



PREVALENCE OF VIOLENT CRIME IN URBAN CITIES OF AFRICA: CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

Violent crime is the type of crime where the perpetrator uses or employs violence against the victim or intentional use of physiological force or power threatened or actual against oneself, another or against a group of community which either result in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death or psychological harm or deprivation. Violent criminal acts include murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, assassination, rape and assault among several others. This paper traces the origin of violent crime in Nigeria and South Africa to colonial legacy of Nigerian civil war and South African during Apartheid regime. The paper examines the causes of violent crime in urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa with a view to recommending solutions to curb the menace. Other aim of the paper is to explore opportunities that can facilitate control of violent crime in urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa. To do this, doctrinal research methodology is used. Here, primary and secondary sources of materials such as textbooks, journal, and conference papers among others were studied. The paper argues that prevalence of urban violence in the cities of Nigeria and South Africa is because of the inability of the law enforcement agents especially the police, army, and Civil Defence Corps to control the menace. The paper concludes that violent crime in Nigeria and South Africa can effectively be controlled through policies that reduce poverty, social exclusion, hunger and deprivation and create employment opportunities for the teeming population. It recommends the reform of criminal justice institutions and effective motivation of the police and other security agents and provision of modern sophisticated crime fighting equipment to the security agents.

Key Words: Security, Government, Policymakers, Legislature, Community

1. Introduction

Violence is the intentional use of physiological force or power, threatened or actual against oneself, another person or against group of community which either result in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm or deprivation (Krug 2002:5) but acknowledges the inclusion of the use of power in its definition to expand the meaning of the word. Crime or violent crime in particular refers to actions that are forbidden by law; offence against the State. Conducts such as murder, robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, rape and arson are seen as acts that violate a political or moral rule and therefore are forbidden. The study aims at understanding the reason for prevalence of violent crime in urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa, or the threat of it; and to inform the design

of policies and programmes for violent prevention. To do this, the paper is divided into five sections. Section one is the introduction which explains the perspective and objectives of the paper. Section two is clarification of conceptual framework with definitions and discussions of the topic incorporating views of scholars as well as practitioners. Section three discusses controversies and problems with comparative analysis of Nigeria and South Africa. Section four examines the challenges and controversies in the control of violent crime. Section five concludes the paper with recommendation.

Violent crime is defined as crime in which an offender uses or threatens to use force upon a victim (Riedel and Welsh,(2008). This entails



both crimes in which the violent act is the objective, such as murder, robbery, or rape, as well as crimes in which violence is the means to an end. There are different perspectives to violent crime. As such, a general definition of the concept has eluded the academia and social analysts for years. However, (Lindsay, 2008: 263) viewed crime from the legal perspective by reporting that violent crime is a category created by law. This definition, however, is very narrow and restricts the application of crime to legal principles. A broader definition of violent crime was provided by Martin when she noted that violent crime or offence is an act harmful not only to some individual or individuals but also to a community, society or the state. Urban centers generally are understood as geographic areas in which population density is higher than in surrounding areas.

Urban violent crime that are prevalent in the urban centers always has been an important concern to governments and policymakers. Crime is a social canker-worm that has eaten deep into the social fabric of Nigeria and South African cities such that its effect is multifaceted. Although Durkheim (1958) opines that “crime is inevitable and normal aspect of social life, it is an integral part of all healthy societies, it is functional” (cited in Haralambo, and Holborn, 2008: 322). Notwithstanding this point of view, the functionality of violent crime in the cities of Nigeria and South Africa must be viewed seriously because of the social and psychological problems it has caused many victims. With rapid increase in urbanization in Nigeria and South Africa of the last decade, the problem of violent crime has become even more pressing.

Cities, especially Lagos, Abuja, Maiduguri, Zamfara, Port Harcourt, Pretoria, Soweto, and Cape Town, Kwa Zulu-Natal, Western Cape, and Limpopo among others are struggling with high levels of violent crime that undermines the very foundation of economic and social development of the entire population. In some cases, areas of the cities have deteriorated into “no-go-zones” that undermine the overall governance of the area and trap the poorest population in a dangerous

cycle of poverty and violence. This has forced the government to take drastic measures and comprehensive policy to combat the menace. Violent crime, or the fear of it deters investment, stigmatizes neighbourhood, erode social cohesion, and limits access to employment and educational opportunities. For this reason, the study aims at understanding how urban residents in Nigeria and South Africa cope with violent crime, or the threat of it, in their everyday lives, and to inform the design of policies and programmes for violence crime prevention. The methodology of the paper includes a review of the literature on urban violence, with a focus on the social dimensions, and a national review of intervention. These capacities are further explored through fieldwork in selected institutions. This paper has been guided by five objectives:

- (a) To understand the causes of violent crime in cities of Nigeria and South Africa.
- (b) To make suggestions to policy makers on the way forward to stemming the tide of violent crime.
- (c) To review existing lessons for supporting community capacities to prevent violence.
- (d) To study five urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa, including different forms of violence found in these cities, their prevalence, impacts on the cities.
- (e) To provide insights into policy responses to high levels of violence.
- (f) To draw on these insights, provide solution and recommendation to policymakers, and to suggest successful violence-prevention interventions.
- (g) To suggest ways that government of Nigeria and South Africa may better address the dimensions of violent crime.

2. Clarification of Conceptual Framework

Crime is one of the human security problems confronting humanity across the world. Several nations have grappled to contain the rising incidence of violent crime such as armed robbery, murder, kidnapping, rape and host of others. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated global violent crime at 468,000 and



more than a third (36 percent) was estimated to have occurred in Africa. According to the report, economic crisis, food insecurity, inflation, and weak or limited rule of law are factors that drive violent crime. Africa has remained a leading continent in global violent crime statistics. Prevalence of violent crime has remained high in Nigeria and South Africa. In the Country, incidents of murder increased from 15,609 murders in 2011/12 to 16,259 murders in 2012/13. The same source also reported that murders and attempted murders that took place in South Africa during aggravated robbery or inter-group conflict (such as gang or taxi violence), and vigilantism make up between 35 percent and 45 percent of all murders and attempted murders.

In Nigeria, violent crime manifest in the convulsive upsurge of both violent crimes and political killings (Okechukwu, 2011). Incidents of armed robbery, assassination and ransom-driven kidnapping are ravaging the society and spreading a climate of fears and anxieties about public safety (Okechukwu, (2011). The upsurge of violent crime has been ongoing as Nigeria has been on the global crime map since 1980s. These throes of crime for decades are traceable to poverty, poor parental upbringing, and greed among the youth; get rich quick mentality, inadequate crime control of national security among others. The Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) heralded the incidence of violent crime such as robbery and murder immediately after the civil war in 1970 as weapons remained in the hands of de-mobilized soldiers (Osawe, (2015). The failure of the government to properly demobilize ex-soldiers after the war laid the foundation for upsurge of violent crime in Nigeria. Thus the escalating rate of violent crime such as armed robbery, ransom-driven kidnapping, assassination, terrorism and rape.

Background to violent crime have been identified by scholars apart from the above concepts. Notable among them is the availability of arms in the hands of illegal users beginning from the end of Nigerian Civil war in 1970. It is argued that proliferation of arms contributes to conflict in two main ways namely: increasingly lethal firepower

is a likely cause of higher levels of destruction; and that augmentation of sophisticated weaponry creates a vicious circle whereby competing militias engage in arms race to gain dominance in capability. Such competitions often result in violent crime (Jasima, 2018).

South Africa's colonial and apartheid background paved way to the 'normalisation' of violence, in which violence is seen as an acceptable means of problem solving and resolving conflict. The policing and judicial system of South Africa is also seen as having led to a mistrust of the rule of law and authorities, and to some vigilantism and summary justice. Fractured families, poor socialization, harsh and inconsistent discipline, physical and emotional abuse, and inadequate limit-setting are contributing factors to why crime in South Africa is so violent. Also are gangs that use violence, guns and other weapons to acquire goods, opportunities, and a sense of identity and self-worth. The misuse of alcohol and other drugs also increases the level of violence in criminal activity. Social attitudes and cultural values about gender condone and reinforce abusive practices against women. The age (younger), gender (males) and educational background (low achievement) of criminals are strongly associated with violent behaviour and violent crime. So are certain psychological profiles and some psychiatric conditions. Poverty, unemployment, inequality and social exclusion also contribute to South Africa's burden, but are inseparably related to other key factors of political, historical, environmental and individual.

There are several other theoretical explanations of why crime in South Africa is so violent. It is undoubtedly that the current levels of violent crime and its multiple manifestations have been built on the legacy of the civil conflict of the past. The extensive nature of politicization in South Africa has ensured that a 'culture of violence' has bled into the social and civic arena of society (Hamber, 1999:118). Scholars have referred to the way in which violence has been normalized in South Africa. They argue that for every variety of reasons violence has become normalized in South African society and the tendency to resolve things



violently is also accentuated in poor communities by numerous other causes of friction. Van der Merwe and Dwes noted that exposure to anti-social norms which present violence as an acceptable means of problem-solving normalizes the occurrence and use of violence. (Van der Merwe and Dawes, 2007). These observations about the normalization of violence, and a culture of violence in the social fabric of South Africa as earlier observed, are attributed to South Africa's historical legacy. Analysts who have sought to explain the process in terms of which violence has become normalized in South Africa have debated whether this should be linked to the era of political violence, particularly in the 1980s.

However, it seems that South Africa townships were already afflicted by fairly levels of criminal violence in the middle of the last century, and explanations probably need to take a longer historical view, which possibly incorporates references to the over all process of social dislocation, dispossession, institutionalized violence, and informal radicalized violence, which was directed against Black people during much of the 20th century in South Africa. A common theme throughout this study is that the ingrained use of violence is part of the legacy of apartheid. Dina (2004) and Dutwater (2005) have argued that violence was once part of the state's response to civil society, individuals learned that violence is an approach to conflict resolution and the acquisition of power. The CSV Report (December, 2018) suggested that “it would perhaps not be a mistake to identify a relationship between the legitimization and popularization of torture during the apartheid period, and the continuing use of torture by some members of the police, and occurrence of incidents where torture is used during robberies and other crimes” (P. 2).

The freedom struggle that lasted for 25 years in South Africa created a climate in which a whole generation grew up with violence as part of their daily lives' (Strydom and Schutte, 2005:120). An example can also be seen in farm attacks, where land claims and racism are regarded as a motive for violence. With the belief that white farmers have settled on land that is not theirs to own, there

is a great deal of tension over this notion, and may explain violent farm attacks (Strydom and Schutte, 2005). Accordingly, the impact on children and young people of the violent activities of the State during the apartheid era has contributed to the violence of South Africa. The formative experience of children who were imprisoned during the apartheid era has been noted by Scheper-Hughes (1997). This has had consequences for the socialization of many children and young people in South Africa.

2.1 Why violence and crime are high in Nigeria and South Africa

Violent crime such as armed robbery has occurred throughout Nigeria since after the civil war in 1970. Two major reasons are advanced as the reason why violent crime became prevalent in Nigeria after the civil war: (a) criminals were able to have access to weapons or buy them from the military, and (b) some demobilized and unemployed soldiers who had few legitimate prospects after the war ended were enticed into using their military skills for illegal purposes (Ekpenyong, 1989; Nkpa, 1976). Also unemployment, hunger and lack of hope for future life pushed majority of people into violent crime for immediate survival. This survival strategy by the unemployed and hungry led to organized armed robbery, murder and manslaughter which takes place in homes and businesses that are invaded, despite security walls and private guards. The long period of military rule in Nigeria contributed a lot to increase in violent crime after the war. Throughout the periods of military rule, soldiers used their weapons indiscriminately and criminals cashed into this misuse of arms and acquire guns which they use for robbery and murder of innocent citizens. By the time the army returned to barrack in 1999, a lot of things have gone wrong in the control of possession of illegal arms by the civilians.

It should come as no surprise that violent crime remains disturbingly high in South Africa, considering how the country dealt with its violent past. South Africa has increasing poverty and inequality, and have failed as a country to secure



confidence and respect for the rule of law. Until 1994 South Africans had little reason to respect the law, and no reason to believe in the rule of law. During the apartheid, not only were many of the laws unjust and intended to entrench white domination, but unfair laws were also applied unfairly. In addition, the security forces, particularly the police, were used by the state to ensure that all South Africans lived in fear of the state, regardless of their race. The apartheid state was deeply corrupt at all levels, and those who held positions of power, whether as politicians or functionaries, were very seldom called to account before a court for acts of corruption or the abuse of power. The situation was no different in relation to interpersonal violence and crime. Black men who murdered were more likely to face harsher sentences than white men who murdered, especially if the white murderer's victim was poor and black. Black women who were raped were less likely to have their cases investigated than cases in which white women were the victims. In this context, who could be expected to have much respect for the law, or the rule of law? This is the genesis of violent crime in South Africa, and this accounts for spread of violent crime in South Africa (CSVR Report 2018)

While the laws in South Africa have substantially changed for better, and the Constitution protects the rights of all South Africans and establishes the principle that all are treated equally before the law, in practice, inequality before the law still exists and this has driven more people to violent crime. It is difficult to slow this steady erosion of law when respect for, and confidence in, the institutions of state, including the police, are undermined by the daily experience of citizens in their interactions with the criminal justice system. Perhaps even more significantly, attempts to change attitudes towards the rule of law are stymied by the disrespect demonstrated for the law and the value of life by the very people responsible for making and enforcing the law. For long, those holding political office power in South Africa appear to act with impunity, or misuse power and state resources. In this situation, no one can reasonably expect South African citizens to respect the law. On this basis, resort to violent

crime would be justified by the citizens. Just as there is no single cause of violence and crime, there is no single solution.

There is an urgent need to develop a coherent programme to prevent and respond to violence. This would need to include at very least the implementation of evidenced-based programmes to support parents; and strategies to reduce inequality (Chandre, 2012/13). However, unless those responsible for making and enforcing laws themselves show respect for the rule of law, there is very little chance at succeeding in reducing violence and crime in Nigeria and South Africa.

3. Issues, Controversies, and Comparative Analysis of Violent Crime in Nigeria and South Africa

Sociological literature establishes a clear link between modernization and increasing levels of criminality. Specific forms of criminal behavior such as poverty theft, armed robbery and burglary are associated with increasing affluence and improved technology, which are by-products of structural changes associated with industrial productivity and concomitant value transformation. Such changes have important impact on urban locations, which are invariably the usual locus of such developments. 'Cities represent an enormous concentration of capital assets invested by a multiplicity of builders, some officially recognized, but increasingly operating outside existing norms and regulations.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that violence has generally been rampant in most cities of the world. From Lagos to Pretoria, Los Angeles to New Delhi, urban crime statistics reveal that not only is the incidence of violence becoming more frequent, but the nature of those crimes more heinous'. The situation is very depressing in developing countries of Africa where rapid growth of unplanned cities and population pressure force impoverished inhabitants to live in cramped spaces, undermining social relations and increasing the propensity for conflict and violence. This disorderly growth of urban areas of Nigeria and South Africa aggravated by poverty, the breakdown of traditional value structures and



social norms, psychological disorientation, child abuse, street trading, unemployment and violence, Group differentials entrench this capacity for violence as it integrates into a social relations whereby the incidence of violence affects all segments of society but has greater impact on the poor. The forgoing is particularly the case in Nigeria where public policy encourages and even inspires the cycle of violent crime. Military governments in Nigeria for years in the past set aside democratic dispensations at will and ruled by fiat. Thereafter, the government itself not only often disregard its own laws, but enacts decrees that place its actions above the law, thus undermining the rule of law. A culture of violence, and the embeddedness of violence in the social fabric of South Africa are frequently attributed to South Africa's historical legacy. Some of this attribution is to the apartheid era. However, longer historical view probably must incorporate reference to the overall process of social dislocation, dispossession, institutionalized violence, and informed radicalized violence, which was directed against Black people during much of the 20th century in South Africa.

The extraordinary degree of urban violence that distinguished South Africa from its colonial contemporaries. A brutalizing mining environment, combined with racial ordinances that criminalized Africans and colored and exposed vast numbers of men to prison and prison gangs, produced a culture of urban violence unique in colonial Africa.

Law enforcement agencies are relatively inefficient, ill-equipped and corrupt, while policies designed to ensure public safety are apparently targeted at low income groups. The judiciary is hampered by political considerations and, in an increasingly materialistic society, legal aid is expensive. In this setting, the criminal justice system, even when it works, offers little succor to the poor. Rebellion against these conditions takes the form of endemic violence as the rhetoric of social warfare is complemented by the increasingly polarized social relationships in the harsh environment of the city where poverty,

political and social exclusion and economic deprivation are all working against the solidarity that would enable city inhabitants to live together peacefully despite their conflicts.

In Nigeria, the case of Lagos provides an excellent illustration of the pattern of urban violent crime. Lagos is a city of political and commercial importance, and its patterns of growth and development emphasized its strategic importance. Violent crime is established as the logical corollary of this process of development and situated within the national perspective. The profile of urban violent crime in Lagos demonstrates that it covers the entire gamut of criminal activities. Offences rang from murder, robbery, kidnapping, rape and burglary, assassination or hired killing and organized street violence by 'area boys'. Mukoro (1994) has also shown that violent crime has spread through all neighborhoods in the city. Armed robbers in Lagos no longer go mask. They operate unmasked and wear police and military uniforms. Their firepower is impressive. Local rifles and homemade guns have given way to powerful assault weapons and machine guns like AK-47S and Russian made K-2s. The use of explosives like dynamites to blow up banks has become the order of the day in the cities because that is where the profit is (Osawe, 2015).

Discussion of violent crime in Nigeria cannot overlook the activities of a sect known as Boko Haram insurgents of recent time. United States Department of Defence defined insurgency as an organized movement, aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict. Insurgency, is thus, an armed rebellion against the constituted authority (for example, an authority recognized as such by the United Nations) when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents. Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria began in 2009, when the Jihadists group called Boko Haram (meaning Western education is forbidden) started an armed rebellion against the government of Nigeria. After years of fighting, the insurgents became increasingly violent. The violence escalated dramatically from 2011 up to



the present time with more than 2 million deaths (Ahmed, 2015).

Violent crime committed by Boko Haram insurgents include the following: (a) kidnapping which the most popular of this being the kidnapping of more than 276 girls from a secondary school in Chibok, Borno State in April 2014. Apart from this, there were cases of kidnapping Americans, Italians Japanese, and Arabs in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States. The insurgents sometime demand ransom before they release the victims. These kidnapped victims especially females, were subjected to various violence including sexual abuses and outright murder. The insurgency in Northern Nigeria has led to lost over 2000,000 lives since 2009. During the half of 2014 alone, Boko Haram killed 2,053 civilians in an estimated over 95 attack in over 70 towns and villages in North Eastern Nigeria (Amnesty International, 2014).

There was drastic increase during 2015 to 2017 in the numbers of casualties from bomb blasts including apparent suicide bombings. Since January 2014 at least 432 people have been killed in more than 14 blasts in crowded markets places, bus stops, offices, embassies and schools, etc. Many of these attacks take place in Maiduguri, Borno State capital. However, there were cases of military and police and other law enforcement agents harass numbers of civilians in the name of fighting Boko Haram, but these are always denied. After abduction of girls in several occasions, Boko Haram and law enforcement agencies have abused hundreds of women and girls during the attacks or while kidnapped. In an interview by Human Rights Watch showed in video revealed sexual attack against kidnapped female victims. Some of the victims claimed they were raped more than 10 times per night. Armed robbery is another violent crime which Boko Haram commits in Northern Nigeria. Since the insurgents started their violent criminal activities in Northern Nigeria as non-state actors, there have been cases of robbing banks in Katsina, Kano, Borno and Yobe States. The sect also engage in armed robbery along Boron-Yobe road, Abuja-Kaduna road, Abuja-Jos road, and Kano-

Maiduguri road, where lives were lost and properties worth millions of naira were snatched from victims. However, Boko Haram members are not only people engaging in armed robbery, as several people interviewed by Human Rights Watch in admitted they were robbed by police or army, which made many civilians to put doubt on the credibility and ability of these agencies to fight insurgency and violent crime in Nigeria.

In South Africa, the relatively high rate of murder and violence in Kwa Zulu Natal has been attributed to the legacy, and continuing tension, of political violence leading up to elections in 1994 and 2009. Bruce (2009), commenting on the election-related violence in South Africa in 2009, for instance, notes that “political loyalties in South Africa, not least of all in Kwa Zulu-Natal, continue to be strongly shaped by racial and ethnic identities” (Bruce, 2009). Bruce notes that the ascendancy in Kwa Zulu-Natal of the African National Congress (ANC), and President Jacob Zuma in particular, “would have been seen by many IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) supporters to threaten the still strong power base of the IFP within the province (ibid).

The highest rates of violent crime in South Africa are in the Northern Cape and Gauteng Province. Northern Cape records rates of 156 per 100,000 for rape, 115 per 100,000 population for attempted murder, 1,178 per 100,000 for assault with intent to inflict grievous harm, and 728 per 100,000 for common assault. The Center for Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) Report goes on to report that over 80 percent of violent incidents in the Northern Cape were identified as 'acquaintance violence', thereby indicating that the victim was known to the perpetrator. This, says the Center for Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) Report, is consistent with the fact that “that much of the violence that takes place in South Africa involves people who are known to each other. Most notably, both assault and rape tend to involve people who are acquainted in some way. Further, “in another descriptive account of the police response to domestic violence in Galeshewe in Northern Cape, such violence is constantly part of



a scenario of intoxicant-fuelled arguments characteristic of weekend drinking binges.

The highest rates of robbery and other property crime, including car and truck hijacking, bank robbery, cash-in-transit robbery, house robbery, business robbery, and other aggravated robbery are in Gauteng Province. The Free State, Gauteng and Western Cape consistently recording more common than aggravated assaults. Kwa Zulu-Natal and Limpopo recording similar numbers in both categories, while the remaining provinces (Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, North West and the Northern Cape Province consistently record fewer common, than aggravated assaults. The lowest rate of rape, however, are in Kwa Zulu Natal (101 per 100,000) and Limpopo (78 per 100,000 (CSV Report 2017).

4. Challenges and Controversies in the Control of Violent Crime in Nigeria and South Africa

In Nigeria, despite proclaimed reforms by successive governments, there has been little improvement in the fight against violent crime. Growing allegations of corruption and incompetence in crime fighting have been continually levelled against the Nigerian Police, compelling the government to establish some security agencies such as anti-robbery squad, rapid response squad and anti-bomb and other explosive lethal weapons. Notwithstanding the establishment of the State Security Service (SSS), and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), to complement the efforts of Nigeria Police, Nigeria still experience violent crime in major cities of the country. This development is attributed to so many factors which include poverty, unemployment, and economic, social and political exclusion of the majority of people. South Africa in 1996 established the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The Strategy was designed to rebuild the Criminal Justice system to ensure appropriate sentencing and fight against violent crime. However, this strategy failed to achieve its objectives because of its many shortcomings.

State policing in Nigeria and South Africa has

failed to meet the targets of fighting violent crimes because of some challenges. The power to manage the security of lives and properties in most cases are trusted in the hands of ill-equipped, ill-trained, inexperienced and corrupt security agents and agencies who are never prepared to fight violent crime in the societies. In most cases, the firepower of the criminals are stronger than that of government security agents. These problems which emanate from poor policies translate into poor operational and occupational standard in crime prevention. It therefore reduces public perception of the police as corrupt, inefficient, weak and non-serious security agent. It can be asserted that the continued failure of State agencies to prevent crime is the most likely reason for the increasing rate of violent crimes in the cities of Nigeria and South Africa.

Hill (1990) identified specific challenges that undermine internal security and limit the effectiveness of the state police in Nigeria and South Africa. In Nigeria, the researcher observed that crime detection and prevention are a mirage because most of the police stations do not have case files, or even the transport and communication facilities needed for effective policing. Training and re-training are substandard, where there is any, commitment to work is very low as there are no programmes for job motivation. In Nigeria and South Africa, the ease with which ordinary citizens have access to guns makes it difficult for the police to effectively prevent insecurity. In addition, the fact that police or army posts are located far away from residence and office makes it possible for criminals to operate very easily and without fear most part of the cities and rural areas of Nigeria and South Africa. In these countries also, persistent and increasing unemployment, economic stagnation, and poor strategic planning, are grossly affecting the effectiveness of state policing and crime fighting.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

(a) Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing discussion, this section present the conclusion arrived at and the



propose recommendation based on the critical issues raised in relation to incidences of violent crime in Nigeria in comparison with South Africa.

The paper reviewed the various theories and empirical evidence on why violent crimes are prevalent in the urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa. No single factor is considered to be the most reason for the prevalence of violent crimes in Nigeria and South Africa. Therefore single factor explanations are considered to be untenable. The evidence that has been received in this study suggests that the reasons for violent crime in Nigeria and South Africa are political-historical, environmental and individual. The level, frequency and degree of violence the two countries is caused by the interaction of factors from within and between each levels of explanations. Some expiations, such as the Nigerian civil war legacy, corruption, economic and social exclusion, poverty and unemployment account for most of the reasons for violent crime in Nigeria. In south, Africa evidence revealed that the colonial history and apartheid legacy of the country, left South Africa with a culture of violence that permeates the fabric of the society. As the discussion has highlighted the theory and causes of urban violence in Nigeria and South Africa, and because the issue touches on the security of lives and properties of citizens, it is important that measures such poverty reduction gainful employment and free education be provided to reduce the rate of crime in the societies. Therefore, in other to effectively reduce the incidence of violent crime in urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa, the following recommendations are made:

(b) Recommendations

Measures to reduce the prevalence of violent crime in urban cities of Nigeria and South Africa must take into account the wide ranging causes of crime and violence, which extend to poverty, migration, lopsided affluence, unjust social and economic policies, urban pathology, food scarcity, unemployment and failure of educational policy. Within this context, three types of palliative may be offered. The first seeks to protect the individual, the second focuses on

the community while the third directs attention to the overall structure of public policy and the model of governance. In the first place, public safety demands puts the onus on individuals to engage in some measure of self-protection. In terms of certain categories of crime such as armed robbery, assassination, etc., a security conscious populace could easily ensure some measure of self-protection. However, urban violence is a social problem which can only be confronted in a community context. Self-help therefore is simply an adjunct to community regulation. Within the community context, policy considerations operate on two broad levels. The first is technical and the second is social or system.

At the technical level, there are certain practical measures which can facilitate the mitigation of urban violence. First is an increase in the strength, organization and equipment of the police. By United Nations standards, Nigeria and South Africa are under- policed. Moreover, Nigerian and South African policemen carry obsolete equipment, while robbers often have impressive firepower, including assault rifles and machine guns. It is true that economic condition of Nigeria and South Africa do not permit any attempt to baby-sit the police or any other security agent but something must be done within these dire economic circumstances, to enhance police efficiency for purpose of crime control. Similarly, the issue of police corruption or the complicity of security agents in crime commission or concealment is a serious one. In addition, the reform of the criminal justice system; that is, the overhaul and improvement of the police, the prison and the law courts is necessary. This will include the provision of sophisticated modern crime fighting equipment and increase in welfare package for police and security agents to enhance their efficiency.

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