INFORMAL SECURITY STRUCTURES AND COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

By

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MAY, 2013.

Certification

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by ADEJOH, PIUS ENECHOJO in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, under our supervision.

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Dedication

To the memory of my late mother, Mrs. Grace Nero Adejoh, who gave her ‘life’ that I may go to school; to my wife – Stella; and my children – Jil and Evidence, who stood by me while this journey lasted.

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Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain who build it.... (Psalm 127:1).

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Abbreviations

CDA	Community Development Association
CLEEN	Center for Law Enforcement Education in Nigeria
EA	Enumeration Area
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDI	In-depth Interview
ISS	Informal Security Structures
ISG	Informal Security Groups
LASTMA	Lagos State Transport Management Authority
LCDA	Local Council Development Area
NDHS	National Demographic Health Survey
NECO	Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator
NPC	National Population Commission
NPF	Nigeria Police Force
PCRC	Police Public Relations Committee
OPC	O'odua People's Congress
PMCs	Private Military Companies
PMFs	Private Military Firms
PSCs	Private Security Companies

Abstract

The inability of the Nigeria Police to adequately guarantee public safety led to the emergence of Informal Security Structures (ISS) in several neighbourhoods in Nigeria. These structures which are unconventional community initiatives organised to protect lives and property of members became more prominent in the twilight of military rule in the 1990s, particularly in Lagos State. However, not much exists in the literature about their types, modes of operation, relationship with the Nigeria Police and effectiveness in crime control. This study, therefore, investigated the types of ISS in Lagos State, their relationship with the Nigeria Police, modes of operation, and public perceptions about their effectiveness in crime control.

The study adopted the survey research design and utilised the relational cohesion and postcolonial state theories as guides. It covered Ikeja, Mushin, Ikorodu and Eti-Osa Local Government Areas of Lagos State, which were selected based on reported high crime rate. Copies of a questionnaire were administered to 1,017 respondents aged 18years and above who were sampled through multistage sampling technique. Forty-six In-depth Interviews were conducted with purposively selected members of identified ISS, Police personnel and community leaders. Five Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with two purposively selected groups of ISS operatives, adult male, adult female, and youth community members. The qualitative data were content analysed while simple percentages were used to analyse the quantitative data.

Three types of ISS were identified in the study communities, namely, state-organised, community-organised and individual house-owner/occupant employed. Each ISS was distinctly organised but worked with other ISS to give a sense of safety to residents. The State-organised ISS were trained and supervised by the Police, and worked full-time during the day and at night. The other two types were largely part-time, operated mostly at night and bore arms and/or charms. House-owner/occupant employed ISS operated within their employers' residences while the other forms patrolled the streets and mounted road blocks in strategic locations after dusk in groups. Usually, they arrested and handed suspects over to the police. Majority (90.1%) of the respondents supported the existence of ISS; 92.3% reported that their presence improved the safety of their neighbourhoods; while 85.2% expressed satisfaction with their services. The FGDs corroborated the survey results, but showed that ISS were limited in the type of crimes they could handle because they were ill-trained and ill-equipped. The interviews revealed that although a relationship of cooperation existed between registered ISS and the police, unregistered ISS mostly had a dysfunctional relationship with the police because some of them bore arms illegally and violated suspects' rights.

Three Informal Security Structures in Lagos State, namely, state-organised, community-organised and individual house-owner/occupant employed, patrolled the streets and mounted road blocks mostly at night and operated within residences. The registered ones enjoyed a good working relationship with the police and contributed immensely to crime control. However, there is the need to ensure that they are all duly registered and operate within the law for maximum effect.

Key words: Informal security structures, Neighbourhood policing, Crime control, Lagos State.
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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Peace, safety and security are both necessary and indispensable requirements for development and the attainment of good quality of life for any human society. They provide the requisite enabling environment for citizens to live and work towards social, economic and political development of the society (Groenewald and Peake, 2004)

By the same token, their absence stifles the human capacity to develop and heavily compromises the dignity and quality of life of both individuals and society. Furthermore, insecurity impacts negatively on all citizens through losses of property, life and limb, or through loss of confidence from fear of violence. It is against this backdrop that the delivery of safety and security is considered a justifiable public good and the very essence of the state (Lubuva, 2004). Human safety and security are indeed human rights having a value of their own and serving an instrumental function in the construction of human contentment and prosperity (Odinkalu 2005).

Unfortunately, social life in Nigeria has remained largely characterized by fear and insecurity in a manner that suggests that the country lacks the capacity to discharge its security functions, especially that of policing (Bach, 2004; Alemika and Chukuma, 2004; Odekunle, 2005; Odinkalu, 2005). In a graphic editorial comment, the Social Science Academy of Nigeria (2004) describes the security situation in Nigeria thus:

> The streets, even in broad day light, are no longer safe. It is increasingly becoming risky to travel on the highway, particularly at night. Even when Nigerians sleep, they are not absolutely sure of safety. Fear is in control largely because armed criminals have assumed the commanding heights of the national security landscape.

A former Inspector General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, underscored the above statement in his address to the National Assembly on August 6, 2006 when he admitted that the security situation in Nigeria was so bad that armed robbers operate on daily basis leaving sorrow, tears and blood in their trail, and that the mobile police are ill

equipped to match the sophistication of the modern-day robbers in Nigeria (Jamiu, 2006). *Daily Sun* of Thursday, September 3, 2009 captured the situation aptly thus:

> Commercial bank workers in Awka, Anambra State capital on Wednesday fled their offices following alleged circulation of a letter by armed robbers announcing their plan to attack again this week. For 10 days now, banks in the city, except those inside Nnamdi Azikiwe University, have been shut to customers in protest against attacks by armed robbers. But on Wednesday, the banks in the University premises joined in closing of shops in a manner only experienced in war zones. The banks were said to be in operation when news came that armed robbers were in the town. The news caused pandemonium as both staff of the banks and customers took to their heels.

In its annual report for 2008, the Nigeria Police acknowledged that offences against persons in Nigeria witnessed an increase in the immediate past year, rising from 34,738 in 2007 to 35,109 in 2008(NPF, 2009). The offences against property were equally high. The profundity of the country's security problem is heightened by the daring disposition of the criminals as evidenced by their temerity to take their trades to the doorsteps of the men of the agency that is charged with the responsibility of protecting lives and property in a manner that suggests that they have conquered the territory. A few instances may suffice here. On Thursday March 26, 2008, the *Guardian* newspaper reported that armed robbers attacked the convoy of the Delta State Commissioner of Police in Edo State, killing eight of his aides. Similarly, the *Daily Trust* of March 20, 2009 reported that several policemen were killed by criminals in Kano and Delta States. The rich and the powerful in society are also not spared. On June 27 2008, *ThisDay* newspaper reported that armed robbers attacked the convoy of the sitting Governor of Delta State, killing the driver of his aide-de-Camp at about 2.30 pm in the afternoon. Also, *The Punch* of Wednesday, March 25, 2009 reported that the home of a former Governor of Enugu State, Dr. Chimaroke Nnamani, was burgled. Today, kidnapping, which used to be a Niger Delta problem targeting expatriate oil workers, has assumed a national character, targeting the rich and powerful, making them to live in grave fear and uncertainty.

Crime is also getting more sophisticated and deadlier with every passing day. Today, there are reports about armed robbers now using dynamites and hand grenades to blow up the doors of bullion vans conveying money with full police escort and using rocket-propelled grenades to attack helicopters (Soyombo, 2009).

The existing literature reveals that increase in crime and insecurity as we have in Nigeria is a common feature of countries in transition. This development is attributed to the uncontrollable nature of change in its formative stage, demobilization or dismantling of repressive security apparatuses used by previous authoritarian regimes in controlling crime and the unequal socio-economic opportunities brought about by economic liberalization programmes (Shearing & Kempa 2000; Shaw, 2002). More fundamentally however, insecurity in Nigeria is intricately tied to the low performance of the police, especially in the discharge of its statutory responsibility of protecting lives and property (Bach, 2004; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004). This is because, of the government's loosely connected bureaucratic 'criminal justice system', the police is the main determinant of security, safety, peace and justice. Indeed, justice, peace, security and progress, of social, economic or political hue, can only take place within the context of an effective and efficient police or policing system (Salam, 2008). As Groenewald and Peake (2004) put it, "the police are the most visible institution of the security sector (and) are vital for lasting human security. Without law enforcement and the sense of workaday safety, security and order that the police can provide, the potential for wider political, social, and economic development dips dramatically".

Sadly, police performance in Nigeria has been low. Indeed police officers in Nigeria are not only viewed as ineffective, but they also represent a source of material and physical insecurity (Bach, 2004; Salay, 2005). A study, claims that 66 percent of Nigerians considered all police personnel in the country as being involved in corruption, while another 58 percent of the people expressed no trust at all in the police (Afrobarometer, 2001). To a significant extent, the police themselves are engaged in criminal activities and are often feared rather than respected in society (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2005; Okafor, 2007; Odinkalu, 2008).

The response of most communities and neighbourhoods in Nigeria, particularly since the country's return to civilian rule on May 29, 1999, to the inability of the police and other security agencies to curb threats to security and safety has been the formation or engagement of various types of Informal Security Structures (ISS) in a bid to improve their safety and security.

It is, thus, within the larger context of the widespread insecurity in Nigeria and the seeming inability or incapacity of the formal police to prevent or contain the situation that we must locate the increasing proliferation and visibility of informal security structures in various parts of the country (Harnischfeger, 2003, Amnesty International, 2003; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004; Bach, 2004; Ginifer and Ismail, 2005). More graphically, Alemika and Chukwuma (2007) argue that "there tends to be proliferation of citizen crime watch and Informal Security Groups (ISG) when there are high incidence of crime; widespread fear of crime and public perception of the police and other criminal justice agencies as ineffective. Under such circumstances, citizens tend to resort to vigilantism".

Reports indicate that as high as 50% of Nigerians patronize the services of informal security structures for their protection from criminal attacks (CLEEN, 2005). Between 2001 and 2003, some state governments in Nigeria increased the profile of informal security groups in the country by tacitly or openly endorsing armed vigilante groups as part of their campaign against crime (Amnesty International, 2002; Akinyele, 2008). In Lagos State, official recognition of informal security structures, otherwise christened the neighbourhood watch, dates far back to 1996; it recruited about 1,950 people into the State Neighbourhood Watch in April 2009 (Vanguard, April 24, 2009; Punch, April 29, 2009). Some other state governments are also known to have given official endorsement to ISS or vigilantes, as they are sometimes called (Harnischfeger, 2003, Punch, April 29, 2009; Vanguard, April 24, 2009). Sometime ago, the Governor of Plateau State was reported to have encouraged various communities in the state to organize vigilante groups in the light of the frequent invasion of these communities by

extremists. Other states including Delta, Anambra, and Edo, have since followed suit. Among other things, this study examined the issues and dynamics of informal security initiatives in Lagos State.

Particular focus was on their forms, organization, modus operandi, and relevance or contributions to the community crime control in the state, especially against the backdrop of their widespread presence and seeming acceptability.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has a palpable security challenge. Crime has become so pervasive that the country is ranked among the high-risk countries to live and work in (http://lagos.osac.gov). No doubt, the high incidence of crime and insecurity in the country portends danger for the peace, progress and development of the country. This is because security is a key consideration by any investor wishing to invest in any country. The citizens also need peaceful and safe environment to be able to attain their social, economic and political dreams.

The police, whose duty it is to provide security, have consistently admitted that they are handicapped because of a combination of factors, among which are: lack of resources, poor government support and poor conditions of service, resulting in unmotivated and untrained workforce (NPF, 2008). Other reasons for the poor performance of the Nigeria Police include corruption and the fact that they are alien and structurally distant to the people they are supposed to police (Okafor, 2007).

As a response to the prevailing insecurity and the apparent inability of the police to rise to the occasion, many Nigerians, including state governments, sought respite in informal security outfits (Abrahams, 1998; Shaw, 2000; Gleitman, Fridlund and Reisberg, 2004; Baker, 2008; Kantor & Persson, 2010). In other words, these structures, like their private security counterparts, emerged to fill an unmet need.

Unfortunately, rather than undertake rigorous interrogation of these groups with a view to deepening our understanding of their dynamics and real or potential contributions to community crime control and the management of security generally, they are vilified

and treated with contempt. Specifically, it is said that informal security structures get infiltrated by thieves and bad eggs sometimes such that they become a part of the problem rather than a solution to crime and insecurity (Akinyele, 2008). It is also argued that some of them not only wield arms contrary to the law and misuse same, but indeed indulge in various forms of violence, including rape, torture, extortion and extra-judicial killings (Amnesty International, 2002; Harnischfeger, 2003; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004; Segun, 2008; Akinyele, 2008). Furthermore, it is said that politicians have significant influence over informal security groups in many communities because a number of these groups receive support from the government at the local and state levels. The public police also express concerns about informal security groups because of the reluctance of some of these groups to work under the supervision of the police in addition to taking the law into their own hands by meting out jungle justice to those they arrest, which constitutes serious violations of the rights of suspects and threat to the security of citizens (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2008, Ojukwu, 2008). Other complaints against these groups in the literature, among others, are refusal to register either with the police or any other regulating body, and poor record of accountability.

However, despite these misgivings against ISS, reports indicate that generally, informal security structures are quite popular in most of the neighbourhoods where they exist, and that more neighbourhoods are embracing this option (Ajayi and Aderinto, 2008). The literature, especially from other parts of Africa, is also replete with concrete evidence to the effect that community-based security arrangements have very rich credentials and amazing public acceptance that recommend them as part of the wider strategy of law and order (Baker, 2005). In this era of heightened security threats and of the increasing need for more involvement of the community, especially as it relates to intelligence-based policing, the existence of community-based policing groups presents an enviable platform that could be leveraged upon for a more holistic response to the problem. But this cannot happen until an empirical study has been done to establish who these groups are, how they are organized, their modes of operation and allied issues including their alleged excesses (Harnischfeger, 2003; Amnesty International,

2003; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004; Bach, 2004; Ginifer and Ismail, 2005). Herein lies the object of this study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of the study are to explain the emergence and persistence of informal security structures in Lagos State and to determine their effectiveness in neighbourhood crime control in the state. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Explain the emergence and proliferation of informal security structures in Lagos State,
2. Examine the forms/types, structures and modus operandi of informal security structures in Lagos State,
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of these informal security structures on community crime control in Lagos State,
4. Assess public perception of the informal security structures in Lagos State,
5. Examine the relationship between informal security structures and the Nigeria Police in Lagos State, and
6. Formulate strategies to enable informal security organizations contribute positively to community crime control in Lagos State.

1.4 Research Questions

Against the backdrop of the objectives outlined above, this study tried to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the reasons for the emergence and proliferation of informal security structures in Lagos State?
2. What are the various forms/types, structures and modus operandi of informal policing structures in Lagos?
3. How have informal policing groups impacted on neighbourhood crime control in Lagos State?
4. What is the public perception of informal security structures in Lagos State?
5. What is the relationship between informal security structures and the Nigeria Police?

6. How can informal policing structures be made to play more active role in community crime control in Lagos State?

1.5 Justification of the Study

There is a palpable dearth of empirical data on the forms, organizations, mode of operations and effectiveness of informal policing structures in Nigeria. Yet such data are very important given the increasing acceptance of these structures as an option for the provision of security across the country. It is this that makes a systematic investigation and understanding of informal policing structures which this study has undertaken, a worthwhile enterprise. This study has generated empirical data that would form the basis for intervention by relevant authorities in a manner that would enhance the effectiveness of informal security organizations in curbing crime and improving security of lives and property in Lagos State. Such data can also be used to improve security in other states of Nigeria. It is also hoped that this study will stimulate further research on the subject of informal security arrangement in Nigeria.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this work covers all forms of informal security structures, including vigilantes that provide security in Lagos State. Lagos State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. The state was created on May 27, 1967 by the then Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon by virtue of State Creation and Transitional Provisions Decree No. 14 of that year which divided the country into twelve states. The State is located in the South-western part of Nigeria and currently has 20 local government areas. There are 37 other local council development centres.

Lagos State is the melting pot of cultures, attracting diverse populations from within and outside Nigeria. Officially, the population of the state is put at 9,013,534 inhabitants out of a national total of 140,003,542 (NPC, 2007). However, the Lagos state Government has estimated the population of the state at 16 million as at December 2005 (Lagos State Government, 2009). The majority of the inhabitants of the state are Yoruba, who constitute about two thirds of the population. Lagos State was the Federal

Capital of Nigeria until the seat of the Federal Government was moved to Abuja in 1991. It is a mega city and the economic hub of Nigeria, accounting for more than 65% of the commercial institutions in Nigeria (*The Nation*, Monday 10 October, 2007).

Crime rate in Lagos is particularly high on account of its status as the commercial capital of Nigeria (Akinyele, 2008; Ajayi and Aderinto, 2008; Nigeria Police, 2008). Consequently, the state has a visible presence of various forms of informal security structures as well as private security outfits apart from the formal police authority, which provides security services in the state. This study covers the activities of only informal security structures in the state.

1.7 The Thesis

The central argument of this work is that the evident inability of the formal police to guarantee the safety and security of most Nigerians, and the public acclaim and goodwill enjoyed by some ISS recommend the latter for deeper empirical interrogation, as opposed to merely vilifying and disparaging them for their perceived weaknesses as is currently the case. This would provide a basis for a proper understanding of their forms, organization, modus operandi and relevance in addressing neighbourhood crime problems in Lagos State, Nigeria, and pave the way for a robust policy framework that would facilitate a more inclusive policing of neighbourhoods.

1.8 Conceptual Clarifications

This section provides definitions of some of the concepts that are frequently used in this study, reviews the literature considered relevant to the study and also examines the theories upon which the study is premised.

The Police: The Police are a formal bureaucratic and hierarchical institution set up and funded by the society for the primary purpose of law enforcement, order management, and ensuring a harmonious and enabling environment for the exercise of civil liberties and the pursuit of entrepreneurial goals. Alemika (1993) adds that the police exist to ensure security of lives and property in society.

Policing: This term is used in this work to refer to the activity of making societies safe. The definition given by Bayley and Shearing (2001) is also considered apposite in this work. According to them, policing entails "intentional attempts to regulate the distribution of physical security produced by actual or potential use of force". Policing, conceptualized as application of the instruments of coercion by the state, is the quintessential function of government.

Informal Security Structures: This concept is used in this study to refer to all forms of unconventional security groups organized by people to protect lives and property in the community. It ranges from neighbourhood watches, communal guards, age grades, masquerade cults to hunters' guilds and other forms of vigilante groups that meet the felt need of the people in the area of safety and security which the formal police are unable to effectively guarantee. Included here also are ethnic militias, such as the Odua People's Congress (OPC) and the Bakassi Boys' (Akinyele, 2008) and street vigilantes organized by residents or community development associations (Soyombo et al, 2009). Informal security groups go by different names in different communities.

Security: Security is a highly contested concept. While the traditionalist school conceives of it in strictly military and state-centric perspective and connotes a condition of establishment and maintenance of protective measures that can guarantee inviolability from hostile acts or enemies, the non traditionalists tend to broaden its meaning to include such issues as economic, environmental, social, feminist and other threats (Eselebor, 2012). We however, use this term in this work in a very narrow sense that is limited to its expression within the context of criminal victimization to refer to the guarantee of citizens' properties from theft and unwarranted destruction. It is sometimes used interchangeably with safety which relates to the condition of freedom or protection of the human person from victimization and avoidable injuries and death.

Vigilante: There has been little serious attempt to establish a criminological definition of the term vigilantism. Johnson (1996) however, speaks of six necessary features of the

term, namely: (i) it involves planning and premeditation by those who engage in it; (ii) its participants are private citizens whose engagement is voluntary; (iii) it is a form of 'autonomous citizenship and as such, constitutes a social movement; (iv) it uses or threatens the use of force; (v) it arises when an established order is under threat from transgression, the potential transgression, or the imputed transgression of institutionalized norms ; (vi) it aims to control crime or other social infractions by offering assurances (or guarantees) of security both to participants and to others.

In this study, the term is used loosely to refer to a range of different groups, each with different motives. For instance, it is applied to groups such as the Bakassi Boys, who were originally set up to fight crime without any explicit political agenda, as well as to others, like the O'odua People's Congress (OPC) which is a Yoruba ethnic militia created initially to advocate for the autonomy of the Yoruba people, but which later extended its activities to fighting alleged criminals. In some of the northern states of Nigeria, there are other groups, also referred to as vigilantes, which are used to monitor and enforce observance of sharia (Islamic law) (Chukwuma, 2002). Some community and village security groups, such as neighbourhood watches, communal guards, age grades, masquerade cults, hunters' guilds as well as a variety of other armed groups, many of them formed along ethnic lines in different parts of the country, are also lumped together as vigilantes in the literature. In this study, we use this term for any community initiative which exists to fight crime and provide security in the community. Variations do exist between vigilantes, depending on the degree of adulteration, impunity and abuse that are allowed by any group.

Community Policing: Community policing is sometimes used interchangeably with neighbourhood policing in some countries. It is a form of policing defined by the cooperation between members of community and the police in fighting crime in specific neighbourhoods. It is hinged on the belief that community interaction and support can help to control crime, with community members helping to identify suspects, detain vandals and bring community problems to the attention of the police. Inclad (2002) defines it as a collaborative effort between the police and the community to identify the

problems of crime and disorder and to develop solutions from within the community. Proponents of community policing contend that the police should be more responsive and connected to the communities they serve.

According to Bohm and Haley (1999), community policing is different from traditional policing because under the former, the police must share power with residents of a community and critical decisions are often made at the neighbourhood level and not at the police headquarters. Community policing is also different from informal security initiatives because, community policing entails participation by the police – a collaborative crime-control effort between the police and the community. The core values of community policing are visibility and accessibility; consultation, cooperation and inter-dependency; multi agency cooperation; proactive policing; and accountability and provision of quality services.

Private security: Private security is an industry that operates along corporate lines and provides security services that are largely independent of the state (Howe, 1998 Wairagu et al 2004; Small, 2006). It is different from the informal or community policing arrangement because it is not only formal, but it is also driven by profit motives. The provision of security by private bodies for profit motives is on the increase across the globe, suggesting that the era of state monopoly over all forms of organized violence is over. Small (2006) recognizes two broad categories of private security, viz: private security companies (PSCs) and private military companies (PMCs) sometimes referred to as privatized military firms (PMFs). The former 'provide security and protection of personnel and property, including humanitarian and industrial assets' (Schreier and Caparini, 2005). The latter, on the other hand, are 'business organizations that trade in professional services intricately linked to warfare' (Singer (2003:8). They are private business-oriented and profit-driven warriors who offer diversified professional services bordering on security issues, such as military advice and training, arms procurement, intelligence gathering, logistical and medical support, combat and military support and humanitarian action. The PMFs are more combat-oriented and are

contracted mainly by states or recognized governments to augment their national military capabilities and specialization (Small 2006:8).

Crime: There are several definitions of crime in literature. However, we use the term here to refer to an act committed or omitted, in violation of a public law, either forbidding or commanding it; a breach or violation of some public right or duty due to a whole community, considered as a community in its social aggregate capacity, as distinguished from a civil injury This includes felonies (serious offences generally punishable by death or by imprisonment for more than a year) and misdemeanours (minor offences, generally punishable by a fine or a short term, usually not exceeding a year, in a jail or workhouse (Wrobleski and Hess, 2006)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of Relevant Literature

Some studies considered relevant to the subject are reviewed in this section. These are reviewed under the following sub-headings: informal security structures in Nigeria, informal security structures and crime control, informal security structures and abuses, and relationship between informal security structures and public police.

2.1.1 Informal security structures in Nigeria

Long before the formation of the Nigeria Police, local communities across the country, as in many other countries in Africa and elsewhere, had created their own informal structures to ensure security of the population. Usually, these groups were composed of individuals from the local community, and often derived their credibility, and unofficial authority from the community in which they served. These structures continued even after the formation of the formal police mainly to complement the police in identifying and handing over criminal suspects to the appropriate judicial authorities. Sometimes, they also tried to settle other conflicts between individuals in the community. Throughout the mid-1990s, state authorities, the police, and traditional rulers called upon villages to set up vigilante patrols or village/community guards (Human Rights Watch and CLEEN, 2002).

The literature reveals a tendency to treat the various types of informal security structures under the term ‘vigilantes’, which is just one typology of informal security structures. Seen in this sense, Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) identify four types of vigilantism. These are religious vigilantism, ethnic vigilantism, state-sponsored vigilantism and neighborhood or community ‘vigilantism’. It needs be noted, however, that this classification is by no means rigid or exclusive, since one type of the groups could combine the features of two or more. Religious vigilantism is a variant of vigilantism that exists to enforce religious laws and doctrines. As Shaw (2002) reveals,

this type of vigilantism arrived on the shores of Africa for the first time in the mid-1990s following the establishment of popular democracy in South Africa. It has since spread into Nigeria with the introduction, in some northern states, of the *Hisbah* groups to enforce the observance of the Sharia (Islamic law). According to Chukwuma (2002), these groups take it upon themselves to enforce such sharia laws as ban on sale and consumption of alcohol, indecent clothing (wearing of trousers and skimpy dresses by women) and arresting of petty thieves, often without authorization by the sharia court. They usually impose the punishments for such "offences" on their own without taking the suspects to the designated sharia courts for trial.

Ethnic vigilantism, as the name suggests, refers to groups that organize along ethnic or tribal lines to defend their narrow interests and sometimes carry out crime-control functions (Chukwuma, 2002). In Nigeria, this type of vigilantism are best typified by groups such as the Odua'a People's Congress (OPC), which is active in the south-western part of Nigeria; and the Egbesu Boys which operates mainly in the oil-rich Delta region of the country (Amnesty International, 2002). The OPC began originally as a self-determination group but subsequently extended its activities to fighting alleged criminals (HRW/CLEEN, 2002). Tertsakian (2003) observes that, according to their motto, which is "by any means necessary", the OPC's methods of operation include street procession, protest marches, brutality, robbery, torture, lynching and *necklacing* of both criminal suspects and opponents during inter-ethnic conflict .

The third type of vigilantism is state-sponsored vigilantism. As the name indicates, this variant of vigilantism operates with the support of governments or state agencies. In Africa, this was first noticed during the apartheid era in South Africa. During that period, the state used specialized police or military units to destabilize and intimidate the political opposition or sponsored civilians, with pecuniary, personal or political interests (Haysom, 1986; Pauw, 1991; Scharf 2000).

In Nigeria, the group that best approximates this type of vigilantism is the "Bakassi Boys" that was active in three eastern states of Abia, Anambra and Imo State. It began

as a sincere response by traders in Aba, the commercial city of Abia State, who were worried about high rate of violent property crimes in their markets. The group was however, later hijacked by state governments, which added partisan political ends in their objectives and armed them with dangerous weapons, including firearms without police check (Tertsakian, 2002). It made routine public spectacles of some of the criminal suspects it captured, who were often paraded naked on the streets, and had their body parts chopped into pieces and later burnt to the cheering of surging and urging crowds (Chukwuma, 2002; Harnischfeger, 2003). The Lagos State government is also known to have officially sanctioned the operation of neighbourhood watch since the days of Brigadier General Buba Marwa as governor of the state. These groups still operate across the State (Sanni, 2008) but are not in the mould of the Bakassi Boys or the OPC.

The fourth type of vigilantism is what is popularly referred to as neighborhood or community vigilantes. These are groups of people that are organized by street associations in the cities or villages in the rural areas, to man street entrances or village gates, as the case may be, at night. They also carry out foot patrols at night to reassure members of the community that some people are watching over their security. They do not carry weapons but are rather armed with whistles, which they use in arousing the neighborhoods if there are unwholesome “guests” (Amnesty International, 2002; Chukwuma, 2003). This category include such groups as neighborhood watchers, communal guards, age grades, masquerade cults and hunters’ guilds. Usually, the methods of operation of informal security structures usually include traditional divining methods, traditional protection methods, praying and fasting, and mob action.

Traditionally, the concept of informal security took on the character of the fourth typology. Typically, they consisted of able-bodied young men of each community member, supported financially and materially by the other community members and charged with the task of securing the community and enforcing the law, usually with the aid of small weapons, such as machetes, bows and arrows, spears, and some guns (Okafor, 2007). Often, these watchers are more active at night than during the day, and

seek to limit access to parts of the community by erecting temporary, movable obstacles on the roads that would slow vehicular and human traffic.

The first three typologies are more recent developments which are traceable to mounting frustration with the steady increase in violent crimes in the country, and the inefficiency and widespread corruption of the police force (Amnesty International, 2002). It has also been argued in some quarters that the emergence of these later variants of informal security is more political than simply an attempt to fight crime.

Some other studies have tried to categorise informal policing structures on the basis of their jurisdictions. In a study in Lagos, Alemika and Chukwuma (2008) identify six informal security structures based on their areas of coverage and where they draw their membership from (it must be added that public concerns, including objection by the police, have always been with respect to groups that operate across wide jurisdiction, such as all over a given state and across states, such as the Odua People's Congress and the Bakassi Boys). These are street –based, village-based, local government area wide, state- based, ethnic based and faith- based groups.

Shaw (2000: 48) cautions that there is the need to disaggregate informal security structures on the basis of their structures and methods of operation. In this regard, ISS which seek to provide 'due process for arrested criminals' are to be distinguished from those which operate as a bunch of death squads that mete out jungle justice to their victims.

2.1.2 Informal security structures and crime control

The available literature on this subject indicate that informal security systems play a positive role in crime control and maintenance of security in communities where they exist (HRW and CLEEN, 2002; Ozekhome, 2003; Ajayi and Aderinto, 2008; Alemika, 2008; and Akinyele, 2008). In a recent study on non-state policing in Lagos conducted for the British Council, Nigeria, Alemika and Chukwuma (2008) found that over two-third (68.1%) of the respondents in the study adjudged the performance of the ISS groups in the state to be good. Another study by Ajayi and Aderinto (2008) on O'odua

Peoples' Congress (OPC) in parts of Lagos also found that the engagement of OPC brought down the rate of crime in the areas of the state that were studied. Specifically, 53.3% of the respondents who suffered criminal attacks before the intervention of OPC admitted that they were now free from criminal attacks, as there is peace in the neighbourhood.

Separate accounts by HRW and CLEEN (2002) and Harnischfeger (2003) also indicate that the Bakassi Boys recorded huge successes in their crusade against criminals in the South Eastern States of Nigeria where they operated. Prior to the arrival of the Bakassi Boys, the inhabitants of Onitsha, for instance, were practically under siege. Robbers paraded through the streets and openly displayed their weapons, as if they were the lords of the town and "in most cases, [the police] would run away whenever and wherever they sighted them [the robbers] (Dr. Chinwoke Mbadinuju, then Governor of Anambra State, in *Tell* 26.3.2001:42). In its own account, *The Guardian* (18.9.2000) reported that the criminals moved about the area with such confidence that on some occasions they would tell people the exact date that they would be robbed. On the appointed day, they would force their way into the houses they had earmarked, regardless of whether the occupants had fled or not. However, the emergence of the Bakassi Boys changed all this. As Harnischfeger (2003) puts it, "all the inhabitants I asked proudly assured me that crime was largely a thing of the past". It was also against the backdrop of the huge successes recorded by the Bakassi Boys that Anambra State was honoured by a commission of journalists with a prize as "the most crime-free State in Nigeria" in 2001(*Newswatch, 14.5.2001:42).* It is needful to indicate here that the Bakassi Boys recorded a similar feat in Abia State, where it succeeded in 'cleaning' the entire state of criminals within a few weeks, starting from Aba.

Studies also indicate that other various forms of informal security structures enjoy remarkable public acclaim. In a study by Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) on the poor and informal policing in four states of Nigeria, the respondents reported that informal security structures in the various states succeeded in several areas where the formal police failed. Specifically, it was found that 85.7%, 79.2%, 87.5%, and 94.1% of the respondents in Benue, Ekiti, Enugu and Jigawa States, respectively expressed

satisfaction with the performance of the informal policing organizations in curbing crime. The rating of the formal police by the same respondents was a far cry from this. One of the reasons for the success story of the informal security structures is the fact that these organizations are not incapacitated by corruption and inefficiency as the formal police. The informal security groups are also reported to provide speedy safety and security services relative to the police and are as well closer to the people.

Despite the overall positive perception of the informal security groups in crime prevention, a number of works have also indicted some of their members for engaging in criminal activities. Writing about the OPC in Mafoluku and Oshodi part of Lagos, Akinyele (2008) observes that

> …the usefulness of the OPC is currently being called to question by the residents of our area of study. First, it is alleged that thieves and bad eggs have infiltrated the ranks of the OPC to an extent that the OPC has become part of the problem rather than the solution to the crime wave in Oshodi and Mafoluku. Secondly, the armed robbers developed the strategy of deceiving their victims by posing as OPC guards and calling on them to come out at night to identify fictitious household members or co- tenants.

Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) also claim that there have been incidents in the past whereby a complaint of stealing was brought against members of other forms of informal security groups. Writing specifically about the *Ndi-Nche* in Nkanu, they observe that, when such a thing happens, the member responsible is reported before the village community members who are then assembled at the village square. Appropriate punishment will now be meted out to the culprit. As a deterrent, such a person is publicly canned by the masquerade".

2.1.3 Informal security structures and abuses

Some informal security groups have a record of impunity and flagrant disregard for due process. As a matter of fact, there are numerous allegations by national and international human rights organizations, the Nigerian press, the Nigerian Bar Association and individuals that some of them carry out extra-judicial executions, illegal detention and acts of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment of suspected criminals (Segun, 2008).

In their celebrated work on the Bakassi Boys and the legitimization of murder and torture, the Human Rights Watch and CLEEN (2004) found that the group killed scores of people after putting them through their form of 'trials' in which they constituted themselves into self- appointed judges, juries and executioners (See also Ozekhome, 2003; Babawale, 2003 Williams, 2003). In most of the cases, it was alleged that decisions regarding the guilt or innocence of the individuals involved were arbitrarily arrived at, often on the basis of fabricated evidence, evidence extracted through torture, or no evidence at all.

A study by the Amnesty International (2002) also reported that following the successes recorded by the Bakassi Boys in their war against criminals, the governments of Abia, Anambra, and Imo States gave official endorsements to the group as security outfits in those respective states. The group became officially called the Abia Vigilante Services, the Anambra Vigilante Services and the Imo Vigilante Services, respectively. Tertsakian (2002) notes that the state governments subsequently hijacked the groups, added partisan political ends to their objectives and armed them with dangerous weapons, including firearms, without police check. Thereafter, the groups were alleged to have been used by the state governments to target and intimidate perceived political opponents (Human Rights Watch and CLEEN, 2002). Thirty-six percent (36%) of the respondents in a survey of informal security structures in Lagos also reported that these people were employed by politicians for rallies and campaigns, while 16.1% of them alleged that some politicians use these groups for improper purposes (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2008).

In the south-west part of the country, where the Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC) holds sway; there are also complaints of rape, torture and extortion against the group (Akinyele, 2008). The group was also associated with street fights and clashes with other groups, ethnic nationalities, government agencies, especially the police, resulting in several deaths (*Newswatch*, September 10, 2001; Ozekhome, 2003). There are also allegations that, in a number of different situations, the OPC, like the Bakassi Boys, were called in effectively as hired thugs, to intervene in private disputes and civil

matters, ranging from debt collection and disputes between landlords and tenants, to conflicts over land ownership and even domestic matters.

In a press conference on the excesses of the Sharia Police in Kano State, Alhaji Mohammed Yesufu, former Commissioner of Police in the state, alleged that "the Kano State Hisbah Sharia police have become superior to the Nigeria Police in Kano …in fact they go to Nigeria Police stations and barracks to arrest policemen, women and of course civilians. They close down shops, schools and churches at will. They harass magistrates and area court judges. When courts of law grant bail, the Hisbah police will arrest the suspect and detain him or her again in their make –shift prisons" (*The Guardian*, Friday May 15, 2009).

Alemika and Chukwuma (2003) aver that abuses are not exclusive to ethnic, religious or state-sponsored vigilante groups, and that the neighbourhood watchers or what is commonly referred to as traditional vigilante groups equally indulge in excesses which sometimes result in the killing of innocent citizens and other forms of grievous violation of human rights. In Ekiti State, for instance, these groups were reported to punish criminals by giving them stones, stripping them, beating and parading them in the open. Mob action is also commonly employed by vigilantes in Enugu State (94.7%), Benue (74.1%), Ekiti (75%) and Jigawa (78.3%). In another study, Alemika and Chukwuma (2008) narrated a story of how members of an informal security group invaded Okpoko community in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State in the early hours of February 9, 2007, brutalizing, maiming and shooting members of the community. The offence of the community was their refusal to pay illegal levies imposed on them by the ISS group. The fracas left a four-year old primary one pupil dead and another primary six pupil with a bullet wound on the back.

It is against the backdrop of the unbridled exercise of police powers by largely unregulated groups most of whose members are untrained and their alleged excesses that the police frown against the groups. In the words of Emmanuel Ojukwu, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (2008), "part of the misgivings of the police against

some informal policing groups is their quick resort to high handedness, showmanship and abuse of fundamental freedoms of persons arrested by them. Some are known to rape suspects, keep detention camps and publicly execute suspects at will, without recourse to due process and rule of law".

2.1.4 Relationship between informal security structures and the Nigeria Police

Most studies point to a relationship of mutual suspicion and hostility between the Nigeria Police and most informal security structures (Ozekhome, 2003; Ojukwu, 2008) . The issues raised against the informal security groups by the Nigeria police border largely on the reluctance or refusal of some of these ISS and their members to work under close police supervision and within the confines of the rule of law and due process. This was particularly the case with members of the Odua Peoples' Congress in the South-West and the Bakassi Boys in the South-East (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2008). Other reasons for police hostility towards these groups are because they employ unorthodox methods in the treatment of offenders and mete out instant 'justice' to suspects (Soyombo et al, 2009). According to the police, in response to the quick fix mentality in the polity, these groups carry out errors of torture, inhuman treatment and extra-judicial executions, resulting in miscarriage of justice, public condemnation and odium, and the blacklisting of the nation in the comity of nations (Ojukwu, 2008). However, not a few people believe that the real reason for the police disposition towards the informal security groups is because the latter enjoys greater level of popularity and acceptance among the public relative to the former. The police also see the ISS as encroaching on their constitutional duties.

On their own part, however, members of the informal security groups detest the formal police because they can no longer be trusted to guarantee public safety and security of life because of their history of corruption. Severally, the OPC has accused the police of colluding with and aiding criminals. According to them, when suspects are arrested and handed over to the police, they take bribe from them, release them and they turn on their

captors with vengeance (Ozekhome, 2003). Many policemen also supply arms to criminals in exchange for financial returns.

The hostility between the police and some ISS has led to several bloody clashes between the two. For instance, at the peak of their notoriety between 2000 and 2003, members of the OPC and the Bakassi Boys openly engaged the police in armed combats, which led to the death of their members and some police officials.

2.1.5 Gaps in knowledge

The above review of literature suggests that informal policing structures are widespread and enjoy tremendous popularity as alternative community response to insecurity in several parts of Nigeria. However, rather than seek to understand their forms, organization, *modus operandi* and effectiveness in crime prevention and control, most studies have dwelt on the extra-judicial and sometimes, unconventional approaches employed by a few of them. Therefore, this study was designed to address these knowledge gaps in Lagos State, a city with one of the highest crime rates in Nigeria. It is hoped that the outcome of the study will provide an empirical basis for policies and intervention programmes to improve security in Lagos State, in particular, and in Nigeria as a whole.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The study is anchored on the social contract theory, the postcolonial state theory and the theory of relational cohesion, in order to explain the state of insecurity in the country and the attendant recourse to informal policing structures.

2.2.1 The social contract theory

The social contract theory has its roots in the works of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau among others. The theory conceives of the political state as man's response to the lawlessness and uncertainties that characterize the state of nature and emerged following the decision of the people to voluntarily give up some of their rights to a government or other authority in exchange for order. It adds that this

agreement imposes on the state both direct and indirect responsibility of enhancing the socio-economic well-being of the citizenry by delivering what Pennock (1966) calls the public goods to persons living within its borders. Public goods means those tangible and hard-to-quantify claims that citizens once made on sovereigns but which they now make on the state, such as security, physical infrastructures – medical and health care, education, communications, roads, electricity, a beneficent fiscal and institutional context within which citizens can pursue personal entrepreneurial goals and potentially prosper; promotion of civil society, provision of predictable, systematized methods of adjudicating disputes and regulating both the norms and the prevailing mores of a particular society or polity. It is these public goods that give content to the social contract between the rulers and the ruled that is at the core of regime-government and citizenry interactions. By the same token, the citizenry under the terms of the agreement becomes obligated to reciprocate the gestures of the state by paying taxes, levies and discharging other national or communal obligations.

The performance or otherwise of this contractual obligation by the political state bears a direct consequence for the state of security in the society. If the state is able to discharge its obligations by creating the right socio-economic environment for people to fulfil their aspirations, it will enjoy the support of the citizenry and by that token, lay claim to legitimacy. This situation will naturally augur well for security as there will be less contestation over unfulfilled vested interests. If, however, the state fails to meet its part of the agreement, it is only natural that social conflicts and contestations will hold sway, thus engendering insecurity of both life and property. This is particularly, as Soyombo et al. (2009:19) reason, "the amelioration of the human condition is not only *primus inter pares* as condition precedent for security, it is also *sine qua non* for enduring measure of security".

From the standpoint of the social contract thesis therefore, we surmise that the insecurity in Nigeria today is a direct derivative of her inability to fulfil her social responsibility of improving the socio-economic well-being of her citizens or of delivering the public goods to the bulk of her citizenry. It is in this respect that many

commentators have referred to Nigeria variously as a weak, failing or dysfunctional state (Lewis, 2003).

2.2.2 Theory of the postcolonial state

For the advocates of the postcolonial state theory, the recourse to and popularity of informal security structures derives glaringly from the evident incapacity of the post colonial state, by the reason of its artificial creation and elitist tendencies, to guarantee safety for the greater part of the citizenry, especially the poor, those outside the corridors of power. The theory uses such pejorative terms as extractive, prebendal, authoritarian, autocratic and militarized to describe the postcolonial state. It adds that, by all intents and purposes, the postcolonial state, which is further described as an enemy state, was not created to promote the common good but to serve the interest of transnational capital and their local collaborators. As Osuoka (2003:113-4) put it,

> The Nigerian state was carved out by British buccaneers to facilitate the project of plunder. As a colonial territory, a social order conducive to exploitation of the local people and their natural resources was promoted and institutionalized.... It was not changed by indigenous rulers who collected the reins of power from representatives of Her Majesty....

Flowing from the very character of the postcolonial Nigerian state is its notoriety for generating tension, conflicts and insecurity (Babawale, 2003:201; Faseun, 2003:106). Linking this to the colonial origin of the state in Nigeria, Ihonvhere (2000:77) puts it,

> Because the colonial state was absolutist in every sense, it combined the power of life and death and dispensed power without consultation or accountability. The colonial governor or district officer was the executive, judiciary and legislature, all rolled into one. The indigenous elites that had been structurally incorporated into the power and economic networks of colonialism following World War II were nurtured in the context of these undemocratic values. Indeed many actively participated in the brutalization of their peoples and were rewarded with all sorts of decorations. Given the tenuous relation of the African elite to productive activities, political independence witnessed the capture of political power without economic power. Consequently, accumulation, survival, and domination could only be guaranteed through the unmediated control of state power. The new elite was forced to device strategies of ideological containment, depoliticization, diversion, violence, and human rights abuses to ward of opposition.

Furthermore, the Nigerian state is perceived by postcolonial state theorists as patrimonial in character. Patrimonialism simply means the blurring of the distinction between the public and the private domains and the personalization of power, as a source of wealth (Ibrahim, 2003:52). It means the conversion and privatization of state power and resources to the exclusive property of those at the helm of affairs. Not too long ago, Nigerians went through a painful moment of mental torture as our military predators rained accusations and counter accusations of how they looted the public treasury at the Justice Chukwudifu Oputa Panel on Human Rights Violations. Today, these same people, now retired, have again hijacked the so-called civilian, courtesy of their loot. This character of the state facilitates division and bitterness. The sense of loss attendant to this bizarre character of the state for the mass of the people, paints a picture of the state as wicked, aloof, insensitive, corrupt, and distant force; an enemy that must, as opportunity permits, lie subverted, avoided, cheated, dismantled (Ihonvbere, 2000:76).

Related to this is what is commonly described as the rentier character of the Nigerian state. According to Ibrahim (2003:52-53), 'a rentier state or economy is one that relies on substantial external rent. In such states, the creation of wealth centers on a small fraction of the society, while the rest of the society is engaged in distribution and utilization of the wealth so created. In a rentier state, the government is the main recipient of external rent. One of its features is that production is relegated to the background and, in fact, there is at best a tenuous link between individual income and activity. Getting access to the rent circuit is a greater preoccupation than attaining production efficiency (see also Beblawi and Luciani, 1987:13).

An apparent feature of a rentier economy is the existence of a curious disconnect between the work- reward causation. In such economies, reward/ income or wealth is not related to work and risk bearing, but instead to chance or situation. For a rentier, reward becomes a windfall gain, an isolated fact, situational or accidental as against the conventional outlook where reward is integrated into a process of end result of a long, systematic and organized production circuit (Beblawi, 1987:52). Luciani (1987:70) refers to it as an allocation, as distinct from a production state. Often, the legitimacy of

a rentier state flows from its ability to guarantee access to resources to a relatively large cross section of the society. Any failure in this respect, either as a result of a short fall in rent or the greed of the ruling clique, would almost always result in loss of legitimacy and political crises (Ibrahim, 2003:54). For Nigeria, the problem is not that there has been any short fall in the rent of the state. If anything, it is to the contrary. The problem is the seeming resolve by the ruling clique to hijack state resources both for themselves and for their 'people' at the expense of the outsiders.

Alavi (1972) and Ake (1996a: 23) follow a similar path when they argue that the Nigerian state is both overdeveloped and too powerful. By this, they refer to the enormous power and resources of the state, and its rentier character, which they argue, define the intense competition, conflict and struggles by contending forces in society for state power. Since access to state power facilitates primitive accumulation and as well as group socio-economic and political hegemony, it is only natural that such control will involve intense contestations. Usually, these struggles for state power assume a zero-sum game approach between contending elements and is often hijacked by the hegemonic social classes within the process (Arowosegbe, 2011). This brings about politics of exclusion, the centralization of power, the imposition of domination and political control, the alienation of the leaders from the masses, and the deployment of extremism in the exercise of power. It is within this context that we must seek to understand the present centralization of all forms of security and policing functions and the sad manipulation and abuses of the bodies entrusted with these functions by the hegemonic social classes at the expense of the larger citizenry. Under the guise of promoting national interest which in actual sense, is not any different from the selfish interests of the hegemonic social classes and their foreign capital allies, the police became turned into an enemy force dreaded and avoided by the common people whose taxes fund their operations. As Ake (1996) is wont to argue, this situation compels the people to retreat into their primary groups, which become the beneficiary of their residual loyalty, and explore other extra-juridical and non-state means of reproducing their material and social existence, including recourse to informal forms of policing their neighbourhoods.

2.2.3 Relational cohesion theory

A major inadequacy of the social contract thesis is that it leaves out the critical element of culture in its explanation of informal policing structures. Yet scholars have averred that culture is an important issue in any attempt to understand attachment or commitment to a social group. This inadequacy is addressed by the relational cohesion theory of E.J Lawler and David Apter, which offers a more direct explanation of why people form and remain committed to social groups, networks or community. According to them, social groups or networks or communities are formed and maintained through social interactions and repeated exchanges by members. Such interactions foster shared sentiments, beliefs, values and shared activities, and provide a basis for attachment and commitment to the group based on shared identity and interest.

The attachment to informal security structures is thus to be understood from this notion that they are part and parcel of the communities and therefore share similar sentiments and aspirations with the rest members of the community. Their commitment is also defined by their membership of the community and identification with its collective interests. This position approximates Okafor's (2005) argument that the informal security structures endure because they are rooted in the traditions, customs, and native practices of the people. By the same token, the public police have failed thus far because they are detached from the people and are not bound by their sentiments and values.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design adopted for this study. More specifically, the chapter provides a detailed description of the planning of the study covering the methods adopted, decisions made about sampling, sources and procedures for data collection and analysis as well as the modalities for measurement of variables and the overall work plan. The necessity of a research design in a scientific inquiry of the nature we have committed ourselves to in this study lies in its usefulness in clearing doubts about what was done, when, how and why it was done the way it was done, and more importantly, in allowing for replicability of study.

3.1 Research design

This study adopted a non-experimental research design involving the triangulation of cross sectional survey, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Non-experimental design was favoured for the study because of its obvious appropriateness for collecting descriptive information and because it is relatively easy to conduct (Fisher and Foreit, 2002).

The cross sectional survey method was used to generate the quantitative data for the study, while the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were utilized to elicit qualitative data which served to deepen discussions on the issues interrogated by the study. The adoption of triangulated research design derives from its acknowledged benefits. One such benefit is that it enhances the validity and reliability of data to be obtained because of the high likelihood that information that are missed out by one method are captured by the other (Caracelli and Greene, 1993; Olsen, 2004). Caldwell (1994:9-10) cautions against the adoption of the quantitative method alone because ‘quantified part of some phenomenon is merely one aspect of it, and often one that has been pushed into a certain configuration to make the measurement possible’ adding that it is artificial to break up continuous variables into quantifiable segments. Similarly,

Trochim (2000) recognises the methodological relevance of the triangulation or multiple methods in view of the fact that all forms of measurement possess different shortcomings. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) note that triangulation reflects an attempt to secure in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. The adoption of multiple methods in this study was, thus, to achieve a more robust outcome by going beyond the statistics offered by the quantitative methods to capture underlying sentiments about the subject matter that are more readily amenable to the qualitative methods.

3.2 Study location

The study was conducted in Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos State is one of Nigeria's 36 states. Located in the south-western part of the country, the state more commonly known as the "Center of Excellence", was created on May 27, 1967 along with eleven others by the then Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon by virtue of Decree No. 14 of that year which divided the country into twelve states. Before that time, Lagos was a British colony (1861- 1960) and, later, the nation's capital (1914- 1991). The state is made up of the old Federal Capital Territory of Lagos and the Colony Provinces of Ikeja, Ikorodu, Badagry and Epe, all of which formed the state's administrative divisions, collectively referred to by the acronym 'IBILE' (Lagos State Government, 2009).

The state is a wetland area, lying 4.5m above sea level along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean between longitude 22^{o}422E' and 4^{o}222E and between latitude 6^{o}222N and 6^{o}422N. It is bounded in the north and east by Ogun State and shares international boundaries with the Republic of Benin in the west. It is bounded on the south by the Atlantic Ocean where it has a 180 km stretch waterfront. The state is the smallest state in Nigeria, occupying an area of 3,577km^2, of which 22% or 787sq kilometres is water.

Although a United Nations Habitat Report (2010) indicates that the state had a population of about 10.5 million, the 2006 National Census put the figure at 9,013,534 out of the total population of 140,003,542 for the country (NPC, 2007). At the time of

the survey in 2010, the state had a total of twenty (20) local government areas. Four of the local government areas, namely Ikeja, Eti-Osa, Mushin and Ikorodu, were randomly selected for the study based on reported crime. The first three local government areas are largely urban or metropolitan in character, while the last one is rural in outlook. According to available data, 80% of the local government areas in Lagos is predominantly urban, whereas only 20% of them is rural (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lagos), hence the decision to investigate three of the former and one of the latter. According to the 2006 final census result, Ikeja local government area has a population 317,614 made up of 171,782 males and 145,832 females; Eti-Osa has 283,791 inhabitants made up of 158,858 males and 124,933 females and Mushin has 631,857 people comprising of 326,873 males and 304,984 females. Similarly, Ikorodu has a total population of 527,917 made up of 268,463 males and 259,454 females (NPC, 2009). Apart from slight variations based on rural - urban divides, the four local government areas selected for the study have the major characteristics that are typical of Lagos State. They are thickly populated, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and have high level of economic and social activities. Furthermore, they are characterized by low policing.

Fig. 3.1: Map of Lagos showing the study L.G.As (source, Department of Geography, University of Lagos)

3.3 Study population

Statistically, a population refers to the totality of all elements, subjects or members that possess a specified set of one or more common definite attributes (Ogundipe, et al. 2006). Put more simply, the population of a study refers to the sum total of all the elements or subjects from which the sample is to be drawn (Rubin and Babbie, 2001). Bordens and Abbott (2002) describe the term simply as all possible individuals making up a group of interest. In an empirical study of this nature, a researcher's choice of research design/methods, sampling techniques and research instrument are largely dictated by the composition of the study population.

This study involved two different categories of respondents. The first of these were the members and leaders of identified community-based security groups, personnel of the Nigeria Police and community stakeholders including traditional leaders, Community Development Association executives, religious leaders, market women, youth leaders, Police Community Relations Committee members and such other persons that were acquainted with the activities of community-based security actors, in the sampled local government areas and communities. The second category of respondents comprised male and female community members who were 18 years and were aware of security and orderliness processes of their neighborhoods. The first group of respondents provided factual information on the forms, structure and modus operandi of the ISS groups, while information from the latter category of respondents provided a basis to assess the performance of the ISS groups and answer related questions raised in the study. According to the 2006 census figures, this latter group constitutes over 50 percent of the overall total population (NPC, 2007). Specifically, the respondents for the survey questionnaire comprised both male and female members of the various communities aged 18 years and above and who met the criteria for participating in the study in the households that were randomly selected in the various communities of this study, while those for the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were community members who were purposively sampled based on availability, involvement and experience with informal policing groups.

3.4 Research methods

Three major research methods were adopted for this study namely, cross sectional survey, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. As indicated earlier, the combination of these tools affords the researcher the opportunity to generate richer and more robust data on the subject under study. These methods are discussed briefly in the following sub sections.

3.4.1 The survey

The survey is a non-experimental, descriptive research method often employed when a researcher is interested in collecting data on phenomena that cannot be directly observed. In survey research, the researcher selects a sample of respondents from a population as was done in this study and administers a standardized questionnaire to them (Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993). The strength of the method lies in its suitability for obtaining information from large samples of the population as well as in gathering demographic data that describe the composition of the sample (McIntyre, 1999, p. 74). Surveys are inclusive in the types and number of variables that can be studied, require minimal investment to develop and administer, and are relatively easy for making generalizations (Bell, 1996, p. 68). More importantly and especially for the purposes of our present study, surveys are considered useful in determining the relationships among variables (Kraemer, 1991) as we seek to do between informal policing structures and security in Lagos State.

As indicated above, the specific type of survey method adopted by the study is the cross-sectional survey, otherwise called the one-time survey, because of its interest in observing all of a population or a representative subset, at a defined time. The method is recommended for this study by the fact that, besides being generally quick and cheap, it is also able to identify associations between variables such as that between informal policing structures and security, as is the case in this study.

3.4.2 Sample size

It is often not possible to study an entire population in a study of this nature because of the factors of time and resources, hence the idea of a sample, which is a part of the population. Usually, a sample is to be selected in such a way that the conclusions drawn are valid (Crow and Semmens, 2008). In other words, a sample has to be both adequate and representative of the larger population so as to allow for generalizations of findings across the whole population.

Usually, larger samples are recommended for any empirical study of this nature because they hold higher prospects of being more representative of the general population. In practice, however, the size of a sample is dictated more by resources available, the nature of the population (whether diverse or homogenous) and what the researcher hopes to do with the data. It was against this backdrop that a sample size of 1000 respondents for the survey was decided on, even though a higher sample size of 1017 respondents was achieved at the end of the study.

3.4.3 Sampling methods

The study adopted the multi stage sampling technique to select the respondents from community members for the survey. This method involves the division of the population into a number of groups or clusters from which samples are drawn (Crow and Semmens, 2008). The method was adopted because it is considered more economical than trying to sample a whole population as one group just as it is useful in situations where there is no general sample frame. The respondents for this study were selected through the following stages: selection of local governments, selection of enumeration areas (EAs), selection of households, and selection of respondents from eligible persons in the selected households.

Step One: The first step in the sampling process was the stratification of the 20 local government areas in the state along rural/urban divide and the selection of three urban and one rural local government areas for the study, based on reported crime levels. The local government areas selected were Ikeja, Eti-Osa, Mushin and Ikorodu. As indicated earlier, the first three local government areas are largely urban in character while the

last one is rural in outlook. The decision to capture rural and urban tendencies about informal policing structures was to allow for better understanding and more representative outlook by covering all possible shades of opinions on the subject matter.

Step Two: The second stage in the selection process was the selection of enumeration areas (EAs) in each of the four local government areas for the study. To do this, a list of all the EAs (based on the 2006 census EA delineation exercise) in each of the LGAs was obtained. According to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006), Ikeja had 635 EAs, Eti-Osa had 568, Mushin had 1,264 and Ikorodu had 1, 0056. The number of EAs selected in a local government area was determined by the number of respondents that were to be selected from the said local government area, the estimated number of households in an EA and the number of respondents to be interviewed per household. The National Population Commission (2006) estimated that an average EA has about 112 households and that an EA in an urban locality has a population of between 400 – 650, while its rural counterpart has between 200-250 persons; an average household in Lagos state has also estimated six persons (NPC, 2004). Only one eligible respondent was to be interviewed per household. Based on these considerations, ten and twelve EAs respectively, were sampled in Ikorodu and Mushin LGAs where larger samples were selected, while seven EAs were sampled in Ikeja and Eti-Osa with fewer respondents. Also, averages of 30 different households were interviewed in each of these EAs. The EAs that were selected fell under the following localities:

Table 3.1: Distribution of Communities of Interview by Local Government Area

Community of Interview by Local Government Area			
Ikeja LGA	**Eti- Osa LGA**	**Mushin LGA**	**Ikorodu LGA**
Alade	Ikate	Akala	Ikorodu Central
Anifowoshe	Okun Alfa	Papa Ajao	Agric
Unity Road	Idado	Omobola	Imota
Onipetesi	Igbo Efun	Ilupeju	Ijede
Onilekere	Osapa	Ikate	Igbogbo/Bayeku
Ward D	Gbara	Ojuwoye	Ikorodu North
Ward A	Jakande	Olomowewe	Ikorodu West
Dosunmu Area		Odi- Olowo	
Market Area		Idioro	

Step Three: Consequent upon the selection of the EAs, a quick numbering of the households in each of the selected enumeration areas was carried out after which the systematic sampling technique was adopted to select the households that were covered by the study. As indicated above, an average of 30 households were sampled based on our knowledge of the average number of 112 households per EA in the state. Thus, every 5^{th} household was selected for the study, after the first number had been randomly selected. This sampling procedure was maintained until the desired sample size was achieved for each of the sampled EAs.

Step Four: The last stage in the sampling process involved the selection of only one eligible respondent from each of the sampled households. Eligibility in the study was extended to any member of the community aged 18 and above and who has lived in the community for upwards of one year to be aware of the security concerns and practices in their neighborhoods. Specifically, the following numbers of respondents were sampled in the various LGAs: Ikeja (181); Eti-Osa (165); Mushin (362) and Ikorodu (309). The number of respondents that were selected per local government was determined proportionally by the population of the various local government areas. The selection of respondents was also done in a manner that ensured gender balance.

3.4.4 Focus group discussions

According to Crow and Semmens (2008:124), people's views and perceptions do not happen in isolation from others but develop in a social context. In other words, what people think, and how they frame their thoughts, takes place in interactions with their neighbours, work colleagues, family and friends. Therefore, if we want to understand how people feel about crime and safety in their neighbourhoods, for instance, as is the case in this study, one way of doing this is to get a group of them together, hence the choice of the method. In the views of these scholars, the method enables us to understand and get a more dynamic picture of the social exchanges that take place in everyday life, understand how people reason through problems or make decisions about things, why people feel the way they do, and how groups of people interpret a

phenomenon and construct meaning even in matters of crime and safety. The method is recommended by its ability to capture aspects of the phenomenon under study that cannot be reduced to numbers (Rubin and Babbie, 2001).

A total of five (5) focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted with members of identified ISS groups as well as with community members in the four local government areas during this study. This consisted of two separate FGDs with selected members of the OPC and state-sponsored neighbourhood watch group, and another three with purposively selected community members grouped into adult males, adult females and male youths. There were between 7 and 12 persons in each of these sessions which were facilitated by a moderator based on a carefully prepared guide. Discussions during the sessions were recorded electronically using tape recorders, while note takers were also on hand to manually record crucial points and as well capture participants' body expressions that were considered crucial to the overall objective of the study. Participants in the focus group discussions were drawn purposively from community members aged 18 years and above and who had lived in the communities for at least one year to understand the workings of the community. Their selection was based on availability, involvement and experience with informal policing organizations in their communities.

3.4.5 In-depth interviews

This is a popular explorative method utilized to generate qualitative data in socio-legal research (Crow and Semmens, 2008: 118-119). It is a long discursive semi-structured or non-standardized interviews or conversations which may go on for hours that is considered quite good for studying sensitive issues common in criminology. The method is also considered useful particularly where one is looking at a complex phenomenon as informal security structures that may have developed over a period of time (Crow and Semmons, 2008:119). It is also considered flexible and able to pursue what the respondent takes to be important, with occasional nudges from the researchers so as to maintain a general direction. It was in view of these positive sides of the method that it was adopted by this study, the ultimate motive being to elicit information

that cannot ordinarily be obtained through most of the other methods. The method was also recommended owing to its more personal, cordial and relaxed atmosphere, which Shariff (1984) says enhances credibility as well as authenticity of information. Obtaining an in-depth understanding and knowledge of a society is possible only from prolonged conversation during innumerable contacts, connected and interconnected questioning, probing and observations, which this method offers (Shariff, 1984:6). Hagen (1992:82) commends this method above the quantitative method because, while quantitative methods allow investigations into a certain level of a phenomenon, the qualitative methods help the researcher to achieve a deeper understanding, such as the exploration and understanding of meanings, frames, subjective experiences, and feelings that a questionnaire is not equipped to capture.

A total of 46 respondents were interviewed in the course of the study. The participants in the in-depth interviews were purposively drawn from identified informal security groups, community development associations (CDA) executives, the Police, Police Community Policing Committees, traditional leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, religious leaders and leaders of landlords and residents associations. As indicated earlier, the selection of this category of respondents was based on relevance, availability and convenience and was so diversely spread so as to capture fairly representative opinions in the various localities that were covered by the study.

The appropriateness of these two qualitative approaches lies in their utility in understanding phenomena in their entirety in order to develop a complete understanding of a person, programme or situation (Polkinghorne, 1991: 112). The methods involve the observation and recording of conversations, actions and events with a view to interpreting them and their meanings through a range of concepts and theories which owe their explanatory power to factors other than statistical techniques or formulae.

3.5 Research instruments

Data for this study were collected between October and November, 2010 through the use of survey questionnaire, focus group discussions and in-depth interview guides. These are discussed briefly below.

A questionnaire is a standardized research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Crow and Semmens, 2008). Compared with other types of instruments, questionnaires are considered to have standardized answers that make them simple to compile data. The survey questionnaire for this study was structured into four parts of mostly close-ended questions considered adequate to elicit required information on the research questions and objectives. A few open-ended questions were, however, included, where such questions required detailed explanations. Specifically, the first part consisted of questions on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, including questions on sex, age, educational level, marital status, employment status, income and economic standing. It was envisaged that this section would enable the researcher to establish causal relationships between selected socio-economic variables safety and security-related behaviours of the respondents in the study. In all, there were fifteen (15) questions in part one of the questionnaires.

The second part of the questionnaire contained questions on current state of safety and security in the study communities. Questions raised in this section sought to establish the extent of police presence in the study area, forms and levels of crime and respondents general sense of safety in the study communities. A total of nine (9) questions were asked in this section. The third section of the questionnaire consisted of ten (10) questions which were deliberately crafted to draw out respondents' perceptions and assessment of the formal police. The fourth and final section dwelt on the activities of the informal security organizations and, in particular, on their perceived impact on the security concerns of the various communities where they operate. A total of fifty-two (52) questions were asked in this part.

Altogether, the questionnaire consisted of eighty-six (86) questions, all of which were carefully designed to adequately answer the research questions and address the objectives of the study. The administration of one questionnaire lasted about 20 minutes.

The instrument used for collecting data from FGD participants was the focus group discussion guide. The guide consisted of semi-structured questions which were woven around such major themes as, community safety and security, the formal police and security, and informal security structures and security, including their structures, modus operandi and public perceptions. The guide also contained probing questions which were consciously included to enhance detailed discussions on the major themes and allow for more meaningful explications underlying observable behaviours and perceptions. It took an average of one hour to conduct a focus group discussion.

The in-depth interviews were based on a semi-structured interview guide, which was also drawn from the FGD guide. It covered the same themes and consisted of a total of 17 questions and several probing questions. It took an average of 40 minutes to conduct an in-depth interview.

3.6 The fieldwork

A total of 10 research assistants (R.As) were involved in the collection of data for this study. These were recruited in the first week in November 2010 and given one-day training on November 5, 2010, to generally sharpen their data collection skills and specifically familiarize them with the research instruments. During this session, the R.As were carefully briefed on the sampling methods and given opportunities to seek clarification on areas that they found confusing or unclear. A pilot study was also carried out on the same day. For this exercise, the R.As were divided into two groups, with one group covering Adekunle area of Yaba while the second group covered Iwaya area also in Yaba. Forty copies of the questionnaire were administered during the exercise.

The pilot study proved quite useful for the study as a whole. First, it gave the R.As the opportunity to make mistakes and be corrected before the study proper. It also gave the research team an idea of the difficulties associated with conducting studies on sensitive issues as security and aided making adequate arrangements to make the actual study

less stressful. Additionally, the pilot study revealed that it took an average of 20 minutes to administer an instrument to a respondent. This was useful in deciding the number of instruments a research assistant was expected to conveniently administer in a day, and, of course, in deciding the entire duration of the fieldwork. The R.As were divided into two teams, with each being under a field supervisor who was responsible for daily supervision and monitoring of the R.As and checking to ensure completeness of the questionnaire administered by the respondents.

The survey proper commenced on November 8 and lasted for a period of two weeks. The data were subsequently screened, edited, coded and subjected to computer processing. The screening ensured that inconclusive or badly completed instruments were eliminated. The instruments were edited to ensure consistency in the responses. After these had been done, the responses were coded and fed into the computer and processed using the SPSS version 14. Tables were run after the data entry and entries discovered to be wrong were subsequently cleaned up to make way for the final data which were analyzed for this study.

An extra five percent of the number of instruments than planned were administered in the field. This was deliberately done to ensure that by the time inconclusive and poorly completed instruments were removed, the number of instruments planned to be collected was not adversely affected.

It turned out that at the end of the survey, a total of 1017 copies of the questionnaire, 17 above what was planned, were returned, while the rest 33 poorly completed ones were eliminated. A breakdown of the proposed and achieved samples sizes according to L.G.As is shown in table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Targeted and Achieved Samples by Local Government Areas

Local Government Area	Proposed Sample Size	Achieved Sample Size (% achieved)
	Survey	
Ikeja	180	181 (100.55%)
Mushin	359	362 (100.84%)
Eti-Osa	161	165 (102.48%)
Ikorodu	300	309 (103.0%)
Total	1000	**1017(101.7%)**
	In-depth Interviews	
Ikeja	8	12 (150.0%)
Mushin	8	12 (150.0%
Eti-osa	8	10 (125.0%)
Ikorodu	8	12 (150.0%)
Total	**32**	**46 (143.8%)**
	FGD	
Ikeja	1	1 (100.0%)
Mushin	2	2 (100.0%)
Eti-osa	1	1 (100.0%)
Ikorodu	2	1 (50.0%)
Total	**6**	**5(83.3%)**

3.7 Problems encountered

Like most studies of this nature, this study was bedevilled by several problems. First in this regard was finance. The project cost which was well in excess of half a million naira was borne solely by the researcher, as there was no funding support for the exercise. The financial burden was worsened by the deep financial appetite of most Lagosians that makes money the language of almost every social encounter including completing an ordinary instrument.

Closely related to this was the sensitive nature of the subject of security. Most residents consider the issue of security too grave that they would rather not discuss, especially as they did not know the interviewers or sure that they were not working for some sinister motives. In most communities, residents insisted that only the Oba, Baale and their chiefs could speak on the subject of security and would either not talk or would talk only on the express permission of their leaders. Getting these critical gatekeepers proved difficult in a number of cases and involved several correspondences and visits.

Even with these approvals, many of the respondents were still found to be rather too cautious and conservative with the information they volunteered and, in most cases, were found to give responses that were deemed “politically correct” or merely to “fulfil all righteousness”. The use of local guides whom the respondents could relate to proved quite helpful in overcoming this problem.

Accessing police respondents was also quite tasking, as none of them could speak without the express permission of the superior officers in charge of their divisions. My students (former and present) who worked with the police were quite useful in facilitating access to the officers and in obtaining permission to conduct the study with this group of respondents.

Some of the locations visited in the course of the study were acknowledged drug havens and were notorious for gang rivalry and outright blood-letting. On one occasion, members of the research team were saved by mere providence from the hands of rival street gangsters who were on a premeditated mission to kill and maim. By the time the coast cleared that day, a corpse was lying right at the spot I parked my car less than an hour earlier. While the study in such communities lasted, the research team went the extra mile trying to be friendly including pretending to be comfortable with the smoke from hard drugs and refraining from acts that would suggest that they were being judgmental.

Some of the R.As could not stay to complete the fieldwork because of other pressing personal demands and had to be replaced. As a result, the fieldwork slowed down a bit. The new R.As received quick training on the tools and they tried to gain mastery of the field exercise. However, team spirit among the interviewers helped them to overcome this challenge in no time.

Finally, we could not obtain a sampling frame (that is, a list of all the respondents with the required characteristics, arranged in special order (either ascending or descending

order) for this study. However, the adoption of the multi-stage random sampling technique proved quite useful in resolving this problem.

In spite of these problems, the field work turned out quite successful as the challenges were never allowed to frustrate the course of the exercise. They were as they cropped up.

3.8 Methods of data processing and analysis

As indicated earlier, this study set out to determine the relevance of informal security structures in addressing the security challenge in Lagos State against the backdrop of their reputed popularity and endurance. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in pursuit of the objectives of the study and were analyzed using both descriptive and content analytical techniques.

For the descriptive analysis, univariate tables of simple frequencies and percentages were used to describe respondents' socio-economic characteristics and other variables relating to community safety and security, perceptions about the formal police in crime and security management, as well as opinions regarding the structures, modus operandi and general performance of informal policing groups in providing neighbourhood security. Charts were also presented where necessary.

The study also adopted bivariate analysis in an attempt to deepen the analysis of data and take discussions beyond mere description of observations. The bivariate analysis involved cross-tabulation of identified independent and dependent variables.

The study also relied heavily on qualitative data generated through FGDs and IDIs. These were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, a research tool used to analyze written or spoken records of specific categories or events (Bordens and Abbott, 2002). The appropriateness of the method is underscored by its ability in "searching-out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed" (Bryman (2004: 392). The method involved the transcription and systematic analysis of recorded FGDs and IDIs along

relevant themes which were then incorporated into the explanations of the quantitative data. As much as was practicable, responses from the qualitative data were presented as they were said by the respondents and interpreted logically bearing in mind the social context of the speakers.

3.9 Ethical issues

The data for this study were collected bearing in mind such ethical issues as confidentiality, anonymity and consent of the respondents and focus group participants. The issue of ethics or standards in scientific research is considered sensitive and highly prized to the extent that it enhances the acceptance or otherwise of research outcomes.

On confidentiality, respondents were assured that their views and disclosures in the course of the interviews and discussions would be held in strict confidence and not revealed to anybody, including their close or loved ones. Regarding anonymity of respondents, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that it had no provision for respondents' names or addresses. This way, it becomes difficult to link respondents to their views afterwards. Again, only respondents and participants who agreed to be interviewed or participate in the discussions after the purpose of the study had been explained to them were involved. To achieve this, the questionnaire provided brief explanation of the objectives of the study and asked if respondents wished to be interviewed or not. Only willing respondents were accordingly interviewed. Similarly, participants in the focus group discussions were fully informed of the objectives of the study and allowed to make up their minds on whether they would take part or not. Only willing individuals eventually participated in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the quantitative and qualitative data that were collected in the course of the study. As indicated earlier, the quantitative data are presented in simple frequencies and percentages, and where necessary, in form of charts. The survey data are also used to discuss observed relationships between and among the variables. Findings from the FGDs and the IDI are also utilized to complement the quantitative data.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section discusses the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, while the second section takes a holistic look at the dynamics of informal security structures in Lagos State. Adequate attention is given to reasons for the existence of ISS groups in the state, their types, organization, modus operandi and involvement in crime control in the state. The third section of the chapter discusses public perceptions about the Nigeria Police vis-à-vis the emergence and proliferation of informal security structures in the state, while section four x-rays the crime and security situation in Lagos State, with guided reference to the implications of this both for the emergence and relevance of informal security structures in the state. The fifth and last section sums up the chapter and discusses the prospects for the maximization of the potential of informal security structures in the collective drive towards improved security in Lagos State and Nigeria, as a whole.

4.2 Demographic and socio economic characteristics of respondents

Demographic and socio-economic factors, such as sex, age, marital status, ethnic group, religious affiliation, level of education, employment status, income and economic status of respondents are presented. The presentation and analysis of these variables are necessary because they provide us a general idea about the nature of the sampled respondents. They are also manipulated as explanatory factors in advanced statistical analysis in succeeding sections of this work.

For convenience and ease of analysis, the demographic and socio-economic variables are presented and discussed in parts. Presented in Table 4.1(a) are the sex, age, marital status, ethnic group, religious affiliations and level of education of the respondents.

Regarding the sex of the respondents, the study targeted an equal number of males and females. However, at the end of the survey, 559 males (55%) and 458 females (45%) were covered. This disparity in the proportion of the sex of the respondents may be explained by two possible factors. First of these is the fact that some of the female respondents considered the subject matter of the study, especially in the more traditional communities, as belonging to the domain of the males and, therefore, declined to be interviewed. A second possible reason is the fact that from the 2006 Census, the population of Lagos State is skewed in favour of the males (Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 2009). However, this uneven distribution of the respondents in terms of sex was of no consequence for the quality of the findings, especially because the objective of the study was not to measure outcomes along gender lines.

Regarding the age distribution of the respondents, it was found that people between 30–39, 40–49 and 20 -29 age categories formed the bulk of the respondents, having 30.5%, 26.3% and 24.0% representation, in that order. The table indicates further that those aged 50 - 59 were 11.0%. This was followed by those aged 60 years and above (6.8%) and then by those aged less than 20 years. The preponderance of the respondents in their middle ages in the study may be explained by the fact that they were mostly the ones charged with policing their respective neighbourhoods and as such were in the positions to give more coherent responses to most of the questions. This factor made them the preferred respondents to some of the interviewers. The under-representation of those who are 60 years and above is explained by the low population of people in this age category across the country due largely to the declining life expectancy of the country as a whole, which was put at 48 years in 2009 (UNICEF, 2009).

The table indicates that most (710 or 69.8%) of the people who took part in the survey were married while just over a quarter (261 or 25.7%) were still single at the time of the study. The proportions of respondents, who were widowed, separated or divorced at the

time of the study were 1.7%, 1.5% and 1.4%, respectively. The low figures for respondents who are divorced or separated agree with earlier studies which claim that, despite the ravaging negative effect of globalization, separation and divorce rates among African couples are still low relative to the experience in the West (africanblogs.wordpress.com, 2009).

The disaggregation of respondents along lines of ethnic origin indicates that those of Yoruba stock accounted for 68%, as against the Igbo (22.2%), the Hausa (2.1%), and all other Nigerian and non-Nigerian ethnic categories (7.7%). Again, the preponderance of the respondents of Yoruba origin in the study is explained by two possible facts. The first of this is that Lagos State is Yoruba in south-west Nigeria, and, therefore, has more people of Yoruba stock. Secondly and related to the first is the fact that the issue of informal policing is largely a traditional matter which is most understood and handled by the aborigines. The second factor attracted the interviewers naturally to Yoruba respondents.

Shown in Table 4.1 are also data regarding respondents' religions and levels of educational attainment. As is seen, respondents who were of the Christian faith constituted 64.4%; those of Islam were 32.4%, while adherents of the traditional African religion were 3.1%. Adherents of other religious categories which were not mentioned were only 0.5%. There does not appear to be any clear reason for the lopsidedness of respondents in favour of the Christian religion neither is it of any consequence as religion is not a major issue under investigation in the study.

Data from the survey also indicate that 50.7% of the respondents had secondary-level education, 35.8% had tertiary-level education, while 10.1% had primary education. Only 3.3% of the respondents did not have any form of formal education. Altogether 96.7% of the respondents had at least primary education. This figure is by far higher than the 70.9% adult literacy figure for urban Nigeria (NDHS, 2003) but compares favourably with the literacy rate for Lagos State, which stood at 92% in September 2011 (Next, Sunday, September 18, 2011).

Table 4.1(a): Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Background Characteristics

Demographic/Socio-economic Characteristics		Frequency N= 1017	Percent (%)
Sex Distribution	Male	559	55.0
	Female	458	45.0
Age Distribution	Less than 20 Years	14	1.4
	20 – 29 Years	242	24.0
	30 – 39 Years	307	30.5
	40 – 49 Years	265	26.3
	50 – 59 Years	111	11.0
	60 Years +	69	6.8
Marital Status	Single	261	25.7
	Married	710	69.8
	Divorced	14	1.4
	Separated	15	1.5
	Widowed	17	1.7
Ethnic Background	Yoruba	692	68.0
	Igbo	226	22.2
	Hausa	21	2.1
	Others	78	7.7
Religion	Christianity	655	64.4
	Islam	325	32.0
	African Trad. Religion	32	3.2
	Others	5	0.5
Education	No formal education	34	3.3
	Primary education	103	10.1
	Secondary education	516	50.7
	Tertiary education	364	35.8

4.2.1 Other socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Other background information of the respondents considered relevant for the study were also captured and are presented in table 4.1b below. The variables are respondents' employment status, income, accommodation and economic standing. As is seen in the table, 83.2% of the respondents were employed while only 6.5% were unemployed at the time of the study. Also, 8.1% of the respondents reported that they were either in school or undergoing some form of apprenticeship while another 2.3% claimed to be involved in other unspecified employment categories. A further analysis of the nature of employment of the 846 respondents who reported that they were employed at the time of the survey revealed that 54.4% were self employed, 30.5% were in private sector employment, while 14.4% were in the public sector. The remaining 0.7% of them claimed to be engaged in other unspecified forms of employment. That more than half (54.4%) of the respondents were self-employed agrees with earlier findings that the

informal sector is the highest employer of labour in Nigeria (Nwaka, 2005; Akande and Akerele, 2008)

A further analysis of the type of respondents' employment revealed that 72.0% had full-time employment, while 11.0% were in part-time employment. Again, only 2.5% of the respondents reported that they belonged to employment forms that were neither full time nor part time. This approximates the national unemployment rate, which stood at 21.1% in December 2010.

The income distribution of the respondents indicates that most (25.9%) of the respondents who took part in the study earned between N20,000 and N39,999 monthly. This was followed by those who earned between N40,000 – N49,999 (17.3%), N100, 000 and above (12.0%) and those who earned below N20,000 (10.4%). Others were those who earned between N60,000 – N79,999 and N80,000 – N99,999 which constituted 7.9% and 3.9%, in that order. The 22.6% of the respondents who did not indicate their monthly incomes expectedly were part of the respondents who reported either being unemployed, in school or undergoing apprenticeship at the time of the study.

A further disaggregation of respondents' income revealed that 62.5% of the respondents had regular monthly income, while the incomes of 35.1% were periodic. The remaining 2.4% of the respondents did not indicate whether their incomes were regular or periodic. The fairly high percentage of respondents whose incomes were periodic may be explained by the high number of respondents who are self-employed in the highly uncertain and unpredictable world of the informal sector of the country's economy.

Asked to rate themselves in terms of their economic standing in society, most (67.3%) of the respondents claimed that they were neither rich nor poor. This was followed by those who thought they were poor (16%), rich (10.9%), very poor (3.4%) and those who considered themselves to be very rich (1.5%). Nine of the respondents, representing 0.9%, did not indicate where they stood economically. Self-assessment of economic

standing is a subjective measure and so may not reveal the actual picture, especially in this part of the world where people are more likely to under-report themselves for security and various personal reasons. It, nonetheless, provides an additional insight to the effect that the respondents cut across the various economic classes in society.

Table 4.1(b): Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Background Characteristics

Socio-economic Characteristics		Frequency	Percent
Employment	Employed	846	83.2
	Unemployed	66	6.5
	Student/Apprenticeship	82	8.1
	Others	23	2.3
	Total	1017	100.0
Nature of Employment	Public Sector	14	1.4
	Private Sector	258	30.5
	Self- employed	460	54.4
	Others	6	0.7
	Total	846	100.0
Type of Employment	Full Time	732	86.5
	Part Time	93	11.0
	No Response	21	2.5
	Total	846	100.0
Monthly Income	Less than N20,0000	106	10.4
	N20,000 –N39,999	263	25.9
	N40,000 – N59,999	176	17.3
	N60,000 -N79,999	80	7.9
	N80,000 – N99,999	40	3.9
	N100,000+	122	12.0
	No Response	230	22.6
	Total	1017	100.0
Economic Standing	Very Rich	15	1.5
	Rich	111	10.9
	Neither rich nor poor	684	67.3
	Poor	163	16.0
	Very Poor	35	3.4
	No Response	9	0.9
	Total	1017	100.0

4.3 Dynamics of informal security structures in Lagos State

4.3.1 Introduction

This section presents in details, the findings of this study about the origins, forms, organization, operations and activities of informal security structures in Lagos State, including the contributions of these outfits to the pursuit of safety and security in the state. For ease of understanding, univariate analysis of relevant variables are presented first, followed by bivariate analysis where necessary, to show relationships.

4.3.2 Reasons for the emergence and proliferation of informal security structures in Lagos State

Here, an attempt is made to provide explanations for the emergence and proliferation of informal security structures (ISS) in Lagos State. As Table 4.2 below indicates, the formation and engagement of informal security structures are traceable to a variety of reasons, the foremost being the perceived rise in criminality, which was mentioned by over a third (35.4%) of the respondents. The other reasons given by the respondents for the setting up or engagement of ISS by community members were the inadequacy of the formal police services (25.2%), poor perception about the ability of the police to respond to the needs of the victims of crime owing to corruption and lack of integrity (24.1%) and the feeling that ISS groups are closer to the people (12.4%). Fifteen of the respondents (1.5%) gave other undisclosed reasons why their communities engaged or set up ISS groups, while an equal proportion (1.5%) of them declined to volunteer information on the subject.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Reasons for Engaging/Forming ISS

Reasons for engaging ISS		
Perceived crime rise	360	35.4
Poor perception about the ability of the police to respond to the needs of victims of crime	245	24.1
Inadequacy of formal police services	256	25.2
The informal security groups are close to the people	126	12.4
Others	**15**	**1.5**
No Response	15	1.5
Total	1017	100.0

An analysis of the data from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions also reflects these sentiments. Responding to an in-depth interview question on why his community engaged a night watch group or vigilante, as they are popularly called, a male community leader in Ikeja said:

> Sometimes in the past, thieves were coming here to disturb the entire neighbourhood, especially at night. They would break into people's shops and cart away their goods, pilfer parts of people's cars such as stereos, mirrors and even tires. Over time they got more daring….With the aid of charms and some powder-like substances, they would enter homes at night

> while people were asleep, ransack houses and steal valuables without the people waking up. This was happening on sustained bases. The community elders then met and decided to engage the Odua People's Congress to patrol the streets at night. This helped to restore the peace of the community.
>
> *Adult male (IDI, Ikeja)*

Stressing the same point, another adult male respondent in Mushin said:

> The vigilante group in my neighbourhood dates way back to the military days of General Sani Abacha(one time Head of State). Crime became so pronounced in the area…gangs of armed young boys (and sometimes girls) would go from one street to another at intervals dispossessing residents of their money and other valuables. At one time, they(the robbers) wrote to inform residents of my street that they were coming and requested that ***it would be in our interest*** to set money aside for them…they warned that it will not be pleasant for anyone who failed to set money aside for them or who decided to run away. We took the letter to the police station at... (location name withheld) but the police told us that they did not have the resources to respond….It was after this incident that the landlords met and decided to mount gates in all the routes leading to the street and to hire vigilantes to regulate movement and oversee the security concerns of the street.
>
> *Adult Male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

This deterioration in the state of security, and the mistrust of the police owing to their seeming inability to rise to the challenge as explanations for the engagement of ISS featured quite repeatedly in all but a few of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion sessions across the four local government areas that were covered by the study. As an adult male in a focus group discussion session in Imota area of Ikorodu submitted, the people of their neighbourhood set up a night watch group because their area was not being serviced by the formal police. In the words of one of them:

> I have lived in this community for the past fifteen years. In all these years, I have not set my eyes on any police man or woman here…. We decided to organize ourselves into community watch teams to help secure our community from the activities of thieves disturbing the area. We take turns to patrol the streets at night because that is the time the thieves in this area operate most.
>
> *Adult Male participant (FGD, Ikorodu)*

Several respondents to the in-depth interviews as well as focus group discussion reported that they distrusted the formal police so gravely that they could not bring

themselves to entrusting their security with them. As one aged male community leader in Eti-Osa put it,

> The police of today are not like the policemen of old who were well disciplined …today's policemen …involve themselves in drinking ogogoro (dry gin) and other alcoholic drinks in company of all those street gangs and miscreants….These criminals work hand in hand with the police and they (the police) give them first hand information. Are these the people you want to trust?
>
> *Adult male (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

Participants in an adult female focus group discussion session in Mushin agreed that a probable reason why many people prefer to deal with ISS is because the police are thought to be irredeemably corrupt and untrustworthy. In the words of one of them,

> The police have lost the respect of most decent members of society as a result of bribery and corruption, coupled with hard drinks and drugs. Many of them want to become millionaires over night, and as such they indulge in things that are unlawful: they rob directly and even collaborate with robbers. They are part of the problem and therefore cannot be a solution.
>
> *Adult female (FGD participant, Mushin)*

The findings from this study agree with those of earlier studies on the subject. For instance, Amnesty International (2002), Alemika and Chukwuma (2005), Abrahamsen and Williams(2005), Adinkrah, (2005) and Kantor and Persom (2010) found that informal security groups emerge in response to the citizens' quest for safety and security and flourish when there is the perception of increased criminality or social deviance which threatens social order. Informal security structures also blossom where the state lacks the capacity to protect its citizens from crime or where the state itself is believed to be corrupt or untrustworthy (Nina, 2000; Heald, 2002; Ginifer and Ismail, 2005), and where the formal security outfits are considered alien and detached from the people ((Nzimiro, 1972; Okereafeze, 2002, Elechi, 2006; Okafor, 2007).

4.3.3 Forms of informal security structures in Lagos State

This section discusses the forms of the informal policing structures in Lagos State. As is seen in Table 4.3 below, three broad forms of ISS groups were identifiable in the communities that were surveyed. These are community night watchers, which were

mentioned by 74.8% of the respondents, residential security guards (3.6%) and state sponsored neighbourhood watch (1.0%).

Table 4.3: Types of ISS Groups in Respondents neighbourhoods

Name of ISS	Frequency	Percentage
Community-Organised Night watchers (vigilante/olode, OPC)	760	74.8
House owner/occupant employed (Residential security guards)	37	3.6
State organised Neighbourhood watch	10	1.0
No Response	210	20.6
Total	1017	100.0

Discussions with residents of the various communities covered by this study revealed a seeming confusion in the description of these various forms of ISS. As a matter of fact, it was found that most residents used the terms vigilante, olode, night watchers or even OPC interchangeably and as deemed convenient in their description of community-based initiatives that exist to provide a sense of safety and security among residents. As an adult male respondent in an in-depth interview in Ikorodu asserted:

> The ISS is called different names by different people. Some people call them vigilante or olode while some people call them community night watchers or guards but they all mean the same thing, which are people who help to protect the communities from criminals especially at night.
>
> *Adult male (IDI, Ikorodu)*

In what seemed to be a corroboration of the interchangeable use of the term, another adult male respondent in Mushin said:

> The vigilante people in my street are called watch night or night watchers. They are made up of young men who are members of the Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the neighbourhood. Residents contribute money to pay them at the end of the month to patrol the streets at night.
>
> *Adult male (IDI, Mushin)*

Discussions with leaders of the various ISS groups that were identified and with key stakeholders in the communities however revealed that there exist clear differences between these various forms of informal policing groups in terms of structures and modus operandi. In the succeeding sub-sections, attempts are made to discuss the underlining features of these various ISS groups in relation to their organization and modes of operation.

4.3.4 Structures of informal security groups in Lagos State

1. Community-organised night watch groups

As is indicated in Table 4.3 above, these forms of informal policing arrangement were in the majority in the communities that were covered by this study. Outcome of in-depth discussions with leaders of these various groups as well as with gatekeepers in the communities revealed that the appellation 'community night watch or watchers' is generic and is used to refer to the various strands of community self-policing initiatives, voluntary or paid, which are organized at various levels – streets, groups of streets or quarters, and entire neighbourhood or communities, to provide security for residents, especially at night, but sometimes during the day. Included here are such groups as youth groups who organize into groups often on voluntary basis to provide security for their streets or neighbourhoods, groups of OPC members who provide security services to streets or neighbourhoods usually at a fee, and the one-man or few-men night guards who are also hired by streets or neigbourhoods to provide security at night. Also mentioned by a number of the respondents is the use of radio and aged persons in certain homes as security strategy. These last two forms of arrangements are driven by the belief that much of the fight against crime is psychological. In this instance, noise from a radio or the physical presence of someone in a house regardless of how old or infirm is deemed to be capable of scaring away certain thieves.

The variant of community night watch arrangement adopted or engaged by communities varied in accordance with their (communities) peculiar internal structures and characteristics. For instance, it was found that in the less cosmopolitan settlements where social relations are still reasonably simple, informal and interpersonal, and in a few of the cosmopolitan settings that have managed to retain a measure of their traditional structures as well as in settings where members are predominantly poor, neighbourhood policing was mostly conceived of as a communal activity. In such settings, community members take it upon themselves to safeguard their neighbourhoods at night, especially and sometimes during the day. Often, this service is provided by youths working closely with the traditional leadership or other respectable

members of the communities to respond to the immediate security challenges of their neighbourhoods. A male respondent in Odi-olowo part of Mushin revealed:

> The youths are the people who provide security in this community at night. When we discovered that people were coming from outside to steal and rob here, we decided to intervene by patrolling the streets at night. Usually, we organize ourselves into groups and dissolve into different streets at night to keep vigil.... If we arrest any criminals, we normally take them to the Police.... We contribute small amounts from time to time to buy things like torch lights and whistles that are used at night.... Sometimes, the *baale* (traditional ruler) and his chiefs also support us with logistics, but usually, we bear the bulk of the cost of our operations at night... our members are trusted people who must be above board in character.
>
> *Youth Male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

Another respondent, a member of the Police Public Relations Committee (PCRC) in the community noted that there is a difference in the character or nature of youth vigilante groups in the cosmopolitan and non-cosmopolitan areas. Specifically, he indicated that while youth vigilantism is a more enduring feature of the security administration of the hinterland communities, in the more cosmopolitan settings, youth vigilante groups occur usually when there is an invasion or attack on a community as stop-gap measures. In his words:

> In most urban settings, youth vigilante occurs when there is an invasion or attach on the community. Maybe hoodlums invaded some number of houses on a particular street and carted away money and other valuables, the youths might now decide to resist these invaders...sometimes they may arm themselves with batons, bottles, cudgels or cutlasses to defend themselves in case of aggression. But usually, the lifespan of such responses is short...say a week or two. In other words, the youths act when there is a threat to security and immediately afterwards, they fizzle out. The picture may be slightly different in the hinterlands where the villagers know themselves more intimately...by name, they know when Mr. A is not around, when he comes back, what he does for a living etc. Here, the youths are part and parcel of the security administration of the neighbourhoods. These cannot happen in the urban areas.
>
> *Adult Male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

In the more cosmopolitan areas where social relations are much more complex and formal, it was found that informal policing functions were usually contracted out to people who were paid monthly or as agreed upon. In such settings, members of ISS resume at night

and close in the morning. They may be residents and they could as well be non-residents. They could also be indigenes or non-indigenes. As an Imam who was interviewed in Ikeja noted:

> We have vigilantes in this area. Most of them are old men who retired from the military or the police. They come in the night and close in the morning. I don't know where they live and where they are from, but I know that they exist...we hear them making noise and brandishing cutlasses at night. Their identities are not always made open but they operate...
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikeja)*

This story was corroborated by a member of the night watch group in Ikorodu who reported that he had done that job for over thirty years in different parts of Lagos. In his words:

> I have done this work for more than thirty years now. I worked in different parts of Lagos before I came to Ikorodu. Before now I was covering more than six streets in this neighbourhood, but now the number of streets has reduced to only two because people in the other streets were not faithful in paying my money....If I have to travel, I bring in my brother to hold forth...I augment it with petty trading during the day.
>
> *Night watcher (IDI, Ikorodu)*

The popular Odua People's Congress (OPC) falls under this category of paid informal policing outfits that provide security on demand to needy clients. As one of their coordinators in Eti-Osa indicated:

> The organization provides security to people who need our services. We provide services to banks, companies, schools, filling stations and even to streets. Usually, we are paid for these services. However, when we are invited to a robbery scene or crisis scene, we make do with any form of 'appreciation'
>
> *OPC Coordinator (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

Our study also discovered that each of these variants of community night watch groups has its modes of recruitment, sustainability, supervision and of ensuring discipline and accountability. These are discussed in later parts of state-sponsored neighbourhood watch.

2. State-sponsored neighbourhood watch

Another form of informal security group that was identified in the study communities was the neighbourhood watch, which was established by the Lagos State Government in 1996 to complement the efforts of the formal police through surveillance and

intelligence gathering. As in-depth interview as well as focus group discussions indicate, members of the outfit are usually recruited through the community development associations (CDA) and posted to work within their communities and local government areas of residence. In the words of one of the group's coordinators in Mushin Local Government Area,

> Neighbourhood watch is a type of community policing working for 24/7 (24 hours daily) for surveillance. We were established in 1996 by the Brig. Buba Marwa military regime. We are recruited by the state government and posted to various LGAs, ministries, hospitals, schools and everywhere mainly for surveillance. We have our own control room ...we report to the police and they respond immediately. We are under the State Ministry of Rural Development.
>
> (*IDI, Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, Mushin)*

3. Individual house-owner/occupant employed/ Residential security guards/ ***mai-guards***

The third form of informal security structures which was found in the study communities were the residential security guards or what most respondents referred to as *mai-guards*. Participants in nearly all the focus groups discussions as well as respondents to the in-depth interview agreed that this category of guards are useful in manning residential gates and that sometimes their presence wards off petty thieves. As a participant in the female focus group discussion in Mushin said:

> *Mai guards* are not the same as vigilante or *olode*. They are *abokis* or mallams (an adulterated reference to persons mostly of northern descent) who are engaged by individual house-owners or residents as gatemen. Sometimes they double as security men. Usually, their work does not cover entire street or community.
>
> *Adult female participant (FGD, Mushin)*

Findings from the qualitative data indicated further that the demand for *mai-guards* is linked to the activities of petty thieves who sneak into compounds to remove household items while people are away. Some respondents also linked the presence of *mai-guards* to the loss of cars to robbers who lurk around residences as people come back from work. Usually these robbers would pounce on unsuspecting victims as they step out of their cars in a bid to open the gate and drive in. Recounting how they got a *mai-guard* for their residence, a female respondent in Ikeja said:

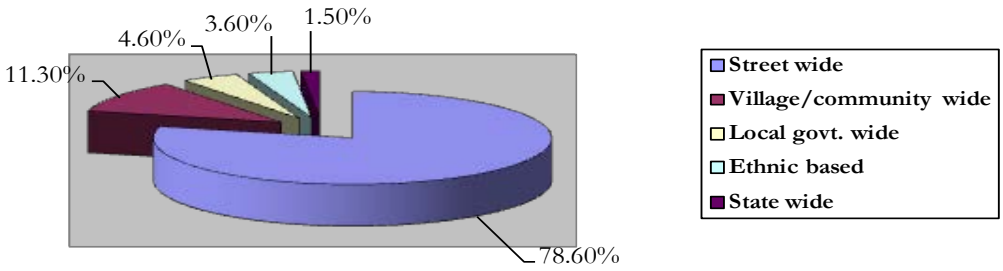
> My husband had come home about 8pm on a fateful night. We did not have a gateman, so he came out of the car to get the gate, and lo and behold, some three young men emerged from nowhere and took the car from him at gunpoint. It did not stop there; they carried him as far as Ibafo in Ogun State, pushed him out of the car and sped away. After that incident, we got a *mai-guard* who would open the gate when we are a few metres away to enable us drive straight in as we come back. These robbers hang around and sometimes they trail you as you drive back, and would attack as you step out of the car to get the gate.
>
> *Female Respondent (IDI, Ikeja)*

Emerging from the foregoing is the clear fact that informal security structures go by different appellations in different neighbourhoods, and sometimes even within the same neighbourhood. There is also clear distinction between three major types of ISS groups, namely those that are the product of collective initiative of the local people through their leaders, those that are state-sponsored and those that are the initiatives of individual house owners or occupants. A last inference from the preceding submissions is also the fact that each of these forms of ISS has its own organizational structure and modus operandi, and that regardless of their origins, structure and modus operandi, they all exist largely to provide a sense of safety and security among residents.

4.3.5 Geographical jurisdiction of informal security structures

The study also sought to find out the geographical presence or jurisdictions of the informal security structures from the respondents in the study. This became necessary given what appears to be a seeming apprehension by the police, especially with groups that have wide jurisdictions, such as all over a given state or across a state, as was the case with the Bakassi Boys in south-eastern states and the Odua People's Congress in south–western Nigeria between 2000 and 2003 (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2006). As is seen in Figure 4.1 below, a total of six different types of informal security groups based on geographical spread were identified in the various areas covered by this study. Presented in order of spread, these categories are street-based ISS, mentioned by 78.6% of the 1017 respondents, village/community-based groups, mentioned by 11.3% of respondents and local government wide groups, mentioned by 4.6% of the respondents. Others are ethnic based groups (3.9%), state-based groups (1.0%) and faith-based groups (0.1%).

Fig.4.1:Types of ISS in Lagos State by Geographical Spread



Discussions with respondents in the in-depth interview and the focus group discussions provided an insight into the above observed geographical spread of these various informal security structures in the state. One of such suggests that informal security is seemingly a matter for residents at street levels because of the largely cosmopolitan character of Lagos which has diminished the influence of the traditional institutions that regulate the operations of informal security structures. Usually, arrangements for informal security are made by residents of given streets operating through either the landlords' associations, residents' associations or community development associations. In the words of one elderly male respondent to the in-depth interview in Ikeja:

> Lagos is a big city with people from different parts of the country and even foreigners. The Oba and the *Baales* and the police also are doing their best to secure everywhere but it is not easy. That is why different streets are helping to protect themselves. It is no longer easy for the Oba or *Baale* to be able to control everywhere as before. The landlords and the CDAs have to come in and assist to make everywhere safe. In most cases, the Oba and the *Baale* get involved only when sacrifices are to be made to appease the gods during which time they send representatives to make the sacrifices. But generally, informal policing arrangements are made by landlords, residents or community development associations (CDA) as the case may be.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikeja)*

The village or community-wide informal security groups were the second most dominant forms mentioned by respondents. As data revealed, these were noticed mostly in the more rural parts of the state. The explanation for this is that these areas are not as cosmopolitan and as heterogeneous as the more urbanized parts of the state. Participants in an all-male adult focus group discussion in Okun Alfa area of Eti-Osa added that, in

such settings, the traditional institutions also appear stronger and social life is less formal. As one of them put it:

> You know that our community is not very big. The people here know themselves very well and cooperate among ourselves. The vigilantes are members of this community…youths who volunteer themselves to protect the community. What happens is that in the night they mount road blocks in strategic routes in the community between 11pm and 5am to check the activities of thieves ....Sometimes they patrol from street to street in groups. I don't know if they are being paid but I know that they report to the Baale and his chiefs. May be they settle them somehow, but I do not know.
>
> *Adult male participant (FGD, Okun Alfa, Eti-Osa)*

Another male respondent to an in-depth interview discussion in the same *Okun Alfa* area of Eti-Osa provided a more apt explanation for the presence of more village- or community-wide ISS groups in the less cosmopolitan areas. In his words:

> The traditional institution is still very strong here. The responsibility for the security of the community rests on the shoulders of the *Baale* and his chiefs. They arrange for the vigilantes and also control them. Our own is to follow what they say....The vigilantes are in charge of the entire community. They patrol the entire community at night to scare away thieves....
>
> *Adult male participant (IDI, Okun Alfa, Eti-Osa)*

Discussions with participants in the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions revealed that there appears to be confusion between ISS groups that were identified as local government based and the ones that are said to be state-sponsored. Indeed, these two groups are one and the same, and refer to the neighbourhood watch group which was established by the state government, but which has jurisdiction only within their local government areas.

The presence of ethnic-based ISS groups in the state is traceable to the Odua People's Congress, which has its base in Lagos State and draws its membership from Yoruba-speaking residents. However, the low presence of the group is explained by the waning popularity of the OPC as an informal security outfit in the state. As Akinyele (2008) notes:

> ....the usefulness of the OPC is currently being called into question by residents of the study area. First, it is alleged that thieves and bad eggs have infiltrated the ranks of the OPC to an extent that the OPC has become a part of the problem rather than a solution to the crime wave.... Secondly, the armed robbers developed the strategy of deceiving their victims by posing as OPC guards and calling on them to come out at night to identify fictitious household members or co- tenants.

Discussions with one of the coordinators of OPC in Ikorodu revealed also that there has been conscious effort to rebrand the organization from its dreadful image of being a violent and criminal group to what he called a "corporate OPC" that is civil and disciplined.

One clear conclusion that emerges from the foregoing is the fact that apart from the state sponsored neighbourhood watch group which has a state wide presence, all other forms of ISS are mostly localized either within specific streets or are at best village or community-based.

4.3.6 Mode of recruitment of members of ISS groups

The study was also interested in finding out how the members of the informal security structures were recruited. This became necessary following allegations that many of the operatives of ISS groups are themselves rogues (Akinyele, 2008; Ojukwu, 2008). It turned out that, although membership of the ISS in all the four local government areas that were studied was generally voluntary, intending members were expected to meet certain minimum conditions before they could be admitted. These conditions varied from community to community, depended on the type of ISS in operation in an area and included residency, sex, indigeneship and proven integrity.

Data from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with members and leaders of these various ISS groups provided further insights into their compositions. Specifically, it was found that in neighbourhoods where security was undertaken as a communal concern, membership of ISS groups was most likely to comprise residents only. Again, this was common in the less cosmopolitan settings where social relations are still reasonably simple, informal and interpersonal and in cosmopolitan settings that have

either managed to retain a measure of their traditional structure or where folks are predominantly poor. As a traditional ruler in one of the interior communities in Eti-Osa Local Government Area put it:

> We have very vibrant vigilante group made up of able bodied young men that oversee the security of our community. Members of the group are part of us....our youths; they patrol the entire community and mount road blocks in strategic locations between 11pm and 5am. They work under my direct supervision and of course, the *baale-in-council.*
>
> *A traditional ruler (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

Another community leader in Igbogbo/Bayeku area of Ikorodu Local Government corroborated this thus:

> The security of the community is a serious matter that we cannot hand over to outsiders, so we handle it ourselves. The *baale* and his chiefs organize the young men in the community to provide vigilante services at night.... Security requires people who have intimate knowledge of the environment and this is why it is better provided by insiders.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Igbogbo Bayeku, Ikorodu)*

In settings where informal policing functions were contracted out and paid for, the situation was slightly different. Members of the ISS groups consisted of both residents and non-residents. They were also made up of indigenes or non-indigenes. Again, and without prejudice to the less cosmopolitan settings, this informal security arrangement was found to be more common in the more cosmopolitan areas where social relations are much more complex and formal. A community leader in Mushin reported that, usually, these salaried vigilantes or olodes are mostly seasoned old hunters recruited from the hinterland based on strong recommendations by trusted persons. They are often men with potent mystical powers. In his words:

> You know that our area here – Mushin – is crime-prone. Some streets here, that is, their leaders, travel to the villages to recruit old men that have charms or voodoo powers. When this happens, members of the community are sternly warned not to go beyond certain areas at night. Normally charms are sprinkled on the surface of those areas. Those who trespass would lose their senses and would begin to hover around the vicinity until dawn when they will be arrested. Most of these salaried vigilantes are hunters brought from the villages to help fight crime.
>
> *Adult male community leader (IDI, Mushin)*

The data also showed that indigeneship or ethnicity as a criterion was mostly common in settings where informal security services were provided by members of the Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC). As was indicated earlier, the OPC is an ethnic self-determination militia group which performs vigilante activities as means of legitimizing itself by responding to felt needs of the people in the area of safety and security. It is purely a Yoruba group and it is only natural that it is not open to outsiders. Responding to a question on how members of the OPC in his Ilupeju Estate area of Mushin are recruited, a coordinator of the group in the area had this to say:

> Membership of OPC is voluntary. Usually, people who are interested in joining the group are made to obtain a membership form for N500. Thereafter, they are investigated to know if they are of good character. After this, we organize interviews for them and successful ones are absorbed... Non indigenes are not members; you must be a Yoruba man before you can be a member of OPC....There are women members of OPC but women do not take part in security.
>
> *OPC Coordinator (IDI, Mushin)*

The state-sponsored outfit, the neighbourhood watch, was found not to consider sex in the recruitment of members. However, members are recruited from their communities based on strong recommendations of their CDA executives. As one of the officials of the outfit in Ikorodu, a Chief Watcher by rank, captured it:

> The group works both day and night. Our personnel consist of both males and females who are recruited based strictly on the condition that they are known credible members of their CDAs.... We have non-Yoruba in the organization.
>
> *Male official of the state's Neighbourhood watch (IDI, Ikorodu)*

Beyond the foregoing, one other criterion for recruitment which kept recurring in almost all the communities that were covered for this study bordered on the honesty and uprightness of the persons that are recruited as members of ISS. Respondents in the in-depth interviews as well as focus group participants were unanimous in their view that the recruitment of people as vigilantes or night guards is a rigorous and painstaking process to ensure that the safety and security of the neighbourhood is not handed over to dubious or crime-minded people. Recounting how a supposed ex-security guard

conspired with criminals to rob his principal in a neighbourhood before, a female participant in a focus group discussion session in Mushin Local Government Area of Lagos State stressed why care is usually taken in recruiting the ISS. In her words:

> Sometime ago, we heard of how a former security guard in a man's house invited criminals to his master's house. They robbed the family of money and other valuables and raped the man's wife and daughter. But as God would have it, the security man protected the housemaid from harm because she was nice to him while in his master's employment. He foolishly exchanged phone numbers with the house help promising to take her out of suffering if she would agree to leave her employer. ....Thank God the house help reported him to her master and he was later rounded up with his gang members. This is why care must always be taken to investigate the background of people we entrust our security to.
>
> *An adult female participant (FGD,Mushin)*

Another adult male respondent in Igbogbo/Bayeku area of Ikorodu corroborated this point:

> Nobody of questionable character can become a member of the ISS. That is why we engage only members of this community who we know very well and can vouch for. It is rare for us to recruit an outsider because security is a sensitive issue that must be handled with care. You must be sure of the people you call security because sometimes criminals pose as security guards as a strategy to penetrate the community and carry out their evil plans.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikorodu)*

Making the same point, the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator (NECO) in Ikeja said 'for my organization, candidates are usually screened by the Commissioner of Police or his representative before they are engaged. The State Security Service also screens our members. Only those that are adjudged credible are recruited into the organization'.

Surprising, however, was the discovery in a few of the communities that were covered by this study that no conscious effort was made to screen out people of doubtful characters from joining the vigilante groups. Indeed, such individuals were encouraged to join the vigilante or community night watchers. When asked the rationale behind this, an elderly community leader replied thus:

> Getting such individuals to participate in the community watch group was a way of committing them and of making them feel responsible... and to feel that they can contribute to the community. Usually, they try not to betray the trust reposed in them by keeping out of crime. They also know that eyes are on them and they strive to prove people wrong. The practice is that they are paired with more responsible and trusted people.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Okun Alfa, Eti-Osa)*

This situation was observed only in such neighbourhoods where neighbourhood policing was regarded as a communal activity and handled mainly by community members who are usually youths. And when this happens, there would usually be internal mechanisms which are put in place to monitor members' activities. Again, these are exceptions, the general tendency being that members of ISS groups are subjected to thorough screening before they are engaged.

4.3.7 Modus operandi of informal security groups in Lagos

Both qualitative and quantitative data from the study point to slight variations in the modes of operations of the various forms of ISS identified in the communities studied. However, they also agree that most of the informal security groups operate during the night, essentially as night watchmen. Usually, they are stationed at strategic locations, but occasionally they patrol their neighbourhood to frustrate and possibly apprehend anyone suspected of crime or of violating regulations on movement during the night. Also, except for the very few instances where security was said to be provided by just one man, most of the ISS groups that operated in the study communities patrolled the streets and neighbourhoods in groups. The number of persons in a group varied from group to group and from community to community, depending on both human and material resources at the disposal of the groups or communities.

In communities where the youths take the security of their neighbourhoods as a communal matter, more people were usually available to patrol given areas. In this instance, the youths divide themselves into groups of between 4 and 7 to patrol various parts of the community while some other groups mount roadblocks in strategic locations

after dusk (anytime from 11pm or even earlier in some places). This category of ISS group often employs such tools as torches, whistles, horsewhips, sticks, boots and, sometimes, cutlasses.

In communities where community members have to pay the night watchers however, the number in a patrol team is usually less. The study also found that, in certain instances, some of these ISS groups do not necessarily patrol the areas they are charged to guard. Instead, they just plant or sprinkle certain charms in the area under their watch, mutter certain incantations and simply go to sleep. Crime-minded persons who trespass on such areas would literally lose their minds and would continue to roam within the vicinity until dawn when they will be apprehended. According to one of the community leaders in Ikorodu:

> The vigilantes in my street were recruited from Ijebu Igbo. Their operation is very simple. Every night, beginning from 11 o'clock, they would just move around the street making some incantations. After that, they would go back to their base. If you have criminal intent and pass there, you will remain there until they come to meet you, but if you have no skeleton in your cup board, you will have no problem. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, the community could not afford to maintain them, so they left. They were armed to the teeth with voodoo.
>
> *Adult male community leader (IDI, Ikorodu)*

When asked of the likelihood of the charm harming innocent persons, one respondent said:

> Never! It cannot hurt anyone who is innocent or even a criminal whose mission is not to rob in the given neighbourhood. Only those who have bad mind towards that particular neighbourhood or who plan to rob or do evil in that neighbourhood will become victims. We may not be able to explain this, but it is true and effective.
>
> *Adult male community leader (IDI, Ikorodu)*

The members of the Odua People's Congress (OPC) were also found to rely heavily on the use of charms. According to one of their members in Mushin, 'we normally arm ourselves to the teeth with charms. We make incantations and use voodoo. When we hit you with our charms, you can become paralyzed or even die'. Part of the reservations of

the Nigeria Police and several other Nigerians derives from this reliance on charms to determine culpability of suspects, especially because this has no logical or empirically provable foundation.

Apart from charms and incantations, it was also found that some ISS groups make use of native guns, double barrel guns, cutlasses and other poisonous substances. As indicated earlier, many of these ISS members are erstwhile hunters or servicemen who have used guns before. Some of them are permitted by the police to carry guns. In the words of one member of PCRC in Mushin:

> They (the night watchers) can apply to the police indicating their intention to carry guns. The moment the police can confirm that they have used guns before, they would grant them the permission. But they must also account for how they use these guns.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

This does not, however, extend to the state-sponsored neighbourhood watchers or even the youth-based vigilantes. The state-sponsored neighbourhood watchers are generally not armed but usually have walkie- talkies which they use to report incidences of crime or other threats to their neighbourhoods to the police or other relevant bodies like the fire service, in event of fire outbreaks.

The study revealed further that most informal policing jobs are part-time, and usually at night. During the day, members take to their respective vocations while at night they transform to vigilantes. As a vigilante in Imota area of Ikorodu volunteered,

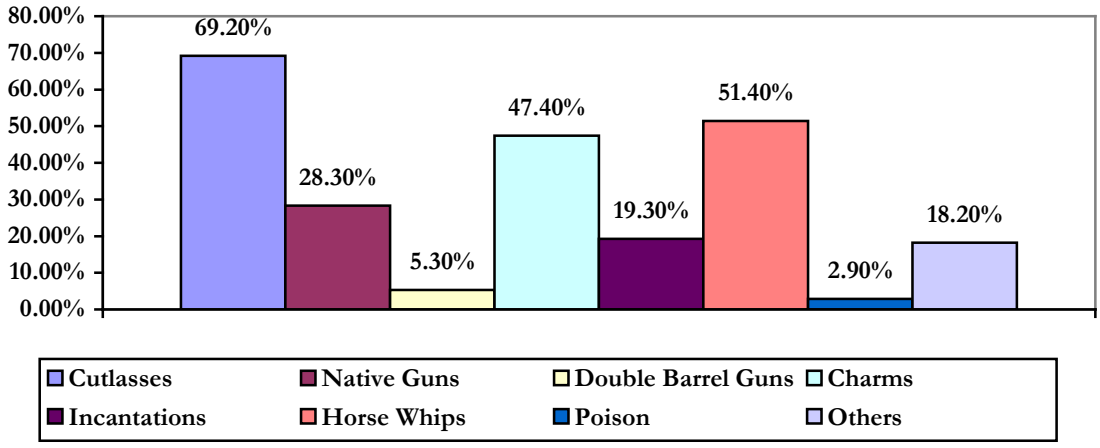
> I am different things at different times. During the day, I go to my provision store where I sell various daily need items. But at night I become a security. I have been combining these two activities for a while now, just to make ends meet.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikorodu)*

This also used to be true of the state-sponsored neighbourhood group until lately when the upsurge in crime made the authority to change the operations of the group from a strictly voluntary service to a regular one. According to one of the NECOs in Mushin,

> Our job is full-time now. Before, it was volunteer, but now, it is regular. Before, we used to have volunteers but now due to the security pressure on the state, it is now regular. Our men work 24/7 (twenty-four hours daily)....Sometimes, our female watchers also work at night, but usually it is our men that work at night.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

Reports from the survey of community members corroborated, to a large extent, the outcome of the qualitative data with respect to the instruments employed by the ISS in the various neighbourhoods. As is seen in Figure 4.2 below, 69.2% of the respondents associated ISS groups with cutlasses, 51.4% said they used horsewhips, 47.4% associated them with charms, while 28.3% reported that the ISS in their areas bore native guns. Furthermore, 19.3% reported that the ISS in their areas used incantations, 5.3% said they carried double barrel guns, while 2.9% said they made use of undisclosed poisons.

Fig.4.2: Instruments/weapons used by members of ISS Groups



The availability of instruments of violence in the hands of non-state actors is considered a cause for worry by some scholars (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004). The Nigeria Police has also expressed misgivings about the use of arms, charms, divination and traditional protection devices to identify suspects by some informal security groups (Ojukwu, 2008). The often common allegation is that some informal security groups are

quick to resort to high-handedness, showmanship and abuse of fundamental freedoms of persons arrested by them.

However, these ISS groups have defended their possession and sometimes, use of arms and charms. As a member of the OPC reported:

> Even the police advise that one can use force in self-defence. We use weapons and charms to protect ourselves in the event that suspects turn violent and attack us. As you know, patrolling the streets at night can be quite dangerous... many of our members have been attacked by criminals in the past. Many of the criminals are usually heavily armed and you cannot effectively handle them with bare hands or sticks. Concerning charms, let me assure you that justice is a condition for their (charms) efficacy and when you break this rule, it normally would boomerang. People are just expressing fears because of ignorance about how it works.
>
> *OPC male respondent (IDI, Igbo Efon, Eti-Osa)*

4.3.8 Leadership, supervision and accountability of informal security groups in Lagos State

Given the prominence of informal security structures in the state and, in particular, their widespread acceptance as trusted security outfits, it was necessary to understand how they are organized. Respondents were asked an array of questions bordering on whether these organizations had leaders, how these leaders were chosen, by whom they were chosen and to whom they accounted. Other things the study tried to find out included whether the ISS groups were registered with any organ of government, whether members of the ISS were paid salaries or not and by whom, and whether their job was full-time or part-time.

In-depth interviews with members of the ISS and other stakeholders as well as responses from participants in the focus group discussions indicated that, although slight variations existed between the various forms of ISS, they were all properly organized around a leader or leaders who was or were mostly appointed either by members themselves or by the empowering authority which ranged from traditional rulers *(baale)* and their chiefs, landlords' or residents' associations, community development associations (CDAs) or local/state government. However, there were a few

streets and neighbourhoods where security was provided by just one man in which case there were no leaders, strictly speaking. However, even in such rare instances, there were still persons who oversaw the activities of these security operatives.

With respect to the OPC, it was found that leaders exist at national, state, local government and zonal levels. Key leaders of the group emerged usually after due consultations of the *ifa oracle* while other executive members are elected by members. According to one of the zonal coordinators in Ikorodu,

> We have a total of 38 zones in this LCDA. Each of the zones has a zonal coordinator and a commandant who are chosen by the *Ifa oracle.* Their tenure is open ended, meaning that they will remain in office as long as possible... until death, promotion or resignation. The positions of the secretary and treasurer are filled through elections.
>
> *OPC Coordinator (IDI, Ikorodu)*

The data revealed further that the state-sponsored neighbourhood watch also has a structure with a very clear line of authority. Specifically, it has officers at state, local government and ward levels. The state and local government units are headed by coordinators known as NECO, an acronym for neighbourhood coordinator, while the ward level is headed by a Chief Watcher. Elevation to leadership positions follow after the civil service pattern and are influenced primarily by efficiency, level of education and length of service. As a NECO in Ikeja Local Government Area put it:

> This organization has come a long way. We have been in existence since the past sixteen years. It is well structured. At the state level, we have state officers, but the overall head is the state coordinator. All the local government areas also have their own officers such as NECO, Deputy NECO, Assistant NECO and the like. At the ward level, we also have our officers. A ward is made up of several CDAs and is headed by a Chief Watcher.
>
> *Neighbourhood Coordinator (IDI, Ikeja)*

For the more communal community night watchers that are organized mostly by youths in liaison with traditional rulers, leaders emerge usually through appointment and, in some cases, through elections.

Regarding supervision and accountability of these groups, the study also revealed that there existed mechanisms for overseeing the activities of the various ISS groups in the respective communities that were covered by the study. For the more communal groups that are tied to the local administration of the communities, the traditional rulers oversee their activities directly or indirectly through their appointed representatives. In the more cosmopolitan settings where security is arranged by residents on streets basis, the activities of these groups are overseen by the body that engaged them, such as landlords' associations, residents' associations or even community development associations. In the words of one of the community leaders in Eti-Osa Local Government Area:

> It is the community that supervises their work. Sometimes, the community members will wake up at odd hours to check on them...if they are not working or if they are sleeping, you remove their baton or gun (because some of them are allowed to use gun with the approval of the police) as evidence that you caught them sleeping on duty. You could query such lax ones and if their conduct persists, you fire them. You also report to the person that connected you to them, because they are recruited through connection.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

For the state-sponsored neighbourhood watchers, supervision is done by both the Nigeria Police and the Ministry of Rural Development, which is their parent ministry. According to a Neighbourhood Coordinator in Mushin:

> Our supervision is done by the Commissioner of Police through his designated officers. Whenever we want to move out for surveillance, we have to book down (document) at the nearest police station in each of the wards. This will enable the police to know our movement and not go to the same direction we have gone to cover. Our parent ministry also supervises our operations.
>
> *Neighbourhood Coordinator (IDI, Mushin)*

Regarding accountability, it was found that there also existed measures which helped to keep members of these groups in check. For all the vigilantes, there is usually a requirement that they should be registered with the police. Those of them who wish to use guns would also have to inform the police and be prepared to account for every shot fired. According to Engineer Adebiyi, a member of the PCRC in Mushin:

> These groups are usually registered with the police. Any street or community that wishes to engage the services of these people would apply to the police and the police must have been aware of the incessant invasion of the neighbourhood by criminals. You write to the police for permission. You will also have to take the vigilantes to the police for interview and if it requires that they will use arms, the police will know the type of arms they will use and whatever they will use to safeguard the community will be analyzed. If they want to use gun, the police would want to know if they have been using guns before and since they are mostly hunters or ex- service men, they will say yes.... They will also have to report any shot they make to the Police and give reasons why.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

While a few of the ISS groups were registered with the police, many were never registered either with the police or with the local government authorities. Specifically, it was found that most of the youth-based vigilantes were not registered with any organ of government. A youth leader in Odi-Olowo in Mushin decried their inability to get their outfit registered with the local government or the police after several efforts. In his words, 'my group has been trying to register with the local government and the police here for over four years, but till today nothing has come out of our efforts. We are already fed up, but we have continued to provide services to our community. We cooperate with the police'.

Community members revealed that, usually, these unregistered ones have problems with the police from time to time. As a community leader in Ikeja noted:

> In places where they are not registered, these vigilantes usually run into problems. There was a case in my area where the police had to raid and lock up all the vigilantes in an area following a reported armed robbery attack. All of the vigilantes were arrested and detained because they were not registered and were therefore seen as suspects
>
> *Adult Male respondent (IDI, Ikeja)*

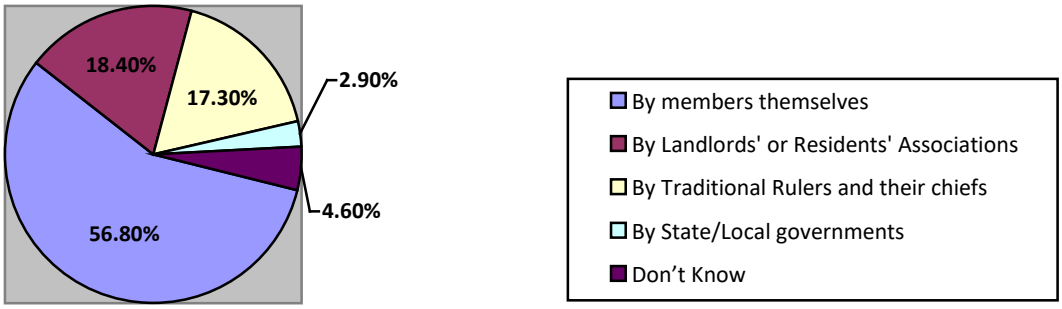
Information from different leaders and members of the Odua Peoples' Congress regarding the status of the organization appeared hazy. While a few of them reported that the national body of the organization was registered, a few others indicated that no such registration of the group took place because of its association with militancy by the government. However, despite this controversy, discussions revealed that accountability

was also demanded by the leaders of the group. The operatives are under instructions to hand over suspects to the leaders who, in turn, will notify their employer who may be landlords association, residents association or any other body that has engaged their services. Such suspects are subsequently handed over to the police. Responding to the common allegation that members of the group mete out jungle justice to suspects, a commandant of the outfit in Ikorodu said:

> That was in the past when our relationship with the police was bad. Many of our people did not like the way the police were doing their work and preferred to handle their suspects without involving the police. But today, things have changed. When we make arrests, we hand over to the police. Also we use force if a suspect tries to harm you... It is in such situations that our men use charms to hit their suspects, and when this happens they say OPC is violent. We rough-handle suspects only when they try to harm us.
>
> *OPC Commandant (IDI, Ikorodu)*

The outcome of the survey of community members agrees with the result of the IDI and focus group discussions on how the leaders of the ISS groups emerge. As is seen in Figure 4.3 below, the leaders of the ISS groups were chosen mostly by members themselves (56.8%), landlords' or residents' associations/community development associations – CDAs – (18.4%), by traditional rulers and their chiefs (17.3%) and by state/local government authorities (2.9%). The remaining 4.6% of the respondents claimed that they did not know who was responsible for choosing the leaders of the ISS.

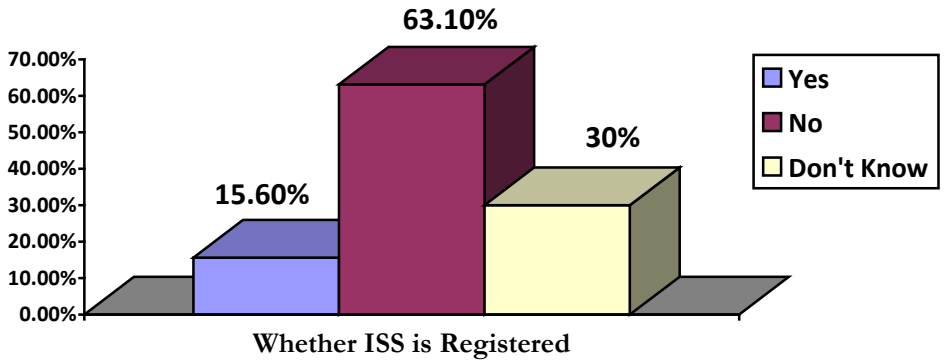
Fig.4.3: How Leaders of ISS Groups are determined



The survey result also revealed that the majority of the ISS groups that were operational in the study communities were not registered with any organ or agency of government.

Only 15.8% of the respondents thought that the ISS in their neighbourhoods were registered with an organ of government as against the 63.1% that thought otherwise. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents could not say if the ISS in their neighbourhoods were registered with any agency of government or not. This is certainly not good enough, especially given that some of these groups bear arms.

Fig. 4.4: Whether ISS Groups are Registered with any Government Agency



4.3.9 Remuneration and funding of informal security structures in Lagos State

The study also sought to find out how the informal security groups were funded. This became necessary against the backdrop of the natural linkage between source of funding and influence or control over these groups. Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) raise fears about the possibility that some groups and individuals that support the work of ISS groups may be doing so out of less than altruistic motives and that they may in fact, be using them for personal vendetta.

It was found that funding for these outfits varied based on type. The common trend across all the communities that were covered by the study is that in areas where vigilantes are salaried, community members levy themselves to pay the vigilantes. According to a community leader in Onipetesi area of Ikeja:

> We finance the vigilante in this area from our purses. Normally, we share the total wages of these vigilantes on the basis of the number of houses on the street. For instance, in my street, we have single rooms, room and parlours, blocks of flats and whole buildings. Each house or compound is levied certain amount of money based on the population.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikeja)*

Another female respondent in Akala area of Mushin corroborated the fact that community members fund the activities of the ISS groups. According to her:

> The vigilantes here collect salaries. There is a man who comes around at the end of the month to collect the security money. If you don't pay they will not allow you to open your shop.
>
> *Adult female respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

This was also found to be true with the OPC. When they are invited to settle disputes, they do not charge a fee, but would gladly receive any goodwill gift from the parties. However, they demand to be paid in the event that they are hired to provide security either by individuals or organizations.

In neighbourhoods where security is treated as a communal work, the traditional rulers and other public-spirited individuals merely voluntarily assist the groups with some of their instruments of work, such as torches, batteries, whistles, and, sometimes, drinks. Members also make occasional personal contributions to sustain their groups, while others also collect tokens from new members.

The data revealed that the state-sponsored neighbourhood watchers are funded by the state through the local governments. They are not paid salaries, but what many of them referred to as stipends. Sometimes, the group gets funds from agencies, organizations and even streets who engage their services. According to a Neighbourhood Coordinator in Jakande area of Eti-Osa,

> The state government pays us monthly stipends through the local government councils. The money is so small, but we are managing it because we have the interest of our communities at heart. That is why we have been lobbying the state government for improved status...Maybe they can make us like LASTMA (Lagos State Traffic Management Authority) or Kai (Kick Against Indiscipline) brigade. The state also funds other aspects of our work, such as patrol vehicles and walkie-talkies.
>
> *Neighbourhood Coordinator (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

The views espoused by in-depth interview respondents and participants in the focus group discussions aligned with those of most of the community members who took part in the general survey regarding the issue of remuneration and funding of the ISS groups. As is revealed in Table 4.4 below, 81.8% of the respondents reported that the ISS in the neighbourhoods were on salaries, as against 13.3% who reported otherwise, and 4.9% who did not seem to know if the ISS members were on salaries. Again, the data showed that most of ISS members worked part-time. Only 31% of the respondents reported that their work was full-time, as against 61% that claimed that their work was part-time. The remaining 7.6% of the respondents did not know whether members of the ISS groups in their areas worked full-time or part-time. Responses further revealed that members of the ISS were paid mostly through levies on community members (81.8%), voluntary contributions from community members (20.3%) and local/state governments (5.9%).

Table 4.4: Work Status and Remuneration of Members of ISS Groups in Lagos State

Work Status and Remuneration of Members of ISS Groups in Lagos State	**Response**	**No N=1017**	**%** 100.0
Whether the work of the members of the ISS in your area is a full-time job	Yes	321	31.0
	No	620	61.0
	Don't Know	76	7.5
Whether members of the ISS in your community are paid salaries	Yes	832	81.8
	No	135	13.3
	No Response	50	4.9
How the salaries of the ISS members are paid	Yes	832	81.8
1. Levies on community members	No	135	13.3
	No Response	50	4.9
2. Voluntary contributions from community members?	Yes	206	20.3
	No	761	74.8
	No Response	50	4.9
3. Local/State government	Yes	60	5.9
	No	907	89.2
	No Response	50	4.9

4.3.10 Relationship between informal security structures and the Nigeria Police in Lagos State.

The stake of securing neighbourhoods is getting higher and more complicated by the day. This calls for coordinated efforts and synergy by all, and especially among those structures and agencies that are charged with the security concerns of the people at both

governmental and community levels. It is this realization that informed the gravitation towards community and non-state policing in most countries (Baker, 2005). It was in this light that this study took interest in examining the relationship between the Nigeria Police and their community-initiated counterparts. In this section, we discuss the outcome of our interactions with men of the Nigeria Police, members of the ISS groups and of course gatekeepers in the various communities that were covered by this study.

Contrary to widely held views in certain circles, this study found that there existed a rather warm relationship between the Nigeria Police and most informal security groups in the communities that were covered by this study. The study revealed that, except for groups that are not registered with the police, the police generally consider the ISS groups as partners in the business of securing the communities. Particularly as the police do not have enough manpower to police every part of the state. In many instances, it was found that the police actively canvassed for community members to organise themselves into vigilantes to augment the efforts of the police. As a Divisional Police Officer (DPO) who took part in the study put it:

> We have a good working relationship with the vigilantes. We insist that any community which expresses desire to have vigilantes must bring these people to us for screening. In fact, we encourage communities to form their own vigilantes to assist in policing their neighbourhoods. When this is done, they bring the people here for us to screen and interview. Then they will submit their passports and personal profiles. The moment they are registered we see them as partners in business. As you know, the police cannot be everywhere. So we encourage the communities to form their own vigilantes to assist in policing their neighbourhoods
>
> *Police Respondent (IDI, Ikorodu)*

Reiterating the fact about their collaboration with the ISS, another Deputy Superintendent of Police in Mushin said:

> We work closely with the ISS groups in this area. They register with us and help to cover interior areas that police cannot reach...you know there are some *lungu areas (*hidden areas) that the police cannot get to, so these people help to cover such areas. They have our phone numbers and would usually call us when the need arises. When they make arrests, they hand over to us... we also advise them on how to deal with suspects so that they do not take laws into their hands....We have not had any

> problems with them here. The ones we have problem with are those who are not registered with us. When we see these ones, we arrest and prosecute them.
>
> *Police Respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

A member of the PCRC in Ikorodu also made a similar observation. In his words:

> They (the Police) see the whole idea of informal policing positively because they (ISS) help reduce the stress of the police of needing to patrol every nook and cranny of the community. The Police also cooperate with the members of ISS during their night patrol...they exchange information that are vital in order to keep the community safe.
>
> *Adult male respondent (IDI, Ikorodu)*

The same situation was found to be true with the state-sponsored neighbourhood watch As was indicated earlier, not only are these ones supervised by the police, but they also work quite closely with them. Underscoring this point, a coordinator of the neighbourhood watch in Ikeja averred that: '...we have our own control room. We report to the police whenever there is a problem and they respond immediately'. Members of the O.P.C who took part in the study also reported that, although their relationship with the police in the past was hostile, things are a lot better now since the organization began some kind of rebranding. According to a leader of the group in Mushin:

> Formerly, there used to be skirmishes between the OPC and the police. The police believed that we took over their functions illegally. The Police also believed that we thrived on jungle justice and were being used to victimize innocent people. This sort of feeling strained the relationship between the two groups in the past. But that has become a thing of the past. Today, if we apprehend a suspect, we hand him over to the police for further investigations. OPC has stopped those excesses because bad eggs in the group have been flushed out. It was so bad in the last five to ten years, but now OPC has been redefined. What we have now is "Corporate OPC".
>
> *OPC leader (IDI, Mushin)*

Emerging from the foregoing is the fact that, generally, the relationship between formal and the informal security groups is cordial in the neighbouhoods that were covered by this study. This is to the extent that the vigilantes complement police work and make the operation of the police in the remote villages especially simpler while transferring

difficult and complex cases to the police. This does not, however, diminish the expressed concerns of the police about the often reported excesses of some of these groups and of the fact that some of them operate illegally. As one of the police respondents argued:

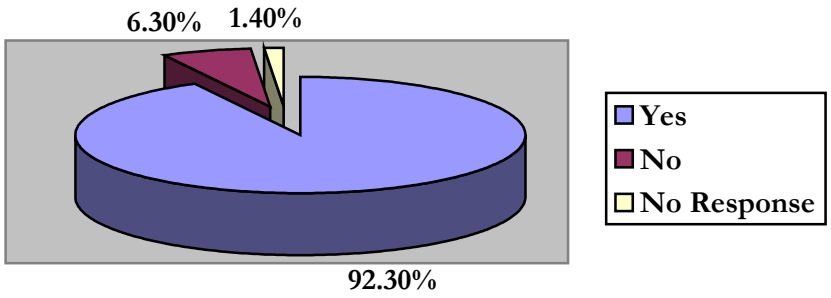
> The police are not opposed to the existence of vigilantes. As a matter of fact we need them because there is no way the police in its present form can effectively police everywhere. However, they must have to register with the police and subject themselves to screening and supervision. They must also have to stop some of the excesses for which they are known such as unlawful detention and torture of suspects. We only frown at them when they fail to abide by these terms....This is an organised society and things have to be done decently.
>
> *Police Respondent (IDI, Eti-Osa)*

Regarding the nature of cooperation that exists between informal security groups and the police, the study showed that the groups cooperated in the areas of providing the police with information on criminals, surrendering of suspects to them as well as surrendering properties recovered from suspects to the police. The police also reported that they provide some of these groups with requisite advice on how to go about their job in addition to screening their members.

4.3.11 Neighbourhood safety before and after the introduction of informal security structures in Lagos State

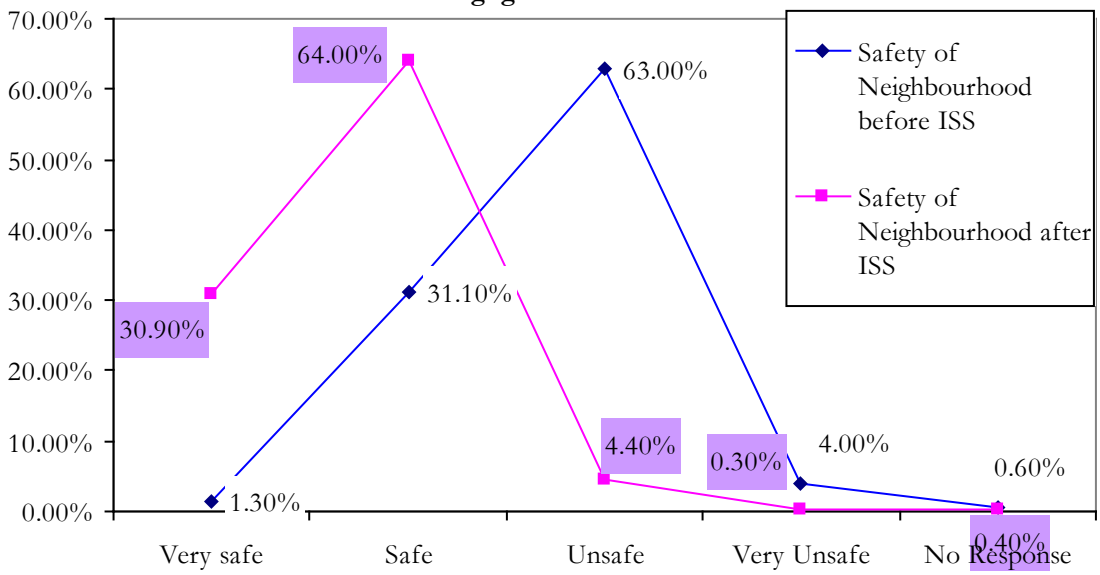
As part of its objectives, this study set out to evaluate the effectiveness of informal security structures in crime control and security management in the state. This was against the backdrop of the widespread acceptance and utilization of these forms of security arrangement. To achieve these objectives, the respondents were asked to air their candid opinions on whether they thought that the security situation in their communities improved in any way as a result of the activities of informal security groups. As is seen in Figure 4.5 below, nearly all (92.3%) of the respondents reported that the security situation in their neighbourhoods actually got better as a result of the activities of the informal security groups there. Only a paltry 6.3% thought otherwise, while 1.4% failed to respond to the question.

Fig. 4.5: Whether Security Situation Improved due to ISS



The respondents were further encouraged to compare the level of safety before and after the establishment or introduction of informal security groups in their neighbourhoods. As is seen in Figure 4.6 below, only 13 or 1.3% of the respondents considered their neighbourhoods very safe before the introduction of ISS. This was a sharp contrast with the 314 or 30.9% of them who reported that their neighbourhoods were very safe after the engagement of ISS. Similar contrasting revelations were also noticed in the proportion of respondents who thought their neighbourhoods were safe before (316 or 31.1%) and after (651 or 64.0%) the engagement of ISS groups. While as high as 641 or 63% of the respondents considered their neighbourhoods unsafe before the introduction of ISS, only 45 or 4.4% of them adjudged their neighbourhoods as unsafe after the engagement of ISS groups. Only an insignificant 0.3% of the respondents still felt very unsafe in their neighbourhoods after the engagement of ISS, as against 4% who felt same prior to the engagement of ISS in their neighbourhoods.

Fig. 4.6: Level of safety of Neighbourhood before and after the engagement of ISS



4.3.12 Effectiveness of informal security structures in crime control in Lagos State

Most of the respondents who took part in the study had positive assessment of informal security structures in their neighbourhoods. Specifically, 995 or 93.9% of them adjudged the informal security groups in their neighbourhoods to be effective in crime control. Only 37(3.6%) and 25(2.5%) considered the ISS groups in their neighbourhoods to be ineffective or could not say whether or not they were effective. This finding agrees with Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) and Ajayi and Aderinto (2008), who found that informal security structures have high rating among the people for being effective in curbing criminality.

Table 4.5: Opinions of Respondents about the effectiveness of informal security structures in Lagos State

Assessment of ISS	Frequency	Percentage
Effective	995	93.9
Ineffective	37	3.6
Don't Know	25	2.5
Total	1017	100.0

4.3.12.1 Perceptions about the effectiveness of informal security structures and support for their existence

Table 4.6 below shows the association between perceptions about the effectiveness of informal security structures and respondents' support for their existence. As is seen, clamour for their existence was highest among respondents who thought that these organizations are very effective (92.9%), with those who adjudged these organizations as effective coming next at 91.8%. These figures are far above 64% and 25% respectively, of those who thought that the informal security structures are either ineffective or very ineffective.

Table 4.6: Relationship between perceptions of effectiveness of ISS and support for their existence

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Perceptions about the effectiveness of ISS	Very effective	170 (92.9%)	10(5.5%)	3(1.6%)	183 (100.0%)
	Effective	709(91.8%)	45(5.8%)	18(2.3%)	772 (100.0%)
	Ineffective	21 (63.6%)	11(33.3%)	1(3.0%)	33(100 .0%)
	Very Ineffective	1 (25.0%)	3(75.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)
	Don't Know	14(60.9%)	7(30.4%)	2(8.7%)	23(100.0%)
	No Response	1(50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

Discussions with IDI respondents and participants in the focus group discussions also supported the survey result. The general sentiment across the local government areas covered by the study was that the presence of the ISS groups in the neighbourhoods has helped in scaling down the rate of crime in most of the neighbourhoods. This can be explained from the point of view of the common understanding among security experts that, sometimes, the physical presence of security, regardless of how well equipped, can be a deterrent to criminals. As a male youth respondent in Ikorodu observed:

> The presence of the *olodes* (vigilantes) has reduced the level of crime because those who perpetrate this evil acts can no longer do

> it since there is a time restriction of movement within our neighbourhood from 12 midnight to 5am.
>
> *Male youth respondent (IDI, Ikorodu)*

Most of the participants in the focus group discussions also concurred with the above assertion. In the words of one of the female participants in Ijede area of Ikorodu,

> They (vigilantes) have been able to control crime effectively because their presence is enough to scare away thieves... you will meet them where you do not expect they can be. They are everywhere. They walk around and when they see you they know the type of person you are ...They are very effective because they walk around everywhere in the night protecting the lives and properties of the residents.
>
> *Adult female participant (FGD, Ikeja)*

The police participants in the study also agreed that the presence of ISS groups have been quite helpful in stemming crime in the state. Their usefulness in alerting the police of the presence of hoodlums came across strongly. As one of the Divisional Police officers reported:

> We encourage communities that are under incessant attacks by robbers to form vigilantes to protect themselves because the police cannot be everywhere. Even our religions encourage self-defense, so our people have to come out and protect themselves. What they do is to divide themselves into groups and take turns to patrol their communities. Sometimes they quarrel among themselves because some will not cooperate. Even this last week some groups in.... came to complain that some of their members were not turning out for vigilante activities when it is their turn. Normally, I invite them to the station and address them on the need to support the police because we cannot do it alone. In most cases, they alert us when they notice the presence of criminals and we respond. This has been quite helpful
>
> *A Police Respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

The respondents who adjudged the ISS groups as effective gave various reasons for their responses. These reasons are shown in table 4.7 below. According to the table, close to half of the respondents (48.5%) reported that the ISS groups respond rather quickly to distress calls, while a slightly higher proportion (49.7%) considered the ISS groups to be more reliable and efficient than the formal police. Furthermore, more than half (58.5%) of the respondents believed that the ISS groups were actually faster and

nearer to the people, while 27.1% of the respondents thought that the ISS groups were incorruptible.

Table 4.7: Distribution of the respondents based on reasons for the effectiveness of Informal Security Structures

Reasons for the effectiveness of ISS groups	Frequency (N=1017)	Percent
Quick response to distress call	493	48.5
More reliable and efficient	505	49.7
Faster and nearer to the people	595	58.5
Incorruptible	276	27.1

These findings agree with the claim of Harnischfeger (2003), Alemika and Chukwuma (2004), Ajayi and Aderinto (2008) that the services of informal policing groups are engaged in order to provide speedy safety and security services which the formal police are unable to offer, and because they are closer to the people than the formal police (Okafor, 2007). Baker (2002) and Ana Kantor & Mariam Persson (2010) recognize the general distrust of the formal police as one reason for the resort to informal security groups, while Okafor (2007) mentions the distant or alien character of the formal police for the preference of the ISS by most people.

Discussions with respondents to the in-depth interviews and participants in the FGDs revealed that some of those who considered ISS groups ineffective based their views on the fact that these outfits are limited in the kind of crime they could fight since most of them do not bear arms, while others alluded to fact of the ill- training of most members of these groups. In the words of a youth participant in a focus group discussion in Ikeja:

> The ISS people are good and have really helped to make this neighbourhood safe, but yet it is not all type of crimes that they can stop because mostly they do not carry guns. Again, they usually work at night and these days robbers attack in broad day light. All the same they have been trying.
>
> *Male Youth participant (FGD, Ikeja)*

4.3.13 Respondents' satisfaction with the services of informal security groups

Most of the respondents who took part in the study expressed satisfaction with the services provided by informal security groups in their neighbourhoods. As is seen in Table 4.8 below, 74.2% and 11% of them, respectively, indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by the ISS groups in their communities. This was against the 1.7% and 1.3% that were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied in that order, and the 11.8% of them that expressed outright indifference about the services of the ISS groups in their areas.

Table 4.8: Distribution of the respondents based on their levels of satisfaction with the services provided by Informal Security Groups

Level of satisfaction with ISS	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	112	11.0
Satisfied	755	74.2
Indifferent	120	11.8
Dissatisfied	17	1.7
Very dissatisfied	13	1.3
Total	1017	100.0

4.3.13.1 Perceptions about level of satisfaction with services of informal security groups and support for their existence

The data were further manipulated to reaffirm the observation made about the possible association between the perceived satisfaction with the services of ISS groups and the overwhelming support they enjoy. As is seen in Table 4.9 below, nearly all (95.5%) the respondents who said they were very satisfied with the services rendered by ISS in their communities expressed support for their existence. This was also true for the 93.6% of them who said that they were satisfied with their services. Interestingly also, even though much lower proportions of those who reported that they were dissatisfied (35.3%) and very dissatisfied (50%), expressed support for the existence of ISS, their proportions were still significant to suggest that generally the verdict stands in favour of the continued existence of ISS in most communities. It also suggests that a significant

number of persons who feel dissatisfied about the services of ISS are even careful enough not to dispense with the groups outrightly, but that improvements be brought to bear on these organizations to correct observed anomalies.

Table 4.9a: Relationship between levels of satisfaction with the services provided by Informal Security Groups and support for their existence

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Level of satisfaction with services provided by ISS	Very satisfied	107 (95.5%)	2(1.8%)	3(2.7%)	112 (100.0%)
	Satisfied	707(93.6%)	33(4.4%)	15(2.0%)	755 (100.0%)
	Indifferent	86 (71.7%)	30(25.0%)	4(3.3%)	120(100 .0%)
	Dissatisfied	6 (35.3%)	9(52.9%)	2(11.8%)	17(100.0%)
	Very Dissatisfied	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)
	No Response	8(88.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)	9 (100.0%
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

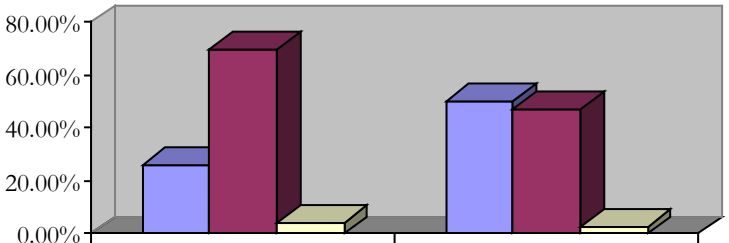
4.3.14 Respondents preferred security outfit for effective policing of their neighbourhoods

The respondents were asked which they preferred between the Nigeria Police and informal security groups for more effective security in their neighbourhoods. This would show the level of public confidence on these policing outfits. The majority (69.6%) of them reported that they preferred the informal security groups, while 26.3% preferred the Nigeria Police for more effective security of their neighbourhoods.

They were asked to indicate what their first choice would be between the Nigeria Police and the informal security groups in the event that they had to report a crime. This again would show the level of public confidence on these policing outfits. As is seen on the figure below, 47.3% of the respondents would report a crime first to the informal security groups before thinking of the formal police while half (50.0%) would report to the formal police first.

While these outcomes represent bold endorsement of ISS and indeed an explanation for their proliferation and endurance over time, they also indicate how lowly the Nigeria Police have sunk. The reason for this lowly rating of the Nigeria Police is not unconnected to the problems of corruption, inefficiency and deep-seated public mistrust for them (Odekunle, 1979; Alemika, 1988; Adejoh, 1988; Odinkalu, 2008; Ahire, 1991).

Fig.4.7: Respondents' Preferred First Choice to Report a Crime



	More Effective Policing Outfit	Preferred Group to report Crime to first
The Nigerian Police	26.30%	50.00%
ISS	69.6%	47.30%
No Response	4.10%	2.80%

The respondents who preferred the informal security structures gave such reasons as nearness of the group to the people (17.3%), more reliable (13.2%), faster than the police (6.4%), incorruptible and disciplined (4.1%), friendly (2.2%), organized (2.5%) and are better than the police in handling certain crimes (5.4%). Those who preferred the police said their choice was because the police are recognized by the law to handle law and order (22.9%), they are better trained and professional (11.1%) and they are better equipped to fight crime (7.2%).

4.3.15 Relationship between selected socio economic variables and support for informal security structures

Attempts were also made to determine possible relationships between selected socio-economic variables and respondents' support for the existence of informal security structures in the study communities. The results of this effort are presented below.

4.3.15.1 Education and support for informal security structures

As is seen in Table 4.9 below, education is clearly not a predictor of people's support for the existence of informal security structures, as support was expressed by virtually all respondents regardless of their levels of education. The highest level of support came from respondents with primary education (96.1%). This was followed by those with no formal education (91.2%), those with secondary education (90.7%) and lastly by those with tertiary education (87.8%).

Table 4.9b: Relationship between respondents' level of education and support for ISS groups

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Highest Level of Education	No formal Education	31 (91.2%)	3(8.8%)	0(0.7%)	34 (100.0%)
	Primary Education	99(96.1%)	4(3.9%)	0(0.0%)	103 (100.0%)
	Secondary Education	468 (90.7%)	36(7.0%)	12(2.3%)	516(100 .0%)
	Tertiary Education	316 (87.8%)	32(8.9%)	12(3.3%)	360(100.0%)
	No Response	2(50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	4 (100.0%
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.3.15.2 Respondents' economic standing and support for informal security structures

The data revealed an overwhelming support for informal security structures across all economic strata of the respondents, even though minimal variations were also observed based on status. The highest support came from respondents who adjudged themselves as being very poor (93.5%). Next in that order were those who are poor (92.0%), those who are neither rich nor poor (90.8%), those who are rich (86.5%) and then those who are very rich (73.3%). While this does not entirely negate findings from earlier studies that linked informal security structures with the poor (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2005; Baker, 2005), it adds a new dimension that suggests that beyond economic variable,

there may be other explanations for the existence of informal security structures. Indeed, a plausible explanation may lie in Okafor's (2005) position that the attachment to informal security may best be explained by the fact that they are rooted in the traditions, customs and native practices of the people. The thesis of the postcolonial school about the characterization of the Nigeria Police as an agent of the state, rather than that for the citizens also bears relevance here. People gravitate towards ISS groups because they reckon that the police exist to serve the state and its cronies and not for all and sundry.

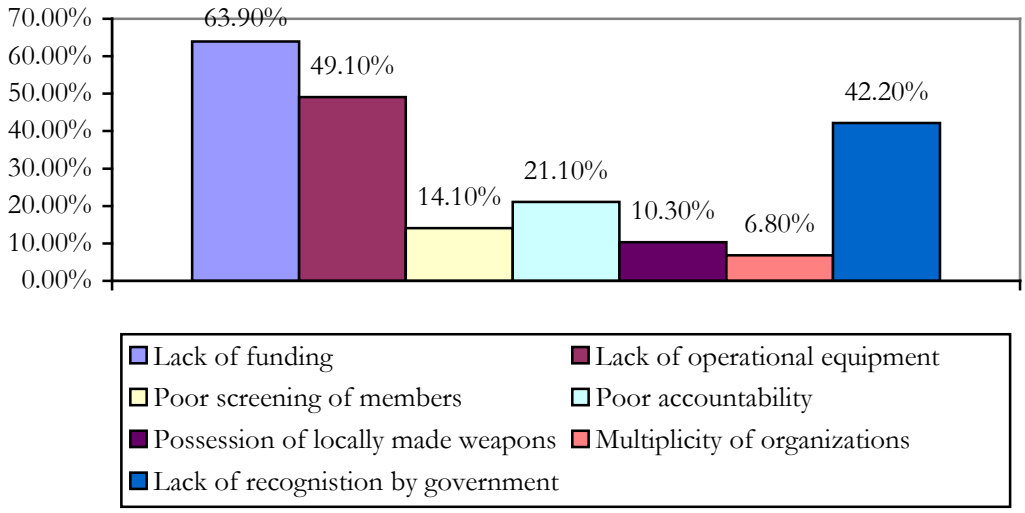
Table 4.10: Relationship between Respondents Economic Standing and Support for ISS Groups

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Economic Standing of Respondents	Very Rich	11 (73.3%)	2(13.3%)	2(13.3%)	15 (100.0%)
	Rich	96(86.5%)	12(10.8%)	3(2.7%)	111 (100.0%)
	Neither Rich nor Poor	621 (90.8%)	50(7.3%)	13(1.9%)	684(100 .0%)
	Poor	150 (92.0%)	8(4.9%)	5 (3.1%)	163(100.0%)
	Very Poor	29(93.5%)	1 (3.2%)	1 (3.2%)	31(100.0%
	No Response	7(77.8%)	2 (22.2%)	0(0.0%)	9(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.3.16 Problems facing informal security structures in Lagos State

The study found that, despite their wide acceptability, most informal security groups are plagued by a variety of problems. Depicted in Figure 4.8 below in order of seriousness are lack of funding, which was mentioned by 63.9% of the respondents, lack of operational equipment (49.10%), lack of recognition by government (42.2%), and poor accountability (21.1%). Other problems mentioned were poor screening of members (14.1%), possession of locally made guns (10.3%) and multiplicity of organizations (6.8%).

Fig.4.8: Problems facing ISS Groups in Lagos State



The respondents in the in-depth interviews as well as participants in the focus group discussion sessions agreed largely that funding and equipment are major problems to most ISS groups. Many ISS groups were disbanded on account of the inability of residents to pay them promptly. In some instances, members of the ISS groups had to levy themselves to be able to remain operational. The problem of funding and equipment were particularly pronounced in the state-sponsored Neighbourhood Watch. The personnel of this group are not on salaries even when they claim that they work for 24 hours in a day. In a number of places, many of them did not have functional patrol vehicles to effectively cover their beats. As a NECO in Mushin said:

> We are not paid salary but stipend...we are not happy with the stipend, but are still doing this job because we have the interest of our communities at heart. The poor stipend is affecting the morale of our people and we are hoping that the government will increase it.... My patrol vehicle has broken down; I have reported to Alausa but they have been telling me they will look into it, but nothing has happened so far.
>
> *Official of state sponsored ISS (IDI, Mushin)*

One other problem which featured quite prominently was the refusal of the government, the police in particular, to register or recognize some youth vigilante groups. Police respondents in the study reported that this happens only when the integrity of the group is doubtful. In the words of a Divisional Police Officer:

> The police will not register any group that is not clean. You cannot tell somebody to guard a place when you yourself can see that the person is not clean. Thank God you yourself know that even among the military we have bad eggs, among the police we have bad eggs; so also among the civilians, we also have bad eggs too. You cannot tell me I should get area boys to guard a place which when you see them they are not clean. So that means you are motivating them to do what they want to do. But if they form an organization and come with the elders of that place who will say to the police that they know them well and trust them, the police will register them. The elders live there and know their environment well and we believe they will not recommend bad people, and if they do they will suffer for it.
>
> *A Divisional Police Officer (IDI, Mushin)*

4.3.17 Unacceptable behaviours of informal security groups in Lagos state

Despite the widespread spread public acclaim for the informal security groups in Lagos State, the study found that respondents still had reservations about certain aspects of their conducts. As is seen in Table 4.11 below, well above a quarter (31.0%) of all the respondents in the study alleged that ISS groups administer physical punishments on suspects, 11.3% complained that many of them take the law into their own hands, while 4.7% of them alleged that some of the operatives of ISS groups are themselves criminals. Few respondents accused some ISS groups of such other conducts as extortion (2.4%), being used by influential people for illegal arrests (2.9%), bribery (2.2%), tribalism (3.0%) and being used as political thugs (3.6%).

Table 4.11: Respondents Opinions regarding unacceptable behaviours of ISS Groups

Unacceptable behaviours of ISS	Frequency	Percentage
Administration of physical punishment on suspects	315	31.0
Taking of laws into their hands	115	11.3
Extortion of money from community members	24	2.4
Being used by powerful people for illegal arrests	29	2.9
Take bribes to release suspects	22	2.2
Used by politicians as thugs	37	3.6
Being suspected as being criminals	48	4.7
They are tribalistic	31	3.0

Most of the respondents in the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions reported that these problems could not be generalized for the ISS groups and that the most culpable are the Odua People's Congress which had a history of violence and cultism. Even then, these problems were in the past because there have been conscious efforts by the leadership of the organization to rebrand and distance it from its terrible past. In the words of one OPC Co-ordinator in Mushin, "OPC has stopped their excesses because the bad eggs have been flushed out and the organization is now being reformed and redefined. It was so bad in the last 5- 10 years, but now it is better"

4.3.18 Maximizing the security potentials of informal security structures in Lagos State

One of the ground-breaking findings of this study is the consensus that informal security structures have helped in no small ways to curb the rate and cases of crime in the respective neighbourhoods where they exist. They help to arrest certain categories of criminals and, more importantly, furnish the police with information about crime and criminals that are beyond their ability to deal with. These organizations also enjoy tremendous goodwill of most of the people because they are closer and friendlier to the people, and less bureaucratic in dispensing justice.

This also suggests that any meaningful and holistic law and order policy or programme of the State and, indeed, Nigeria, must take these groups into account, albeit with some fundamental reorganizations. In this era of constant threats of terrorist attacks across the country, nothing can be more important than intelligence gathering by community members, and especially by members of the informal security groups.

It was against this backdrop that the study sought to find out from the respondents what they thought should be done to make informal security groups more effective in fighting crime and criminals. As Table 4.12 below indicates, 64.7% of the respondents who took part in the study suggested that most of the ISS groups need some form of training to be able to perform to their full potential, 60% suggested that some form of funding would assist in the effective performance of the ISS groups, while well over a half (54.9%)

thought that assisting ISS groups with basic equipment would enhance their effectiveness. Furthermore, nearly a half (45.1%) of the respondents recommended that the government should assist to organize these informal policing groups so that their full potential can be realized.

Table 4.12: Nature of support needed by ISS groups to make them more effective

Nature of support Needed by ISS Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Assist to better organize the groups	459	45.1
Training	658	64.7%
Provision of equipment	558	54.9
Funding	610	60.0
Others	87	8.6

Discussions with the respondents in the in-depth interviews and participants in the focus group sessions pointed to the fact that informal security groups offer very rare opportunity to the government in its crusade against crime. The respondents argued that rather than lump all informal security outfits together and brand them either as militants or criminals, the government at both local and state levels should objectively isolate and empower those that are genuinely committed to law and order. This would have to be done either through the traditional institutions or through residents', landlords' or community development associations. As an in-depth interview respondent in Ikorodu said:

> The general insecurity we have today will be drastically curtailed if the government can give just 10% of the support they are giving to the formal police or to other security bodies, to the ISS groups. As you know, we have CDAs in almost every community in this state. All that the government- local or state- need do is to get these CDAs to organize credible vigilante groups who would enjoy government support in terms of kitting, logistics and periodic training on intelligence gathering, surveillance and the like. This of course, will be with the full involvement and supervision of the police. Part of the so called security votes which the governors and the chairmen of local government areas are sitting on can be utilized along this line.

Participants in the focus group discussions agreed with the above suggestion. They suggested that government should work in concert with the CDAs or community leaders to standardize the activities of ISS groups, provide them with basic training on strategies for crime prevention and detection, basic equipment for operational efficiency and modest stipends to motivate them to work harder. These suggestions agree with those made by respondents in an earlier study conducted by Alemika and Chukwuma (2004).

The need to strengthen and empower credible ISS falls in line with the observation by Johnston (2001: 965) to the effect that the broad trend is that ‘‘citizens, rather than being the passive consumers of police services, engage in a variety of productive security activities”, which is corroborated by Scharf (2003: 38) in what he calls “the rich diversity of non-state justice systems’’. Baker (2005) advocates a strategy of law and order that “integrates, regulates, mobilizes and empowers all those willing to preserve law and order in an acceptable manner”.

4.4 Public perceptions of the Nigeria Police

4.4.1 Introduction

This section discusses the perceptions of the respondents about the Nigeria Police. Public perception about the group has a direct link with their level of confidence and whether or not they would be trusted by the public. The proliferation and endurance of informal policing structures in the state can also derive from the level of public confidence in the public police. Indeed Table 4.2 above suggests that some of the reasons why the communities engaged informal policing groups bordered on the perceived inadequacy of the formal police services and the poor perception about the ability of the police to respond to the needs of the victims of crime.

4.4.2 Perceptions about the performance of the Nigeria Police

The study sought the views of respondents on critical performance and dispositional indicators concerning the formal police in Nigeria. According to Table 4.13 below, the

police were rated low in most of the indices measured. Specifically, 64.3% of the respondents adjudged the police to be poor in treating all people fairly without regard to position or status. This result agrees with earlier findings that police access and treatment are skewed in favour of the rich (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2005). Further analysis of the table indicates that 61.9% of the respondents thought that the police are poor in respecting the rights of suspects, 57.3% of the respondents said the police service delivery was poor, while same proportion rated police poorly in respecting the rights of complainants. Other indices where the police were rated poorly include maintenance of good relationship with communities (55.9%), proper response to people who wish to report crime or incident (55.0%), detecting and solving crime (55.1%), crime prevention (53.4%) and responding quickly to urgent calls (52.7%). About 30% of the respondents rated the police average in the variables assessed, while between 4 % and 10% thought the police were good on all the variables measured.

Table 4.13: Respondents' assessment of the Nigeria Police based on selected performance indicators

Police Performance indicator	Rating		
	Good	Average	Poor
Quick Response to urgent calls	101 (10.0%)	380 (37.4%)	**536(52.7%)**
Crime Prevention	101(10%)	383(37.7%)	**543(53.4%)**
Detecting/Solving crime	76(7.5%)	380(37.4%)	**561(55.1%)**
Treating all people fairly without regard to position or status	42(4.1%)	321(31.6%)	**654(64.3%)**
Proper response to people who wish to report a crime or incident	79(7.4%)	376(37.0%)	**565(55.0%)**
Respecting the rights of suspects	59(5.8%)	329(32.4%)	**629(61.9%)**
Respecting the rights of complainants	84(8.3%)	350(34.4%)	**583(57.3%)**
Maintenance of good relationship with communities	89(8.7%)	360(35.4%)	**568(55.9%)**
Police service delivery	**58(5.7%)**	**376(37.0%)**	**583(57.3%)**

Responses from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions amplified this deep-seated disdain or distrust for the police among neighbourhood residents. A number of direct quotes from some of the respondents suffice here:

> The police are not doing anything to prevent insecurity because any time the area boys are fighting; the police will not step in until lives have been wasted before the police will get there.
>
> *Youth Male (IDI, Mushin)*

> Police don't answer to urgent calls. Years back, I was attacked by armed robbers in which I called the police but they did not come until long afterwards. I lost a family member in that incident.
>
> *Male community leader (IDI, Ikorodu)*

> Police are not my friend because if there is a case between poor man and rich man and the poor man is on his right, the police will give the right to the rich man.
>
> *Female youth (IDI, Okun Alfa, Eti-Osa)*

> Police are not the friend of the nation because they arrest anybody they see once they are in need of money. For instance, I sent my son to buy me something and the police arrested him and took him to the station without any offence, I had to pay N2000.00 to bail the boy.
>
> *Adult women leader (IDI, Ikorodu)*

> Police is not my friend because suspect and complainant will pay at the station.
>
> *A youth leader (IDI, Ikeja)*

> I am not satisfied with the police because if they arrest any criminal, they will collect money and release the criminal before 24 hours which is not supposed to be.
>
> *Adult female (FGD, Mushin)*

> I don't respect the police. If they can allow me to beat them with their uniform I will do it.
>
> *Male youths (FGD, Ikeja)*

The respondents were also requested to express their candid views about particular forms of wrong behaviours that the police have been accused of and which have had profound impact on the level of public trust in the police. As is evident in Table 4.14 below, almost all (91.2%) of the 1,017 respondents reported that the police are corrupt. This tallies with findings in numerous other studies which associated the police with corruption (Ozekhome, 2003; Omotola, 2007; Soyombo et al., 2009). Significant proportions of the respondents also accused the police of threatening citizens with guns

and weapons (42.8%), abuse of power (48.6%), maltreatment of suspects in detention (44%), favouritism (41.8%), use of unfair methods to get offenders convicted, aiding and abetting crime (37.2%) and of sexual abuse (15.4%).

Table 4.14: Respondents' opinions regarding some alleged bad behaviours of the Nigeria Police

Behaviour associated with the Nigeria Police	Yes	No	No Response
Corruption	927 (91.2%)	90(8.9%)	**536(52.7%)**
Threaten citizens with guns/weapons	435(42.8%)	498(49%)	**543(53.4%)**
Maltreat suspects while in detention	447(44%)	570(56.1%)	**561(55.1%)**
Abuse of power	494 (48.6%)	523(51.4%)	**654(64.3%)**
Excessive use of force	403(39.6%)	614(60.4%)	**565(55.0%)**
Favouritism	425(41.8%)	592(58.2%)	**629(61.9%)**
Use of unfair methods to get offenders convicted	400(39.3%)	617(60.7%)	**583(57.3%)**
Aid and abet crime	378(37.2%)	639(62.8%)	**568(55.9%)**
Sexual abuse	**157(15.4%)**	**860(84.6%)**	**583(57.3%)**

4.4.3 Police presence and extent of policing in neighbourhoods

Perceptions about the police are also influenced by feelings of safety and security which are, in turn, influenced by several factors, including the physical access to and visibility of the police within a given neighbourhood (Clapton, 2006). Accordingly, the study sought to determine what respondents thought about the distance of their neighbourhoods to the nearest police access points. Their responses are as seen in Table 4.15 below. According to the table, well over a half (55.2%) of the respondents who took part in the study across the four local government areas reported to spend between 10 and 30 minutes from their homes to the nearest police access point using normal modes of transportation, which could be trekking, using motor cycles or motor vehicles as the case may be. An equally significant proportion (35%) spent less than 10 minutes from their homes to the nearest police access point, while only 7.9%, 1.7% and 0.2% respectively, spent between 30 minutes and 1 hour, between 1 hour and two hours and above two hours.

Taken together, the data indicate that there is a fairly high presence of the formal police structures in the study area, which can also translate into easy reach by the citizens to the police and of the latter to the people. This may be explained first by the status of the state as a former capital of Nigeria, having a history of being a haven for criminals and, therefore, of special attention by the police authority, and more importantly by the determination of the current regime in the state to reclaim the lost glory of the state on all fronts including making it safe and secure for its citizens. This latter factor has translated into massive financial and logistical support for the police by the state government such that regardless of where people live in the state (metropolitan or non-metropolitan), 90.2% of residents can get to the nearest police access point from their homes between 10 and 30 minutes, using their regular means of transportation.

Table 4.15: Time respondents spend from home to nearest police access point

Distance	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	356	35.0
>10mins but < 30 mins.	561	55.2
> 30 mins but < 1 hour	80	7.9
> 1 hour but < 2 hours	17	1.7
> 2 hours	2	0.2
No Response	1	0.1
Total	1017	100.0

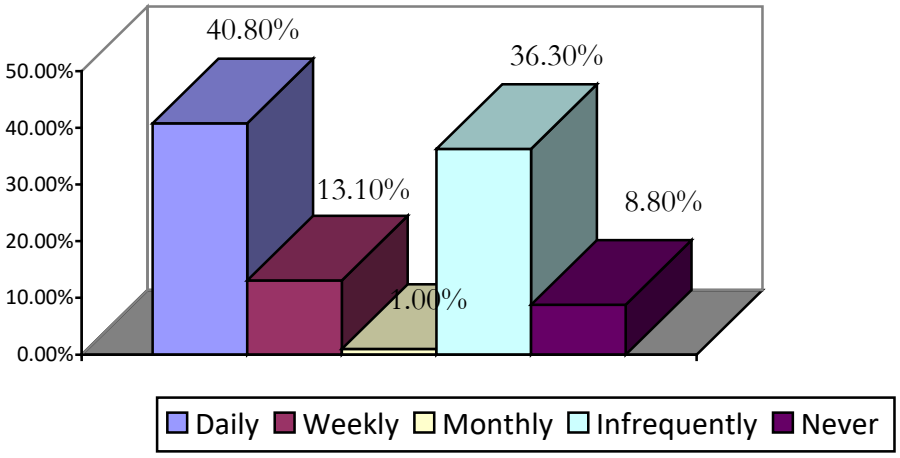
4.4.4 Neighbourhood street patrol by the police

Another measure of the physical presence of the police in an area is frequency or regularity of police patrol in a given area. Data on how often respondents saw a police officer patrolling their neighbourhoods were somewhat mixed. As is seen in Figure 4.9, while a fairly good proportion (415 or 40.8%) of the respondents in all the local government areas covered by the study reported seeing a police patrol team in the streets where they live daily, an equally significant proportion (369 or 36.3%) said they see police infrequently in their neighbourhood streets. In the same vein, 133 (13.1%) and 10 (1.0%) of them reported that they see police patrol team weekly and monthly,

respectively. The remaining 90 or 8.8% of the respondents reported never to have seen a police officer or team patrolling their neighbourhood streets.

This finding agrees with the reports given in various studies to the effect that the entire country is actually under-policed (Odinkalu, 2008). Ademola (2008) also reported that, as at 1999, there were an estimated 137,000 personnel in the NPF, an equivalence of one police-to-population ratio of approximately 1:870. The police-to-population ratio improved to 1: 400 based on an estimated population of about 360,000 police personnel in 2007, following a conscious effort by the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo (Odinkalu, 2008). Despite this marked improvement, this still falls far below the UN specification.

Fig.4.9: Frequency of Neighbourhood Patrol by the Police



4.4.4.1 Frequency of neighbourhood patrol by the police and support for the existence of informal policing groups

Further analysis revealed that support for the existence of informal policing structures was more among respondents who thought their neighbourhoods were not adequately patrolled by the police. As is seen in Table 4.16, nearly all of those who reported that their neighbourhoods were patrolled infrequently (95.4%), never patrolled (94.4%) and monthly (90%) supported the existence of informal policing groups. The reason is almost taken as given, as nature abhors a vacuum. In other words, neighbourhoods will

naturally find ways to protect themselves in the absence of the official protection by the state as represented by the formal police.

The fact that significant numbers of respondents who reported seeing police patrolling their neighbourhoods daily (85.8%) and weekly (85.7%) still want informal policing structures to exist suggests the need to look into the quality of police patrol. Discussions with community members indicate that police patrol where it occurs is mostly limited to day time and that, even then, there are some inner-city centres they are usually not able to access. This result indicates that there must be something about informal policing groups that recommend them to even people who have access to the formal police.

Table 4.16: Relationship between frequency of neighbourhood police patrol and support for the existence of ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Frequency of police patrol in residents` neighbourhood	Daily	356 (85.8%)	48(11.6%)	11(2.7%)	415 (100.0%)
	Weekly	114(85.7%)	15(11.3%)	4(3.0%)	133 (100.0%)
	Monthly	9(90.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(10.0%)	10(100 .0%)
	Infrequently	352 (95.4%)	10(2.7%)	7(1.9%)	369(100.0%)
	Never	85(94.4%)	3(3.3%)	2(2.2%)	90(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.4.5 Respondents` level of confidence in the Nigeria police

The study further sought to know how much confidence respondents had in the ability of the Nigeria Police as an agent for providing public safety and security. Only 5.4% of the respondents reposed great confidence in the police, as compared 78.9% of them who reportedly had little confidence in the police. Also 11.3% of the respondents expressed mixed feelings about the police, while another 2.1% did not know whether or not they had any confidence in the police. Confidence in the police has far-reaching implications for public cooperation with them as well as in their decision to rely on them or seek help from alternative groups, such as the informal policing groups. Table 4.16 below captures the respondents' views in this regard.

Table 4.17: Distribution of the respondents by level of confidence in the formal police

Level of confidence in the Public Police	Frequency	Percentage
Great Confidence	55	5.4
Little Confidence	802	78.9
Mixed Feelings	115	11.3
Don't Know	21	2.1
No Response	24	2.4

When data on level of confidence of respondents in the police were cross-tabulated with support for the existence of informal policing structures, it was found that most people who had little confidence in the police (90.6%) as well as those who expressed mixed feelings on the ability of the police to contain crime (90.4%) expressed support for the existence of informal policing groups. This is without prejudice to 90.9% of them who expressed great confidence in the police and yet expressed support for the existence of informal policing groups. The possible explanation for this latter category may be seen in the light of the increasingly dawning reality that the police alone cannot do the work considering their numerous personnel and logistic handicaps.

Table 4.18: Relationship between public confidence in the police and support for the existence of ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Level of confidence in the formal police	Great confidence	50 (90.9%)	4(7.3%)	1(1.8%)	55 (100.0%)
	Little confidence	727(90.6%)	59(7.4%)	16(2.0%)	802 (100.0%)
	Mixed feelings	104 (90.4%)	7(6.1%)	4(3.5%)	115(100 .0%)
	Don't know	14 (66.7%)	4(19.0%)	3(14.3%)	21(100.0%)
	No Response	21(87.5%)	2(8.3%)	1(4.2%)	24(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.4.6 Respondents` level of respect for the Nigeria police

Closely related to the issue of confidence is that of respect of members of the public for the Nigeria Police. Respect for the police derives from the way they comport themselves and, in particular, how well they discharge their duties. Respect for the police will ultimately influence the decision to deal with them or to ignore them in preference for other security arrangements including engaging ISS groups. As is seen in Table 4.19 below, more than half (63.9%) of all the respondents in the study reported having little respect for the police, while 22.6% had mixed feelings about the police. This has fundamental implication for whether the people would want to work with the police or seek other means of solving their security challenges. Just 10.7% of them had great respect for the police. No doubt, much has to be done to improve the public image of the police if they are to be trusted by the public to the point that they can begin to want to work with them.

Table 4.19: Distribution of the respondents by level of Respect for the formal police

Level of Respect for the Public Police	Frequency	Percentage
Great Respect	109	10.7
Little Respect	650	63.9
Mixed Feelings	230	22.6
Don't Know	23	2.3
No Response	5	0.5
Total	1017	100.0

Table 4.20 below shows the kind of relationship that obtains between the level of respect of the respondents for the police and their views as to whether or not informal policing structures should continue to exist. The majority of the respondents, regardless of whether or not they respected the formal police, would want informal policing groups to continue to function. A total of 92.7%, 90.3% and 89.1%, respectively of those who had great respect for the police, little respect for the police and mixed feelings about the police expressed support for the existence of informal policing groups. This is suggestive of the fact that there must be something unique about informal policing

groups that gives them an overwhelming appeal even among people who would prefer the formal police.

Table 4.20: Relationship between public regard for police and support for the existence of ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Level of respect for the formal police	Great respect	101 (92.7%)	8(7.3%)	0(0.0%)	109 (100.0%)
	Little respect	587(90.3%)	48(7.4%)	15(2.3%)	650 (100.0%)
	Mixed feelings	205 (89.1%)	16(7.0%)	9(3.9%)	230(100 .0%)
	Don't know	19 (82.6%)	4(17.4%)	0(0.0%)	23(100.0%)
	No Response	4(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.4.7 Perceptions of respondents about level of honesty of the Nigeria Police

One last variable that the respondents assessed the Nigeria Police by was that of honesty. This is in view of the implication of public perceptions about the honesty of the police for the decision to seek alternatives such as the informal policing groups. Asked to compare the police to most Nigerians, 79.3% of the respondents claimed that the police were less honest. This was clearly higher than the 15.3% that said the police were about the same with most other Nigerians, and the paltry 2.9% that thought that the police were more honest than most other Nigerians.

Table 4.21: Distribution of the respondents by perceptions about how honest the police are in comparison with most other people

Honesty of the police compared to most people	Frequency	Percentage
More Honest	29	2.9
About the same	156	15.3
Less honest	806	79.3
Don't Know	20	2.0
No Response	6	0.6
Total	1017	100.0

Further attempts to determine the association between respondents' perceptions of police honesty and their support for the existence of informal policing groups revealed that, although perceptions of honesty of the police has implications for respondents` support for the existence of informal policing structures, there were certainly other intervening factors. This is explained most eloquently by the proportion of the respondents who considered the police more honest than most people but who still expressed support for the existence of the informal policing structures.

Table 4.22: Relationship between honesty of the Nigeria Police and support for the existence of ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Honesty of the police compared to most people	More honest	27 (93.1%)	2(6.9%)	0(0.0%)	29 (100.0%)
	About the same	140(89.7%)	9(5.8%)	7(4.5%)	156 (100.0%)
	Less honest	728(90.3%)	60(7.4%)	18(2.2%)	806(100 .0%)
	Don't know	16 (80.0%)	4(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	20(100.0%)
	No Response	5(83.3%)	1(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	6(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.4.8 Respondents' satisfaction with the performance of the Nigeria Police

The majority (77.7%) of the respondents who took part in the study reported that they were not satisfied with the performance of the formal police in providing security in their neighbourhoods, while only 15.2 % of them claimed that they were satisfied with the services provided by the police. The remaining 7.1% did not respond to the question.

According to Table 4.23 below, 90.3% of the respondents who were not satisfied with the performance of the formal police would want the informal policing structures. An equally significant proportion of them (88.4%) who claimed that they were satisfied with the performance of informal policing groups would still want to have informal policing structures around.

Table 4.23 Relationship between respondents' satisfaction with the performance of the formal police and support for informal policing groups

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Whether Respondents were satisfied with the performance of the formal police	Yes	137 (88.4%)	14(9.0%)	4(2.6%)	155 (100.0%)
	No	713(90.3%)	58(7.3%)	19(2.4%)	790 (100.0%)
	No Response	66(91.7%)	4(5.6%)	2(2.8%)	2(100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.4.9 Perceptions about factors hindering the Nigeria Police from effective performance

The respondents in this study enumerated several problems which they thought were responsible for the poor performance of the Nigeria Police, especially in fighting crime. Arranged in order of proportion, these problems are corruption, which was mentioned by most (88%) of the respondents, poor funding (64.2%), lack of equipment (57.3%), and poor morale (51.1%). Others are incompetence (41%), inadequate training (35.2%), inadequate personnel (24.8%); too detached and far from the people (23%), political interference (19.4%), and poor community support (13.8%).

Table 4.24: Distribution of the respondents based on perceptions about the problems facing the Nigeria Police

Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Corruption	895	88.0
Poor Funding	653	64.2
Lack of Equipment	583	57.3
Poor Morale	520	51.1
Incompetence	417	41.0
Inadequate Training	358	35.2
Inadequate Personnel	252	24.8
Too detached from the people	234	23.0
Political Interference	197	19.4
Poor Community Support	140	13.8

4.5 Perceptions of crime and security situation in Lagos state

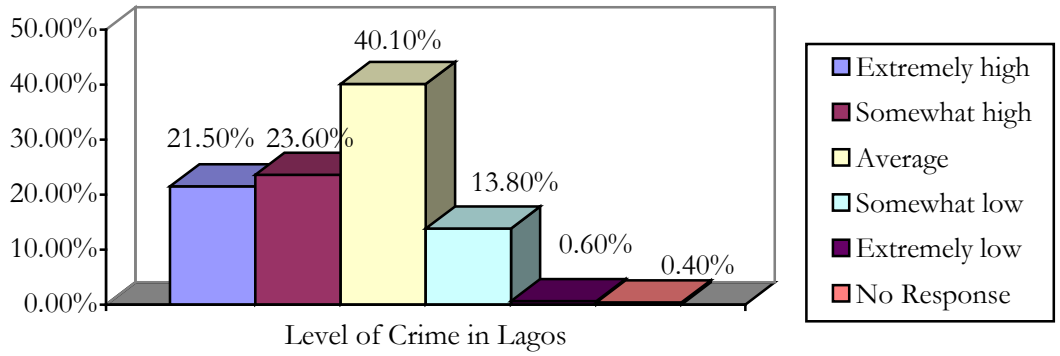
4.5.1 Introduction

This section analyzes the crime and security situation in the communities covered by this study. This was considered important because of the implications of the level of crime or the state of security for feelings of personal safety and security, and ultimately for the formation and proliferation of informal security groups, especially by the poor (Silverman and Della- Guistina, 2001).

4.5.2 Perceptions about level of crime in Lagos State

Figure 4.10 below is a graphic representation of the respondents' perceptions about the level of crime in Lagos State. Nearly half (459 or 45.1%) of the respondents considered the level of crime in the state to be high, while 408 or 40.1% of them adjudged crime level to be average. Only 140 (13.8%) and 6 (0.6%) thought that the level of crime in the state was somewhat low and extremely low, in that order.

Fig.4.10: Respondents Opinions Regarding crime level in Lagos state



4.5.2.1 Perceptions of crime level and support for informal security structures in Lagos state

A further deepening of this analysis by a cross-tabulation of respondents' perceptions about the level of crime in Lagos State and support for the existence of informal security structures shows a pattern of distribution that suggests an association between the two variables. As is seen in Table 4.25 below, support for the existence of informal policing groups appears to be quite high among respondents who considered the level of crime in the state to be extremely high (90.9%), among those who thought that the level

of crime in the state is somewhat high (91.3%) as well as among people who considered crime level in the state to be of average (88.7%). Support for the existence of informal security structures was lowest (66.7%) among respondents who considered crime level extremely low in the state. Even at that, that equally significant proportion of the respondents who thought that crime level was low still showed favourable disposition towards informal policing structures suggests that, while perceptions about crime level is a predictor for support for the existence and proliferation of ISS in the state, it may indeed not be the only influencing factor.

The outcome of this study agrees with claims of earlier scholars that given that self-preservation is a natural instinct of man, resort to self help a' la informal security organizations is a high likelihood in instances of high crime level (Abrahams, 1998; Shaw, 2000; Gleitman, Fridlund and Reisberg, 2004; Baker, 2008; Kantor & Persson, 2010).

Table 4.25: Relationship between level of crime in Lagos State and support for ISS

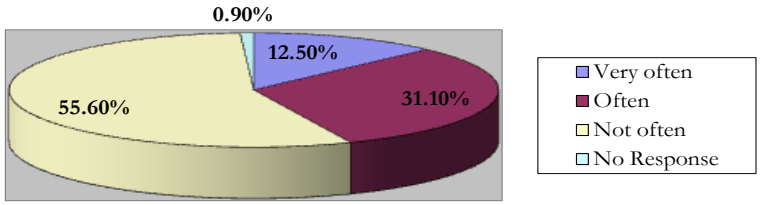
		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Description of level of crime in Lagos State	Extremely high	199 (90.9%)	12 (5.5%)	8 (3.7%)	219 (100.0%)
	Somewhat high	219 (91.3%)	18 (7.5%)	3 (1.3%)	240 (100.0%)
	Average	362 (88.7%)	38 (9.3%)	8 (2.0%)	408(100 .0%)
	Somewhat low	128 (91.4%)	7 (5.0%)	5 (3.6%)	140 (100.0%)
	Extremely low	4 (66.7%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	6 (100.0%)
	No Response	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4 (100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.5.3 Rate of crime in respondents' neighbourhoods

The respondents' views were further sought on the frequency of crime in their immediate neighbourhoods as opposed to the entire state, as a likely influence on their feeling of safety. As Figure 4.11 below shows, the respondents' opinions regarding this subject were divided. While slightly over half (565 or 55.6%) of them reported that

criminal activities did not occur often in their neighbourhoods, an equally significant proportion (316 or 31.1%) and a further 127 or 12.5% claimed that crime occurred very often and often, respectively, in their neighbourhoods, suggesting a high frequency of the occurrence of crime generally. Only nine (0.9%) of the respondents did not indicate how common criminal activities took place in their communities. These data have profound implications for residents` feeling of safety and, therefore, for the resort to informal policing initiatives.

Fig.4.11: Opinion Regarding Frequency in occurrence of Crime in Respondents Neighbourhoods



4.5.3.1 Rate of crime in the respondents' neighbourhoods and support for informal security structures in Lagos State

The study also probed for the respondents' perceptions about the rate of crime in their respective neighbourhoods. This was considered more realistic as most people would be much more familiar with their immediate environments than the entire state. A similar pattern as was seen in relation to crime level in the entire state also emerged.

As seen in Table 4.26 below the majority of those who thought that crime occurred in their neighbourhoods very often (92.1%) and often (86.1%) lent their support for the existence of informal policing organizations in the state. Interestingly also, even those who thought that crime did not occur often in their neighbourhoods equally supported the existence of informal security structures in the state. This may as well be a confirmation of Baker's (2005) position regarding the situation in Liberia, where it was found that most people in both rural and urban settings did not consider informal security providers as alternatives but as complementary to the state security provision. It also explains earlier findings by Alemika and Chukwuma (2005) that as many as 73.1%

of respondents in Enugu State, and another 49% in Ekiti State, both in Nigeria would continue to patronize ISS groups even if all the problems associated with the police were solved today

Table 4.26 Relationship between frequency of occurrence of crime in respondents neighbourhood and support for ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Frequency of occurrence of crime in respondents' Neighbourhood	Very Often	117 (92.1%)	9 (7.1%)	1 (0.8%)	127 (100.0%)
	Often	272(86.1%)	30 (9.5%)	14 (4.4%)	316 (100.0%)
	Not often	520 (92.0%)	35 (6.2%)	10 (1.8%)	565(100 .0%)
	No Response	7 (77.8%)	2 (22.2%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.5.4 Experience of criminal victimization by respondents in their neighbourhoods

Perceptions about community safety and security and, therefore, of likely security responses are also affected by personal experience or reports by relatives and acquaintances (Silverman and Della-Guistina, 2001; Alemika et al.2006). Consequently, the study sought to find out from the respondents if they or any of their family members had been a victim of crime in their neighbourhoods before. As responses in Table 4.27 amply indicate, more than a quarter (28.6%) of the respondents reported either having been victims or having a family member who had been victims of a crime before. While these data give us a fair idea of the extent of criminal victimization in the study areas, Alemika et al. (2006) caution that household victimization statistics is less likely to be accurate because it is less likely to capture all incidents, as respondents may not have full knowledge of victimization suffered by household members. The implication of this is that there is likelihood that the rate of criminal victimization may have been under-represented.

Table 4.27: Distribution of the respondents by whether they and/or their family members had been victims of crimes in their neighbourhoods before

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	291	28.6
No	725	71.3
No Response	1	0.1
Total	**1017**	**100.0**

The results of the survey revealed that theft of mobile phones, armed robbery, theft of or from car, burglary and theft of money were the most widespread in the four local government areas that were covered by the study. A total of 10.8% of the respondents were victims of mobile phone theft; this was followed by armed robbery (6.9%), theft of or from car (6.2%), burglary (5.5%) and theft of money (4.9%). Important also is the proportions who were assaulted by area boys/hooligans/thugs (3.5%) or who were victims of fighting by area boys/hooligans/thugs (3.3%). Interestingly also, few respondents reported that they or their family members were victims of robbery in traffic (1.7%), domestic violence (1.6%), sexual harassment (1.3%), car snatching (1.1%), rape (0.8%) and sundry other crimes (0.5%). Some of these findings approximate those by the Lagos State Crime and Safety Survey where it was found that armed robbery, theft of money, burglary and physical assault were the most widespread crimes in the state with about 8.4%, 5.8%, 5.2% and 2.8% of sampled households in the 20 local government areas of the state reporting to have experienced robbery, theft of money, burglary and physical assault in that order in the last five years (Arthur-Worrey and Chukwuma, 2011).

4.5.4.1 Experience of criminal victimization by respondents in their neighbourhoods and support for ISS

Table 4.28 below shows that support for informal policing groups was high among respondents who had been victims of crime before (78.3%) as well as those who had never been victims of crime (91.2%). This implies that people would still clamour for informal security groups for reasons beyond personal victimization.

Table 4.28: Relationship between crime victimization and support for the existence of ISS

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Crime victimization by respondents' or their family members	Yes	254 (87.3%)	30(10.3%)	7(2.4%)	291(100.0%)
	No	661 (91.2%)	46 (6.3%)	18 (2.5%)	725 (100.0%)
	No Response	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1(100 .0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.5.5 Fear of criminal victimization by respondents

Fear of criminal victimization is another critical indicator of safety and security. Fear of crime and actual level of criminality do not often correlate because fear includes assessment of risks or vulnerability (Thomas and Hyman, 1977; Silverman and Jo-ann Della-Giustina, 2001). The study sought to find out how fearful respondents in the study were of becoming victims of any type of crime in their neighbourhoods and, more importantly, how safe they thought their communities and Lagos State as a whole were.

Their responses are captured in Table 4.29. As seen in the table nearly half (476 or 46.8%) of all the respondents across the entire local government areas of the study reported that they were a little fearful about becoming victims of crimes in their neighbourhoods. When this figure is added to the 100 (9.8%) and another 179 (17.9%) who reported that they were very fearful and fearful, respectively, the picture that emerges is one of a relatively high level of fear of criminal victimization in the study communities. This is, however, without prejudice to about a quarter (243 or 23.9%) of the respondents who reported that they were not at all fearful of becoming victims to some form of crimes in their neighbourhoods. This finding agrees with the outcome of the 2006 criminal victimization, safety and policing survey by Alemika and Chukwuma (2006:45), where it was found that about three-quarter (73.3%) of all the respondents in Lagos State expressed fears about falling victim of crime.

Table 4.29 Distribution of Respondents by fear of becoming a victim of crime in their Neighbourhood

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very fearful	100	9.8
Fearful	179	17.6
A little fearful	476	46.8
Not at all fearful	243	23.9
Don't Know	15	1.5
No Response	4	0.4
Total	**1017**	**100.0**

Fear of criminal victimization by respondents was reported in all the four local government areas that were covered by this study with more respondents (36.4%) in Mushin Local Government Area expressing fear of becoming victims of crime. This was followed by Ikeja (32.6%), Eti-Osa (26.1%) and Ikorodu (14.6%), in that order. Earlier studies in Lagos by Alemika and Chukwuma (2005) and Soyombo et al. (2009) also found that Mushin had one of the highest rates of fear of criminal victimization in the state. Agboola (1997) also found that Mushin is one of the three most dangerous and crime prone neighbourhoods in Lagos metropolis. The other two are Ajegunle and Oshodi.

4.5.5.1 Fear of criminal victimization and support for informal security structures

It was necessary to establish the nature of the relationship between fear of criminal victimization and respondents' support for the existence of informal security structures. Table 4.30 indicates that fear of victimization has influence on support for the existence of informal policing groups, as shown by the high proportions of respondents who were very fearful (82%), fearful (87.2%) and a little fearful (91.4%), who expressed support for the existence of informal security groups. However, that an equally significant 93.4% of the respondents who said that they were not at all fearful of criminal victimization still supported the existence of informal security structures is first indicative of other possible intervening variables in this regard, and, secondly,

underscores the collective endorsement of the contributions of informal security groups to the management of the security concerns of the people.

4.30 Fear of criminal victimization and support for informal policing groups

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Fear of becoming a victim of crime	Very fearful	82 (82.0%)	12(12.0%)	6 (6.0%)	100 (100.0%)
	Fearful	156(87.2%)	18 (7.5%)	3 (1.3%)	179 (100.0%)
	A little fearful	435(91.4%)	30(6.3%)	11(2.3%)	476(100 .0%)
	Not at all fearful	227 (93.4%)	124.9%)	4 (1.6%)	243 (100.0%)
	Don't Know	13 (86.7%)	2(13.3%)	0(0.0%)	15 (100.0%)
	No Response	3 (75.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1(25.0%)	4 (100.0%)
		916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.5.6 Feeling of safety by respondents in their neighbourhoods

Regarding feeling of safety, it was found that only 16.1% of the respondents in the study reported that they felt safe in their neighbourhoods, while 66.7% felt just safe in their neighbourhoods. Besides, 15.3% and 1.7% respectively of the respondents reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe in their neighbourhoods, respectively Alemika and Chukwuma (2007) found that close to 20% of the respondents from all LGAs in the state said they felt unsafe walking alone in their neighborhoods after dark. Worrey and Chukwuma (2011) also found in another state wide survey that between 25-40% of the respondents reported feeling unsafe in their homes, and in their area walking during the day or night, while 45% also felt unsafe at work and in public places.

It can be inferred from the foregoing that feeling of insecurity is rife among residents of Lagos State owing to high level of crime and criminal victimization. As it has been shown, informal policing structures flourish in environments such as we have painted here of Lagos State. People would naturally take their destinies in their own hands if the state fails to deliver on part of the social contract with the citizens, which include guaranteeing a safe and secure environment for the citizens to actualize their dreams.

4.5.6.1 Feeling of safety and support for the existence of informal security structures

Table 4.31 below shows the probable relationship between feeling of safety in their neighbourhoods and respondents support for the existence of informal policing groups. According to the table, as high as 72.2%, 88.5% and 90.4% of respondents who felt very unsafe, unsafe and just safe, respectively, expressed support for the continued existence of informal policing groups in the state. Interestingly too, an equally high proportion (92.1%) of those who felt very safe in their neighbourhoods also supported the continued existence of informal security groups in the state. This suggests that there is an appreciation of the modest contributions of the ISS groups to the containment of insecurity in the state. As one adult female respondent to the in-depth interview put it:

> We are safe here because of the activities of the *olodes*. We were living with our hearts in our mouths before they were hired. So why would anyone want to stop them? Have the police changed or have all the bad people (criminals) relocated. What we should be talking about is how to make them work better and not to disband them
>
> *Adult female respondent (IDI, Mushin)*

4.31: Feeling of safety and support for the existence of informal security groups

		In support of the existence of ISS			
		Yes	No	No Response	Total
Feeling of safety in respondents' neighbourhoods	Very safe	151 (92.1%)	11(6.7%)	2 (1.2%)	164 (100.0%)
	Just safe	613(90.4%)	48 (7.1%)	17(2.5%)	678 (100.0%)
	Unsafe	138(88.5%)	15(9.6%)	3(1.9%)	156(100 .0%)
	Very unsafe	13 (72.2%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (16.7%)	18 (100.0%)
	No Response	1 (100.00%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1 (100.0%)
	Total	916 (90.1%)	76 (7.5%)	25 (2.5%)	1017(100.0%)

4.6 Improving the effectiveness and accountability of the Nigeria Police Force: Lessons from the informal security structures.

This study has thrown up a number of fundamental lessons. One of these is the discovery that informal security structures are not only popular in the neighbourhoods where they are found; they also enjoy overwhelming local support and cooperation. This development derives largely from the general feeling that as part and parcel of the communities where they operate, members of the informal security structures share similar sentiments and aspirations with the rest members of their communities, and identify with their collective interests. They are also considered to be reliable, efficient accessible and accountable, and preferred security outfits for effective neighbourhood policing than the formal police. Again, this is explained by the active involvement of community leadership in their recruitment, supervision and discipline.

Incidentally, it is for the absence of these same conditions that the Nigeria police do not enjoy public confidence, respect and cooperation. They are seen as the enforcement organ of a distant 'enemy' state which exists to foist the capricious will of its 'masters' on the ordinary people and who are better avoided than courted (Bowden, 1978). In the words of Brodgen (1982:203), "Police forces are structured, organizationally and ideologically to act against the marginal strata". This situation is worsened by the impunity and sheer lack of accountability of these men most of who have turned their uniforms and guns as licenses to kill, maim and loot from the people they are meant to serve. Extant literature indicate that this character of the Nigeria Police is traceable to its colonial origin (Onoge, 1993; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2007). As Onoge (1993:178) put it,

> The burden of colonial policing was the subordination of the national interests of the people to the political and economic interest of the state. Through armed patrols, raids, arrests and detention, the colonial police protected the colonial economy by policing labour. Through the enforcement of unpopular direct taxation, the raiding of labour camps, and the violent suppression of strikes, the police ensured the creation, supply and discipline of the proletarian labour force required by colonial capitalism … The police, the most visible enforcer of colonial *diktat* remained immensely unpopular. The police, in the consciousness of the

> people, became the symbol of the dictatorial establishment rather than the protector of the people's rights. As the people had no checks over the arbitrariness of the police, they either avoided "police trouble" or mediated inevitable contacts with bribe offerings. During colonial rule in Nigeria, members of various colonial police forces were accused of 'looting, stealing and generally taking advantage of their positions"

Sadly, several years after the colonialists left, this character of the police has remained unchanged because the indigenous power elites who stepped into the shoes of the colonial overlords saw in the existing structure an opportunity to perpetuate their hold on power, plunder the economy and rein in the opposition. Nwolise (2012) frowns particularly at the classification of the police under the exclusive legislative list and the subsequent centralization of its authority to the point that State Governors who are constitutionally recognized as Chief Security Officers of their states have practically no control over the least police officer in their states. To the extent that the Nigeria Police are psychologically and structurally too distant from the people they are meant to protect including state Governors, to that extent have they also remained grossly unaccountable, corrupt and repressive. With the backing of autocratic leaders and repressive laws, they have continued to act as though they were laws unto themselves, maiming, killing and detaining persons arbitrarily and with impunity. This is also possible because they see themselves as far and above the people, independent of them and therefore, make no pretensions about sharing the values, sentiments and interests of their communities of operation.

It is thus this structural deficiency of the Nigeria police and the grand conspiracy of the power elites that have turned the agency into what it has become, a monster that is generally hated and dreaded (Onoge, 1993). This also explains the prevailing public hostility to the police and the abysmal failure of the latter to deliver on its constitutional role of maintaining law and order and protecting life and property. This is because no police force can succeed in the discharge of its statutory responsibility of maintaining law and of order and of guaranteeing the safety of lives and property, without the cooperation and support of the public. The police and the community residents need to

work in close partnership to enhance crime detection, prevention and community safety, especially in view of the ever increasing sophistication of crime. A fundamental assumption of the cooperative relationship between the police and community is that cooperation hinges on and in turn shapes the attitudes that community residents hold toward the police. When there is good police–community relations, police have a better understanding of the public's concerns (especially those that are crime related), and citizens are more inclined to report crimes that occur to the police, provide tips/intelligence to law enforcement, willingly serve as witnesses, and are happy to participate in jury trials. By extension, police also become more proactive, thereby preventing crimes before they occur or minimizing their impact, instead of simply reacting to calls for service.

Unfortunately, this collaboration which is a prerequisite for effective police performance has become hampered by a groundswell of public distrust arising from the distant, imperial, corrupt, repressive and crass lack of accountability of the Nigeria Police. It is for these same reasons that some people have advocated for the establishment of state or even regional police structure. Proponents of state police insist that apart from being a negation of the principles of federalism, the "over centralization of power invariably prevents local initiatives, and promotes inefficiency and a sense of over-dependence on the central government" (Ebo,2014). Ewuga (The Tribune,5/9/2012) takes this argument further by pointing attention to the United States of America where there exist four levels of police structures – Federal, State, Local and County – each with clear job descriptions, roles and jurisdictions.

Dismissing the fear of those who think that the Nigerian federation is still too young for a decentralized police force and who see such arrangement as an invitation to chaos, tyranny and impunity of the powerful and privileged (Malogo, The Sun,2/9/2012), Nwolise (2012) argues that this will not be so if the restructuring of the police is done to make them agents of the law as opposed to being agents of the Chief Executive and Big man that they have been since the last 52 years of the country's independence. Besides, Bracht and Tsouros (1990) see the continued centralization of the police as being inconsistent with the global gravitation toward not just state police, but indeed towards

what is variously regarded as community-based, partnership, networking, collective, problem-solving or intelligence-led policing. Ebo (2014) insists that the rising and overwhelming rate of crime which has now involved series of kidnapping, hooliganism, violent religious fundamentalism and other forms of criminal activities including terrorism is an eloquent testimony that a central command police force is no longer fashionable in view of current realities. It is partly the frustration inherent in this arrangement that has propelled many state governors to create informal security outfits to carry out crime control functions (Chukwuma, 2002; Ebo, 2014).

The idea of community –based or partnership policing is driven by the understanding that the changing environment of security both nationally and globally has made it expedient for countries to re-think and tinker with their policing strategies based on their peculiar realities. Its' proponents acknowledge that rather than being the monopoly of the formal or public police, policing function is more effective when it is carried out as a collective responsibility of all critical stakeholders including members of the public. Specifically, the concept recognizes that the local people as stakeholders in their communities not only understand their neighbourhoods better but share the common aspiration of promoting and protecting it. Additionally, it notes that besides serving as a means of getting things done, involving people in solving their own problems also brings many lasting benefits to people including bringing people together in creating and making decisions about their environment, incorporating local values and attitudes into any programme, and providing access to local leaders, resources, and technical skills not otherwise available (Bracht N. and Tsouros A, 1990). Above all, it also engenders a sense of identification and continuing responsibility for any programme, often referred to as the principle of ownership.(Carlaw R.W, Mittlemark M.B, Btacht N. et. al, 1984.

All these ingredients are what combine to make informal security structures preferred outfits for neighbourhood policing and which recommend them for closer scrutiny in any attempt to develop a robust, inclusive and acceptable law and order policy in Nigeria. Such policy must recognize the need for strategic partnership between the

police and the community through their informal security structures. This type of cooperative problem-solving approach would help in building trust between the police and the community, and ultimately in engendering collaboration in problem-solving (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1994), especially in view of the growing threat of terror and of the need for intelligence led policing. This is also particularly so because of the increasing understanding among security experts that it is practically impossible for any single agency to win the war against crime and that any comprehensive strategy to successfully fight crime must seek the partnership of other relevant stakeholders.

This has become the new approach in several countries including US, UK, Canada and Australia since the New York 9/11, London 11/7 and Madrid 11/03 terror attacks. Since then, Canada for instance, adopted a new security approach whereby members of the community are encouraged to survey suspicious neighbours or activities. Under the approach, the community became a strategic source of information which could then be utilized to counter possible threats of terrorism (Murphy, 2005). The approach also encouraged the police to invite active participative interaction with communities in policing programs through which local communities were then penetrated to provide intelligence in this manner. In Australia, the approach adopted was a combination of intelligence-led policing, problem orientated policing methods, and the network or collective policing approach to policing wherein policing responsibility is distributed to diverse entities which may be affected by terrorism in whatsoever manner including private security outfits, other government agencies as well as members of the public (Chan, 2001). The objective is to create a combined stance against crime irrespective of cultural and ethnic differences (Palmer and Whelan, 2006). This is also true of Finland and Switzerland where policing is considered a joint approach from a diverse spectrum of community-based groups working together to address security and prevention of crime (Schedler, 2006). In the case of the United States of America, former President Bush set up the Homeland Security and designed a National Strategy for combating terrorism that made provision for a role for the American Public/Civil security based on the principle of shared responsibility and partnership with the Congress, state and local governments, the private sector and the American people (Okiro, 2013) In Sri-Lanka,

frequent attacks from terrorists in the wake of the country's civil war prompted the villagers to organize themselves into security groups to protect themselves. These groups known as Home Guards were recognized and armed by the government which then created the Home Guard Service and issued them uniforms and weapons and placed under the command of the Sri-Lankan Police Units. They were then posted to their home towns and villages as volunteers, to protect the civilian population from terrorist attacks. In 2006, the group became known as the Civil Security Force following the establishment of the Department of Civil Security (ibid). This arrangement can be utilized in combating not just terrorism, but also crimes of all sorts.

The foregoing indicates that policing styles are highly context and history specific. It is also country specific. This presupposes that each country has to evolve its own concept of policing that suits its environment, its people and its crime problems. In doing this, it is pertinent that local realities that have worked and which enjoy the goodwill of the people should form part of the larger policing strategy of a people. For Nigeria and as the experience in Lagos state has amply shown, community crime control initiatives have remained popular, acceptable and largely effective in curbing neighbourhood criminality because they are close to the people, share their values, sentiments and aspiration, accessible and accountable. On the other hand, the Nigeria Police has failed largely because it is structurally and psychologically distant from the people, corrupt, repressive and unaccountable. There is therefore the need to restructure the police with a view to bringing it closer and making it more responsive and accountable to the people. Thereafter, a partnership arrangement can be worked out that would make security a collective responsibility of the police and community crime control initiatives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This is the last chapter of this work and contains the summary and conclusions that are drawn from it. It also contains the recommendations that are made based on the findings of the work.

5.2 Summary

The central objectives of this study were to explain the emergence and persistence of informal policing structures in Lagos State and to determine their effectiveness in improving security in the state. More specifically, the study set out to interrogate and accomplish the following objectives.

i. To explain the emergence and proliferation of informal policing structures in Lagos State,
ii. To examine the structures and organizations of these informal policing systems,
iii. To examine the relationship between informal policing structures and the Nigeria Police in Lagos State,
iv. To evaluate the effectiveness of these informal policing organizations on security in Lagos State,
v. To assess public perception of the Informal Policing groups in Lagos, and
vi. To formulate strategies to enable informal policing organizations contribute positively to security in Lagos State.

The study was organized into five separate but interrelated chapters. The first chapter provided a background of the phenomenon of informal policing structures, with particular emphasis on the role of these structures in security administration locally and elsewhere. The chapter also articulated the research problem, the justification of the

research, its scope. It also provided clarifications of the meanings of concepts as used in the study.

Chapter two of the work reviewed existing literature on the subject under study and the gap in knowledge that needed to be filled by this study. Special focus was on the involvement of informal security structures in security administration, excesses and relationship with the formal police. Three theories which were considered apposite for the understanding of the proliferation and endurance of the phenomenon of informal security structures in Lagos State were also reviewed in the chapter.

The third chapter explained the research design that was adopted by the study. The triangulated design was recommended by its quality of being able to enhance the validity and reliability of data to be obtained because of the high likelihood that information that are missed out by one method are captured by the other. For the survey, a total of 1017 respondents aged 18 years and above were interviewed in four local government areas of Lagos state. Forty six (46) in-depth interviews were administered on members and leaders of identified informal policing groups, community development associations executives, the Police, Police Community Policing Committees, traditional leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, religious leaders and leaders of occupational associations. Five (5) separate focus group discussions were also conducted with purposively selected community members and operatives of ISS.

The fourth chapter of the work presented and discussed the findings from the field. These were done using tables of simple frequencies and percentages. Charts were also presented where necessary. The data were subjected to univariate and bivariate analysis only. The bivariate measures was used to measure only possible associations between notable independent variables, such as level of crime, performance of the formal police, effectiveness of informal policing structures and the dependent variable of support for the existence of informal policing structures, without the rigours of statistical test of hypotheses in the strictly quantitative sense of the word.

The fifth and final chapter of the work summarized the entire work and highlighted its major findings. The chapter also discussed the modest contributions of this work to knowledge, the areas where further researches would be needed and policy recommendations.

5.3 Major findings of the study

This section discusses the major findings of the work in relation to the research questions, and as well highlights other ancillary findings that are deemed useful for purposes of policy.

Research question one: On the reasons for the emergence and proliferation of informal policing structures

The study found that the emergence, proliferation and persistence of informal security structures are, largely, the product of a variety of factors namely:

i. The general and persisting or worsening state of insecurity across the country nay, Lagos State: Nearly half (45.1%) of the respondents considered the level of crime in the state to be high while another 40.1% of them adjudged crime level to be average. Most (90.9%) and 91.3% of the respondents who thought that crime was extremely high or somewhat high, respectively expressed support for the existence of ISS groups. Also, 82%, 82.7% and 91.4% of the respondents who were very fearful, fearful or a little fearful of criminal victimization, respectively, expressed support for the existence of informal security groups.

ii. The low rating or outright loss of confidence in the Nigeria Police as a result of inadequate personnel, funding and equipment, corruption and their attendant inability to effectively address the pervasive insecurity across the state: The study found that, as is the case in Nigeria, generally, Lagos State is under-policed. A total of 36.3% and 8.8% of the respondents reported that they saw police patrol team either infrequently or never in their neighbourhood streets, respectively. Nearly all of those who reported that their neighbourhoods were either patrolled infrequently (95.4%) or never patrolled at all (94.4%) supported

the existence of informal policing groups. Also, 78.9% of all the respondents had little confidence in the police, 63.9% of them had little respect for the police and 79.3% of them thought that the police were less honest compared to most other people.

iii. The high level of public confidence in the informal security groups arising from their closeness and ability to reasonably fill the security gap in most neighbourhoods, their alleged excesses abuses notwithstanding.

Research question two: On forms/types and modus operandi of informal security structures in Lagos State

i. Three broad categories of informal policing groups were identified in the four local government areas that were studied. These are state-organised, community-organisedandindividual-house-owner/occupant-employed, otherwise called *mai guards.* The community night watchers were the most pronounced in the communities that were covered by the study, having been mentioned by 74.8% of respondents.

ii. The various forms of ISS have varying organizational structures and modus operandi, but nonetheless exist largely to provide a sense of safety and security among residents.

iii. The majority (78.6%) of the ISS groups in the communities covered by the study were street based. Only 11.3%, 4.6% and 3.9%, respectively, were village- or community-based, local/state-government based and ethnic-based.

iv. In most cases, recruitment of members of the different informal policing structures followed very strict screening procedures and emphasized integrity and unblemished character. For most of the ISS groups, recruitment was sometimes based on strong recommendations by significant members of the community.

v. Apart from the state sponsored ISS whose operation was for twenty hours, most other groups operated mostly at night as night watchmen. Their jobs were also mostly part-time.

vi. Most of the ISS employed such tools as torches, whistles, horsewhips, sticks, boots and sometimes cutlasses during their night patrols. A few of them admitted using charms, while community members also reported that some of them bear arms, such as native guns. The state-sponsored ISS group carries only walkie- talkie, whistle and batons.

All the ISS groups were properly organized around a leader or leaders who was/were mostly elected/appointed either by members themselves or by the empowering authority which ranged from traditional rulers (baale) and their chiefs, landlords' or residents' associations, community development associations (CDAs) or local/state government. The activities of these groups are also overseen by the body that engaged them.

viii. Regarding accountability, it was found that there also existed measures which helped to keep members of these groups in check. One such measure was that which required that all ISS groups should be registered with the police, including those who wish to bear guns. However, many of the ISS groups were found not to be registered with either the police or any other organ of government.

ix. Except for the state-sponsored ISS group whose members are paid by the government, members of other ISS groups were mostly paid through levies on community members. Sometimes, these ISS groups are funded through voluntary donations from public-spirited persons or by personal contributions of members.

Research Question Three: On the relationship between informal security structures and the Nigeria Police

i. The study found that there exist a rather warm relationship between the Nigeria Police and most registered informal security groups in the communities that were covered by this study. The police actively canvas for community members to organize themselves into vigilantes to augment the efforts of the police

ii. The ISS groups cooperated with the police in the areas of providing the police with information on criminals, surrendering of suspects to them as well as

surrendering property recovered from suspects to the police. On the other hand, the police also provide some of these groups with requisite advice on how to go about their job in addition to screening their members.

iii. Despite this seeming partnership between the two groups, the police, however, expressed concerns about the often reported excesses of some ISS groups and about the fact that some of them operate illegally.

Research question four: On the effectiveness of ISS groups in Community Crime Control in Lagos State

i. Nearly all (92.3%) of the respondents reported that the security situation in their neighbourhoods actually got better as a result of the activities of the informal security groups there.

ii. Most (94.9%) of the respondents considered their neighbourhoods safe after the introduction of ISS, as against the 32.4% who thought so before the introduction of ISS.

iii. The majority (93.9%) of the respondents adjudged the informal policing groups in their neighbourhoods to be effective in crime control, while only 3.6% considered them to be ineffective

iv. Most (92.9%) of the respondents supported the existence of ISS groups because they were very effective, while 91.8% said that ISS groups should be allowed to exist because they were effective.

v. The majority (85.2%) of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the services provided by the ISS groups in their communities.

vi. All the respondents who expressed satisfaction with the services of ISS groups as well as the majority (85.3%) of those who expressed dissatisfaction with the services of ISS supported the existence of ISS groups.

vii. With respect to guaranteeing neighbourhood security, most (69.6%) of the respondents reported preference for informal policing groups, as compared to

the 26.3% that preferred the Nigeria Police. While 50% of the respondents would report a crime first to the police, a near equal proportion (47.3%) of them would report a crime first to the informal policing groups before thinking of the formal police.

5.4 Conclusion

There has been a global gravitation towards the decentralization of policing functions lately. In the West especially, the buzz word is 'community policing' wherein policing becomes a collaborative effort between the police and the community to identify the problems of crime and disorder and to develop solutions from within the community. However, in most of Nigeria, as in the rest of Africa and many parts of the non-Western world, informal security actors have remained very prominent part of society's entire security landscape. Indeed, rather than being the monopoly of the formal or public police, policing function is being carried out by formal and informal agencies outside the realm of the state such that from the citizen's point of view, the formal and informal security actors are part and parcel of a complex pattern of overlapping actors rather than appearing as incompatible alternatives.

This study was conceived against the background of this co-existence of formal and informal security groups in Lagos state, the main objective being to explore and document the origins, forms, organization, operations and contributions of informal security structures to neighbourhood crime control in the state. An understanding of the nature or characteristics of informal security actors is not only imperative because of the public trust and legitimacy that they seem to enjoy but because such understanding offers an opportunity to strengthen them especially in the light of the current security challenges being faced across the country.

The study established that informal policing structures are deeply entrenched in the communities that were covered and that these structures form an integral part of the security architecture of these communities. The reasons for their existence, proliferation and endurance lie deeply in the obvious inability of the police to guarantee safety and

security in the study communities and the state at large, and even in the cultural root, closeness and accessibility of the ISS to the people. The poor image and public distrust for the formal police and their numerical and logistic inadequacies have also helped to push people to self-help alternatives, such as informal policing groups.

The study established that there are aspects of the operations of the informal security groups that are cause for concern, especially as they relate to abuse of suspects' rights, bearing of arms and, in some cases, the existence of unregistered ISS. However, despite these problems, there was unanimity of views about the relevance and positive contributions of these organizations to the improvement of safety and security in the communities where they exist and in the state as a whole. This is in spite of the fact that many of these outfits have not been incorporated into the "formal" policy on security and policing. Indeed, many of them operate with the knowledge and silent consent and nudging of the formal police and will continue to do so in the light of a poor functioning police and criminal justice system.

Based on the foregoing, the study concludes that rather than dwell on the reported weaknesses and limitations of the informal policing outfits, or even stressing the fact that they do not conform to Western standards, any genuine initiative that is committed to improving the human security of the local populations should instead acknowledge the centrality of these outfits in the security landscape of the society and work on their weaknesses with a view to strengthening and improving their performance. It will also be necessary to study and understand the ways in which the formal police and their informal counterparts inter-penetrate, mingle and merge with a view to enriching and strengthening this relationship in a manner that would enhance more robust security arrangement.

In this era of terrorism and of the need for more involvement of the community especially as it relates to intelligence-based policing, the existence of informal policing groups presents an enviable platform that could be leveraged upon for more inclusive policing. Since it has been established that informal security structures work and

satisfactorily so, focus should be on why it is working and how it can be supported and improved upon. This may be what is needed to come to terms with the prevailing insecurity across the country.

5.5 Recommendations

This study has established unequivocally that informal policing groups have played satisfactory roles in guaranteeing safety and security in Lagos State, despite their shortcomings and limitations. Therefore, the following recommendations are made in order to strengthen and improve their performance.

- There is the need to carefully articulate and standardize the parameters for the operation of informal policing structures in the state. A situation whereby some ISS groups exist without due registration with relevant government authorities is not healthy. Such parameters would also define the desired relationship between these ISS groups and the formal police.

- Next to the above is the need to evolve a new strategy of law and order which will consciously seek to integrate, regulate, mobilize and empower informal policing outfits that are willing to preserve law and order in an acceptable manner. As this study has demonstrated, ISS groups offer very rare opportunity for grass-roots mobilization and involvement in the security of their neighbourhoods and of the state at large, especially given the evident inadequacies of the formal police. This implies that rather than treat these groups as villains, as is currently the case, the government, through the police, should painstakingly identify, recognize, organize and supervise credible ones to ensure that they operate within set parameters.

- Just as the Lagos State neighbourhood watch is a creation of an act of Lagos State Government, local government authorities should be encouraged to make by-laws to legitimize and regulate the establishment and methods of operation of ISS in their areas of jurisdiction subject to police supervision. Only those who meet the provisions of the law should be registered with the police and empowered to function under the close monitoring of the police.

- When the above point is accomplished, the CDAs should be strengthened and empowered to form ISS groups that would take charge of the local security needs of their areas in concert with the police. The local or state governments working through the CDAs and community leaders would then support these ISS groups by way of funds and equipment for improved operational efficiency. As things stand, it will be unproductive to rely only on the formal police to address the enormous security challenges of our time. Time has come to empower our communities and make them stakeholders that they are in ensuring their own security.

- There is the need for a forum that would periodically bring together all certified informal policing groups and the police within specific geographical locations to compare notes, exchange information, standardize procedures, and improve relationship. Such a platform would also be used to develop community safety plans, create channels for referral to services provided by one another and share resources.

- One of the allegations against informal policing groups is their tendency to take the laws into their own hands by maltreating their suspects. This is largely because most of them have limited knowledge and training on basic issues of human rights and rule of law. It is, therefore, important that these people be exposed to the rudiments of rule of law and defaulters held accountable for their excesses. This training should also include strategies of crime prevention and detection, patrol strategies, surveillance and arrest of suspects.

- The formal police were reported to have low regard among the respondents owing to corruption, brutality and inability to curb crime. This is sometimes the reason why informal policing groups prefer to deal with the police at arm's length and take the law into their own hands. This is also why most community members prefer the informal policing groups to the police. Therefore, there is the need to improve the public image of the police to win the trust of all including ISS groups. If the two must work together, then there must be trust

between them. Everything should be done to improve the poor perceptions of these groups about each other.

- Contrary to opinions in certain quarters, informal policing structures are not an alternative to the police and must not be so seen. Rather, they are partners with the police working together to enhance the safety and security of citizens. Therefore, efforts must be made to bridge that gap between these groups for better synergy and working relationship.

- The introduction of certain incentives or rewards for ISS that play by the rule will help in motivating them for better performance, and should be seriously considered. Such incentives may include improved provision of operational equipment, such as raincoats, booths, touches, uniforms and improved remuneration.

5.6 Contribution to knowledge

1. This study was embarked upon in the first instance because of the palpable lack of evidence- based data on the forms, modus operandi, relationship of ISS to the Nigeria Police, and the specific contributions of the latter, especially in Lagos, and generally in Nigeria, to community crime control. This gap has been successfully addressed by this study, as it presents reliable data on the dynamics and potential of ISS in addressing the problem of law and order in Lagos State.

2. Although the study agrees with earlier studies that informal security outfits flourish because of the inability of the state to guarantee the citizens' safety and security, it takes a step further to establish the place of culture, shared sentiments and aspirations, and repeated exchanges by community members as a basis for people's attachment and commitment to informal security groups.

3. Earlier studies on informal security structures merely concentrated on their reported weaknesses and non-conformity with Western standards. This study was more holistic and provides more robust, concrete and authoritative insight into the actual and potential contributions of these structures to the management

of security in Lagos State, and provided a roadmap for evolving a more holistic law and order policy that will involve and enjoy the confidence of the people.

5.7 Limitations of the study

It was the desire of this study to compile a list of all the informal security structures in the study communities and to do a comprehensive profiling of each of them. This was not possible because many of these organizations are not formally registered and were thus unwilling to divulge very personal information. Results of the study relating to many of the variables that were examined, such as level of crime, feeling of safety and effectiveness of informal policing structures, were based on perceptions rather than actual measurements. Also, the study did not set out to do a trend analysis of informal security groups in Lagos State within a specific time frame. Its focus was instead on deepening understanding of these groups generally as they operate in the various communities where they are found

5.8 Areas of future research

For reasons of time and resources, this study was limited to only four local government areas in Lagos State. It is may be necessary that future studies expand the scope to cover more local government areas. This would certainly provide a more holistic and authoritative picture of the dynamics of informal policing groups in the state.

Besides, given the far-reaching revelations from the study about the actual and potential usefulness of ISS in the security architecture of Lagos State, future studies may consider the possibility of replicating this study in other states of the country, especially with a view to integrating these groups into the country's law and order policy.

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Appendix I

FGD session with operatives of the State-sponsored ISS (Neighbourhood Watchers)

FGD session with community leaders in Eti-Osa LGA

FGD session with Female community members *Okun Alfa*

An IDI session with a member of PCRC in Mushin

Appendix II

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
NIGERIA

MODULE A

TOPIC: INFORMAL SECURITY STRUCTURES AND COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Pius Adejoh. I am conducting a study on informal security structures and community crime control in Lagos State. The study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Ibadan. The interview will take about 30 minutes to complete. Kindly provide candid answers to the questions. You are assured of confidentiality on all information you volunteer.

Respondent agrees to be interviewed 1

Respondent does not agree to be interviewed 2

Thank you.

Adejoh, P. E.

SURVEY IDENTIFICATION

Questionnaire Identification Number:	
Local Government of Interview:	
Community of Interview:	
Street of Interview:	
Name of Interviewer:	**Signature Code**
Name of Supervisor:	**Signature Code**
Date of Interview:	
Time Interview Started:	
Time Interview Ended:	

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

S/N	QUESTION	RESPONSE	CODE	
1.	Sex	Male Female	1 2	
2.	How old are you now?	…….		
3	What is your marital status?	Married Single Divorced Separated Widowed	1 2 3 4 5	
4.	If ever married, type of marriage	Monogamous Polygamous	1 2	
5.	What is your ethnic group?	Yoruba Ibo Hausa Others (Specify)……	1 2 3 4	
6.	What is your religious affiliation?	Christianity Islam Traditional Others (specify)……	1 2 3 4	
7.	What is your highest level of education?	No formal education Primary Education Secondary Education Tertiary Education	1 2 3 4	

8.	What is your employment Status?	Employed Unemployed Student/Apprenticeship Others, specify	1 2 3 4	
9.	If employed, state the nature of employment you are engaged in.	Public sector Private sector Self-employed Others (Specify)……	1 2 3 4	
10.	If employed, state the type of employment you are engaged in.	Full time Part Time Others (Specify)……	1 2 3	
11.	On the average, how much do you earn for a living per month?	N……..		
12.	How would you describe your income?	Regular Periodic Others (Specify)……	1 2 3	
13.	What type of house do you live in?	Single room A room and palour Flat Duplex Others (specify) ……	1 2 3 4 5	
14.	What is your occupancy status in the house where you live?	Tenant Owner Squatter Others (Specify)……	1 2 3 4	
15.	How would you classify your economic standing?	Very rich Rich Neither rich nor poor Poor Very poor Others(specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6	
SECTION B: Community Safety and Security				
16.	What is the distance from your residence to the nearest police access point using your normal mode of transportation?	Less than 10 minutes >10mins but < 30 mins. > 30 mins but < 1 hour > 1 hour but < 2 hours > 2 hours	1 2 3 4 5	
17	How frequently do you see a police officer patrolling the streets where you live?	Daily Weekly	1 2	

		Monthly Infrequently Never	3 4 5	
18.	How often do you hear of crimes being committed in your neighbourhood?	Very often Often Not often	1 2 3	
19.	What are the common types of crime committed in your neighbourhood? (Respondents can choose more than one response)	Armed robbery Burglaries (Breaking and Entry) Sexual Harassment Theft of or from car Theft of mobile phones Theft of money Robbery in traffic Homicide (Killing) Car snatching (Robbing of car while in motion) Rape Kidnapping Domestic violence Drug abuse Rioting/demonstrations Fighting by area boys/hooligans/political thugs Assault by area boys/hooligans/ political thugs Communal/ethnic clash Others (specify)……..	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	
20.	Have you or any member of your family been a victim of crime in your neighbourhood before?	Yes No	1 2	Q22
21.	If yes, which of these crimes were you or your family member a victim of (Respondents can choose more than one response)	Armed robbery Burglaries (Breaking and Entry) Sexual Harassment Theft of or from car Theft of mobile phones Theft of money Robbery in traffic Homicide (Killing) Car snatching (Robbing of car while in motion)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

		Rape	10	
		Kidnapping	11	
		Domestic violence	12	
		Drug abuse	13	
		Rioting/demonstrations	14	
		Fighting by area boys/hooligans/political thugs	15	
		Assault by area boys/hooligans/ political thugs	16	
		Communal/ethnic clash	17	
		Others (specify)	18	
22.	In general, how fearful are you of becoming a victim of any type of crime in your neighbourhood?	Very fearful	1	
		Fearful	2	
		A little fearful	3	
		Not at all fearful	4	
		Don't know	5	
23.	Generally, how safe is your community?	Very safe	1	
		Just Safe	2	
		Unsafe	3	
		Very unsafe	4	
24.	How would you describe the level of crime in Lagos State?	Extremely high	1	
		Somewhat high	2	
		Average	3	
		Somewhat low	4	
		Extremely low	5	
		Non existent	6	

SECTION C: Perceptions of the Nigeria Police

25	How would you rate the performance of the Nigeria Police in the following areas?					
	Please tick the box of your choice	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
	Responding quickly to urgent calls					
	Preventing crime					
	Detecting/solving crimes					
	Respecting the rights of suspects					
	Respecting the rights of complainants					
	Respecting the rights of other citizens					
	Dealing with the disputes between people and/ or groups					
	Dealing with riots and violent disturbances					
	Treating all people fairly without regard to status or position					

	Proper response to people who wish to report a crime or incident						
	Police service delivery						
	Maintaining a good relationship with communities						
	Dealing with domestic violence						
	Dealing with female complainants on rape or similar cases						
	Working with other agencies to improve safety and security and access to justice						
26.	Which of the following behaviours would you associate with the Nigeria Police? (Tick as many as are applicable)	Corruption Threaten citizens with guns/weapons Harass suspects when being arrested Maltreat suspects while in detention Abuse of power Excessive use of force Favouritism Sexual abuse Use unfair methods to get offenders convicted Aid and abet crime		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
27.	Considering what you know about the way the police do their job, would you say you have	Great confidence in the police Mixed feelings about the police Little confidence in the police Don't Know		1 2 3 4			
28.	Considering what you know about the way the police do their job, would you say you have	Great respect for the police Mixed feelings about the police Little respect for the police Don't Know		1 2 3 4			
29.	Compared to most people, do you think the police are	More honest About the same Less honest Don't Know		1 2 3 4			
30.	Generally, are you satisfied with police performance in the provision of security in your area? Please tick the box of your choice	Yes No		1 2			
31.	Which of the following factors hinder the police from performing effectively? (Tick as many as are applicable)	Corruption Incompetence Poor funding		1 2 3			

		Lack of equipment It is detached from the people Inadequate training Political interference Inadequate personnel Poor morale Poor community support	4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
32.	What should be done to make the police more effective and efficient?			
33	Is there a forum in which members of your community meet with the police to discuss issues that affect the community?	Yes No	1 2	Q35
34	If yes, what is the name of the forum?			
SECTION D: Informal Security Structures (ISS)				
35.	Is there a vigilante or neighbourhood watch group operating in your community?	Yes No	1 2	
36.	How many of such groups do you have in your community?			
37.	What is/are the name(s) of the group/s working in your community?	1……. 2……. 3……. 4…….		
38.	Who are the people recruited into the group/s	Residents only Non Residents only Mixture of 1 & 2	1 2 3	
39.	If residents are members of the ISS in your area, what is the nature of their membership?	Voluntary Obligatory Others (Specify)……	1 2 3	
40.	Are you a member of any of the ISS groups?	Yes No	1 2	
41.	Is any member of your household a member of any of the ISS groups?	Yes No	1 2	
42.	Are women members of the ISS in your area?	Yes No	1 2	
43.	Are non indigenes members of the ISS in your community?	Yes No	1 2	

44.	How would you describe the ISS group in your community?	Street based Village based Local government wide Ethnic based Faith based State sponsored ISS group	1 2 3 4 5 6	
45.	Why did the members of your community engage the services of Informal Policing Group?	Perceived crime rise Poor perception about the ability of the Police to respond to the needs of the victims of crime Inadequacy of the formal police services The ISS are closer to the people Others (Specify)…….	1 2 3 4 5	
46.	Is the work of the members of the ISS a full time job?	Yes No Don't Know	1 2 3	
47.	Is there anybody/organ in the community or outside that supervises the activities of the ISS group?	Yes No	1 2	
48.	If yes, which body or organ in the community or outside the community supervises the activities of the ISS group in your area?	The Police The traditional leader and his chiefs in the community The Residents Association The Local Government Chairman The State Government Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6	
49.	Does the ISS in your area have a leader?	Yes No Don't Know	1 2 3	Q52
50.	If yes, how is the leader chosen?	By election By appointment Others (Pease specify)……	1 2 3	
51.	Who chooses the leader?	The Police The traditional leader and his chiefs The Residents Association The Local Government Chairman The State Government Others (specify)…….	1 2 3 4 5 6	
52.	Is there a forum where members of the ISS group are made to provide periodic account of their stewardship to the community?	Yes No Don't Know	1 2 3	Q54
53.	If yes, who do they report to?	The Police The traditional leader and his chiefs The Residents Association	1 2 3	

		The Local Government Chairman The State Government Others (specify)…….	4 5 6	
54.	Is the ISS in your community registered with any agency or organ of government?	Yes No Don't Know	1 2 3	Q56
55.	If yes, which agency or organ of government is it registered with?	The Police The Local Government The State Government Others (specify)……	1 2 3 4	
56.	Are the members of the ISS group in your community paid salaries/fees?	Yes No	1 2	Q58
57.	If yes, kindly state who pays the salaries? (Multiple choices)	Levy on community members Voluntary contribution Local government State Government	1 2 3 4	
58	Does the group get other support from the government?	Yes No Don't Know	1 2 3	60
59.	If yes, what is the nature of the support they get from the government?	…….. …….. ……..		
60.	Do you know of ISS groups receiving financial support from the following? (Multiple choices)	Local politicians Traditional rulers Nigerian NGOs International NGOs Ruling Party in the State Traders/Business Owners Township Village Associations Opposition Parties State Government Local Government Residents levies/fees	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
61.	Which of the following activities are undertaken by the ISS in your community? (Multiple choices)	Patrols at night Patrols during the day Provide security in markets Arrest and detain suspects Arrest but handover suspects to police Arrest and punish offenders Settle disputes and disagreements Extort money and do other corrupt things Eliminate criminals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

62.	Which of the following instruments do members of the ISS in your community carry with themselves? (Multiple choices)	Cutlasses Native Guns Double Barrel Guns Charms Incantations Horse whips Poison Others (Specify)……	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	
63.	How often do you hear of crimes being committed in your neighbourhood since the ISS group was established?	Very often Often Not often Rarely	1 2 3 4	
64.	What are the common type(s) of crime committed in your neighbourhood since the ISS group was established? (Multiple Choices)	Armed robbery Burglaries (Breaking and Entry) Sexual Harassment Theft of or from car Theft of mobile phones Theft of money Robbery in traffic Homicide (Killing) Car snatching (Robbing of car while in motion) Rape Kidnapping Domestic violence Drug abuse Rioting/demonstrations Fighting by area boys/hooligans/political thugs Assault by area boys/hooligans/ political thugs Communal/ethnic clash Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	
65.	Have you or any member of your family been a victim of any crime in your community since the establishment of ISS?	Yes No	1 2	Q67
66.	If yes, which of the following crimes have you or any member of your family suffered from since the establishment of the ISS group in your community? (Multiple choices)	Armed robbery Burglaries (Breaking and Entry) Sexual Harassment Theft of or from car Theft of mobile phones Theft of money Robbery in traffic Homicide (Killing)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	

		Car snatching (Robbing of car while in motion)	9	
		Rape	10	
		Kidnapping	11	
		Domestic violence	12	
		Drug abuse	13	
		Rioting/demonstrations	14	
		Fighting by area boys/hooligans/political thugs	15	
		Assault by area boys/hooligans/ political thugs	16	
		Communal/ethnic clash	17	
		Others (specify	18	
67	How effective is the ISS group in your area in crime control?	Very effective Effective Ineffective Very ineffective Don't Know	1 2 3 4 5	
68.	If effective or very effective, kindly give reasons. (Multiple choices)	More reliable and more efficient Respond immediately to distress calls Faster and nearer to the people They do not collect bribe/incorruptible	1 2 3 4	
69	How safe was your neighbourhood before the ISS was established?	Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe	1 2 3 4	
70	How safe has your community been after the establishment of ISS?	Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe	1 2 3 4	
71.	Has the security situation in your community improved since the presence of ISS there?	Yes No	1 2	
72.	Which of these two do you prefer for more effective security in your community?	The Formal Police (The Nigeria Police) The Informal Policing Structure (ISS)	1 2	
73.	How friendly is the ISS group in your community?	Very friendly Friendly Unfriendly Very unfriendly Don't Know	1 2 3 4 5	
74.	What are the problems faced by the ISS group in your Community? (Multiple Choices)	Lack of funding by the government Harassment and extortion by the police when carrying out their duties Lack of basic operational equipment Lack of recognition by the local government authorities Multiplicity of organizations Poor screening of members	1 2 3 4 5 6	

		Poor accountability Possession of locally made weapons Lack of representation of women Lack of representation of non indigenes.	7 8 9	
75.	Which of the following unacceptable behaviours do the ISS groups in your community engage in? Tick as many options as are applicable. Extort money from community members…… Are used by powerful people to make illegal arrests…… Administer physical punishments on suspects…… Eliminate innocent people secretly…… Take bribes to release suspects…… Are used by governments against opponents…… Are used by politicians as thugs…… Are suspected of being criminals…… Sexual abuse…… They are tribalistic and cause tribal conflicts…… They are crude in handling offenders…… Take laws into their hands…… Do not seem to respect their work ethics……		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	
76.	Please state your level of satisfaction with the services provided by the ISS in your community.	Very satisfied Satisfied Indifferent Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied	1 2 3 4 5	
77	If you have to choose between reporting a crime to the police or the ISS group, Please indicate who your first choice would be.	Police ISS Group	1 2	
78	What is the reason for your choice in the question above?	…… …… ……		
79.	Are you in support of the existence of informal policing structures generally?	Yes No	1 2	
80.	How would you describe the relationship between the police and the ISS group in your community?	Very Cordial Cordial Hostile Very hostile Don't Know	1 2 3 4 5	
81.	Specifically, do you think the police are happy with ISS generally?	Yes No	1 2	Q83
82.	If No, what are the reasons for the attitude of the police towards ISS groups	ISS groups are rivals ISS groups are unprofessional	1 2	

		ISS groups do not submit to the police		3	
		ISS groups engage in abuse of suspects rights		4	
		ISS groups are not accountable		5	
		ISS engage in extra judicial killings		6	
		Others (Specify)		7	
83	Is the ISS group in your community supervised by the police?		Yes	1	
			No	2	
			Don't Know	3	
84.	Do you think the activities of the ISS groups should be supervised by the police?		Yes	1	
			No	2	
85.	In which of the following areas does cooperation exist between the police and the ISS group in your community? (Multiple Choices)	The ISS group provides police with information on crime		1	
		The ISS group provides police with information on criminals		2	
		Joint patrol with the police		3	
		Surrender suspects to the police		4	
		Obtain assistance from the police to arrest suspects		5	
		Receive training from the police		6	
		Allow police to screen their members		7	
		Surrender properties recovered from suspects to police		8	
86.	In which of the following areas does the ISS group in your community need support in order to make it more effective? (Multiple Choices)	Assist to better organize the group		1	
		Training		2	
		Provision of equipment		3	
		Money		4	
		Others			

Thank you very much

Appendix III

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
NIGERIA

MODULE B

TOPIC: INFORMAL SECURITY STRUCTURES AND COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

INDEPTH INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD) GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Good Morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Pius Adejoh. I am conducting a study on informal policing systems and security in Lagos. The study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Ibadan. The interview will take about 30 minutes to complete. Kindly provide candid answers to the questions. You are assured of confidentiality on all information you volunteer.

Thank you.

Adejoh, P. E.

A. Community safety and security

1. How would you describe the level of crime in this neighbourhood?

   Probe:

   - How often do you hear of crimes being committed?
   - What are the common types of crime committed in this neighbourhood?
   - How much of these crimes are reported to the police? - If not reported to the police, why; If reported to the police, what is their response like?
   - Are these crimes committed by people who are insiders or outsiders to the neighbourhood?
   - Which time of the day are crimes more likely to be committed in the neighbourhood

2. Generally, how safe is this neighbourhood

   Probe:

   - Do people feel free to move about at night or during the day?
   - How often are people robbed or attacked in the neighbourhood?
   - Is movement restricted at any point of time in the neighbourhood?
     If yes, when and why?

3. How would you describe the performance of the police in controlling crime and insecurity in the neighbourhood?

   Probe:

   - Reasons for responses
   - Are there reservations about the activities of the police relating to crime and insecurity in the neighbourhood? What are these reservations?
   - Would you say the police are coping well or need the assistance of other agencies to be able to cope with the problem of crime and insecurity in the community? Explain your answer please
   - What possible factors hinder the police from performing more effectively? Explain

- How would you describe the relationship between the police and the members of this neighbourhood?
- Is there a forum in which members of the neighbourhood meet with the police to discuss issues that affect the community? Is this necessary? Please explain

4. Generally, how satisfied are people in the neighbourhood with the performance of the police in:
   - Preventing crime;
   - Detecting/solving crimes;
   - Responding quickly to urgent calls;
   - Respecting the rights of suspects?
   - What should be done to make the police perform better in dealing with crime and insecurity generally?

5. Generally, how much respect do you have for the police?

   Probe:
   - Reasons for response

6. What do you have to say about the slogan that the police is your friend? Please explain your response

B: Informal Policing Structures

7. Is there a vigilante or neighbourhood watch group operating in your community

   Probe:
   - How many of such groups in your community do you know of?
   - Kindly list the names of the ISS in your community that are known to you.
   - How are the members of the ISS recruited? Is it open to just any body? Is there any form of screening for people who want to join? If yes, who does this?

- What is the nature of the membership of the ISS in the community? Is it for only residents or for residents and non residents? Is it voluntary or mandatory?
- Are women members of the ISS in this community? Reasons for response?
- What about non-indigenes? Reasons for response?

8. Does your community really need the services of ISS?

Probe:

- Reasons for the establishment of ISS in your community?
- What are the specific activities of the ISS in your community? What services do they provide? Which areas do they cover?
- Is the work of the ISS in your community full time or part time?
- What time of the day do the members of the ISS work?

9. Is there anybody/organ in the community or outside the community that supervises the ISS in your neighbourhood?

Probe:

- Kindly explain
- Does the ISS in your neighbourhood have a leader?
- How is the leader chosen and by who?
- How are members of the ISS in your neighbourhood recruited?
- Are the ISS registered with any government agency or organ? Please explain
- Are members of the ISS in your neighbourhood paid salaries? Please expatiate.
- What are the various sources of financial support to the ISS in your neighbourhood?

10. Do members of the ISS carry any form of weapon during their patrols?

Probe:

- Please expatiate

- Is there a forum where the members of the ISS in your neighbourhood are made to provide periodic account of their stewardship to the community?

11. How would you describe the performance of the ISS in controlling crime and improving security in your neighbourhood?

Probe:

- Reasons for responses
- In what specific ways would you say that the establishment/engagement of ISS in the neighbourhood has affected the level of crime and insecurity in your neighbourhood? Please explain.
- Are there some specific forms of crime that the informal members of the ISS find difficult to handle? Please expatiate
- Between the formal police and the ISS, which one do you prefer for more effective security in your community? Please give reasons.
- Compared with the formal police, how friendly are the members of the ISS? Please expatiate.
- Compared with the formal police, how effective are the members of the ISS in meeting the security need of the community? Please expatiate.
- Are there behaviours or things members of the ISS in your community do that you do not like or consider unacceptable? Please expatiate.

12. How would you describe the relationship between the police and the members of the ISS in your neighbourhood? Please give reasons for your response.

Probe:

- In which areas do the police cooperate with members of the ISS in your community?
- Are the ISS in your community supervised by the police and do you think this should be the case. Give reasons for your answer.
- Does the ISS report to the police and should they do this?
- Do the police have hand in the recruitment/screening of the members of the ISS group?

- What about the selection of the leaders of the group? Why?
- How do the police see the whole idea of ISS? Explain your response.

13. In which areas does the ISS in your community need support in order to be more effective?

14. Generally, how satisfied are people in the neighbourhood with the performance of the ISS in improving the security situation in the neighbourhood?

15. What are the problems faced by the ISS groups in your community?

16. Are there excesses on the side of the ISS as people complain in the case of the police?
    - Please explain

17. What should be done to make the police perform better in dealing with crime and insecurity generally?

Thank you very much.