally, crime is disproportionately concentrated in urban areas (Onibokun et al., 1995; Glaeser, 2011). Over 1.5 billion people reside in areas plagued by regular criminal violence (World Bank, 2011).

Urbanisation and Crime: A Complex Relationship

Urbanisation brings economic growth, cultural diversity, social opportunities, and higher crime rates. Cities offer anonymity and opportunities for criminal behaviour, making urbanisation a complex factor in crime rates. As urbanisation contributes to increased crime, crime affects urban development and quality of life. To achieve safe and sustainable urban development, understanding this intricate relationship is crucial for developing effective strategies to address urban crime. Urbanisation fuels economic growth and industry expansion and potentially fuels crime (Ajaz, 2016). Urban areas have higher crime rates due to population density and anonymity, whereas rural areas have lower crime rates due to smaller populations. Urbanisation leads to social changes that can foster criminal behaviour, and research consistently shows that urban areas have higher crime rates than rural areas (Ajaz, 2016). However, more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between urbanisation and crime, particularly beyond major metropolitan areas.

Soh (2012) notes that metropolitan areas foster deviance and subcultures that support criminal behaviour, contributing to higher urban crime rates. Urbanisation's rapid expansion creates an environment ripe for crime, providing offenders, victims, and locations. However, research suggests that urbanisation is not the primary cause of crime (Katsina, 2013). Instead, economic factors like unemployment, poverty, poor living conditions, economic deprivation, and social inequality drive urban crime. This highlights a strong correlation between economic conditions and crime rates, indicating that addressing economic issues is crucial to reducing crime.

Unemployment and economic hardship have led many young people to commit crimes, according to Ajaegbu (2012) and Katsina (2013). Soh (2012) also highlights unemployment as a global contributor to crime. Additional factors contributing to urban crime include poverty, unstable employment, high living costs, limited education, poor health and sanitation, substandard housing, and weak law enforcement and crime-control organisations. Combined with a lack of effective policies, these factors create an environment conducive to urban crime (Ajaegbu, 2012). Addressing these underlying issues is crucial to reducing urban crime. Crime in cities is a pressing issue, affecting over 1.5 billion people worldwide (Onibokun & Faniran,

1995; Glaeser, 2011). Nigeria's rapid urbanisation has transformed its cities into power hubs, leading to uncontrolled growth, decaying infrastructure, and increased crime (Bloch et al., 2015; Alemika & Chukwuma, 2005). This disorderly growth has reshaped power dynamics, creating new opportunities for crime and violence.

Urban crime is a pressing social issue in Nigeria, rivalling human and economic growth in importance (Ojo & Ojewale, 2019). It hinders social and economic progress, affecting well-being, business expansion, and social development in urban areas (Marenin & Reising, 1995; Salm & Falola, 2009; Suberu, 2001; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). Crime also discourages investment, impedes economic growth, and leads to brain drain. The link between urbanisation and crime is clear: high population density, rapid social change, and poor living conditions create a breeding ground for criminal activity (Ghani, 2017). Addressing urban crime is crucial for the development and growth of Nigerian cities.

Theoretical Framework

The Routine Activity Theory (RAT), proposed by Cohen and Felson (1979), explains how crime occurs when three elements converge:

- i. Motivated offender,
- ii. Suitable target (victim or valuable item),
- iii. Absence of a capable guardian (protection or security). The theory assumes a motivated offender is present but focuses on victimisation. The suitable target's value, size, and accessibility determine its attractiveness. Capable guardians, such as police, security, or surveillance, serve as protection. RAT posits that crime is a by-product of daily life, requiring a capable guardian to prevent it. This theory, along with others, explains how urbanisation and immigration lead to high crime rates in underprivileged neighbourhoods with inadequate security and community watch programs. The three theories share a common thread: ineffective security measures and community engagement lead to increased crime opportunities.

The Routine Activity Theory was put forth by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979. It holds that the presence of three elements—a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian—increases the likelihood that a crime will be committed. Crime happens when these three factors combine in the same place and time. Cohen and Felson assumed that a motivated offender was present when examining the first component. However, they were less concerned with the perpetrator's motivation than the theory's victimisation side (Margit, 2021). According to some studies, the motive can be pretty diverse, especially in light of the structural elements of the offenders' environment. The second component is a suitable target, also referred to as a possible victim or a seductive item. Value, size, weight, visibility, and ease of access are just a few variables that can affect whether an item is appropriate. Next, the absence of a capable guardian, which serves as protection for the victim of the crime, should be emphasised. Police officers, security guards, video monitoring, and alarm systems are all examples of personal or technical control.

The essential tenet of the routine activity theory is that the presence of these three components leads to crime. By that, crime is not something extraordinary but rather a by-product of daily life, and it requires a capable guardian, more of an everyday person, who is capable of protecting targeted victims and preventing motivated offenders from committing any crime, especially in neighbourhoods.

Material and Methods

The study was qualitative. It relied on Key Informant Interviews conducted with seven (7) Lagos Neighbourhoods Safety Corps officials at the agency's Oshodi, Lagos State headquarters. The seven officials were selected based on their years of service and availability for the interview sessions. The interviews were semi-structured, permitting the use of an interview guide and, when necessary, interrogating outside the guide. Fourteen questions spread across the study's research questions. The data from the KIIs were transcribed and analysed thematically.

Discussions and Findings

Collaboration between LNSC and other Law Enforcement Agencies in Lagos State

According to respondents 01, 02, 04, and 06, the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) maintains a cordial relationship with other law enforcement agencies in mitigating crime in Lagos State. Respondent 05 described the relationship as symbiotic. The LNSC headquarters houses multiple agencies, including the Lagos State Environmental Sanitation Corps (LAGESC) and the Lagos State Taskforce Office, fostering collaboration. The respondents specified that LNSC works with various agencies, including the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), Vehicle Inspection Service (VIS), National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Civil Defence Corps, Directorate of State Security Services (DSSS), Nigeria Customs Service, Federal Fire Service, National Intelligence Agency.

Respondent 02 elaborated on the collaborative efforts between the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) and other law enforcement agencies. The respondent highlighted that the LNSC shares intelligence with agencies like the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and Directorate of State Security Services (DSSS), conducts joint patrols with the NPF and Lagos State Taskforce, collaborates with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) on drug-related cases, works with the Vehicle Inspection Service (VIS) on vehicle-related issues. They also partner with the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) on traffic management and coordinate with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) on human trafficking cases, engage in information sharing and joint operations with other agencies like the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Civil Defence Corps, and Fire Service. The official also mentioned that:

The nature of the collaboration is to complement the police and stop any incident from escalating. For example, during our patrol, probably if a child is being trafficked, we can step in and help rescue the child before the police come. We also have a suitable referral pathway.
(KII/LNSC Official/Lagos)

Respondent 04 added that the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) collaborates with the Task Force to ensure a robust and effective security framework in Lagos State, promoting efficient security operations and enhancing public safety. Respondent 05 also made a statement thus:

For LASTMA, our officers are on standby when we have traffic issues, and LASTMA cannot respond or is overwhelmed; our officers standing will do the work for them. If the police need

intelligence concerning a criminal on the loose, we provide credible information. (KII/LNSC Official/Lagos)

When asked about potential clashes of interests with other law enforcement agencies, respondents 01, 05, and 06 acknowledged that there have been some conflicts. However, respondents 02 and 04 stated they had not experienced any clashes. Respondent 01 elaborated that clashes are inevitable since LNSC's work complements that of the police. However, they mitigate this by stepping back and allowing the police to take the lead in situations. This approach helps to maintain a harmonious working relationship. Talking about clashes of interests, respondent 05 asserted that:

Everybody has their issues; it is natural, especially regarding jurisdiction. There are times when each agency is protecting its interest, there are times when it is legal who is in charge here, we have had it, and then sometimes, you know, because of the nature of Africans, we have had overzealous security personnel, who feels like maybe we are operating at a lower rank than them. Hence, there is a small amount of aggression, but we all have common ground in the long run. At the top echelon, we have an almost seamless relationship because of mutual respect at that level. However, in most cases where we have had altercations, it has been at the junior level...we have had our clashes. It is natural. (KII/LNSC Official/Lagos)

Respondent 01 explained that any conflicts with the police are quickly resolved through a simple phone call. "If issues arise, the general manager of LNSC calls the commissioner of police, and with mutual respect, a phone call is all it takes to resolve the matter," he said (KII/LNSC Official/Lagos), highlighting the effective communication and collaboration between the agencies.

Challenges Inhibiting the Performance of LNSC in Lagos State

Public Awareness

In relation to the agency's visibility and effectiveness in crime-prone areas, it was noted that all respondents except respondent 05 stated that LNSC has a presence in all 20 local government areas and 37 local council development areas in Lagos State. However, respondent 05 believed that LNSC still lacks adequate public recognition, citing the need for ongoing public relations and enlightenment efforts to increase awareness about the agency's role and activities. He further said:

...we do not assume that we are well-known, and we are doing everything possible to ensure that we are well-known and our functions are also well-known because that is one of the significant issues that we have had. People ask us questions about what you guys do. So, we want people to know us, so we would keep talking to people. (KII/LNSC Official/Lagos)

Many Lagos State residents are ill-informed about the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) and its responsibilities. Respondent 04 noted that LNSC officers were not armed, so

they reported incidents to the nearest police station, and the police took over from there. Respondent 06 also emphasised that LNSC's role is often misunderstood, leading to a lack of awareness about their duties and limitations. He stated that:

We are doing our best so members of the public are to assess us. Everybody has challenges, and we need improvement, especially the inadequacy of men and even the people we work with. You know, members of the public, there are miscreants among them. There was a case where some of our officers were killed. Some criminals went after them until they were killed (KII/LNSC Official/Lagos).

Public Assaults

Despite their efforts to combat crime, unarmed LNSC officers have fallen victim to attacks by criminals, resulting in fatalities. Moreover, instances of LNSC officers' misconduct, such as the recent incident where an officer assaulted a resident, causing permanent eye damage, have tarnished the agency's image. Respondent 04 confirmed that the incident has been addressed, and LNSC strives to maintain public trust and ensure maximum security. However, such incidents significantly challenge LNSC's reputation and daily operations.

Inadequate Operational Utilities

All respondents confirmed a shortage of operational facilities, such as vehicles, to carry out their work. However, the Lagos State Government has addressed the shortage of patrol vehicles and replaced damaged ones, providing the agency with the necessary resources to serve the communities effectively. The government has also equipped LNSC officers with modern tools, including face shields, ropes, caution tapes, body scanners, drones, and body-worn cameras. Respondent 04 specified that 250 body-worn cameras have been distributed, with at least two officers in each beat equipped with them. These cameras aid in capturing evidence, identifying offenders, and tracking criminal activity. Additionally, the Lagos State Government has installed CCTV cameras in strategic locations connected to a control room to enhance crime scene identification and evidence management, as noted by Respondent 03.

The use of bicycles by LNSC officers has been effective in accessing areas inaccessible to patrol vehicles and trucks, with over 2000 bicycles in operation, according to Respondent 04. However, Respondents 01 and 02 revealed that bicycles are only used on Tuesdays and Thursdays, posing a significant challenge. This limited deployment leaves victims vulnerable to crime on other days of the week, potentially emboldening criminals to operate in areas with limited LNSC presence. This restriction on bicycle patrols may hinder LNSC's effectiveness in reducing crime rates in Lagos State.

Inadequate Funding

Funding for LNSC is a significant challenge. While the state government provides funding, respondents 04, 06, and 07 agreed that more funds are needed. Respondent 01 confirmed that the state government grants their funds, but the agency still faces financial constraints. Other challenges hindering LNSC's performance include inadequate personnel, with Respondent 02 citing the need for more hands to cover all areas. There is a lack of synergy with other law enforcement agencies, with Respondents 03 and 04 emphasising the need for improved collaboration and a platform for inter-agency discussions. Need for continuous training and

retraining of officers, as suggested by Respondent 04. They are establishing a reliable, efficient, effective, and sustainable institutional framework, which Respondent 05 identified as a critical challenge.

Conclusion

The role of the LNSC is not in doubt in checking the crime rate in Lagos metropolis low. However, there is the need to pay attention to some challenges inhibiting its effective performance, as discussed in the preceding session. This study, therefore, advocates for more public enlightenment about the Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps and their duties for people who do not know about the agency and what it stands for. That way, they will be more accountable to the people and answerable to them. Educating the public about LNSC's role in maintaining community safety and security can help dispel misconceptions and clarify their duties. When citizens are enlightened about the LNSC's responsibilities, they can hold them accountable for their actions and performance, promoting transparency and effectiveness. Furthermore, public trust can be built and sustained between LNSC and the communities they serve, encouraging cooperation and collaboration. This can be achieved using media outreaches such as radio, TV, newspapers, social media, community events and town hall meetings, public notices and billboards, collaborations with community leaders and organisations and workshops and training sessions.

Deployment of more equipment should be prioritised to ensure the officers' safety whenever they are at a crime scene. Face shields, tapes and ropes are not enough to protect them, so they should be adequately equipped with items that can protect them in times of danger. Criminals and miscreants cannot be predicted, so that the officers can be given bulletproof materials and even arms in some extreme cases. Officers should also be adequately trained and retrained now and then because they occupy delicate positions. They need to be prepared at all times on how to save themselves and the environment they work in because anything can happen at any time. Training should be every month or even less to ensure they are fit to carry out their duties. The synergy with other law enforcement agencies should be improved by creating more institutional platforms to work hand in hand and mitigate crime in Lagos State and Nigeria.

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