

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Crime Prevalence in Nigerian Urban Slum Areas: The Way Forward

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ABSTRACT

One of the ugliest phenomena in Nigerian Urban Centres is the prevalence of crime and slums. Slums are the home of the urban poor, people in search of a better life or without a better place to go. Half of the world has become urbanized, and the number of people living in cities is only projected to grow. The most rapid growth is expected in developing countries and will contribute to more slums. Slums are described as centres of violence and crime, and these informal communities are a veritable breeding ground for criminal activities, accompanied by an increased rate of crime, violence, and lawlessness. The phenomenon of crime knows no boundary and does not distinguish between developed and developing countries. Crime prevalence is the proportion of people or targets, for example, households, properties, or cars in an area, who are victimized and is used to identify the risk of being a victim. The number of potential victims commonly equates to an area's population. Consequently, the paper investigates the present causes and effects of the urban slums and examines the crime prevalence in Nigerian urban slum areas. However, the study relied on secondary data. Data were obtained from literature in journals, textbooks, official records, private papers, and the internet. The study identifies poverty, bad governance, unemployment, lack of planning for the lower-income classes of society, improper use of land, poor infrastructure, and social exclusion; health hazards, prone to natural and man-made hazards; and inhabitants often being in danger of violence and crime such as burglary and housebreaking, drug abuse, armed robbery, and kidnapping. The study suggests the implementation of poverty eradication projects, effective planning, good governance, a slum upgrading programme, a monitoring system and data management, and increasing the presence of police.

Keywords: *Causes; Crime Prevalence; Effects; Planning; Urban Slum*

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most enduring physical manifestations of social exclusion in African cities is the proliferation of slums and informal settlements. People living in these settlements experience the most deplorable living and environmental conditions,

which are characterized by inadequate water supply, squalid conditions of environmental sanitation, the breakdown or non-existence of waste disposal arrangements, overcrowded and dilapidated habitation, hazardous location, insecurity of tenure, and vulnerability to serious health risks. (Arimah, 2001). These are areas in which little government attention in terms of provision or maintenance of public facilities and infrastructure is being felt. These are high-density squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition which sprawl at the edge of cities (Orewere, Oguroyewa and Owonubi, 2019).

Slums arise from poor people's need to find affordable and accessible housing. They are created by the market or by the people themselves when increasing numbers of people in poverty meet inadequate housing and planning responses. Slum conditions are worsened by economic decline, increasing inequality, loss of formal-sector jobs, rapid immigration, poor governance, and exclusionary actions (The Challenge of Slum: Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003).

The global assessment of slums undertaken by UN-HABITAT (2010) shows that 828 million, or 33% of the urban population of developing countries, reside in slums. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 62% of the urban population resides in such settlements. Such large concentrations of slums in which inhabitants live in inequitable and life-threatening conditions impose an enormous burden on city authorities that are often cash-strapped and lack the institutional and technical capacity to provide even the most basic of urban services.

In Nigerian cities, slum dwellers have limited access to formal health, education, and other social services, and live in environments characterized by poor housing, sanitation, and infrastructure, alcohol abuse, stigma, rape, discrimination, high unemployment rates, high crime rates, low quality of life, and high rates of violence. Despite these challenging conditions, cheap housing and proximity to urban amenities continue to attract a large number of in-migrants, leading to the rapid growth of slum settlements (Ekpenyong & Mathias, 2019; Nubi, 2015).

Slums are areas of deprivation of basic needs such as adequate shelter, food, clothes, sanitation, and security (and this is consistent across different slums). Based on these similarities, it is expected that the level of crime would be similar across the different slums as well. However, available literature and research indicate divergent views (Ekpenyong and Mathias, 2019). Available literature has shown that Slums are breeding grounds for criminal activities, accompanied by increased rates of crime, violence, and lawlessness. Hence, reducing the population of urban slums by 100 million was a critical point of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Ekpenyong and Mathias, 2019).

Crime is deviance that violates a law. Crime represents an expression of how a society frames or constructs what is appropriate and what is inappropriate behaviour (Coomber, Donnermeyer, McElrath, and Scott, 2014). Crime is one of the human security problems confronting humanity across the world. Nations have grappled to contain the rising incidence of homicide, armed robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, sex trafficking, illegal gun-running, and a host of others (Ukoji and Okolie, 2016).

Crime is an inevitable reality in human society. It is inherent in human nature; hence, no society or human settlement is completely free from the shackles of crime. The phenomenon (crime) knows no boundary and does not distinguish between the developed and developing world. It is social contact, relative to time and place (Olusegun, 2015).

Africa has been at the forefront of global statistics on crime. South Africa and Nigeria have recorded high incidents of violent and non-violent crimes. Nigeria is currently caught in the web of a crime dilemma, manifesting in the convulsive upsurge of both violent and non-violent crimes. Notable in this regard are the rising incidents of armed robbery, assassination, and ransom-driven kidnapping, which are now ravaging the polity like a tsunami and spreading a climate of fear and anxiety

about public safety. The upsurge of crime has been ongoing as Nigeria has been on the global crime map since 1980 (Oruwari, 2006).

Crime prevalence refers to the proportion of people (or targets, e.g., households, properties, or cars) in an area who are victimized and is used to identify the risk of being a victim. The number of potential victims commonly equates to an area's population. However, in many cases, potential targets are more narrowly defined. For example, the potential victims of vehicle crime should be restricted to the number of individuals who own or have access to a vehicle. The prevalence of different crime types includes burglary, other theft, assault, threats, vandalism, racial abuse, and theft from the person (Rogerson, 2004).

According to Africa Check, incidents of murder increased from 15,609 murders in 2011/12 to 16,259 murders in 2012/13 in South Africa, with an increase of 650 murder cases or a 4.2% increase when comparing the total numbers with the previous year. According to the same report, murders and attempted murders that take place during an aggravated robbery or inter-group conflict (such as gang or taxi violence) and vigilantism make up between 35% and 45% of all murders and attempted murders.

National Bureau of Statistics' crime statistics on reported offenses reflected that a total of 125,790 cases were reported in 2016 in Nigeria. Offences against property had the highest number of cases reported, with 65,397 such cases reported, while offences against persons recorded 45,554 cases (Aduloju, Adeniran, and Ageh, 2020).

Therefore, the paper investigates the present causes and effects of urban slums and examines the crime prevalence in Nigerian urban slum areas.

The objectives of the study are to provide a safe, pleasant, healthy, socially functional living and working environment, find lasting solutions to the formation and proliferation of slums and informal settlements, and to find crime prevention strategies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Slum

A slum is a universal phenomenon spreading its tentacles in virtually every urban settlement. A slum is an informal, criminalized, illegal space both in the occupation of land and the formation of substandard structures and is often marginalized by the local and national governments. Consequently, slum dwellers – many of whom are poor in the first place - are made poorer by the various forms of exclusion that they face (Arimah, 2001).

Slums are a major phenomenon accompanying Nigerian cities, characterized by overcrowded dwellings, unemployment, poor environmental conditions, limited water supply, poor sanitation, inadequate electricity supply, and limited access to health facilities. Slums are generally marked by a distinctiveness of poverty, lack, and frustration (Ekpenyong and Mathias, 2019).

A slum is a heavily populated urban informal settlement characterized by substandard housing and squatter (poverty). Slums punctuate almost every city in the world, a trend that has become a universal phenomenon accompanying urban growth. Late in 2003, the United Nations reported that one billion people, approximately one-third of the world's urban dwellers and a sixth of all humanity, live in slums. Similarly, UN-HABITAT stated that around 33% of the urban population of the developing world in 2012, or about 863 million people, lived in slums. The proportion of the urban population living in slums was highest in Asia and Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, with a staggering 61.7% (UN-HABITAT, 2007).

A slum is any specific place, whether a whole city or a neighbourhood, where more than half of all households lack improved water, improved sanitation, sufficient living area, durable housing, secure tenure, or a combination of two (UN-HABITAT,

2012). The houses inhabited by slum dwellers are mostly decrepit and overcrowded, in neighbourhoods that are prone to flooding and beset with poor sanitation and shortage of potable water (Emma-Ochu and Onwuka, 2016). These are areas where little government attention in terms of provision or maintenance of public facilities and infrastructure is being felt. These range from high-density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition, which sprawl at the edge of cities (Orewere, Ogurayewa and Owonubi, 2019).

According to Nubi (2015), slums are decried as centres of violence and crime, and these informal communities are a veritable breeding ground for criminals. Slums are known for high crime rates, unemployment, low self-esteem, alcohol abuse, stigma, discrimination, and low quality of life.

The majority of the people in slums, mostly the youth, lack occupation, are unemployed, and end up in crime for survival or under the influence of drugs. (Munana, 2019). Slums create conditions that expose and stimulate youth criminal tendencies. Living in deprived slum neighbourhoods has a levelling effect on young people's occupational and educational aspirations. Limited opportunities in slums lead many to make early transitions out of school and into crime. Hence, living in slums invariably results in youths' susceptibility to crime as victims. For example, exposure to high rates of violence and crime, which is typical in many resource-poor urban slums, can have negative impacts on youth development (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). These include depression, poor academic performance, post-traumatic stress symptoms, delinquency, and aggression (Kabiru, Mojolam, Beguy and Okigbo, 2013)

The increase in shanty dwellings, squatter settlements, and slums in most of our cities in Nigeria and other less developed nations of the world is attributed to a chain of factors. Of course, such factors are closely associated with the low level of socio-economic and cultural lifestyles of the inhabitants (Omole, 2010). Slums are areas that concentrate low-income earners, low-cost houses, possibly mud houses, with no layout and poor inhabitants.

Slums range from high-density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. Slums have various names, namely: favelas, Kampung, bidonvilles, tugurios, yet share the same miserable living conditions. Slums are not static; there are ongoing dynamics that, over a period of years, may turn an established urban area into a slum or may lead to the redevelopment of an existing slum (The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003).

In Nigerian cities, slum dwellers have limited access to formal health, education, and other social services, and live in environments characterized by poor housing, sanitation, and infrastructure, high unemployment rates, and high rates of violence. Despite these challenging conditions, cheap housing and close proximity to urban amenities continue to attract a large number of in-migrants, leading to the rapid growth of slum settlements (Ekpenyong and Mathias, 2019; Nubi, 2015).

Types of Slums

Slum of Hope/Notified Slums: This slum of hope is characterized by the attitude of the residents, whether or not they expect to improve their situation and whether or not there are opportunities for advancing out of the slum. Slums of hope have generally been the home for recent immigrants to the community. The type of people here are respectable poor, the trapped, beginners, climbers, and entrepreneurs who are utilizing vital slum economic opportunities. They are temporary necessitants who are never adjusted to slum living nor reconciled to it (Shagufta, 2010). Notified slum dwellers can usually afford to invest in education and skill training (Krishna, Sriram and Prakash, 2014).

Slum of Despair/Non-Notified Slums: A slum of despair is populated by groups of longer residence. They are indolent, the adjusted poor, social outcasts, fugitives, unfindable, sporting crowds. They consist of people living in the slum because of the opportunity offered to them. They are also permanently marginalized. Their values and identifications, if any, remain

within the slum area. They are no longer new immigrants who have the potential of moving up the socioeconomic scale. Urban economics has not favoured them; hence, they remain (Shagufta, 2020). Non-notified slums are where residents are mostly unconnected to basic services and formal livelihood opportunities. (Krishna, Sriram and Prakash, 2014).

Table 1. Slum Growth in Developing Countries

Country	Slum Annual Growth Rate (%)	Slum Population (Thousands)	Scenario 2020 with no Change
Angola	5.28	3,918	10,677
Kenya	5.88	7,605	23,223
Nigeria	4.96	41,595	76,749
South Africa	0.19	8,376	8,677
Uganda	5.32	3,241	8,904
Tanzania	6.16	11,031	35,561
Brazil	0.34	51,676	55,074
El Salvador	1.89	1,386	1,986

Source: UN-HABITAT, *Urban Observation*, 2007, as cited in Orewere, Ogunrayewa and Owonubi, 2019.

The Characteristics of Slums

(Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003; Hiraskar & Hiraskar, 2010; and Rangwala & Rangwala, 2011)

Appearance: This is rather the universal mark of the slum, and its unpleasant appearance offends the eyes, nose, and conscience. The structures appear to have deteriorated and to be of over-age.

Lack of Basic Services/Inadequate Infrastructural Facility: Lack of access to sanitation facilities and safe water sources is the most important feature, sometimes supplemented by the absence of waste collection systems, electricity supply, surfaced roads and footpaths, street lighting, and rainwater drainage.

Overcrowding and High Density: The slum is overcrowded with buildings, or the buildings are overcrowded with people, or, in the worst condition, both conditions prevail in the slum. Overcrowding is associated with a low space per person, high occupancy rates, cohabitation by different families, and a high number of single-room units. Many slum dwelling units are overcrowded, with five or more persons sharing a one-room unit used for cooking, sleeping, and living. Bangkok requires at least 15 dwelling units per rai (1,600 square metres).

Substandard Housing or Illegal and Inadequate Building Structure: Many cities have building standards that set minimum requirements for residential buildings. Slum areas are associated with a high number of substandard housing structures, often built with non-permanent materials unsuitable for housing given local conditions of climate and location. The slum is often exposed to fire accidents and consequent damage. One stick of matches may prove to be sufficient to reduce the whole slum to ashes in no time. Factors contributing to a structure being considered substandard are, for example, earthen floors, mud-and-wattle walls or straw roofs. Various space and dwelling placement bylaws may also be extensively violated.

Unhealthy Living Conditions and Hazardous Locations: The slum is characterized by low standards of sanitation and is often reflected most in the public services for sanitation. It also refers to an area of high sickness and death rates. Unhealthy living conditions are the result of a lack of basic services, with visible open sewers, lack of pathways, uncontrolled dumping of waste, polluted environments, etc. Houses may be built in hazardous locations or on land unsuitable for settlement, such as floodplains, in proximity to industrial plants with toxic emissions or waste disposal sites, and in areas subject to landslip. The layout of the settlement may be hazardous because of a lack of access way densities of dilapidated structures.

Poverty and Exclusion/Income Criteria: The slum is a poverty area, and it is occupied by people of the lowest income group of the society. Income or capability poverty is considered, with some exceptions, as a central characteristic of slum areas. It is not seen as an inherent characteristic of slums, but as a cause (and, to a large extent, a consequence) of slum conditions.

Slum conditions are physical and statutory manifestations that create barriers to human and social development. Furthermore, slums are areas of social exclusion that are often perceived to have high levels of crime and other measures of social dislocation. In some definitions, such areas are associated with certain vulnerable groups of the population, such as recent immigrants, internally displaced persons, or ethnic minorities. The slum area is of the lowest social status, and it is usually linked up with the rest of the community through its labour force. In a democratic society, the slum dwellers can identify themselves with certain political groups because of their quality of voting and other legal rights with the rest of the community.

Population: If the slum population is racial or cultural, it grants a degree of social organization even though the area looks like a poverty-stricken slum area. For a heterogeneous occupancy, the inhabitants are of different categories who are not welcome in other localities, or they cannot afford to live elsewhere.

Insecure Tenure, Irregular or informal settlements: Several definitions consider lack of security as a central characteristic of slums and regard lack of any formal document entitling the occupant to occupy the land or structure as prima facie evidence of illegality and slum occupation. Informal or unplanned settlements are often regarded as synonymous with slums. Many definitions emphasize both informality of occupation and the non-compliance of settlements with land-use plans. The main factors contributing to non-compliance are settlements built on land reserved for non-residential purposes, or which are invasions of non-urban land.

Minimum Settlement Size: Many slum definitions also require some minimum settlement size for an area to be considered a slum, so that the slum constitutes a distinct precinct and is not a single dwelling.

Way of Life/Morals: Depending upon the manner in which the slum has come up, the way of life of the inhabitants may be such that they are strangers to one another or they form a family slum with a thick acquaintance with one another. The socially disorganized slum may prove to be an area of delinquency, crime, and vice.

Causes of Slums

Economic Conditions/Poverty: The unemployment and growth of the population may force affected persons to stay even in an unhealthy atmosphere. Poverty encourages the formation and demand for slums. With a rapid shift from rural to urban areas for the purpose of employment and income, poverty migrates to urban areas.

Urbanization: The formation of slums is closely linked to urbanization. Urbanization creates slums because governments are unable to manage urbanization, and migrant workers without an affordable place to live dwell in slums. Rapid urbanization drives economic growth and causes people to seek work and investment opportunities in urban areas.

Politics: Governments, for political interest, have subverted efforts to remove, reduce, or upgrade slums into better housing options for the poor. Vote politics also supports the slums. Removal of slums brings conflicts of interest for politicians. Slum population forms a good amount of easy vote bank, and politicians want them to remain as they are, because their upliftment and education will hurt their vote bank (Social Window India, 2013).

Decentralization: When decentralization takes place, the rich and middle-class people move to the extended portions of the town, and thus, the poor people are left unattended in the overcrowded central area of the town.

Industrialization: The slums may be said to be the direct evil result of industrialization, which in the early stages never took care of planning houses for labourers. Those that were built near factories were cheap structures with rent as the only motive. Through the Industrial Revolution, more people were attracted to move from rural to urban areas on account of improved employment opportunities (Hiraska and Hiraska, 2010; CONSERVE ENERGY FUTURE – Be Green, Stay Green.

conserve-energy-future.com. Hence, whenever they find land, public or private, they start living there in temporary huts; as time progresses, more people join them, and the area soon develops into slums. (Social Window of India, 2013).

Bad Governance: Slums develop due to bad governance. Government often fails to recognize the rights of the urban poor and incorporate them into urban planning, thereby contributing to the growth of slums. People are coming to cities far faster than the planning process can incorporate them. Often, they find their own land and build a shack before the government has a chance to learn of their existence. The attitude of a government towards urbanization is also an important component. Some governments take a hostile approach to urbanization. They believe that if they provide urban services to the poor, it will attract urbanization and cause the slums to grow. The problem with this view is that very few people come to the city for water or services. They come looking for work. In other cases, governments take more of a passive approach to urbanization. They either do not have the planning tools to deal with the rapid urbanization that is happening, or the tools in place are not sufficiently responsive to the reality on the ground.

Poor Housing Planning/Lack of Planning for the Lower Income Classes of the Society: Lack of affordable low-cost housing and poor planning by the government encourages the supply side of slums (Deng, 2017 and Paknezhad, 2017). Insufficient financial resources and lack of coordination in government bureaucracy are two main causes of poor housing planning (Social Window of India, 2013).

Poor Infrastructure and Social Exclusion: It forces people to adapt to conditions beyond his/her control.

Improper Use of Land/Lack of Zoning: If land fit for residence is used for industries or vice versa, the slum will be formed. If the town is not divided into suitable zones and development is allowed to take place at random, the slums may be created.

Migrants: The persons migrating from the surrounding areas may occupy, usually illegally, the vacant or empty places in or outside the city. The term squatter is used to mean a person who is occupying the land without permission. The colonies of squatters may result in slums. The flow of migrants per day increases in metropolitan cities. About one-third of the urban population lives in ramshackle huts with no civic amenities.

Physical Planning: If the authority concerned does not possess adequate powers to control the development of towns, slums may be formed. If preventive measures are not taken in time, the decent localities of the town will be the slums of tomorrow. The neglect of basic principles of urban planning leads to widespread slums.

Effects of Slums

Health Hazards: The poor living conditions in slums affect the health of people mentally and physically. The people residing in slums are easily attacked by various types of diseases. The climate of slums is such that it easily leads to unhealthy living conditions (Rangwala and Rangwala, 2011). Water contamination causes diseases like blood dysentery, diarrhoea, malaria, typhoid, jaundice, etc. Children with bloated bellies or famished skeletons, many suffering from polio, are a common sight. People are not aware of health problems.

Undesirable Spots: The slums, as such, on a city plan form undesirable spots and, in a sense, disturb the appearance of good features of a city plan.

Working Conditions: It is not possible to work peacefully in slums because the whole area is full of congested houses, traffic congestion, street trading, dusk and darkness. Living in deprived slum neighbourhoods had a leveling effect on young people's occupational and educational aspirations. Limited opportunities in the slums lead many to make early transitions out of school and into crime. When faced with significant real or perceived barriers, many youths may adjust their aspirations to the reality of constraints within their environment. Hence, living in slums invariably results in youth's susceptibility to

crime as well as being victims. For example, exposure to high rates of violence and crime, which is typical in many resource-poor urban slums, can have negative impacts on youth development (Furlong and Cartmal, 1997).

Absence of Amenities: The surrounding area of slums is lacking in essential amenities in the required proportions because of overcrowding. Slums have invariably extreme unhygienic conditions. There are no toilets, and people defecate in open places. Slums have practically no drainage.

Surrounding Locality: The working of institutions like libraries, schools, hospitals, and clinics located near slums is seriously affected.

Prone to Natural and Man-Made Hazards: In slums, houses are crammed into a little space; they are often prone to dangerous hazards like floods, waterlogging, fire, etc. The extent of hazard is increased because of high population density.

Social Problems: Socially, slums remain isolated from the rest of the urban society and exhibit pathological social symptoms like drug abuse, alcoholism, crime, vandalism, violence, stigma, low self-esteem, discrimination, and low quality of life.

Table 2. Slum Prevalence in Nigerian Cities

S/N	Nigerian Cities	Slum Areas
1.	Lagos	Agege, Ajegunle, Amukoko, Badia, Bariga, Bodija, Ijeshatedo/Itire, Ilaje, Iwaya, Makoko, Mushin, Oke-Offa Babasale, Somolu, Ikorodu.
2.	Kano	Kurna, Asabe, Sabon Gari, Nasarawa.
3.	Ibadan	Beere, Oje, Inalende, Mapi, Oke Padi, Yemetu, Oniyanrin, Agbokojo, Akobo-Ojuirin, Bodija, Ojoo.
4.	Akure	Erekesan, Obarila, Isolo, Idiagba/Ijemikin.
5.	Kaduna	Angwan Kurmin Gwari, Television, Nasarawa, Angwan Shanur, Malali, Ungwan Rimi, Barnawa.
6.	Jos	Angwan Rogo, Gangare, Katako, Angwan Rukuba, Hwolshe, Tudun Wada.
7.	Enugu	Akwuke, Ugwuaji, Abakpa, Emene, Akegbeugwu
8.	Port Harcourt	Njemanze, Igbo-Etche, Bundu, Water Side, Mile 1, Eleme.
9.	Ado-Ekiti	Oke-Isa, Irona, Oke-Ila.
10.	Abuja	Dutsen Alhaji, Karimu Gwagwa, Kabusa, Kuchi, Gishiri, Bena, Jabi Daki Biyu, Utako Village.
11.	Minna	Tudun Fulani, Kpakungu, Angwan Biri, Dutsen, Kura.
12.	Makudi	Wadata, Angwan Jukun, Idye, Logo.
13.	Zaria	Parts of Samaru, Hagin Dogo.
14.	Owerri	Amaigbo, Oparanozie, Umezurike, Amadi (Umuodu), Old Ogboshishi, Egbu.
15.	Lokoja	Kabawa, Adankolo, Gadumo, Angwan Kura, Karaworo, Kpakungu, Madabo, Rimi, Galilee and Shabayagi.

Source: Adapted from Sunday A. B. & Alexander A. F., 2011; Field and DAILY TRUST 2022.

Findings by our correspondent show that Ajegunle is one of many chaotic slums in Lagos, where people from all tribes in Nigeria live. The meaning of Ajegunle in Yoruba is “This is where I have found my wealth,” but ironically, poverty is the second name of the busy slum called Ajegunle (DAILY TRUST, dailytrust.com). A slum is a haven for criminals who attack residents during the day and at night.

Crime

Crime is an inevitable reality in human society. It is inherent in human nature; hence, no society or human settlement is completely free from the shackles of crime. The phenomenon (crime) knows no boundary and does not distinguish between the developed or developing world (Olusegun, 2015). Crime is deviance that violates a law. Crime represents expressions of how a society frames or constructs what appropriate behaviour is (Coomber, Donner-Meyer, McElrath and Scott, 2014).

Nigeria is currently caught in the web of the crime dilemma, manifesting in the convulsive upsurge of both violent and non-violent crimes. Notable in this regard are the rising incidents of armed robbery, assassination, and ransom-driven kidnapping, which are now ravaging the polity like a tsunami and spreading a climate of fear and anxiety about public safety. The upsurge

of crime has been ongoing as Nigeria has been on the global crime maps since 1980. These theories of crime, for decades, are traceable to poverty, poor parental upbringing, and greed amongst the youth; get-rich-quick mentality, inadequate crime control model of national security, among others (Oruwari, 2006). The issue of crime is associated with slums because of factors such as a lack of adequate employment and, finally, an environment of nurturing a sense of helplessness and hopelessness; mostly, neighbouring leafy suburbs make crime an attractive venture for jobless youths. Frequent ejection of the slum dwellers from their residences pushes them into criminal activities, which are high and noted to be increasing yearly (Masese, 2007 and Kubende, 2018). A report by UN-Habitat 2006 indicated that the lack of semi-public areas that are protected and have inadequate public security infrastructure leads to the spread of lawless areas around the world. Urban centres are affected by both unplanned and planned crime activities, and Nigeria is no exception.

Crime creates a difficult situation when the frequency is extensive in society, as to entail a menace to the safety of persons and possessions (Adebayo, 2013). The mix of poverty and urbanization may encourage youths to enlist in criminal activities to enable them “to protect themselves and their neighbourhoods but also engage in criminal activities in the absence of steady sources of employment and in the absence of effective social support mechanisms” (Beall and Fox, 2007). Stravrou (2002) argued that existing forces found in destitute and dehumanizing living standards of the poor in communities could drive the majority of these individuals into criminal activities, which increases crime rates (Kubende, 2018).

Social Factors Influencing Crime in the Urban Slum Areas

Poverty and Crime

The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology reveals that poverty refers to a deficiency of basic resources, especially of social needs. Scott and Marshal (2009) define poverty as a condition where a person lacks important basics for sustenance. Poverty entails various dimensions. It involves a low level of earnings and a lack of ability to afford the most basic goods and necessary survival services for dignity. It also entails inadequate education and health, inadequate security, lack of access to sanitation and clean water, no voice, and lack of opportunity for betterment of lives (Silver, 1994). Poverty enhances the development of anti-social behaviours of people. When people are extremely lacking, most often they resort to crime to address a lack of means for livelihood. As a result, they may be involved in crime to meet the needs of living, those which are basic in life (Bowlby, 1988).

Unemployment and Crime

Unemployment imposes negative effects on people and their dependents, while anxiety, hostility, and depression are features of such people (Clark, 1978). Staying out of work for long periods of time results in reduced self-respect and leads to frustration and perceptions of uselessness. These feelings may result in criminal activities in an effort to regain a sense of purpose and status. Children are particularly severely affected by unemployment as they suffer from poor diet, housing conditions, health, and clothing. When the head of the family is unemployed, such families mostly live in overcrowded housing (Clark, 1978).

It will be problematic for less-educated immigrants from rural areas to procure a well-paying job due to a deficiency in skills and knowledge for jobs that are competitive on the market (Obeng – Odoom, 2011). The increasing group of seekers of employment becomes part of the urban underprivileged. Stability of society is destabilised by anti-social delinquency exhibited by the idle young people who are not employed but are readily prone to proscribed behaviours. The high rate of unemployed young people has adversely affected the efficacy and capability of police in combating criminal activities (Dambazau, 2007).

Housing and Crime

Housing in slums is mainly single-room units made of inferior materials, leaving occupants exposed to the elements. The houses are often occupied by over 8 individuals, mostly sleeping on the floor due to the limited space. The structures lack basics such as sanitation, water, safety, and fire protection. The tenants pay more than is expected as rent given the poor quality of housing. A major feature of these houses is the existence of organized groups that collaborate with the local administration to obtain illegal payments. In his book *Creating Defensible Space* (Newman, 1996) indicated that houses with a large number of families per entry, they are also susceptible to various types of deviant behaviours. Some of the deviant behaviours experienced by single-family households are burglary, which is committed when members of the household are sleeping or far from home. These areas are where delinquents wait to ambush their targets or victims and threaten them back into their residences with the intention of robbing them.

Family Structure and Crime

It has been noted that the family influences the maintenance of a free and stable society. The size of the family, poor and ineffective skills used for parenting, kids' ill-treatment, antisocial and disorderly parents, and family dissonance may lead to delinquency in juveniles (Wasserman and Seracini, 2001). In his study involving 250 boys, McCord's (1979) concluded that parental conflict, aggression, poor parental supervision, and harsh punishment while disciplining children led to adult convictions for violent offences. McCord, Wisdom and Crowell (2001) identified children raised in single-parent families as likely to be involved in future delinquency. Similarly, results were obtained by Wright and Wright (1994) in their study on single-parent families, especially mother-only families. The study found that these families are more likely to have children who easily fall into delinquency than families with two parents. Muehlenberg (2002) particularly found that lack of an intact family may drive youth into joining gangs.

Kids or children who come from collapsed families are more likely to engage in deviance conducts than those from steady backgrounds. Out of 10, about 7 of these deviances are likely to belong to broken homes (Adebayo, 2013).

Poor families and homes are susceptible to numerous fundamental personality traits and child development issues, with poor family organization practices surfacing due to uncontrollable situations such as staying in localities with very high deviance activities, lack of schooling, and poverty (Patterson, DeBaryshe, and Ramsey, 1989).

Low Levels of Education and Crime

According to Chege (2015), the majority of the youth living in slums have low education levels. Inability to access education centres is an important issue that children in slums face. Local institutions, in most cases, intentionally fail to register the children, which leads to reliance on external donations or organizations. Over a period of time, the number of uneducated and jobless youths drawn towards crime for survival increases, as they find crime attractive. In addition, children attending school have no guaranteed security. Young girls have to be escorted to school due to idle youths who may attack them. Informal settlement school kids sometimes opt for unskilled employment (like house girls or boys) and drop out of school even when performing well in the academic field. Children in informal settlements usually work to survive; survival of the fittest is key in these slums, so most of the time, school-going children will not care about the laws that require them to go to school but look for any job that will put food in their household.

Causes of Crime in the Urban Slum Areas

The causes of crime in the urban slum areas are traceable to poverty, poor parental upbringing, and greed amongst the youth; get-rich-quick mentality, inadequate crime control model of national security, among others (Oruwari, 2006).

According to Neto (2002), the causes of crime are manifold but may be placed in three major categories: social, institutional, and situational.

Social Causes: Social causes include marginalization and social exclusion, lack of social control, lack of socialization in the family and school, crises in local traditions and values, and lack of integration into society.

Institutional Causes: Institutional causes include deliberate government policies to disenfranchise certain sections of society as well as weak law enforcement and criminal justice systems.

Situational Causes: Situational causes of crime, which are directly related to the urban environment, include failure to master the urbanization process, lack of urban services, absence of the conception of security in urban policies and planning, degradation of urban neighbourhoods as well as overcrowding and proliferation of zoning abuses and squatter settlements.

Crime Prevalence

Crime prevalence refers to the proportion of people (or targets, e.g., households, properties, or cars) in an area who are victimized, and it is used to identify the risk of being a victim. The number of potential victims commonly equates to an area's population. However, in many cases, the potential target is more narrowly defined. For example, the potential victims of vehicle crime should be restricted to the number of individuals who own or have access to a vehicle. (Rogerson, 2004).

The prevalence of different crime types is burglary, other theft, assault, threats, and vandalism, and between racial abuse and theft from the person (Rogerson, 2004).

Police recorded crime is, as is known, not equivalent to "all" crime. A well-known fact is that a large proportion of "all" crime remains unrecorded.

Kidnapping is a more serious crime that violates the personal integrity of the victim. Assault remains the most common type of crime reported based on its mean value, followed by burglary. The least common among the crime types is manslaughter.

Table 3. Crime Statistics: Reported Offences by Type and State 2016 in Nigeria

State	Offence Against Persons	Offence Against Property	Offence Against Lawful Authority	Offence Against Local Acts	Total No. of Cases 2016	% Share of Total Cases
FCT	2,984	9,350	843	4	13,181	10.48
Abia	230	113	21	0	364	0.29
Adamawa	779	1,417	56	7	2,259	1.80
Akwa Ibom	840	333	232	6	1,411	1.12
Anambra	898	1,413	142	81	2,534	2.01
Bauchi	812	1,713	118	14	2,657	2.11
Bayelsa	612	837	91	1	1,541	1.23
Benue	463	497	0	129	1,089	0.87
Borno	423	479	3	269	1,174	0.93
Cross River	1,134	1,154	100	35	2,423	1.93
Delta	3,911	2,502	1,202	252	7,867	6.25
Ebonyi	572	595	44	0	1,211	0.96
Edo	697	1,307	0	0	1,004	0.80
Ekiti	718	1,008	103	0	1,829	1.45
Enugu	886	1,094	124	0	2,104	1.67
Gombe	513	1,350	19	356	2,238	1.78
Imo	954	873	103	0	1,930	1.53
Jigawa	321	214	37	74	646	0.51
Kaduna	338	502	129	37	1,006	0.80
Kano	1,981	2,375	318	243	4,917	3.91
Katsina	51	65	4	0	120	0.10
Kebbi	656	370	21	108	1,555	0.92
Kogi	294	480	17	7	798	0.63
Kwara	327	614	21	22	984	0.78
Lagos	15,426	22,885	6,768	306	45,385	36.08
Nasarawa	489	725	14	92	1,320	1.05
Niger	528	1,083	53	105	1,769	1.41
Ogun	1,122	1,112	145	0	2,379	1.89
Ondo	1,037	1,934	521	1	3,493	2.78
Osun	258	540	57	333	1,188	0.94
Oyo	1,377	1,752	314	0	3,443	2.74
Plateau	470	1,938	145	0	2,553	2.03
Rivers	1,683	897	271	143	2,994	2.38
Sokoto	496	1,055	29	0	1,580	1.26
Taraba	719	998	55	45	1,817	1.44
Yobe	398	520	18	8	944	0.75
Zamfara	157	303	6	17	483	0.38
National	45,554	65,397	12,144	2,695	125,790	100.00

Source: National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria, 2016

According to the National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria (2016), Crime statistics on reported offences reflected that a total of 125,790 cases were reported in 2016. Offences against property had the highest number of cases reported, with 65,397 such cases reported. Offences against persons recorded 45,554 cases, while offences against lawful authority and local acts recorded the least, with 12,144 and 2,695 cases reported, respectively. Lagos State has the highest percentage share of total cases reported, with 36.08% and 45,385 cases recorded. FCT Abuja and Delta State followed closely, with 10.48% and 13,181 and 6.25% and 7,867 cases recorded, respectively. Katsina State has the lowest percentage share of total cases reported, with 0.10% and 120 cases recorded. Abia and Zamfara States followed closely with 0.29% and 364 and 0.38% and 483 cases recorded, respectively.

1. Offences against persons are those offences against human beings – eg. murder, kidnapping, manslaughter, infanticide, concealment of birth, rape and other physical abuse, etc.
2. Offences against property are those offences against property. Property of any kind – e.g. stealing, receiving stolen property, obtaining property by false pretence, armed robbery, burglary and housebreaking.

3. Offences against lawful authority are any offence committed against any establishment of the law. e.g. The law says pay your tax (FIRS); failure to do this amounts to an offence against lawful authority.
4. Offences against local acts are those laws that we cannot enforce outside Nigeria – e.g. Liquor Act or Firearms Act. Here in Nigeria, you cannot go selling arms/ammunitions without a license, but in the Republic of Benin, they are freely sold.

Crime Statistics: Reported Offences by Type and State (2017)

According to the National Bureau of Statistics of Nigeria (2017), Crime statistics on reported offences reflected that a total of 134,663 cases were reported in 2017. Offences against property had the highest number of cases reported, with 68,579 of such cases reported. Offences against persons recorded 53,641 cases, while offences against lawful authority recorded at least 12,443 cases recorded respectively.

Lagos State has the highest percentage share of total cases reported, with 50,975 (37.9%) cases recorded. Abia and Delta States followed closely with 12,408 (9.2%) and 7,150 (5.3%) cases recorded, respectively. Kebbi State has the lowest percent share of total cases reported, with 205 (0.2%) cases recorded. Kogi and Bauchi States followed closely with 282 (0.20%) and 386 (0.30%) cases recorded, respectively.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study covers Crime Prevalence in Nigerian Urban Slum Areas: The Way Forward. The paper investigates the present causes and effects of urban slums and examines the crime prevalence in Nigerian Urban Slum Areas. The research objectives were achieved through extensive document review. However, the study relied on secondary data. Data were obtained from literature in journals, textbooks, academic articles, official records, private papers, and the internet. Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources; Lands, Survey and Physical Planning; Owerri Capital Development Authority (OCDA); Environmental Transformation Commission (ENTRACO); police stations; and Tertiary Institutions were visited in the case of slums and crime.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Slum development has become a major urban planning and management problem due to the challenges they pose to the larger urban environment. Activities of slum dwellers are known to undermine the social, economic, and environmental sustainability efforts of the city.

Most of the settlements in Nigeria were built more than 50 years ago and have become slums. Most slums are caused by rapid population growth, decentralization, industrialization, poor infrastructure, social exclusion, migrants, uncontrolled urban development/lack of planning for lower-income classes of society, which also results in overdependence on facilities. Crime creates a difficult situation when it is extensive in society, as to entail a menace to the safety of persons and their possessions.

Poverty is one of the main reasons for crime; countries with high rates of economic deprivation tend to witness higher crime rates than other countries. Since people do not have the means to secure a living in the right ways, they invest their time in criminal activities. Poverty encourages the formation and demand for slums.

Unemployment is an issue faced by developing and developed countries, especially in Nigeria. A huge portion of the youth of today are unemployed. The unemployment rate in our country is ever-increasing. Naturally, this leaves the youth frustrated,

as despite spending a lot of time and money on their education, they still find it tough to get a good job. This leads to a feeling of resentment towards the system in the minds of many youngsters, who then rebel and resort to crime early on in their lives. Unemployment may force the affected persons to stay even in an unhealthy atmosphere. Unemployment is a driving force of youth criminality in slum areas of Nigeria. The slum areas serve as hideouts of criminals since accessibility to these areas is difficult.

Politics: The interrelation between politics and crime is overlooked many times. This is problematic as many people have engaged in criminal activities while dealing with political issues. Additionally, there have been quite a few politicians in developing countries who have also been associated with violent crimes and murders. So many youth members of parties are often given weapons and instructed to handle matters violently during conflicts. This not only exposes youth to criminal activities but also puts the lives of various citizens at risk. So, an unstable political situation in a country leads to an exponential increase in the crimes that take place there.

Governments, for political interest, subvert efforts to remove, reduce, or upgrade slums into better housing options for the poor. Slum populations form a good amount of an easy vote bank, and politicians want them to remain as they are.

Bad Governance: Slums develop due to bad governance. Government often fails to recognize the rights of the urban poor and incorporate them into urban planning, thereby contributing to the growth of slums.

Health Hazards: The poor living conditions in slums affect the health of people mentally and physically. The people residing in slums are easily attacked by various types of diseases like malaria, typhoid, diarrhoea, dysentery, etc.

Working Conditions: It is not possible to work peacefully in slums because the whole area is full of congested houses, traffic congestion, street trading, pollution, etc., which affect young people's occupational and educational aspirations.

Undesirable Spots: The slums are such on a city plan as undesirable spots and, in a sense, disturb the appearance of good features of a city plan.

Absence of Amenities: The surrounding area of slums is lacking in essential amenities in the required proportions because of overcrowding.

Surrounding Locality: The working of institutions like schools, hospitals, libraries, and clinics located near slums is seriously affected.

Prone to Natural and Man-Made Hazards: In slum houses, which are crammed into a little space, they are often prone to dangerous hazards like waterlogging, floods, fire, etc.

Social Problems: Socially, slums remain isolated from the rest of the urban society and exhibit pathological social symptoms like drug abuse, crime, alcoholism, violence, etc.

Peer Pressure plays a significant role in the lives of all teenagers and young adults. That is a phase of life where people tend to look up to their friends and believe what they do is the, or rather, 'hip and happening' thing to do. The lack of wisdom and experience these people have just adds fuel to the fire. As a result, many individuals in their youth subconsciously get drawn to vices like alcohol consumption and smoking just by looking at peers.

Unfair Justice System: The flawed justice system is another major contributor to crimes. When people believe that they are not given their due and are unfairly treated by the system itself, they harbour feelings of resentment towards it and start to rebel. This involves them engaging in criminal activities and doing the opposite of what is expected of them. People try to get what is just for themselves when they feel like the state is not going to do the same and tend to commit various acts of crime in their journey to avenge themselves and get what they believe they deserve. Many innocent people resort to crimes when they are wrongly proven to be guilty in the Court of law owing to a lack of trust in the system.

Background: Oftentimes, the background and family conditions of a criminal can be attributed to the reason behind their crimes. When people believe that they are responsible for providing for their family and they are unable to do so owing to a lack of opportunities, lack of education, or other such issues that handicap them, they resort to crime. This issue does not lead to crimes such as theft alone but also motivates people to commit gruesome acts that put their freedom and lives at risk just so they can make a good amount of money through bribes or ransoms that can be used for their family's sustenance.

Unequal Rights: Deprivation is another significant contributor to the increasing crime rates. People resort to notorious activities when they are deprived of their basic rights since that impedes their means to obtain a livelihood conventionally and honestly. They have limited options and are already at a disadvantaged position in society, so they choose to make money and sustain themselves through hook or crook. This usually involves them engaging in criminal activities.

Religion: Even today, unfortunately, various divides and issues in society can be attributed to religion. Despite it being a basic human right, many people are deprived of practicing their own religion. This leads to a feeling of resentment in the minds of believers. Moreover, there have been an awful lot of cases involving crimes over different schools of thought too. Innocent lives have been lost in this war over ideological concepts that have existed since time immemorial. This is an extremely sad state of affairs considering that it is already the 21st Century and human beings have progressed so much in other areas. There are a huge number of crimes committed by religious fanatics while they try to further their cause by propagating their religion or, at times, try to establish their religious superiority over other faiths by resorting to destruction and vandalism.

Drugs: Crime and drug abuse are closely related. A person under the influence of drugs tends to indulge in criminal activities that they may not have indulged in otherwise. The main problem arises when they get addicted to the drugs and believe they require them to sustain themselves. In such a situation, drug addicts are ready to go to any extent to procure these illegal substances. Under the influence of drugs, people feel the urge to do things that are not only illegal but also have the potential to ruin and, at times, even end their lives.

Society: In today's times, money is one of the most important aspects of everyone's life. The meaning of money is not restricted to the amount of wealth in a person's bank account but is instead also attributed to their societal status, worth, and even values. As a result of this, people value money more than their relationships and happiness. What other people think of a person is more important to them than how they feel. Even schools and universities do not teach children how to be happy and satisfied in life but instead teach them how to make more money, which indirectly attributes wealth to worth. (Ipleadersblog.ipleadersin>causes-of-crime). The crime prevalence in Nigerian Urban slum areas is murder, manslaughter, infanticide, concealment of birth, rape, assault, prostitution, kidnapping, assassination, politically motivated killings, religious clashes, drug abuse, armed robbery, burglary and house breaking, stealing, pickpocketing, motor vehicle/automobile theft, counterfeit currency, fraud, bribery and corruption.

The Way Forward

Slums are a universal phenomenon spreading its tentacles in virtually every urban settlement. It is a breeding ground for criminal activities accompanied by increased rates of crime, violence and lawlessness. These are areas where little government attention in terms of the provision or maintenance of public facilities and infrastructure is being felt. If cities are to play their role as drivers of economic and social development, these challenges have to be addressed through effective planning and good governance at Federal, State and Local Government levels. These planning programmes can include removal of high fences that provide cover to criminals and the rehabilitation and re-appropriation of community public space, slum clearance programmes, forced eviction and demolition, resettlement or relocation. Slum upgrading programmes by constructing high-rise blocks of flats to replace slums by the government.

Implementation of poverty eradication projects that improve living standards and give support to the poor and needy through supporting the youths in attaining more education, introduction of vocational training which can help the youths in self-employment hence limiting unemployment, idleness and joblessness.

Structural efficiency through provision of employment opportunities by government in partnership with private organizations to improve the quality of life of the people.

Encourage community participation and involvement in security management, especially at policy formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring, among other issues.

There should be combined efforts of the police and vigilantes to check criminality in the urban areas.

Neighbourhood Watch is most often employed on an area basis but is more successful when activity is clustered in small cocoons surrounding victims' addresses.

Education and Public Awareness Campaigns are most commonly used as an area-wide strategy, including posters, newsletters, leaflets, door-to-door, jingles, radio programmes, playlets, T.V. programmes, and Town hall meetings, which will be activated to enlighten the citizenry on living standards and be free from crime.

Increasing patrols of security officers and community policing initiatives reduces the number of criminal activities.

Increasing the presence of police personnel, vehicles/patrol cars, or the wider policing family is a common area-based strategy that will assist in containing crime. Policy and Warden teams can also be mobilized to target specific problem areas, and these may be identified either as areas with crime prevalence or concentration. It is desirable to adopt a response to repeat victimization that involves some form of detection activity. This is particularly appropriate since around 80% of repeat burglary, kidnapping, etc. victims are likely to have been revictimized by the same offender.

Police data is the most frequently used source of information used to identify repeat victims. This has its limitations. Chronic victims are less likely to report crimes. They may have had previous negative experience with criminal justice agencies and may be resigned to experiencing victimization. They may also fear reprisals associated with assisting the police. Initiatives to encourage the reporting of crime and to increase the avenues through which crimes can be reported will have additional benefits in the identification of repeat victimization.

Searching for repeat victims amongst recorded incidents is not an easy task. Many police systems have limited searching facilities. Incomplete, incorrect, and inconsistent recording of information further hinders attempts to match incidents to victims. Efforts to improve the accuracy and availability of crime data should be in delivery plans. A Crime Tracking Data and Analysis System should provide a computer system to receive data both from the police and other partner agencies. The system is designed to improve the ability to sort, link and analyse data.

The use of standard Geographical Information Systems, searching geographically referenced crime locations, can dramatically improve the time and accuracy of identifying repeats; they can identify geographic areas of concentration in which to target crime reduction interventions. They can also be used to identify areas in which to further investigate crime concentration at the level of the individual victim. Nigerian cities should be planned, built, and managed to ensure transformability towards sustainable and harmonious development.

5. CONCLUSION

Most cities in Nigeria today are confronted with slum development and crime. Poverty, uncontrolled and unplanned settlements, as well as the absence of an urban physical landscape in Nigeria, remain the challenges affecting urban development in most states. Making cities a safe and healthy living environment depends on the capacity of the planning,

design, and policy models employed to cope with the forces that are shaping the cities and causing the threats (Salau and Lawanson, 2009). In this regard, the government should focus more on providing adequate health facilities in the area as well as good roads, adequate electricity supply, potable water, and a good drainage system to ensure a safe, healthy, and working environment. Create more opportunities to reduce rural poverty and promote sustainable development. Therefore, education and public awareness, CCTV and surveillance, physical design, physical presence of security outfit, community participation and involvement in the security management, land use planning, infrastructure development, monitoring system, and effective data management are ways of reducing slums, violence, and crime.

Good governance is a key to achieving safety and a healthy living environment because it will ensure that the right response is given when the occasion arises (Achi, 2009). Physical planning remains a veritable tool, a special purpose vehicle for, among other things, actualizing sustainable settlement in Nigeria. This will generate multiple benefits in all sectors which are necessary to improve basic development needs of citizens. There is a need to carry out a study to establish the law enforcement readiness and strategies to combat the rising cases of slums and criminal activities in the slums. The findings from such a study will add knowledge on the government's readiness in combating these behaviours.

6. COMPETING INTERESTS

None to declare.

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