Urban Crime and Violence: The Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

Given the serious nature of urban violent crimes and its implications on socio-economic development; it is clear that there is a crucial need for a common understanding of the trend, pattern and spread in the Country. This paper provides an overview of the state of urban violence in Nigeria, the country with fastest urban growth rate in Africa. The study adopts qualitative research method, which entails extraction of secondary data from text books, journals, seminar papers, research findings, Newspapers, and other reliable media reports on the subject. Accordingly, the generated data were carefully analysed using descriptive method. It was evident that, Nigeria's urban communities provide a classic case study of the rise of violence, as the areas are fast becoming zones for wars and fora for violent expression. The paper therefore, recommend among others, genuine socio-economic transformation, reorganization of security agencies and systemic security in Nigeria.

Key words: Violence, Urban Crime, Urban Violence, Insecurity**,** Urbanization.

Le Crime Urbain et la violence: L'expérience nigériane

Résumé

Compte tenu de la gravité des crimes violents en milieu urbain et ses implications sur le développement socio-économique; il est clair qu'il existe un besoin crucial d'une compréhension commune de la tendance, le motif et la propagation dans le pays. Ce document donne un aperçu de l'état de la violence urbaine au Nigeria, le pays le plus rapide en taux de croissance urbaine en Afrique. L'étude adopte la méthode de recherche qualitative, qui implique l'extraction de données secondaires à partir des manuels, des revues, des documents de séminaire, les résultats de recherche, journaux, et d'autres rapports de médias fiables sur le sujet. En conséquence, les données générées ont été soigneusement analysées en utilisant la méthode descriptive. Il était évident que, les communautés urbaines du Nigeria fournissent une étude de cas classique de la montée de la violence, comme les zones sont en train de devenir des zones de guerres et les forums d'expression violente. Par conséquent, le document recommande entre autres, une véritable transformation socio-économique, la réorganisation des agences de sécurité et de la sécurité systémique au Nigeria.

Mots clés: Violence, Crime Urbain, la violence urbaine, l'insécurité, l'urbanisation.

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Introduction

Urbanization has become a defining phenomenon of the 21st century and there appear to be no end to it as long as the world yearns for growth and development. By 1900 13% of the world's population was urban compare to 1980 when it was 29%. By 2005 it was 49% and according to a recent prediction, 60% of the world's population are expected to be urban dwellers by 2030 (UN, 2008; 2010). As developing countries begin to prosper, they move from being predominantly rural to urban, land changes from agricultural to industrial and commercial, people migrate to cities, the markets for products and capital become increasingly fluid and population rises.

However, this development has also brought new challenges in terms of urban conflict, violence and crime – and citizen security in particular. The World Bank's (2011) landmark highlighted the significance of violence as a development problem. Its work noted how violence is changing, becoming less structured around notions of civil war and conflict, and more focused around criminal violence, terrorism and civil unrest. The impacts of violence on human development are significant and varied. What is clear is that violence has emerged as one of the central development challenges of our time. Virtually all fragile states have experienced repeated episodes of violence, and the large majority of the world's poorest people live in states affected by violence – over 1.5 billion people. The continent of Africa provides examples in South Sudan, Somalia, Mali and Nigeria.

The preoccupation with urbanization, urban violence and urban crime is not new. Cities have been a locus of violent revolution and popular unrest, as well as sites of pacification and social control (Kalyvas, 2004). Today's cities are centres of multi-layered violence. Criminal and organized violence, associated with the drug trade in some countries have become entwined with national politics. Gangs and militias have come to substitute for public authority, offering some protection to communities, but often at great cost. Social violence, including violence within the household, is also a significant problem, particularly for vulnerable youth and women living in these environments.

Violence and crime are a huge threat to public safety. They cause great personal suffering, vast material damage, and place an enormous burden on the urban social network. Yet, as Vanderschueren (1996) observed, urban violence has increased worldwide in the last decade at a rate which has largely surpassed that of urbanization. Globally, every five years, 60 per cent of city inhabitants have been victims of one form of crime or the other and over half of these crimes involved property. Violent crimes such as murder, infanticide, assault, rape, sexual abuse, acts of terrorism, trafficking on women and children constitute another 25 to 30 per cent of urban crime. Other forms of urban violence that have been perpetrated in European and Latin American communities are the drug trade and anti-social behaviour (hooliganism) which have singly, as well as collectively, increased in the cities, creating a pervasive feeling of insecurity.

The increasing societal sophistication and modernization of the country, the continuing bastardization of the Nigerian economy, widening social and economic inequality, poverty and the rising wave of unemployment, especially among young school leavers, have greatly accentuated the wave of violent urban crime in recent times. The implication of all these is that urban violence has spatial and temporal distribution which need to be carefully analysed as to causes and spread, in terms of trend and pattern and the wider implications on the country. Such analysis may help to proffer solution that can help curb the implications of violent crime on socio-economic and political development in the country.

Urban Crime and Violence: A Definition Complex

Browsing through the literature reveals that there is no consensus with respect to the definition of urban crime and urban violence. However, urban crime and violence as concepts is a hybrid of two words-"urban and crime" on one hand and the other is "urban and violence". As can be expected, scholars continue to view the concept of urban, crime and violence, from the perspective of their various disciplines.

An in-depth survey of the literature reveals that there is no general acceptable definition. At its most basic, an urban area is defined in relation to, or as forming a core characteristic of a city or town. Urban areas include demarcated geographic zones of dense human habitation and a degree of physical separation from rural areas. By definition an urban area therefore is "an inhabited central place differentiated from a town or village by its greater size and the range of activities practiced within its boundaries" (Wirth, 1938: 28). A report published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and quoted by the Population Reference Bureau (PRB, 1990) shows that there are no common criteria by which African urban centres can be defined. It showed, for example, that whereas the typical Nigerian city had a population of 200000, cities in Ghana had 50,000, Kenya 20,000, and Gabon 10,000. While there is no unequivocal definition of what comprises "urban" there are some intrinsic features of urban settings- administrative demarcation, dense populations, impersonality, heterogeneity, and specialization and division of labour, etc.

The concept of crime is a social construct which is relative as to what is considered a crime in one society may be a norm in another society. Its conceptualization and etiology can be influenced by ideas of morality (in relation to responsibility) and by religious faith (the sinful nature of crime) as well as competing scientific claims as to its origins (Marshall, 1998). Crime simply defined is an offence which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishment or sanctions are attached, and requires the intervention of a public authority i.e. the State or a local body (Marshall, 1998). Similarly, Hensl in (2008) defines crime as the violation of rules that have been written into law. In the light of the above definitions crime is therefore a social problem in the society due to its negative consequences on the well-being of society.

A review of literature on violence will quickly bring to surface different views. Tamuno (1991) define violence as the unlawful use of threat or force, which could be a manifestation of despair and desperation; and to Hibbs (1973), violence, implies the use of physical force and is generally evinced by the destruction of property, the killing or maiming of people or the use of riot control equipment. Anifowose (1982) views violence as the use of the threat of a physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals, and/or property, with the intent to cause injury or death to persons and/or destruction of property. According to Degenaar (1990), violence is the intentional application of extreme force against a person, an object, etc. in such a way that it is destructive to objects and physically injurious to animals and persons. Mackenzie (1975) also interpreted violence as (a) the exercise of physical force so as to inflict injury on or cause damage to persons or property; (b) action or conduct characterized by this; and (c) treatment or usage tending to cause bodily injury, or to forcibly interfere with personal freedom. The definitions of violence seem to express consensus that violence is any act that involves a threat to, or destruction of, lives and/or property.

Literally, urban crime referred to behaviours in violation of rules that have been written into law happening in urban areas. From the above, the definition of urban crime is crime related to cities and towns. While urban violence is any act which involves the use of threat within a

densely populated and heterogeneous area causing injury or death to persons and damage or destruction of property. Therefore, urban crime and violence includes rape, armed robbery, assault, bloody ethnic and religious conflicts, coups, demonstrations, riots, hooliganism, woman and child battering, internal war, explosions, assassinations, and any action that causes breach of the peace, destruction and harm to human and/or environment in the urban area that the law frowns at.

Causes of Urban Crime and Violence
There is no single factor to explain urban crime and violence. Crime and violence are extremely complex phenomenon that has their roots in the interaction of many factors. WHO (2002) identified biological, social, cultural, economic and political factors as the roots of violence. According to UN (2007), several factors influence the incidence of crime and violence. These include economic and political circumstances that produce opportunities and incentives for criminal behaviour and violent acts, as well as the situations that frame victimization. Other factors associated with urban crime and violence include poverty, unemployment, inequality, intergenerational transmission of violence as reflected in the continuous witnessing of parental abuse during childhood, the rapid pace of urbanization, poor urban planning, design and management, growth in youthful population, and the concentration of political power, which facilitates corruption and city size and density.

However, drawing copiously from existing literature on crime, violence and insecurity in Nigeria, the causes include but are not limited to:
  i.   The aftermath of the civil war led to the proliferation of illegal weapons.
  ii. Serious economic hardship resulting from unemployment and poverty.
  iii. Absence of institutional capacity resulting in Government failure.
  iv. Inequality and absence of fairness and justice.
  v.   Erosion of socio-cultural, religious and communal value system.
  vi. Non-prosecution of perpetrators of crimes and violence in Nigeria
  vii. Disconnection between the people and Government
  viii. Pervasiveness of corruption

Theorizing Urban Violence
In social science as in other disciplines, theories are developed in order to provide a sound basis for explaining social ideas and propositions about a social phenomenon. A theory must have the ability to explain the behaviour and characteristics under investigation and capable of predicting a social reality based on facts. Generally, there are numerous theories of violence; this paper is anchored on Liberal Structural theory of Conflict. The structural theory sees structural defects either internally generated or externally conditioned as the main cause of conflict or violence in society. In its liberal version, structuralism emphasizes "how the competing interests of groups tie conflict directly into the social, economic and political organizations of society as well as the nature and strength of social networks within and between community groups" (Ademola, 2005, p.15). Essentially, liberal structuralists like Galtung argues that whenever economic and political discrimination and lack of tolerance in plural societies are embedded in human social relationship, conflicts are bound to be higher than in societies where opposite social relationship is established. Similarly, other structuralists have argued that other factors such as overpopulation, economic underdevelopment, demographic factors and uninterested social and political institutions are also responsible for the emergence of internal conflicts. In line with the above theoretical standpoint, urban violence results from demographic, socio-economic and political structure of urban area.

Urban Violence in Nigeria

During the past three decades, the cities of the developing world in general and Africa in particular, have witnessed a remarkable and in many ways unprecedented demographic growth making them a conducive setting for the various types of urban violence as well as environment for a specialized and organized crime. According to Gibbert and Gugler (1982), a city provides the anonymity required for individual crime and the space for a specialized and organized underworld. Theft, fraud, arson, forgery and other criminal activities become a means of survival. The profile of urban violence in Nigeria demonstrates that it covers the entire gamut of criminal activities. Offences range from murder, robbery, petty theft, burglary, store breaking, rackets and counterfeiting to slave dealing, domestic violence, gambling, narcotics, rape, kidnapping, indecent assault, arson etc.

About a decade ago, on November 4, 1985, the *Times International* of London reported that crime was prevalent in Nigeria. Lives were no longer safe... the nation was being crippled by an insecurity problem posed by criminals. Prominent Nigerians, whose interests cut across all walks of life, had their lives terminated through gruesome murders. Announcements concerning stolen vehicles were a daily feature on the news. Now, more than thirty years later, the situation has become more frightening. Not only is the incidence of violence becoming more frequent, the nature of the crimes, especially armed robbery and murder, have become more sophisticated. Both the rich and the poor suffer the same fate, and the whole society appears helpless in the face of urban violence. The manifestation of urban violence in Nigeria is worrisome particularly due to the unreliableness and disagreement of crime statistical data.

In recent times, there has been a growing concern over the increasing trends of violent crimes and terrorist activities especially the use of improvised explosive devices by criminal elements in urban areas in Nigeria. Majority of the violence crime that took place in urban areas and cities in Nigeria centred on the issues of money, resources control, political, land, boundary and indigenous/settler.

Kidnapping itself is a violent crime; is one of the criminal activities that posed serious security threat to the Nigeria particularly between 2003-2015. The phenomenon took most Nigerians unaware in terms of the frequency, severity, sophistication and its implications social-economic and political development. Thus various forms of kidnapping including criminal kidnapping, political kidnapping, and emotional or pathological kidnapping are now perpetuated. In Nigeria, between 1991 and 2009 there were about 34 reported cases of kidnapping and abduction (NIALS, 2010). Also Ekpe, (2009) reported that Nigeria recorded 512 cases of kidnapping and 30 dead persons in kidnappers' den that year as against 353 cases recorded throughout 2008. In a report released in naijafeed.com, the former Minister of Police Affairs, Ibrahim Yakubu Lame disclosed that 512 people were kidnapped in 2010 and 30 out of the 512 died in the hands of their kidnappers. Kidnappings in Nigeria began to rise in 2006 when militants in the Niger Delta started kidnapping expatriates for ransom. For Abati (2009), ransom kidnapping and hostage taking are no longer restricted to the Niger Delta area, or South-South of Nigeria. With reported cases in Lagos, Abuja, Benin city, Owerri, and now Kaduna and Kano, this brand of terrorism has become a national phenomenon as the entire country is now a kidnappers' den. However, in total, 2015 aw at least 37 crew kidnapped for ranon in nine searate incidents off the Niger Delta; this compares with 14 incidents of similar attacks in the area in the previous years.

In Nigeria, primordial identities of ethnic, communal and religious formation have taken the centre stage in social and political interactions. Ethnic socio-political organizations were formed but corollary to these groups are the ethnic militias; who have become the defining

characteristic of Nigeria emerging nearly in every section of the country. The ranks of the ethnic militias include the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Oodua People's Congress, the Arewa Peoples' Congress (APC), the Ijaw National Congress (INC), The Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Niger Delta Vigilantes (NDV) or Avengers etc. These groups claim to represent specific ethnic or communal interests, and adopt various tactics including violence, in the conduct of their activities. The resurgence of urban militia's activities is an issue raising much anxiety, complicating an already insecure situation both for security agents and the society. Their activities have at most times posed threats to the continued existence of the Nigerian state. The sheer enormity of the problems associated with urban violence especially gang violence, rising militancy and the potential for destruction, and social disruption,

In Nigeria, since 1980s, ethno-religious conflicts have become more frequent, more widespread, more violent and destructive of life and property especially in urban areas. Between 1980 and 2001 alone, Usman (2003) enumerates thirty-four major conflicts that have taken place in urban areas in different parts of the country. Indeed, this enumeration does not include the more recent and so far the most serious ethno-religious genocides. Among the major conflicts since the 1980s, which is barely a span of two and a half decades, are the Maitatsine uprising in Kano in 1980; Ife-Modakeke conflicts in 1981; Maitatsine uprisings of Kano, Maiduguri and Kaduna in 1982 and of Yola and Gombe in 1984 and 1985 respectively; the conflicts in Kaduna State engulfing Kafanchan, kaduna, Zaria and other urban areas of the State; the conflicts in Taraba and Benue States engulfing Wukari, Takum and other urban areas of the States in 1990 to 1992; the conflicts in Tafawa Balewa and other parts of Bauch State in 1991, 2000 and 2001; the Zangon Kataf conflicts in 1992 in Kaduna State; the 1995 to 1999 conflicts in Nasarawa State largely involving Toto and Obi areas; the 1993 to 1994 Andoni-Ogoni and 1994 to 1996 Ogoni-Okrika crises in Rivers State; the Karim-Lamido conflicts of 1993 to 1994 in Taraba State; the Nembe and Kalabari Conflict of 1996 to 1997 in Bayelsa State; the Bassambari-Ogbolomabiri and Okpoma Brass areas of Bayelsa State conflicts of 1990s; and the Sangamu, Soku and Oluasiri areas of Rivers and Bayelsa States in 1993 to 2001.

Other conflicts include the Burutu Area of Delta State in 2000 to 2001; the youths restiveness in Warri and its environs of 1997 to 2002; the Okitupapa area conflicts in Ondo State in 1998 to 2000; the 1999 to 2000 Kano disturbances; the year 2000 uprisings in kaduna metropolis; the 2001 to 2002 Jos metropolis and its environs conflicts; the Ife-Modakeke crisis of 2000 to 2001; the Mambila Plateau 2001 to 2002 crisis; the Shagamu and other urban areas of Ogun State conflicts of 1999 to 2000; the Agaleri-Omuleri crisis of 2000 in Anambra State; Communal clashes in Brass area of Bayelsa State in 2000; Communal clashes in Brass area of Etsako area Edo State in 2000; Sharia crisis in Kaduna in 2000; Violent clashes betwwen Muslims and Christains in Jos in 2001; the Yan daba group clash and Osama Bin Ladan riot of 2001 in Kano; the communal clash of Tiv and Alago in Azara area of Nasarawa State; Toto Community clash in 2002 and 2004 between Bassa and Egbira in Nasarawa State; Religious conflicts in Numan in 2003 in Adamawa State; the year 2004 Yelwan-Shendam conflict in Plateau State; fighting between Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic groups in Niger Delta; Maitatsine group launched an attack in Kananama in Yobe State in 2003; fours of sectarian violence across Nigerian cities particularly in Onitsha, Maiduguri, Katsina and Bauchi over Danish cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad in February, Ethno-religious conflict Jega Town, 2004; Shite-police conflict in Kebbi, 2004; Kabba Buna inter-communal Conflict Kabba, 2004; Wuse-Ethno religious conflict 1 and 2, 2004, Fulani-

Taro conflict over cow theft, 2004; Hausa-Fulani against indigenes conflict in Jos, 2004, Yelwan-Shendam, 2004; 2006; clashes between Muslims and Christians in Jos over disputed Local Government election; two days battle with radical Islamist in Yobe and Bauchi; postelection violence in Kaduna, Bauchi and some State in the northern part of the country; Pre and Postelection violence in Kogi State, 2007; Communal clashes in Akwa-Ibom in 2008; Land dispute in Ebonyi in 2008; etc. (Usman, 2003; Alubo, 2004; Various Nigerian Newspapers;).

Recently, renewed inter-communal riots in January and March, 2010 in Plateau State between Muslims and Christians; a clash between the Fulani herdsmen and Agatu and other farmer in Doma in 2011, Fulani herdsmen and Tiv/Mada and Migili communities in Doma and Keana Local government Areas of Nasarawa State; Fulani herdsmen and farmer in Doma town in 2013; in March, 2014 a clash between Fulani Muslim herdsmen and Christians farmer in Kano; December, 2015 violent attack between the Nigerian Army and Shiite in Zaria; a communal clash between Adadama in Abi and Amagu in Nko Local Government Areas of Ebonyi State in June, 2016; a violent attacks on Elepete and Igbo communities by militants in Ogijo area of Ogun State; and violent clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmer in Benue State in June, 2016.

Framing the impacts of urban violence and Crime

There is no precise record and calculation of the extent of crime impact emanating from urban violence in the country. The urban violence has direct and indirect incalculable damage to social relations, economic activities and peaceful co-existence of societies. The first major impact is the loss of human and material resources. Urban violence is most clearly expressed by the annual tally of conflict deaths, homicides, assaults, robberies and sexual violence which results in the unquantifiable destruction of lives and properties. For instance, in 2001, in the clash between Christians and Muslims over "Miss World" beauty context slated to be held in Abuja, about 250 people were killed in three days (Mohammed, 2005). In particular between 1999 and 2003, a total of 10,000 lives were lost in the country (Naanen, 2003). The Boko Haram insurgency in the north has left over 16,000 police men, soldiers and civilians including politicians dead (UNCIRF, 2012).

The upsurge in urban violence such as armed robbery, theft, ethno-religious conflict, kidnapping and boko haram, have displaced people to and from the urban areas. Across urban settings real and perceived violence influence the decision of individuals and households to stay in their homes or to relocate elsewhere. While there is virtually no accurate data on urban displacement, there are some emerging case studies that offer glimmers into the extent of the phenomenon. Individuals, families, groups and businesses may opt to migrate within cities to escape various forms of insecurity and instability or related threats. For instance between June and July, 2011 approximately more than 100000 was reported to have left Maiduguri because of boko haram insurgency. Similarly, the continuous kidnap cases in commercial cities of Port Harcourt, Aba and Onitsha, obviously forced investors, businessmen and manufacturing companies to relocate to other peaceful cities in Nigeria. In Aba for instance, the NBL, SEVEN UP PLC, UNILEVER PLC, PZ PLC relocated to Enugu largely due to constant kidnapping of their expatriates.

Urban violence permeates into the social fabric of families and entire societies, which negatively affect interpersonal trust and mutual expectations that are so critical for sustaining social relationship. There is a growing evidence base on the detrimental impacts of urban violence on social capital and cohesion. Overlapping forms of urban violence restricts mobility, stigmatizes neighbourhoods, erodes associational ties, and relationships. The ensuing climate of insecurity has

significantly weakened social exchange and solidarity with neighbours, families and associates for fear of being exposed to victimization.

In recent times, there has been a sharp decline in the attendance of religious, social and public functions. People are scared of going to mosques, churches, burials, patronage of hotels and other recreational centres for the fear of being attacked by thieves, armed robbers and/or Boko Harams. There are well known media reports that in urban cities of Lagos, Kaduna, Port Harcourt etc. thieves and armed robbers have carted away with handsets, money and other valuable during prayers in mosques, church services, marriage, funeral and burial ceremonies. Various Boko Haram bomb explosions at place of worships such as the July 9, 2011blast in Suleja, Niger state, where a bomb targeted at a church killed four and injured many others, on January 6, 2012 Adamawa State 17 people died in Christ Apostolic Church, Yola, Adamawa State through bomb blast on December 25 Niger State About 50 people died on Christmas Day bombing in Madalla. and other attacks at public places include the October 1, 2010 explosions near the Eagle Square, Abuja; another explosion close to the palace of the Shehu of Borno, Abubakar Garbai Elkanem, and on April 17, 2011 explosion at Happy Night Hotel in Kaduna State, etc.

The available social and economic infrastructures for daily functioning of urban areas have witnessed severe damages and destruction. Social amenities such as schools, hospitals, hotels, police stations, markets, airports, communication networks, power supply, industries, banks and other critical installations has been greatly affected by activities of armed robbers, thieves, and Boko Harams. For instance, on June 16, 2011, the Nigerian Police Headquarters was attacks. Various other Police Divisional Headquarters at Potiskum-Yobe State, Kankara Misau- Bauchi State, Shagari Quarters-Kano State, etc.; have also been attacked. On September 8, 2010, the Bauchi Central Prison was set ablaze and on February 15, 2012 Kogi State suffered a jail break in Koton Karfe Prisons, in which prisoners were released. These destruction of needed public infrastructures exist adverse impacts on development.

Urban violence slows economic growth and impedes social development. The spate of kidnapping, armed robbery and Boko Haram operations in some parts of Nigeria ultimately resulted in serious economic problems. These overlapping forms of urban violence restrict socio-economic development by deterring foreign and domestic investment, constraining access to formal and informal employment and other educational opportunities and communication networks. The growing rate of insecurity in Nigeria has significantly affected the country's economy. More so, insecurity in form of hostage taking, abduction and kidnapping foreign workers and bombings of multinational oil pipelines and series of successive bombings have been a menace that has been frequent; Instead of witnessing foreign investors coming into the country to boost the nation's economy, the country rather experiences the exodus of many companies and industries. Employers and investors are less inclined to invest in cities where their assets are likely to be destroyed or stolen leading to closure of business activities and operations.

In many violence-affected cities, employees are reluctant to work after dark when the streets are considered insecure and working places and offices are deserted. Clear indications of economic setback include the series of attacks on Banks and financial institutions, markets by armed robbers in different towns and cities. Boko Haram attacks in Banks, Markets and Public Offices, Police Stations and Prisons certainly affect the economy. For instance, the August 26, 2011 suicide bombing of the United Nations building in Abuja would discourage investors coming into the country. Equally, series of attacks at mammy markets at Mogadishu barracks in Abuja, Shandawanka barracks in Bauchi State, etc. affect economic activities. The most obvious cost of urban violence is the value of resources for capital projects and infrastructural provisions that are

used to attempt to control it or remedy its consequences. The typical social development programmes jeopardised by the activities of violent crimes in the country include the following: socialisation of children, women empowerment, health, community development needs and child and adolescent learning. The crises undermine their future earning and productive potential and wellbeing. Urban violence therefore appears to exacerbate urban inequality and poverty.

Conclusion

Urban violence is the reality of daily life in Nigeria and urban dwellers are treated to its numbing effects. The profile of urban violence in Nigeria demonstrates that it covers the entire gamut of criminal activities. Offences range from murder, robbery, petty theft, kidnapping, burglary, store breaking, rackets, ethnic militias, ethno-religious conflicts rape, indecent assault, arson etc. The urban crime and violence has direct and indirect incalculable damage to social relations, economic activities and peaceful co-existence of societies.

Recommendations

The overview of the state of urban crime and violence in Nigeria requires vigorous enhancement of human, technical, material and financial capacity of security agencies. It also needs genuine socio-economic transformation of the state for enduring peace, security and stability for development in Nigeria.

Finally, to fix the problem of urban crime and violence, there is need to sustain the systemic security in Nigeria. Systemic security here refers to the approach whereby the security of the individual, the state and the international system are fully integrated and pursued collectively.

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