

Criminal Victimization and Fear of Crime in Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria

Etannibi EO ALEMIKA
Innocent C. CHUKWUMA

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By:

CLEEN Foundation
1, Afolabi Aina Street
Ikeja 100281
Lagos, Nigeria

Tel: 234-1-4933195

Fax: 234-1-4935339

E-mail: cleen@cleen.org

Website: www.cleen.org

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CLEEN FOUNDATION
1A Afolabi Aina Street;
Off Allen Avenue
Ikeja Lagos

Telephone: 234-1-4933195; 234-1-4935338-9

E-mail: cleen@cleen.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Criminal victimization has serious consequences for the citizens and society. Individual and societal aspirations for democracy, development, human rights, high standard of living are undermined by high level of criminal victimization. Nigeria has witnessed high rates of crime and victimization that have defied the measures, introduced by successive regimes, for its management during the past two decades. The problem of crime is most widespread and endemic in Lagos. This is most likely due to its being the most economically active and densely populated city in Nigeria. In spite of the crime problem in the country, there are no reliable statistics on the trend and pattern of crime and victimization. In order to bridge the data-gap, this study surveys the extent and pattern of victimization, fear of crime, perceptions of crime and the police among residents of Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria. Lagos was the capital of Nigeria from 1914¹ to 1991 when the capital of the Federation was moved to Abuja in the central area of the nation.

The survey conducted in August 2004, covered Lagos metropolis. Data were obtained through multi-stage sampling design. The target population from which the sample was drawn were people who were 16 years or older in 14 Local Government Areas. Fieldwork was carried out by the staff of the Federal Office of Lagos with supervision by staff of CLEEN Foundation also based in Lagos, during the month of August 2004. In all, 2091 respondents were interviewed, with the following aims: to find out whether or not they were victims of crime during the past five years; to discover the extent and types of criminal victimization in Lagos metropolis; to find out the level of subjective feeling of safety as well as attitudes to crime and the police among the residents of Lagos. The findings of the study are summarized below.

Extent of criminal victimization

A substantial proportion of the respondents were victims of corruption and cheating in 2003. More than two-fifths of the respondents said they were victims of corruption, particularly demand for bribe by public officials. Also, 30% said they were cheated by various persons, groups and businesses during the year.

Over a period of five years covered by the survey, theft and assault were the commonest form of victimization experienced by the respondents. The levels of victimization reported by the respondent for the past five years were as follow:

- 1% of the households reported the murder of a member;
- 6%; 5% and 23% of households with vehicle owners respectively reported robbery of automobile; theft of vehicle and theft of property from an automobile belonging to their members;
- 15% of households with motorcycle and bicycle owners reported theft of cycles;
- 9% and 6% of the households were victims of burglary and attempted burglary respectively;
- 9% of the respondents reported being victims of robbery;
- 25% were victims of theft;

¹ This was the year that the British colonial government amalgamated the Northern and Southern Protectorates, and the Colony of Lagos as a single Nigeria political entity.

- 12% said they were assaulted;
- 9% of the female respondents were victims of sexual violence.

Spatial pattern of criminal victimization

Criminal victimization varied across the Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Lagos metropolis, with the following pattern discernible from the analysis of the survey:

- Murder was higher in Lagos Island, Mushin and Kosofe;
- Automobile theft was highest in Lagos Island and Mainland;
- Theft of property from car was widespread in all the LGAs but highest in Apapa and Mushin;
- Incidence of burglary was highest in Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Lagos Island, Ifako-Ijaye and Shomolu;
- Robbery was more prevalent in Lagos Island, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Ojo, Agege, Apapa and Mushin;
- Respondents in Oshodi-Isolo, Ajeromi-Ifelodun and Apapa reported higher levels of assault;
- Female respondents in Ojo, Mushin, Oshodi-Isolo and Ajeromi-Ifelodun reported higher levels of sexual victimization;
- In 2003, incidence of corruption, particularly extortion, was more prevalent in Lagos Island, Oshodi-Isolo, Mushin and Apapa.

Perceptions of Crime and Safety in Community

Robbery and murder were the crimes perceived as most prevalent in nearly all the LGAs. The two crimes were followed in respect of prevalence by theft, burglary. Majority of the respondents in all the LGAs, with the exception of Alimosho, reported decrease in crime level in their communities. However, while more than 70% of the respondents felt that crime decreased in their communities, majority of the respondents perceived increased level of crime in society. This apparent contradiction may be explained by the concentration of electronic and print media of mass communication with extensive coverage of criminal incidents in the state. More than 80% of respondents from all the LGAs (except Ajeromi-Ifelodun with 56%) said that they felt safe walking in their neighbourhood after dark. Greater percentage of respondents felt safe at home after dark. However, nearly 70% were fearful of being a victim of any crime.

Perception of Police

Majority of the respondents had positive impression or perception of the police. More specifically:

- 58% of the respondents said the police in their communities were doing a good job;
- 53% agreed with the view that the police were helpful;
- Positive perception or impression of the police was highest among respondents in Agege, Mainland, Mushin, Ikeja and lowest among respondents in Alimosho, Apapa, Kosofe, Surulere and Ajeromi-Ifelodun;

Notwithstanding the generally positive perception of the police by the respondents, majority of them felt that police performance has declined over the past five years.

Reactions to Crime

Faced with high incidence and fear of crime, many communities and individuals took several measures to reduce their feeling of vulnerability and minimize risk of victimization.

- 81% of the respondents said that vigilante existed in their communities, while 77% reported that the vigilantes were paid for their services;
- Individuals introduced target hardening devices (fence, metal doors, locks, electronic devices) and employed security guards in order to minimize their risk of victimization.

Police Community Relations Committee

The provision for the establishment of Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) in police divisions was aimed at developing public-police partnership. About a third (34%) of the respondents said PCRC existed in their area, while 77% reported that they are aware of the role of PCRC.

1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Crime causes loss of life and property as well as overwhelming fear of insecurity. These have serious consequences for democracy, economic development, social capital and associational life generally. Nigeria has witnessed upsurge in crimes during the past two decades. Increasing incidence of armed robbery has led to a paralysing fear which has in turn affected economic and social life in the country. Lagos being the nation's primal economic centre and the most densely populated city has recorded disproportionate level of crime². As a result of the growing rates and severity of criminality successive governments in the country since the early 1980s introduced diverse crime control measures, but without much success.

To effectively combat crime, comprehensive socioeconomic development planning aimed at effective and equitable social services delivery as well as efficacious citizen political participation is necessary. But these cannot even be achieved without reliable and valid data. In order to develop and implement effective crime prevention and control programmes as well as effective administration of criminal justice, there must be reliable and valid data on the extent, trend and pattern of crimes in society. Nigeria at present does not have such statistics. It is therefore not surprising that in spite of the various crime control measures and task forces that were respectively introduced and established during the past two decades, criminals continue to operate in greater number over increasing wider spheres.

Official crime statistics produced by the police, prisons and the courts are the indicators of criminality and victimization commonly available in most societies. However, such statistics are inaccurate due to dark figures (unreported crimes), grey figures (reported but unrecorded crimes and manipulation of records to satisfy political and/or institutional interests (as when reported increase or decrease may be advantageous to regime in power or the police force). Globally, official statistics are known to suffer several weaknesses. Such weaknesses led criminologists to develop two methods of obtaining information on criminality, victimization, criminal justice administration and public attitudes to crime and criminal justice administration in society. These are the self-report measures – crime survey (self-reported criminal behaviour) survey and victim survey (self-reported victimization). They complement official crime statistics produced by the police, judiciary and the prisons service.

Crime survey involves the study of a sample of the population as regards the types and number of crimes that they committed during a particular period, usually during the past year - whether or not detected or reported to the police. The method uses questionnaire to collect relevant information. Crime survey as well is characterized by many weaknesses: First, the questionnaire tends to contain more questions on minor crimes with which the respondents

² Etannibi Alemika 1997 "Criminal Violence in Lagos State, Nigeria" *Africa Peace Review* 1(2): 72- 95

are more comfortable and questions on more serious and sensitive crimes are avoided. Second, respondents may not accurately recall their criminal activities, and third, respondents also tend to underreport serious crimes that they may have committed. Notwithstanding the deficiencies, crime surveys have provided a broader view of the extent and pattern of crimes and public perceptions of crime and criminal law enforcement in society.

Victim survey is used to obtain data on the extent of criminal victimization. Unlike crime survey, which is used to obtain data on extent and pattern of crimes committed by members of society, victim survey is used to measure the extent and pattern of victimization in a community, among members of groups and in a nation. Questionnaires were designed to gather information on respondents' experience of criminal victimization. The method also suffers several deficiencies, including inability of the respondents to accurately report events during the period covered by the survey. However, several advantages have been attributed to victim survey. Principally, it provides rich data for understanding the distribution of criminal victimization and the socio-demographic characteristics of victims and criminals; offer better information for building theories on criminality and victimization, and promotes understanding of the consequences of victimization, and extent of fear of crime among different groups in different locations³.

Until now, large scale crime and victim surveys have not been conducted in Nigeria. This study is a step towards developing capacity for the conduct of crime and victims surveys and their utilisation for crime prevention and control planning and programmes in the country. It is also a modest contribution towards the collection of reliable data on crime, victimization, fear of crime and perceptions of the police through a social scientific survey in the metropolitan areas of Lagos State.

Coverage and Methodology

The survey covered Lagos metropolis only. The target population were people of the age of 16 years and older. Fieldwork was carried out by the staff of the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) in Lagos and supervised by staff of CLEEN Foundation also based in Lagos, during the month of August 2004. The questionnaire for the survey included questions on respondents' socio-demographic background; victimization for several types of offences; fear of crime; perception of crime; contact with and perception of the police; individual and community crime control measures, etc. Most of the questions were pre-coded with multiple choices. The instrument was pre-tested and subsequently modified in the light of problems identified during the pre-test.

A multi-stage (two-stage) sampling design was used. At the first stage, ten (10) enumeration areas were selected from each of the 14 local government areas of the Lagos Metropolis. A total of 140 Enumeration Areas (EAs) were selected in all. From each of the enumeration area, 15 housing units (HUs) were selected. The second stage involved the selection of housing units from which respondents were selected. Thus, 150 housing units were selected in each of the 14 Local Government Areas (LGAs). On the whole, a total of 2,100 housing units were selected for the study. Under the National Integrated Survey of Households

³ Cantor, D. and J. P. Lynch. 2000. "Self-Report Surveys as Measures of Crime and Criminal Victimization" *Criminal Justice*, 2000, vol. 4: 87-138 and Gottfredson, MR and MJ Hindelang (1981) "Sociological Aspects of Criminal Victimization"; *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 7: 107-128

(NISH) sampling design of the Federal Office of Statistics, a housing unit will usually contain only one household except for uncertain situations. A respondent was selected from a list of everybody who was at least 16 years old. The person whose birthday is next was selected. Data collection took 15 days. There were 14 teams, one for each LGA. A team consisted of a supervisor and two enumerators. The fourteen Local Government Areas covered by the survey and number of respondents (in parenthesis) who were successfully interviewed were: Agege (146); Ajeromi-Ifelodun (150); Alimosho (149); Apapa (149); Ojo (150); Mainland (150); Mushin (149); Ifako-Ijaye (150); Ikeja (150); Kosofe (150); Oshodi-Isolo (148); Lagos Island (150); Shomolu (150) and Surulere (150). Presented in table 1 are data on the socio-demographic backgrounds of the respondents.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<i>Socioeconomic Characteristics</i>	<i>%</i>
Sex	
• Male	55
• Female	45
Age (in years)	
• Less 25	28
• 25-34	29
• 35-54	33
• 55 and older	11
Marital status	
• Never married	41
• Married	54
• Others	5
Education	
• Less primary	6
• Primary	2
• Secondary	24
• Tertiary	44
• No response	25
Employment status	
• Employed	60
• Unemployed	5
• Students/vocational trainees	20
• Housewives	5
• Others (retired, disabled, etc.)	10
Religion	
• Christianity	68
• Islam	32
• Traditional/others	0.3
Sample size = 2091	

The social and demographic characteristics of the sample presented in table 1 indicate that educated and employed persons were overrepresented in relation to their representation in the population.

2

EXTENT AND PATTERN OF VICTIMIZATION

This section presents an analysis of the extent and pattern of criminal victimization during the past five years. In addition, perceptions of crime and safety, and fear of crime among the respondents of the survey in the 14 Local Government Areas of the Lagos metropolis are analysed in this section.

Disputes

Dispute is inherent in social relations. As a result of the ubiquity of disputes in daily transactions among people, societies have various dispute resolution mechanisms. Depending on the nature, seriousness and applicable norms and rules, people resolve their disputes through different institutions. Different types of disputes were reported by the respondents. The disputes were about land ownership (44%); marital relation (5%); inheritance, excluding land (14%) and physical fighting and assault (19%). Dispute over land was therefore the most common.

People took their disputes to several agents and agencies for resolution. A total of 6% (134) of the sample said they were involved in a dispute within the past twelve months which had to be taken to third-party agents for resolution. Some of the respondents (44 persons) took their dispute to traditional rulers. More than one-half (59%) of those who took dispute to traditional rulers for settlement reported that they were satisfied with the handling of the dispute. Most (78%) of those involved in the reported disputes took them to family members for resolution. Others took the disputes to other agents such as the police (32); traditional system (16%) and court (16%)⁴. Overall, most of the respondents were very satisfied with the handling of the disputes.

Table 2: Satisfaction with Dispute Resolution Agencies

<i>Dispute resolution</i>		<i>Satisfaction with dispute resolution agency</i>	
<i>Agents to which disputes were referred</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Very satisfied %</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied (%)</i>
Family	78	72	16
Police	32	7	42
Traditional system	16	4	36
Court	16	7	35

Figures do not add to 100 because of the use of multiple agencies for dispute resolution

The data in the table above indicate that non-formal systems are preferred and more frequently used for dispute resolution. Recourse to the use of formal system of dispute and conflict resolution introduced by colonial powers in the continent are not encouraged, at least, without first exploring resolution through traditional kin and community institutions.

⁴ Disputes were taken to more than a single agency for resolution. Thus pathway to resolution may sometimes be from family to the police and to the courts.

Extent of Criminal Victimization

Criminal victimization has generally been explained in terms of opportunity theory or life style model. According to opportunity theorists, victimization requires a target, opportunity to victimize the target and motivation to victimize an individual by criminals. On the other hand, life-style model proposes that some people are prone to victimization because of their lifestyle. Results from the survey with regards to the extent and pattern of criminal victimization in Lagos metropolis are presented in table 3 and discussed below.

Table 3: Extent of Criminal Victimization

<i>Nature of Criminal Victimization</i>	<i>Persons victimized during the last 5 years</i>		<i>Year of Victimization</i>		
	No.	%	January- July 2004 (%)	2003 (%)	2000- (%)
Murder	29	1	4	44	52
Automobile theft ⁵	29	5	36	18	46
Automobile hijack	31	6	48	20	32
Theft from automobile	129	23	30	36	34
Motorcycle/bicycle theft	27	15	48	19	33
Burglary	184	9	32	29	36
Attempted burglary	130	6	28	33	39
Robbery	168	9	27	28	44
Personal theft	514	25	30	36	34
Sexual offences ⁶	80	9	24	35	41
Assault	232	12	39	39	23
Cheating (in 2003)	615			30	
Extortion or corruption (in 2003)	912			44	

Automobile theft and robbery

Automobile robbery and theft were seen by respondents as common crimes in their communities.

- 5% of the household with an automobile reported that their vehicles were stolen during the past five years
- Automobile theft (e.g. without contact with owners or use of violence) occurred more frequently at home (27%); near owners' home (24%) and within the LGA of residence (14%), and 9% of the cases occurred elsewhere (outside owners LGA of residence) in the country.
- More than one-third (35%) of the respondent said their stolen vehicles were recovered.

⁵ Questions relating to automobile theft and hijacking asked whether any member of the household owned an automobile and whether an automobile belonging to any member of the household was stolen, hijacked, or burgled. Percentages for these victimizations are based on households with members who own automobiles.

⁶ This question was asked of female respondents' only (N=930).

- Automobile robbery occurred more frequently near owner's home (25%) and elsewhere within the LGA (25%). In 65% of the robbery incidents, the automobiles were actually taken from their owners.
- Automobile robbery, on the average involved two robbery suspects (56%). In 28% of the incidents, three or more robbers were involved.
- 46% of automobiles taken from their owners through robbery were recovered, indicating that the prospect of recovery was higher in automobile robbery cases than vehicle theft incidents.
- In 90% of automobile robbery cases, lethal weapons were used. Handgun and long gun were respectively used in 75% and 18% of vehicle robbery incidents.
- Reports were made to the police in 77% and 80% of automobile theft and robbery respectively.
- Automobile robbery victims generally had no prior acquaintance with persons who attacked them during robbery.

Robbery (of non-automobile goods)

Robbery in households, offices, financial institutions and business premises constitutes a major component of the country's crime problem.

- People were robbed more frequently at home and within the Local Government Area of residence: 33% of the robbery incidents reported by the respondents occurred at home; 34% elsewhere within the LGA, and 15% near victims' home
- Three or more suspects were involved in 57% of the robbery cases and two suspects were involved in 13% of the incidences.
- Lethal weapon was used in 31% of incidents, less than in the case of automobile robbery.
- Weapons of choice were handgun (46%), long gun (26%) and knife/cutlass/machete (18%)
- The incidents were reported to the police in 31% of the cases

Theft

Official statistics indicate that theft is the most widespread crime reported to the police in the country. This survey confirms high level of victimization through theft.

- One-quarter (25%) of the respondents were victims of theft during the past five years. This represented the highest level of victimization reported in the survey.
- 73% of respondents said they experienced theft in form of pick-pocketing and bag or purse snatching
- 47% of livestock owners (166) reported that they experienced incidents of stolen livestock

Sexual offences

Media reports indicate that sexual offences, especially rape and indecent assault, are fairly common. However, public concern about sexual crime remains limited and intermittent.

- A variety of acts of sexual assault and violence victimization were reported by 8% (80) of the female respondents. The victims reported rape (19%); attempted rape (27%); indecent assault (23%) and offensive behaviour (29%).

- Sexual violence victimization rarely occurred in victims' homes (7%), compared to near victims' home (26%) and elsewhere within the LGA (39%)
- In more than two-thirds of the incidents (68%), only one offender was involved, two persons were involved in 18% of the incidents, and three or more persons took part in 10% of sexual violence incidents
- Weapon was used in 14% of the incidents. The weapons used were handgun (33%), knife/cutlass/machete (22%) and other types of weapon (33%)
- Victims knew offenders by sight (20%), by name (49%); thereby confirming the literature that the victims of sex offences and the offenders are often acquaintances. In 25% of the cases, the victim did not know the offender. Sexual offences were reported in only 5% of the incidents.
- Specifically, the following were involved in the reported sexual assault/violence victimization: spouse (6%); boyfriend (9%); ex-boyfriend (15%); close friend (30%); colleague/boss (15%) and others (18%).

Assault

Official statistics indicate that assault is widespread. Crime statistics indicate that it is second to theft in crimes reported to the police. The result of this survey confirms this pattern.

- 12% of the respondents said they were victims of assault during the past five years.
- Assault occurred more frequently farther away from home within the LGA/city (33%), near own home (22%) and at own home (20%).
- Weapon was used in 23% of the incidents.

Corruption

We found evidence of high level of extortion or corruption.

- 44% (912) of the respondents reported being a victim of extortion or demand for a bribe by public officials in 2003. National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) officials were the most frequently mentioned (58%) as demanding bribe before offering services. Other officials reported being involved in the practice include: police 29%; Local government Council (LGC) staff (3%); elected LGC officials (3%); revenue officials (2%); teachers/lecturers (2%) and Custom officials (1%). Level of contact between staff of public agencies and members of the public may in part account for high level of corruption/extortion reported. NEPA officials and the police have more contact with the public than other agencies.
- 81% of the respondents said corruption has increased in the country – with 68% reporting that it has increased a lot while 13% felt it had slightly increased.

Cheating

High incidence of cheating was reported by the respondents.

- 29% of the respondents reported being a victim of cheating in 2003. According to them, the cheating involved the following acts: sale of fake products (36%); false pretences (18%); deception by traders (17%); poor job by construction works and repairers of household and other goods (12%); overcharging by hotels and restaurants (4%) and use of fake products and poor services by automobile garages (3%).

Social Characteristics of Respondents and Victimization

Empirical studies have shown that the level of victimization varies among persons from diverse socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds. In particular, women and older persons are reported to be less at risk of victimization than their male and younger counterparts respectively⁷. A survey conducted in Netherlands indicated that age, sex and size of the municipality of residence are the significant factors associated with victimization⁸. But some studies have not evidence of variation based on education and gender⁹ (Yin 1985; Legrange and Ferraro).

Table 4 presents the statistics on victimization in relation to the social characteristics of the respondents. There are no significant differences in the level and types of victimization reported by male and female respondents. The only exception was in respect of extortion or corruption where more males reported higher level of victimization. Similarly, significant differences in the level and types of victimization were not observed among the various age groups, although older people who were 55 years or older reported slightly lower levels of victimization. Nonetheless, a significant difference was observed in relation to sexual offences in which younger female respondents reported higher level of victimization. Victimization did not vary significantly between respondents who were never married and those currently married, except in respect of assault and sexual offences where higher levels of victimization were reported by those who were never married. Previously married persons (divorcees, widows/widowers) recorded lower levels of victimization, in relation to those who were never married and those currently married. There may be an influence of age in the observed pattern as younger persons are less likely to be married or currently married, while divorce and widowhood are likely to be higher among older people.

Table 4: Socioeconomic Characteristics and Pattern of Criminal Victimization

Socio-economic characteristics	Murder	Automobile Theft	Automobile hijacking ¹⁰	Theft from car	Burglary	Attempted burglary	Robbery	Theft	Assault	Sexual offences	Cheating	Extortion
Sex												
• Male	2	7	8	25	10	7	9	24	13	-	31	48
• Fema	1	8	3	20	8	6	7	26	10	8	28	39

⁷ Ferraro, KF. 1995. *Fear of Crime: Interpreting Victimization Risk*. New York: State University of New York Press; Miethe, TD. 1995. "Fear and Withdrawal from Urban Life". *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 539: 14-27; Stafford, MC and Gale OR 1984. "Victimization rates, exposure to risk and fear of crime, *Criminology*, 22: 173-185.

⁸ van Dijk, J. and Vianen A. (1978). *Criminal Victimization in the Netherlands*. The Hague: Research Documentation Centre, Ministry of Justice.

⁹ Lagrange, RL and Ferraro, KF. 1989. "Assessing Age and Gender Differences in Perceived Risk and Fear of Crime". *Criminology*, 27:697-719; Yin, P. 1985. *Victimization and the Aged*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

¹⁰ The figures for automobile theft and automobile robbery are the same implying that in this context that both were interpreted as the same event by either the respondents or interviewers. Same percentages were also observed for responses to the two crimes under the employment status.

le												
Age (in years)	1	6	6	25	9	7	8	27	14	11	33	44
• Less than 25	1	5	5	17	9	6	8	22	7	1	29	46
• 25-34	1	4	4	18	7	6	10	19	7	3	20	42
• 35-54	9	0	0	20	11	11	7	18	5	0	18	41
• 55 and older												
Marital status	1	6	7	22	10	6	8	29	16	13	34	43
• Never married	1	5	5	24	8	7	8	23	9	6	28	45
• Married	5	0	0	8	10	5	8	13	7	1	18	39
• Previously married												
Education												
• Less than primary	2	5	0	22	5	6	5	10	9	3	17	35
• Primary	1	3	5	20	9	3	7	21	8	6	22	40
• Secondary	1	3	2	22	10	6	8	25	12	8	30	44
• Tertiary	2	8	9	23	9	9	11	27	16	12	36	47
Employment status	1	6	6	25	10	6	9	24	10	5	30	49
• Employed	1	4	4	18	5	6	11	23	15	22	41	38
• Unemployed	2	5	5	20	8	7	6	26	14	11	28	36
• Others ¹¹												
Religion												
• Christianity	1	4	5	23	9	6	9	25	12	8	30	42
• Islam	3	9	7	21	9	7	7	24	12	9	29	47

¹¹ In these category were housewives, pensioners, handicapped persons, etc., who are not seeking employment.

Victimization did not vary significantly across educational levels. However, respondents with tertiary education reported slightly higher level of victimization in respect of offences associated with theft of and from automobiles (which is understandable because more educated people are more likely to own automobile), assault, sexual offences and cheating (which may be explained too by their relatively greater mobility, exposure to social strains and influences (phonographic materials in literature and electronic media) associated with physical and sexual assault. Victimization did not also vary significantly by employment status, except in relation to sexual violence and cheating where the unemployed respondents reported high level of victimization. Sexual violence victimization figures were obtained from female respondents. The implication of the result is that unemployment renders girls and women vulnerable to sexual violence victimization. There were no significant differences in the level of victimization reported by adherents of Christianity and Islam.

Residential and Spatial Pattern of Criminal Victimization

Social disorganization theory posited ecological and residential variations in criminal victimization. Parts of the city characterized by concentration of immigrants, poor person, dilapidated infrastructure, heterogeneous population without dominant cultural pattern and rapid population mobility are associated with high crime rates. In an earlier study of spatial distribution of violent crimes in Lagos, Mukoro reported high rates of violent crimes in Ikoyi, Apapa and Victoria Island as well as Oshodi, Mushin, Ogba, Shomolu and Ilupeju. In contrast, he reported low rates of violent crimes in Yaba, Onikan and Ikeja¹². His interpretation of the finding was that areas where people with high socioeconomic status resided recorded higher levels of violent crimes. Closer analysis of his presentation, however, showed that this was not consistently so. Agboola reported that burglary was highest in high density residential areas¹³.

Results in table 5, indicate no significant differences in victimization among those living in single rooms apartment usually occupied by low income earners and those living in houses, duplexes and flats normally occupied by relatively more affluent members of society. But a discernible difference was observed in respect of robbery. In Nigeria, robbery is often directed at the relatively wealthy communities and individuals, obviously because they possess valuable property. Similarly, victimization did not vary significantly between low socio-economic and high socio-economic residential neighbourhoods. This may be partly explained by the fact that Lagos is not fully segregated in terms of residential neighbourhoods. Both types of neighborhood usually co-exist in close proximity to each other.

Nigeria's local political administrative units are referred to as the Local Government Areas¹⁴. The Local Government Areas in Lagos differ from each other, to varying degrees, in terms of population sizes, ecological characteristics, residential pattern and composition, and

¹² Mukoro, SI. 1994. "Intra-urban pattern of violent crimes in African cities: Lagos, Nigeria; pp.65-74; IO Albert; J. Adisa; T. Agboola and G. Herault. Eds. *Urban Management and Urban Violence in Africa*. Vol. 2; Ibadan: IFRA: University of Ibadan)

¹³ T. Agboola. 1997. *The Architecture of Fear: Urban Design and Construction Response to Urban Violence in Lagos, Nigeria*. Ibadan: IFRA/ABA, University of Ibadan

¹⁴ Nigeria is a federal republic system structured into federal, state and local levels of government. There are currently 36 States and Federal Capital Territory divided into 774 Local Government Areas, six of which are in the Federal Capital Territory and designated Area Councils.

economic activities. Therefore, in the light of these differences and insights from the ecological and social disorganization paradigm in criminology, it is expected that levels of victimization will vary across the Local Government Areas. Results in table 5 indicate that murder victimization is slightly high in Lagos Island; Mushin and Kosofe. Automobile theft and robbery were highest in Lagos Island followed by the Mainland which is a gateway to the former.

The survey shows that theft of property from car was generally widespread across the LGAs but nonetheless highest in Apapa and Mushin, and virtually non-existent in Alimosho on the periphery of Lagos metropolis. Victimization in terms of burglary was highest in Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Lagos Island; Ifako-Ijaye and Shomolu. All the LGAs, with the exception of Lagos Island, are relatively densely populated areas, while the Island is a commercial center with high concentration of financial institutions, merchandise stores, and offices. Higher levels of robbery were reported in Lagos Island, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Ojo, Agege, Apapa and Mushin. Respondents across the LGA reported high levels of theft, with those in Apapa, Oshodi-Isolo, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Ifako-Ijaye, and Mushin reporting high levels of victimization.

Table 5: Residential and Spatial Pattern of Criminal Victimization

Residence and Local Government Area	Murder	Automobile theft	Automobile hijacking ¹⁵	Theft from car	Burglary	Attempted burglary	Robbery	Theft	Assault	Sexual offences	Cheating	Extortion
Type of Dwelling	2	4	5	23	8	7	12	24	11	6	28	43
• House/duplex/flat	1	6	6	23	9	6	7	25	12	9	30	44
• Single rooms												
Residential neighbourhood	2	6	7	23	10	7	9	26	10	9	28	42
• High socioeconomic	1	4	2	21	8	6	7	24	14	8	31	46
• Low socioeconomic												
Local Government Area												
Agege	0	3	7	19	8	3	10	13	5	10	27	30
Alimosho	0	0	7	0	3	2	1	5	4	1	5	34
Apapa	0	3	0	44	5	6	10	47	19	8	39	52
Ojo	1	5	0	20	9	5	11	24	13	15	22	43
Mainland	1	9	4	7	10	3	3	16	6	8	22	36
Mushin	3	7	2	34	3	12	10	28	13	14	71	56
Ikeja	2	5	3	22	6	5	8	23	7	5	28	36

¹⁵ The figures for automobile theft and automobile robbery are the same implying that in this context that both were interpreted as the same event by either the respondents or interviewers. Same percentages were also observed for responses to the two crimes under the employment status.

Kosofe	3	6	9	9	9	7	8	15	9	10	32	46
Oshodi-Isolo	2	5	0	27	8	7	7	43	32	13	41	64
Lagos Island	4	19	21	26	13	13	15	19	14	10	23	66
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	1	5	5	24	15	10	11	38	19	5	34	53
Shomolu	1	2	0	23	12	6	8	18	11	8	11	17
Surulere	0	4	4	27	8	2	4	27	3	5	34	41
Ifako-Ijaye	1	0	8	25	13	8	7	29	12	4	27	41

In respect of assault, high levels of victimization were reported by respondents in Oshodi-Isolo, Ajeromi-Ifelodun and Apapa. Female respondents in Ojo, Mushin, Oshodi-Isolo, Lagos Island, Kosofe and Agege reported higher levels of sexual violence. Cheating and fraud were widespread but most commonly reported by respondents in Mushin; Apapa; Oshodi-Isolo; Apapa; Surulere; Ajeromi-Ifelodun and Kosofe. Extortion and corruption were also widely reported as a form of victimization experienced in 2003. Highest levels of victimization during 2003 were recorded in Lagos Island; Oshodi-Isolo; Mushin and Apapa. All of the three areas are characterized by high level of economic activities, including large markets and trading in Mushin. Our overall finding is consistent with an earlier study by Agboola¹⁶, which reported that the three most dangerous and crime prone neighbourhoods in Lagos metropolis were Ajegunle, Mushin and Oshodi – all three being areas where low socioeconomic persons live and practice their trades.

¹⁶ Agboola, 1997; op. cit

3

PERCEPTIONS AND FEAR OF CRIME

Perceptions of Crime

Generally, respondents across the LGAs said crime rates decreased in their communities. Most respondents (73%) felt that crimes have decreased in their area. Also 76% said violent crime also decreased, while (78%) reported decrease in property crime. Respondents felt that people were motivated to commit property crimes by greed (45%), need (28%), and non-financial motives (11%). Also, 7% of the respondents said that they knew someone who makes a living from crime in their area.

The data presented in table 6 show that on the average, 44% of the respondents felt that criminal victimization increased over the past five years. This figure is higher than the 38% of respondents who felt that victimization decreased. There are significant variations among respondents from the LGAs. For example, more respondents in Agege, Mushin, Shomolu, Surulere and Ifako-Ijaye reported that criminal victimization decreased during the period. But substantially higher number of respondents from the Alimosho, Mainland, Ikeja, Oshodi and Ajeromi-Ifelodun reported increase in criminal victimizations. These responses were obtained when respondents were asked: “In your opinion, has crime gone up or down in the last five years?”

Table 6: Perceptions of Crime Trends in Local Government Areas

Local Government Area	Crime rate in the past five years		Decrease in incidence in types of crime % that said crime rate decreased in past five years		
	Increase	Decrease	Crime in community	Violent crime in community	Property crime in community
Agege	30	50	80	80	80
Alimosho	50	10	39	41	49
Apapa	47	33	84	80	84
Ojo	45	32	60	62	68
Mainland	62	25	78	82	82
Mushin	33	46	89	91	91
Ikeja	76	21	69	71	71
Kosofe	45	43	71	82	84
Oshodi-Isolo	60	31	67	69	72
Lagos Island	40	25	69	70	69
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	53	33	65	71	75
Shomolu	28	51	80	85	86
Surulere	4	90	93	93	93
Ifako-Ijaye	40	44	84	85	86
Average	44	38	73	76	78

Respondents were asked specifically about trends of specific types of crime in their community¹⁷. Majority of respondents in all the LGAs, with the exception of Alimosho

¹⁷ Respondents were asked three separate questions: “How do you think the level of crime in your area has changed in the last five years?” The question was repeated for violent crime and property crime. Response categories were – increased, decreased, stayed the same.

reported that crime rates decreased in their community during the past five years (table 6). What the results indicated is that although more than 70% of the respondents felt that crime decreased in their community, they nonetheless perceived increased crime rate in the society. Two interrelated explanations may be proffered for the apparent discrepancy. First, is the character of Lagos metropolis as a densely populated industrial and commercial city with very high levels of reported criminal victimization by the mass media and the police¹⁸. Second and related is that there is a concentration of the electronic and print media of mass communication which daily report incidences of crime within the metropolis. These two factors can engrained in the consciousness of the population a perception of increasing crime rates as well as fear of crime.

Perception of Safety in Communities

Perceptions of safety or insecurity are influenced by several factors such as physical and environmental quality of a neighbourhood, population composition, levels of unemployment and social services, and visibility and effectiveness of social control agencies¹⁹. Respondents generally felt very safe in their neighborhoods. More than 80% of the respondents from all, but one, LGAs said they felt safe walking alone in their neighborhoods after dark. Even grater number felt safe in their homes after dark. The only exception was in Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA where 56% said that they felt safe walking alone in the night (table 7). The responses largely corroborated the perceived decrease in crimes within the communities reported above.

Table 7: Public Perception of Safety in Communities

Local Government Area	Feel safe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark?	Feel safe at home after dark?
	% that felt very/fairly safe	% that felt very/fairly safe
Agege	93	99
Alimosho	91	91
Apapa	89	93
Ojo	79	95
Mainland	95	98
Mushin	97	99
Ikeja	73	67
Kosofe	91	97
Oshodi-Isolo	88	95
Lagos Island	100	97
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	56	82
Shomolu	94	95
Surulere	100	100
Ifako-Ijaye	79	93

¹⁸ See Etannibi Alemika (1997) "Criminal Violence in Lagos State, Nigeria" *Africa Peace Review* 1(2): 72-95

¹⁹ Lane, J. and Meeker JW. 2000. "Subcultural Diversity and Fear of Crime and Gang". *Crime and Delinquency*, 46(4): 497-521.

Perception of Most Common Crimes in Communities

Crimes are unevenly distributed across communities, neighbourhoods and among groups in society. Robbery was reported as the most common crime by the respondents. Overall 29% of the respondents across the Local Government Areas reported that robbery is the most common crime in their communities (table 8). It was distantly followed by theft, home-breaking and pick-pocketing/bag snatching. In all, property crimes were the most identified common crimes. Armed robbery, characterized by increasing violence has constituted a major concern to the citizens (especially Lagos Residents) since the mid-1980s²⁰. Successive governments introduced various measures and established armed task forces to combat armed robbery without enduring success.

The Nigeria Police reported that between 15 August 2000 and 19 December 2000, a total of 659 cases of armed robbery were recorded nationwide²¹. During the robberies, armed robbers killed 134 civilian victims and 26 policemen. The police killed 348 armed robbery suspects. And more specifically, citing police record, Alemika also presented the following statistics on armed robbery victimizations in Lagos State, for the period January 1 and July 4, 2001: cases of armed robbery recorded – 129; armed robbery suspects arrested – 274; armed robbery suspects killed by the police – 183; policemen killed by armed robbers – 14; policemen injured by armed robbers – 22; civilians killed by armed robbers – 41; civilians injured by armed robbers – 45.

More recent figures on robbery and related casualties in Lagos State indicated that between January and November 2004, 126 cases of armed robbery were reported as against 63 cases in 2003; 351 robbery suspects were arrested compared to 215 in 2003; 83 armed robbery suspects were killed by the police as against 94 suspects killed in 2003; 17 police officers were also killed compared to 12 in the previous year 2003 (*Vanguard* December 30, 2004; p.4). Nationwide, a total of 3,787 cases of armed robbery were recorded; 1,694 robbery suspects were killed in 2004 compared to 3,100 that were killed in 2003; 54 police officers were killed during encounter with suspects compared to 58 in 2003 (*The Comet*, December 30, 2004; p.1).

Although armed robbery was perceived as the most common crimes in most of the LGAS, the perception was exceedingly high in Ikeja and Surulere both of which are mixed commercial and residential communities. Both also housed fairly large number of middle class and professional persons. In addition, a large number of banks are located in Ikeja. Several bank robberies were reported in the area during the past five years.

Assault was reported as a common crime by respondents in Lagos Island and Mainland LGAs (table 8). The phenomenon of street urchins (commonly referred to as ‘area boys’) is a major problem in Lagos Island. These young people, many of who hawk and abuse drug, molest people and pick-pockets and snatch bags of ladies in the busy streets of the Island.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Etannibi EO Alemika 2003 - “Police Corruption and Insecurity in Nigeria”, in S. Einstein and M. Amir (Eds.) *Police Corruption: Paradigms, Models and concepts – Challenges for Developing Countries*, Huntsville, Texas: Office of International Criminal Justice, Sam Houston State University, Chapter 18 (445-494).

Similar problem exists in the Mainland LGA, especially in Ebute Metta and Yaba areas. A number of LGAs can be identified as those in which several crimes were reported as common. They are Oshodi-Isolo; Lagos Island; Agege, Apapa, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Ojo and Kosofe LGAs. Home breaking or burglary was reported as common crime in Agege, Oshodi-Isolo and Lagos Island. This form of crime is more common in the residential areas of low-income earners with high multiple household occupancy in single rooms and two rooms apartments, poorly served by public utilities such as electricity.

Table 8: Perception of Most Common Crimes in Community

<i>Local Government Areas</i>	<i>Types of crime</i>							
	Theft of motor vehicle	Theft of property	Pick-pocketing/bag snatching	Home breaking	Murder	Robbery	Assault	Others
Agege	0	3	12	32	3	32	0	13
Alimosho	0	3	25	5	9	30	2	6
Apapa	13	8	14	0	0	20	12	3
Ojo	1	26	10	5	4	15	7	15
Mainland	1	5	1	7	1	4	26	34
Mushin	3	25	0	8	0	26	7	23
Ikeja	1	2	1	7	1	82	0	0
Kosofe	0	13	8	7	17	22	7	18
Oshodi-Isolo	1	29	12	18	3	10	8	6
Lagos Island	12	1	7	20	9	17	28	2
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	1	16	17	3	1	14	6	21
Shomolu	9	7	3	7	4	32	2	5
Surulere	0	3	0	4	5	76	1	1
Ifako-Ijaye	2	21	3	9	3	29	3	5
Average	3	12	8	9	3	29	8	11

Theft was reported as a common crime in Ojo, Mushin, Oshodi-Isolo, Ifako-Ijaye and Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGAs (table 8). A careful analysis of the areas indicate that some have concentration of markets and motor parks (Oshodi-Isolo; Mushin, and Ojo LGAs) or densely populated with concentration of artisans, street trading and motor parks (Ajeromi-Ifelodun and Ifako-Ijaye). Motor-theft/robbery was reported as a common crime in only Lagos Island and Apapa LGAs which are adjacent to each other and both characterised by high level of economic activities. Pick-pocketing and bag snatching were identified as common crimes in Alimosho, Agege, Apapa, Oshodi-Isolo and Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGAs. These areas, with the exception of Apapa, are characterized by population density and high informal economic activities (street trading, hawking and stalls). The two most important seaports in Nigeria are located in Apapa LGA. As a result, it enjoys thriving commercial activities as well as criminal victimization of the patrons of the ports who often carry large sums of money to clear their goods.

Fear of Crime in Communities

There are various factors that influence the fear of particular crimes in communities. Factors like ‘knowledge and experience of criminal realities’; ‘environmental context’ and ‘biographical features’²² influence peoples feeling of safety and security or otherwise.

- Crimes that respondents feared most in their area were robbery (36.6%), murder (23.8%), house breaking (8%), theft or stealing (6%), assault (6%) and pick-pocketing/bag snatching (3%)
- Types of crime most talked about within their community by respondents were robbery, excluding automobile theft/robbery (26%); murder or killing (21%); extortion or corruption (14%); burglary (6%); assault (5%); pick pocketing and bag snatching (5%); other theft (5%); political violence (5%); domestic violence (2%); sexual assault/rape (1) and automobile robbery (1).
- 35% discussed concern about crime with family members or neighbours or friends during the past two weeks
- Overall, 56% of all the respondents (2091) were very fearful of being a victim of a crime; 14% were quite fearful; 15% were a little bit fearful, and 13% were not fearful at all.
- Despite the level of fear (69% among respondents), more than four-fifths (81%) felt very safe walking alone in their area during the day and 17% felt fairly safe doing so. Comparatively, 50% felt very safe walking alone in their areas after dark and 33% felt fairly safe while doing so.
- What do people fear about crime? 89% said their greatest fear about criminal victimization is the prospect of loss of life; 3% feared loss of property; and physical injury was the major fear of 4% of the respondents. More women (4%) feared sexual violence than men (1%).

Table 9: Most Feared Crime in the Community

Local Government Areas	Types of Crime					
	Theft of property	House breaking	Murder	Robbery	Assault	Others
Agege	5	33	5	36	1	14
Alimosho	0	4	32	31	3	11
Apapa	10	3	10	32	5	9
Ojo	12	3	10	53	5	9
Mainland	1	3	7	6	36	34
Mushin	4	12	32	26	2	15
Ikeja	1	5	5	88	1	0
Kosofe	8	2	60	17	0	9
Oshodi-Isolo	14	8	50	16	2	3
Lagos Island	1	18	41	11	20	1
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	16	5	18	30	2	13
Shomolu	6	9	19	39	2	7
Surulere	1	3	29	62	0	1
Ifako-Ijaye	1	5	16	64	1	9
Average	6	8	24	37	6	9

²² Ferraro, KF. 1995. *Fear of Crime: Interpreting Victimization Risk*. New York: State University of New York Press; p.15.

Robbery was the crime feared most by a large percentage (37) of the respondents, followed by murder (24%). Although theft was the most common victimization, it was not the most feared crime. Fear therefore appears to be related to both incidence as well as seriousness of losses associated with criminal victimization. Robbery often results into murder and murder involves loss of life. No doubt these are more serious crimes than theft. House breaking ranked third while theft and assault tied in the fourth place at 6% of respondents indicating them as most feared crimes in the community (table 9). There were variations across the LGAs with the fear of robbery being highest in Ikeja; Ifako-Ijaye; Surulere and Ojo areas. The pattern is to a large extent consistent with the responses obtained in the previous section on most common crimes. Robbery was identified as most common crimes by residents in Ikeja and Surulere LGAs. Respondents in Kosofe, Oshodi-Isolo, Lagos-Island, Mushin and Alimosho LGAs` identified murder as the most feared crime in their communities (table 9). Assault was reported most feared crime by a significant percentage of respondents in Mainland and Lagos Island.

Socioeconomic Characteristics, Fear and Perceptions of Crime

Literature and empirical findings show that people often express a high level of fear of crime even when the objective probability of their victimization, a phenomenon that has been referred to as the 'paradox of fear'²³. It has also been empirically demonstrated that fear of crime is influenced by 'physical incivility' which refers to "disorderly physical surroundings such as litter, abandoned buildings or cars, graffiti, broken or barricaded windows"²⁴. But equally significant, fear of crime also varies with socio-demographic backgrounds and quality of life in a neighbourhood. According to a report by an Australian Report: "Gender, age, income experience of previous victimization ... an individual's ability to cope generally, rapid change in a neighbourhood, evidence of disorder in an area, living in large cities, and the role of the media have all been found to influence levels of fear"²⁵.

Data presented in table 10 indicate a fairly high level of feeling of safety and security. Feeling of safety did not show any significant variation across gender, education and residential factors. However, older people express greater feeling of insecurity. Victimology literature indicates that although older people are less likely to be victimized, they nonetheless are more fearful of crime, perhaps due to their frailty and feeling of vulnerability. Unemployed persons also showed slightly higher level of feeling of insecurity in walking in their neighbourhood after dark. There is no significant variation across gender, age, employment status, residential and education characteristics in respect of feeling of safety at home after

²³ Warr, M. 1994. "Public perceptions, and reactions to violent offending and victimization", in AJ Reiss and JA Roth, eds. *Understanding and Preventing Violence: Consequences and Control*; vol.4, pp 1-66. Washington, DC: national Academy Press; Ferraro 1995, op. cit; Evans, DJ. 1995. *Crime and Policing: Spatial Approaches*. England: Avebury; Skogan, WG. 1990. *Disorder and Decline: Crime and the Spiral Decay of Urban Neighbourhood*. New York: Free Press.

²⁴ Ferraro KF. 1995. *Fear of Crime: Interpreting Victimization Risk*. New York: State University of New York Press; p.15

²⁵ ACT Community Safety Committee (1996:3)

dark. Respondents generally felt very safe at their homes after dark. Younger persons, males, and residents of high socioeconomic residential neighbourhoods manifested a slightly higher level of fear of any form of victimization in their neighbourhood (table 10). Overall respondents generally perceived corruption to be on the increase during the past five years. In contrast they perceived a decrease in the level of crime generally, and violent and property crimes in particular (table 10).

Table 10: Socioeconomic Characteristics, Fear and Perceptions of Safety and Crime

Socioeconomic characteristics	Fear of Crime			Perception of increase in corruption generally, (b) property and (c) crime in the area decreasing ²⁹	
	Feel safe walking alone in neighborhood after dark ²⁶ ?	Feel safe at home after dark ²⁷ ?	Fear any form of victimization ²⁸ ?	Corruption increasing	Crime in the area decreasing ²⁹
Sex					
• Male			69		
• Female			61		
Age (in years)					
• Less 25	88	93	71	68	73
• 25-34	87	93	72	70	75
• 35-54	90	94	64	71	76
• 55 and older	76	91	59	66	61
Education					
• Less primary	91	94	68	68	73
• Primary	88	94	70	66	68
• Secondary	88	93	72	68	75
• Tertiary	86	93	66	71	73
Employment status					
• Employed	89	93	71	68	74
• Unemployed	76	91	73	70	69
• Others	86	94	68	69	74
Neighbourhood					
• High socioeconomic	90	93	60	67	79
• Low socioeconomic	84	93	53	70	68

²⁶ Percentages refer to the respondents who said that they felt very/fairly safe walking alone after dark in their residential neighbourhood. Response categories were (1) very safe, (2) fairly safe, (3) a bit unsafe and (4) very unsafe

²⁷ Percentages refer to the respondents who said that they felt very/fairly safe walking alone after dark in their residential neighbourhood. Response categories were (1) very safe, (2) fairly safe, (3) a bit unsafe and (4) very unsafe

²⁸ Percentages refer to the respondents who said that they were very/fairly fearful of being victimized in their residential neighbourhood. Response categories were (1) very fearful, (2) fairly fearful, (3) a little fearful, and (4) not at all fearful.

²⁹ Percentages refer to the respondents who said corruption was increased; and that crime generally, violent and property crimes decreased during the past five years, since 2000. Response categories were (1) increased a lot, (2) slightly increased, (3) stayed same, (4) decreased a bit, (5) decreased a lot, (6) don't know.

4

THE PUBLIC AND THE POLICE

Historical and social science literature and especially media reports in Nigeria portrays a hostile relationship between the police and the public.³⁰ Citizens in the country often complained about corruption, brutality, incivility and ineffectiveness of the country's police force. These problems are often attributed to the colonial origin of police forces and the protracted military rule in the country that entrenched a culture of impunity. But American police literature has shown that public confidence in the police tend to be higher than expected based on media reports police-citizen encounters.

Perception of Police Performance and Helpfulness

Public attitudes toward the police are generally unfavourable though less hostile than is usually reported in the media or by sporadic attack on police and police stations by aggrieved groups³¹. Nearly three fifths (58%) of the respondents felt that the police were doing a very or fairly good job while 42% felt that they were doing a poor job. A little over one-half (53%) of the respondents strongly agree/agree that the police were very helpful, while 47% felt otherwise (table 11). Yet surprisingly, more respondents felt that police performance has worsened in the past five years.

Table 11: Public Perception of Police Performance and Helpfulness

Local Government Areas	Police performance in crime control		Police helpfulness to citizens		Police performance in past 5 years	
	Very/fairly good job	Very/fairly good job	Strongly agree/agree	Strongly disagree/disagree	Improved	Worsened
Agege	60	40	54	46	30	46
Alimosho	34	66	40	60	6	40
Apapa	35	65	50	50	24	42
Ojo	51	49	47	53	29	46
Mainland	63	37	55	45	18	55

³⁰ See E. E. O. Alemika and I. Chuckwuma (2000) *Police-Community Violence in Nigeria* (Lagos: Centre for Law Enforcement Education); E. E. O. Alemika (1988) "Policing and Perceptions of Policing in Nigeria", *Police Studies* Vol. 11, No. 4: 161-176; T. N. Tamuno (1970) *The Police in Modern Nigeria* (Ibadan; Ibadan University Press); E. E. O. Alemika (1993) "Colonialism, State and Policing in Nigeria" *Crime, Law and Social Change* 20: 189-219; P. T. Ahire (1991) *Imperial Policing* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press); K. Rotimi (1993) "Local Police in Western Nigeria: End of An Era" in T. N. Tamuno; I. L. Bashir; E. E. O. Alemika and A. O. Akano (eds.) *Policing Nigeria: Past, Present and Future* (Lagos and London: Malthouse Press); F. Odekunle (1979) "The Nigeria Police Force; A Preliminary Assessment of Functional Performance" *International Journal of Sociology of Law* (7): 61-83; O. Ohonbamu (1972) "The Dilemma of Police Organization under a Federal system: The Nigerian Example" *The Nigerian Law Journal* 6: 73-87, and the Working Party Report on Police and Prisons (1966) *The Report of the Working Party on Police and Prisons Services in Nigeria* (Lagos: Federal Government of Nigeria).

³¹ E. E. O. Alemika and I. Chuckwuma (2000) *Police-Community Violence in Nigeria* (Lagos: Centre for Law Enforcement Education); E. E. O. Alemika (1988) "Policing and Perceptions of Policing in Nigeria", *Police Studies* Vol. 11, No. 4: 161-176; T. N. Tamuno (1970) *The Police in Modern Nigeria* (Ibadan; Ibadan University Press); E. E. O. Alemika (1993) "Colonialism, State and Policing in Nigeria" *Crime, Law and Social Change* 20: 189-219

Mushin	70	30	61	39	13	40
Ikeja	81	19	75	25	50	21
Kosofe	26	74	17	83	13	65
Oshodi-Isolo	76	14	64	36	31	26
Lagos Island	63	37	62	38	24	44
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	47	53	41	59	21	51
Shomolu	83	17	75	25	44	23
Surulere	44	56	41	59	20	55
Ifako-Ijaye	71	29	57	43	50	16
Average	58	42	53	47	27	40

There were variations in the perceptions of the police across the LGAs. Respondents from Agege, Mainland, Mushin, Ikeja, Oshodi-Isolo, Lagos Island, Shomolu and Ifako-Ijaye LGAs have very positive perception of the police. However, the perceptions of the police by respondents in Alimosho, Apapa, Kosofe, Surulere and Ajeromi-Ifelodun were more negative. Generally respondents who perceive the police as doing a good job also tend to consider them as helpful while those who rated the performance of the police as poor also tend to consider them as unhelpful. However, significant majority of the respondents across the LGAs (with the exception of Ikeja, Shomolu and Ifako-Ijaye) felt that the performance of the police had worsened during the past five years.

Police Performance and helpfulness

Police-public relations in the country have been characterized by mutual hostility and mistrust due to a legacy of colonial police oppression and continuing corruption, brutality and incompetence since independence. Notwithstanding police tend to under-estimate public goodwill towards them.

- 58% of the respondents said the police were doing a very good (14%) and fairly good (44) job
- 53% said the police were very helpful to them
- 27% said that police performance improved over the past 5 years; while another 27% said police performance stayed at same level, compared to 40% who said it had gotten worse.
- 59% of the respondents were stopped by the police during the past year
- Police gave reasons for stopping the respondents in 50% of the incidents in which the respondents were stopped
- In 30% of the stop, the respondents were allowed to continue their movement without further action, but 68% said they had to give money to the police to avoid getting into trouble

The literature and empirical findings on police-public relations and public perceptions of the police show that persons with contact with the police exhibit less favourable attitude towards the law enforcement agents³². Analysis of responses presented in tables 12 indicates that

³² See E. E. O. Alemika (1988) "Policing and Perceptions of Policing in Nigeria", *Police Studies* Vol. 11, No. 4: 161-176, and E. E. O. Alemika and I. Chuckwuma (2000) *Police-Community Violence in Nigeria* (Lagos: Centre for Law Enforcement Education).

persons with contact, in the form of stop and search, during the year had less favourable attitudes toward the police. For example, 68% of respondents without contact said the police were doing very good or fairly good job, compared to 52% of those that had contact with the police. The major reasons for assessing police as doing a good job by respondents (49.6%) in Agboola study was reduction in crime³³. Perception and fear of crime in community also have impact on public evaluation of the police. Bennett observes that confidence in police mediates fear of crime³⁴.

Table 12: Public Perceptions of Police Performance

<i>Evaluation of whether or not the police are doing a good job in respondents' communities</i>	<i>Stopped and searched during the past year</i>	
	Yes %	No %
Very good	11	18
Fairly good	41	50
Fairly poor job	21	15
Very poor job	27	18
<i>Evaluation of police performance in the past 5 years</i>		
Improved	22	34
Same level, no change	28	27
Worse	47	30
Don't know	3	9

Criminal Victimization and Report to the Police

Criminal victimization survey approach to determining the level and dynamics of crime was developed as a result of dissatisfaction with official statistics produced by the criminal justice agencies. In particular, police crime statistics, though regarded as the best indicators of criminal activities in society generated by official sources was criticized for incompleteness (due to non-reporting and non-recording) and manipulation (for institutional and political interests). Crime and victimization surveys in different parts of the world indicate that a large proportion of crimes were not reported to the police by their victims due to several reasons: nature of police-public relations; seriousness or extent of losses; police effectiveness in bringing offenders to justice and recovery of property (in cases of property crimes), costs (in terms of time, money and emotional distress) that may be incurred in reporting to the police; requirements of insurance or re-issuance of official documents; etc. Data in table 13 indicate that murder, automobile robbery and automobile theft were the most widely reported crimes. This pattern is consistent with the literature. Sexual offences in particular have low rate of reporting due to stigmatization, insensitivity of law enforcement officials, statutory requirements for substantiation of allegations, and prior relationships or acquaintance between offender and victims in majority of cases.

Table 13: Percentage of Victims who Reported their Victimization to the Police

<i>Type of Crime</i>	<i>%</i>
Murder	86

³³ Agboola, T. 1997. *Architecture of Fear*; op.cit. P.101-104.

³⁴ Bennett, T. 1994. "Confidence in Police as a Mediating Factor in the Fear of Crime." *International Review of Victimology*. 3: 179-194

Automobile robbery	80
Automobile theft	77
Robbery	31
Theft or stealing	9
Sexual offences	5
Assault	21
Cheating	7

Respondents who reported their victimization to the police did so for different reasons (table 14). The most important reasons, however, were the hope of recovering property lost to the criminals; desire to obtain help from the police, to secure apprehension of the offender and seriousness of the criminal event.

Table 14: Reasons for reporting or not-reporting crime to the police

<i>Reasons for reporting victimization</i>	<i>Type of victimization</i>	
	<i>Automobile robbery</i> %	<i>Robbery (non-automobile)</i> %
1. To recover lost property	92	55
2. Insurance claim	25	23
3. crime is a serious problem that should be reported	75	75
4. Apprehension and punishment of offender	69	67
5. To stop it happening again	11	71
6. To get help from the police	75	56
<i>Reasons for not reporting victimization</i>		
1. Incident not very serious	33	27
2. Solved it /knew offender	67	13
3. Family solved it	33	7
4. Police wouldn't do anything – no sufficient evidence	50	-
5. Police would not do anything	50	-
<i>Satisfied with police handling of report of crime</i>	15	19
<i>Reasons for dissatisfaction with police handling of report</i>		
1. Did not do enough to solve the crime	88	77
2. Did not apprehend the offender	67	70
3. Did not recover goods	56	53
4. Did not inform me of progress in investigation	17	11
5. Impolite to me	83	58
6. Slow to respond to respond or arrive	33	29

Victimizations were also not reported to the police by victims for different reasons, including the belief that the police would not or cannot solve the problem (table 14). The major reasons for not reporting crimes by victims (54.2%) in Agboola work was police corruption³⁵. Less than 1 in 5 victims who reported their victimization to the police said they were satisfied with the police handling of their case (table 14). Reasons for dissatisfaction include failure of the police to do enough to solve the case; failure to apprehend the offender and recover goods and impoliteness to the victims. The various reasons may be summarized as inefficiency and impoliteness by the police.

Reactions to crime

Garofalo observed that people attempt to reduce their risk of victimization through three mechanisms: (a) avoiding sites of high risk of victimization – avoidance; (b) installation of protective mechanisms such as gates, window bars, fences, electronic monitoring and alarm systems – target hardening, and (c) insurance of self and property to minimize victimization costs³⁶. Some of the respondents introduced measures specifically to prevent them from being victimized, including: employment of private security (22%); vigilante/self help group (21%); physical targeting of buildings such as locks, gates, fences, electronic devices (7%); lock and electronic devices on automobiles (1%) and acquisition of weapons or firearms (1%). However, 43% said they did not introduce any specific criminal victimization prevention measures.

The number and activities of vigilante groups have increased over the past decade. An overwhelming majority (81%) of the respondents said that a vigilante group existed in their area. Furthermore, 77% reported that vigilantes in their areas are paid for their services. Nearly one-half (48%) of the respondents had personally seen vigilante groups inflicting punishment on suspects, while 44% had personally witnessed vigilante groups apprehending suspects. One of the reactions to crime is public attempt to influence government allocation of resources to crime-fighting. How should government allocate resources with respect to law enforcement and social development? Sixteen per cent (16%) of the respondents said government should give priority to crime control and law enforcement (16%), while 7% preferred that the judiciary or courts be given priority in government spending. However, an overwhelming majority (74%) wanted government to give priority to spending on social development³⁷.

³⁵ Agboola, T. (1997), op. cit.

³⁶ Garofalo, J. 1981. "The fear of crime: causes and consequences". *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*; 72(2): 839-857

³⁷ Multiple responses permitted and figures therefore do not add to 100%

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CONCLUSION

This research analyses the extent and pattern of victimization as well as public perception of crime and police, and level of fear of crime in Lagos metropolis. Robbery and murder were the most feared crimes by the public. The two crimes constituted major concern for the respondents. Most respondents felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhoods and homes after dark. However, most of the respondents felt that crime rates have increased in society during the past five years, yet majority also felt that crime generally and both violent and property crimes have decreased in their communities. Nearly three-fifths (58%) of the respondents said that the police were very good or fairly good job. More than one-half (53%) said the police were very helpful. However, persons with contact with the police evaluated police performance and helpfulness less positively. Similarly, respondents who said crime has increased in their communities also had lower positive evaluation of the police. We also found that victims who reported report their victimizations to the police were generally dissatisfied with the police due to what they saw as police ineffectiveness and impolite.

The results of the study provide insights into the extent and pattern of victimization as well as public perceptions and fear of crime. They also raise several raised policy issues on policing. Three of the major issues and policy options are:

- Public fear of crime revolves mainly around robbery and murder. Measures designed to curb the crimes will therefore reduce fear of crime and enhance feeling of safety and security;
- There were relatively high incidence of victimization in some Local Government Areas like Lagos Island; Ajeromi-Ifelodun; Apapa; Mushin; Oshodi-Isolo; and Ojo. Efficient allocation of resources to crime prevention and control in these areas will reduce victimization and fear of crime in the metropolis.
- Public perceptions of the police were influenced by contact with the police: people with contacts with the police had lower estimation of police performance and helpfulness. Similarly, respondents who said crime was on the increase in their communities also had lower estimation of police performance and helpfulness. It was also discovered that respondents who reported crime to the police were generally dissatisfied with the handling of their case and how they were treated. They cited failure of the police to do enough to solve the case; failure to apprehend the offender and recover goods and impoliteness to the victims as reasons for their dissatisfaction. Therefore, in order to enhance police public relations and partnership in crime prevention and control, police efficiency and civility need to be emphasized.