

OBSTACLES TO THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PRIVATE SECURITY FIRMS IN CRIME PREVENTION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the factors that hinder the effective participation of private security companies in crime control in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to identify the basic duties performed by private security companies in crime control, determine their effectiveness in performing these duties in crime control, identify the factors that affect their performance and effectiveness, find out the extent to which these factors affect their performance and effectiveness, and suggest ways of solving these challenges to enable private security companies contribute effectively to crime control in Nigeria. The study utilized the survey design and randomly extracted information through questionnaire and in-depth interview from 1,520 respondents. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and charts were used to analyze quantitative data from questionnaire; qualitative data was subjected to content analysis. Finding showed that majority of the respondents (72.0%) adjudged the contribution of PSCs to crime control as effective while (69.0%) were satisfied with their performance. The study found that most of the respondents were willing to recommend the services of PSCs to their friends in spite of the flaw trailing their operations. The study recommends among others that government should approve a holistic legal framework for the operations of the private security sector to enhance their growth, expansion, sustenance, and contribution in the national security discourse, and PSC operators should improve their relationship with police and other agents of governments for better and efficient service delivery.

Keywords: Private Security Company, Private Security, Crime, Crime Control, Security

1.0. Introduction and Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, organized and non-organized crime and other vices, armed robberies, cross border crimes, murder, cyber-crime, and human trafficking have become serious security issues that are of concern to well-meaning Nigerians. Crime is one of the most potent threats to national security of any country because of its devastating effects on the socio-economic and psychological welfare of the people. Thus, Dambazau (2007, p.153) averred that “the greatest danger to national security coming after external aggression is the feeling of insecurity among citizens, a situation that could result in indiscipline, loss of trust in authority, frustration, apathy, desperation, agitation, anarchy, lawlessness”. This aptly describes the feeling of most Nigerians and the current situation of insecurity in the country especially when the apparatus of government security agencies seem completely off balance in tackling the problem. Similarly, Chinwokwu (2012) had observed that the emerging trends of violent crimes in the form of terrorism, kidnapping and other criminal activities have really shaken the very fabric of the country’s national security and state security machineries seem to be worst hit. This is because most police officers have themselves fall victim of violent attacks by criminal elements. The apparent inability of the police to combat the menace of rising

wave of violent crimes in the country provided the leverage for the emergence of private security companies (PSCs) into the security architecture in order to complement government efforts. Hence, Ekhomu (2005) argued that even in the developed countries of Europe and the West, government alone cannot provide all the facility and resources required for citizen's security. In this regard, Van Steden and Sarre (2011) assert that private security companies are on the increased and has had global acceptance in the past two decades. There is no doubt that private securities have made great impact globally in the area of crime control, and they outnumber the public police in most countries (Asomah, 2017; Bamidele, Akinbolade, & Nuhu, 2016; Manning, 2006; Yoshida & Leishman, 2006; George & Button, 2000; Johnston, 1992) and in Nigeria, research findings showed that that private security companies are the preferred choice of citizens in respect of crime prevention for homes and corporate organizations (Okenyodo, 2011). Some scholars have noted that government spent a whopping sum of #6.5 Billion Naira annually to fight crime in Nigeria (Obe, Akasike, Adetayo, Olatunji, Aborisade, Olufowobi, Ubabukoy (2015), yet crime and insecurity across the country have remained problematic. Therefore, crime control measures seem to be a very serious problem confronting the federal and state governments. It is this weakened capacity of government, particularly, the police to combat crime and other vices in the society, which led to the emergence and subsequent proliferation of private security companies across the country. They are more likely to increase astronomically in future, unless the current insecurity prevailing in the country is tackled headstrong by government forces. Krahmann (2009) holds the view that the proliferation of PSCs has consequences on public security or fear of crime. He argued that PSCs assist the state in contributing to checkmate conflicts and security of business investments. Anyanwu's (2012) study of the role of PSCs towards the development of governance in Trinidad and Tobago found that private security guards working for private security outfits were sometimes involved in serious crimes. Van-Steden and Nalla's (2010) study of Netherland discovered that private security guards have poor professional qualifications. Similarly, Ruddell, Thomas and Patten (2010), study of United States urban social control found that private security guards have inadequate training. However, how these identified problems may affect the performance and effectiveness of private security companies in crime control in Nigeria has not been adequately articulated empirically. There is dearth of research on the factors hindering the effective participation of private security companies in crime control in Lagos metropolis in particular. Thus, this study is aimed at bridging the knowledge gap in substantive literature and adding to the body of knowledge in this field.

2.0. Literature Review

The duties and functions of private security companies (PSCs) in Nigeria in addition to guarding public and private places include: joint police and PSC patrols; escort services; rapid response; very important personality protection; cash in transit movement; dog handling; protocol services; cleaning and environmental services (Ekhomu, 2005). Section 1 (1) of Cap 367 summarizes the functions of the PSCs as watching, guarding, patrolling, cashin-transit protection and crime prevention. The private security companies play important role in preventing and detecting crimes at all levels of their duties. The

effectiveness of private security companies could be observed in the role they play as undercover agents outside the formal authorities especially among industrialized countries (Singer, 2003). Dambazau (2007) asserts that the presence of a private security officer is effective and capable of deterring criminal activities in an area. This means that PSCs can provide general deterrence to potential criminals in their areas of operation. The effectiveness of PSCs can be seen in most of the campuses, especially in curbing and controlling the excesses of cult members. In the same way, PSCs have contributed immensely in crowd control at entertainment centers, sport arenas and night clubs. This has helped in checking illegal gathering or rioting in various locations or arenas. In Lagos metropolis, there is no public function that can be organized without the presence of private security to maintain effective security governance of the area. While acknowledging the effectiveness of PSCs in this aspect, Macucci (1998) noted that limits about suspects and illegal gathering of people and “wanderers” are reported before nefarious activities are hatched out. On April 15, 2014, four security guards were arraigned before a Senior Magistrate Court in Abuja by the police for negligence. The security guards were alleged to have connived and negligently abandoned their security post at Brains and Braces Ltd, Djibouti Crescent Wuse 2 Abuja, thereby allowing armed robbers to attack the premises at night (Vanguard, 2014). This case helps to highlight the challenges PSCs have in their operations which may likely impede upon their performance and effectiveness. Another major factor which affects the activities of private security companies in Nigeria is lack of adequate training for guards (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2005; Macucci, 1998). Most private security companies are always in the habit of recruiting people as guards with very little or no training. Many of the private security guards only certify their guards of physical fitness as prerequisite for their recruitment without providing them with any basic security training that will assist them face potential job hazards. The extent to which some of these practices are applicable in Lagos metropolis is subject of investigation.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The Problem-Oriented Policing theory (POP) developed by Goldstein (1979) and Routine Activity Theory formulated by Cohen and Felson (1979) were utilized to direct this study. The problem-oriented policing theory is premised on the need for police or rather security officers to be more “proactive in identifying underlying problems that could be targeted to alleviate crime and disorder at their root” (Weisburd, Telep, Hinkle, & Eck, 2010, p.140). The theory was elaborated by Eck and Spelman (1987) to create a basic model for implementing POP. The models for the implementation of problem-oriented policing theory rest on four steps: scanning, analysis, response and assessment (SARA). The first step which is scanning involves identifying and prioritizing the problem. Thereafter, critical analysis of the problem is carried out before applying the required and proper response to solve it. When the problem has been solved, an assessment of the impact of the response is done. This theory is very relevant to private security companies in Lagos metropolis, because before the deployment of security guards to their posts; such areas are first surveyed (scanned and analyzed) to determine the risk exposure and security need of the location. This knowledge is fundamental in their planning and choice of suitable, skilled and trained guard required for a particular beat. Accordingly, hot spots policing requires that security officers should focus their attention and efforts

on specific geographical locations in order to prevent and incapacitate disorderly and illegal activities of criminals (Weisburd & Eck, 2004). It means that a focus of interest on small specific area will help in solving the crime situations in the society. This informed the United Nations recommendation for 1 (one) police officer to 4 (four hundred) citizens. The idea is that if police officers are able to contain their allocated small units effectively, it will spread to affect the entirely society positively; crime been contained. On the other hand, the routine activity theory states that for crime to occur, three elements must be present: an available target, a motivated offender, and lack of capable guardians (Bottoms & Wiles, 1997). It must be stated that for crime to be committed, the target and offender must be at the same place, at the same time, and the three elements must converge in unity. People who can protect targets are guardians (private security guards or law enforcement agents). The target and main objective of security guards is to ensure adequate protection of their allocated and assigned areas of responsibility. This they do, by frustrating every effort of potential criminals through due diligence which are exhibited in their alertness at their static duty post and surveillance, monitoring through close circuit television, patrol and supervision of guards, and hardening of targets. They do this also by being pro-active and active in deterring routine criminal opportunists from carrying out their heinous activities. The two theories aptly explain the goal of a functional private security companies in crime control. These two theories have been used in reducing fear of crime, violent and property crime, reduction of theft and other forms of disorder in urban areas. The effectiveness of the application of these theories rely on the fact that security guards must be alert, responsible and committed to their job because any act of negligence may affect their performance. Moreover, in the process of fully protecting their area of jurisdiction, they tend to drive away potential criminal to less protected area, thereby creating problem for those who cannot subscribe the services of private security companies.

3.0. Methods

This study adopted the cross sectional survey design which focuses on large populations.

Lagos is chosen as the area of study because of its large population and the large number of private security companies that operate in it. Lagos has an estimated population of 21 million people as at 2016 (World Population Review, 2017). It has the two largest seaports in Nigeria namely; Apapa and Tin Can Ports. Lagos is currently composed of 20 Local Government Area (LGAs) with 37 Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs). Lagos houses over 22 industrial estates and several business districts (Olokesusi, 2011). The population of Lagos makes it a destination point for the harvest of private security companies to match the ever security needs of the people. It is this unique nature and position of Lagos that necessitated a study of this kind. The population of this study comprises all adults, (male and female), employed in Private Security Companies (PSCs) as security guards, supervisors, managers and clients of PSCs. The clients of PSCs include corporate and private organizations (banks, telecommunications, multinational companies, oil companies, schools, Churches), business shopping malls, residential estates and governmental agencies. A total sample size of 1,520 was drawn for this study. This comprises 1,100 PSC clients, 400 security guards and 20 interviewees. The sample size was calculated using Cochran (1977) and Yamane (1973) statistical

formulae. The multi-stage sampling approach was used to select local government areas, wards, streets and respondents. A simple random (balloting) sampling method was used to select 10 LGAs from the 16 LGAs that make up Lagos Metropolis. A systematic random sampling method was used to select 50 private security companies from the sample frame of 225 (list of licensed private security companies) in Lagos metropolis. A constant sampling fraction of (1/100) was used for the selection of the security guards from the 50 PSCs irrespective of the population of the PSCs in order to provide equal representation for all and avoid bias. In this regard, each of the randomly selected 50 PSCs provided lists of households (homes, estates, corporate offices and government offices where their services are provided. Based on the list, a simple random sampling method was used to select 1,100 PSC beneficiaries or Clients. A set of questionnaire was distributed through research assistants to respondents to generate quantitative data. The questionnaire was self-administered. The questionnaire item was designed to generate data on socio-demographic characteristics and research objectives. The qualitative data was generated through in-depth interviews. 20 participants comprising 5 police officers, 5 PSC personnel, 5 Nigeria Security and 5 Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) officers, and 5 members of the public. The 20 interviewees were purposively selected and interviewed based on their relationship and knowledge of the functions of PSCs. The result from the quantitative data was integrated with that of in-depth interview to provide the study a valid outcome. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency distribution, and charts was used to describe and interpret the data collected from the field. Qualitative data from in-depth interview was subjected to content analysis

4.0. Results

Presented below are the research findings based on analysis of data collected during the fieldwork. Two sets of questionnaires were self-administered. The first set was administered on 400 private security guards out of which 372 (93.0%) questionnaires were correctly filled and returned. The second set of 1,100 was administered on PSC clients out of which 1,014 (92.2%) were validly filled and returned; and these were used for the analysis. The response rate showed the interests of participants in the study. The filled questionnaires were retrieved at the point of distribution by research assistants through contact persons.

4.1. Identification of some services performed by private security companies

This section identified some basic services PSCs provide for their beneficiaries or clients.

Table 1: Some services performed by private security companies

<u>Services Performed by PSC</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Escort and Protocol	112	10.8
Protection of life and Property	267	26.0
House-Keeping	41	4.5
Access control and static guard	478	46.8
Security drivers and Customer services officers	81	7.8

Others	35	4.1
Total	1014	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 shows duties performed by PSCs for their clients. Majority of the respondents (46.8%) were of the view that they hire PSC services for access control and static guard (checking or control of persons at entrance and exits of a place at a stationary point). This is attestation of the critical role of security guards in most corporate organizations, business premises, and residential areas. This is also an affirmation of the importance attached to these services in Lagos metropolis. It is now customary for most estates in Lagos to have security guards manning their gate entrance and exits. In most cases, a visitor to such estates has to wait at the gate while their host will be informed to come and take the visitor to the estate. More so, 26.0% of the respondents hire their services for protection of life and property while 10.8% does that for security escort and protocol services. Table 1 also shows that 7.8% of the respondents hire PSC services as security drivers and customer service officers, while 4.5% hire their services for housekeeping. More so, 4.1% of the respondents said they hire the services of PSCs for others reasons such as personal guards (for very important personality). This was supported by a male Director of PSC in Ikeja, Lagos during an in-depth interview (IDI) session, when he said “My Company provides such services as very important personality (VIP) guards, escorts, event surveillance, protocol, static guarding, and entertainment centers”. This was further corroborated in another IDI session when a male Managing Director of PSC in Lekki, Lagos stated: We provide maximum protection of assets, people and places under our control. We also provide training services to individual companies. Our services include VIP services, escort, security drivers, man and static guard, dog and handlers, provision of non-uniform guards for intelligence gathering, vetting guards and company staff etc. This was also supported by another male member of the public when he said in an interview session that: Our Church employed the services of private security guards to keep watch over our church premises. They help to organize vehicles in properly parking spaces in the church compound especially on Sunday service. They also help to control traffic in front of the church to avoid accidents. They have been with us for some time now and we have no problem with them.

4.2. Evaluating the Performance and Effectiveness of PSCs in Crime Control

This section probed to determine the performance and effectiveness of private security companies in crime control by looking at the situation of crime before and after the employment of PSCs in Lagos metropolis.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by crime situation in Lagos metropolis before employing the services of PSCs (Beneficiaries)

What was the security situation before engaging the services of PSCs in your area/workplace?	Frequency	Percentage
High	643	63.4
Low	151	14.9
Can't say	220	21.7

Total **1014** **100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents (63.4%) were of the opinion that the crime situation was high before employing the services of private security services. 14.9% said it was low while 21.7% of the respondents couldn't say what the crime situation was before hiring PSC service. On the security situation in Lagos metropolis after beneficiaries employed the services of PSCs in their residential or business areas, Table 3 shows that there was some sense of safety and reduction of fear of victimization with the employment of the services of PSCs.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on their description of current security situation in their area after employing PSCs by sex

Sex	Describing the current security situation of the area after employing PSCs			Total
	Safe	Unsafe	Don't know	
Male	350 (61.0%)	191 (69.7%)	44 (52.4%)	585 (62.8%)
Female	224 (39.0%)	83 (30.3%)	40 (47.6%)	347 (37.26%)
Total	574 (100.0%)	274 (100.0%)	84 (100.0%)	932 (100.0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2018 $\chi^2 = 19.623$; $df = 2$; $p > 0.001$ Critical χ^2 value = 5.991

Table 3 showed that out of the respondents that described the current security situation of their area since the employment of PSCs as safe, 61.0% were male while 39.0% were female. On the other hand, for all those that indicated that the current situation of their area after the employment of PSCs is unsafe, 69.7% were male whereas 30.3% were female. Also, for those who said they do not know the current situation of their area since the employment of PSCs, 52.4% were male while 47.6% were female. This finding was supported by a male member of the public during an IDI session when he said: I observe that the high incidences of crime in our area have reduced for sometimes now. I may say it is because of the employment of security guards in the neighbouring estate. We are experiencing constant patrol of the neighbourhood at night; at least one can hear the noise of siren all over the place at odd hours of the night as the security guards patrol the area. This was not so before in this area. We feel more secured now than what we use to experience before. The result showed that male respondents are in a better position to explain the security situation of their area than their female counterparts. This is more likely to be so, because men more often than not take decisions on matters of security concerning their family, community or organizations than the female folks. Again, the Chi-Square (test showed that there is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 19.623$, $N=923$; $df=2$; $P= 0.000$) relationship

between respondents' description of the current situation of security in their area after the employment of PSC services. On further evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of PSCs in crime control, the study probed to find out which criminal activities have been effectively controlled by PSCs in the areas where their services were provided.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents (Beneficiaries) by Crime types effectively controlled

Which of these criminal activities have PSCs effectively controlled in your residential area/workplace?	Frequency (Multiple Response)	Percentage
Robbery	814	21.1
Stealing	863	22.4
Burglary	734	19.0
House – breaking	467	12.1
Office/Shop breaking	262	6.8
Rape	106	2.7
Carjacking	142	3.7
Assault	173	4.5
Workers Picketing(Protest)	206	5.3
Others	92	2.4
Total	3859	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents (22.4%) were of the opinion that PSCs have effectively controlled stealing in their areas while 21.1% of the respondents said PSCs have effectively controlled robbery in their areas. 19.0% said burglary, 12.1% house breaking while 6.8% said shop breaking have effectively been controlled by PSCs. This means that PSCs have been fulfilling their responsibilities of preventing and reducing criminal victimization. This was attested to by a male DPO in Lagos Island during an IDI session when he said: I think the main objective of PSCs is to prevent crimes in their areas of jurisdiction and reduce criminal victimization and ensure they maintain the security of their clients. They have helped in reducing cases of assault, shop breaking, burglary, office breaking and car theft in their areas of operation. This is because, the numbers of reports we use to receive from some of the areas where they perform their duties have drastically reduced. I give them credit for their performance. The study interrogated further to ascertain the contribution of PSCs in crime control by assessing their performance.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by perception of the contribution of PSCs to crime control

Do you agree that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control in your area/workplace?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	843	83.1
No	171	16.9
Total	1014	100.0
If 'yes', how would you assess the effectiveness of PSCs in crime control in your area?	Frequency	Percentage

Effective	607	72.0
Ineffective	200	23.7
Can't say	36	4.3
Total	843	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 5 shows that overwhelming majority of the respondents (83.1%) agreed that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control in Lagos metropolis while 16.9% did not agree. This was supported by a male DPO during an IDI session when he said “I think private security companies were doing their work effectively to the best of my knowledge and their visibility seems to be very great as they are seen in almost every place within Lagos”. Table 5 also showed that 72.0% of the respondents evaluated the contribution of PSCs to crime control as effective, 23.7% as ineffective and 4.3% could not say anything. This finding was supported by a male DPO in an IDI session who stated that “The Police cannot do the work of security alone. Private security companies have been complementing our efforts. In so doing, they assist in reducing the level of criminality in the society especially in areas where they are overseeing”. This was also corroborated by another DPO in an IDI session, when he said “I give them credit for their jobs. They are performing effectively in their duty”. This was attested to by a male DPO in an IDI session when he said: The Police cannot do the work of security alone. Private security companies have been complementing our efforts. In so doing, they assist in reducing the level of criminality in the society especially in areas where they are overseeing. They are discharging their duties well and effective. The study also interrogated to determine the degree of satisfaction of respondents (beneficiaries) in relation to PSC performance in crime control.

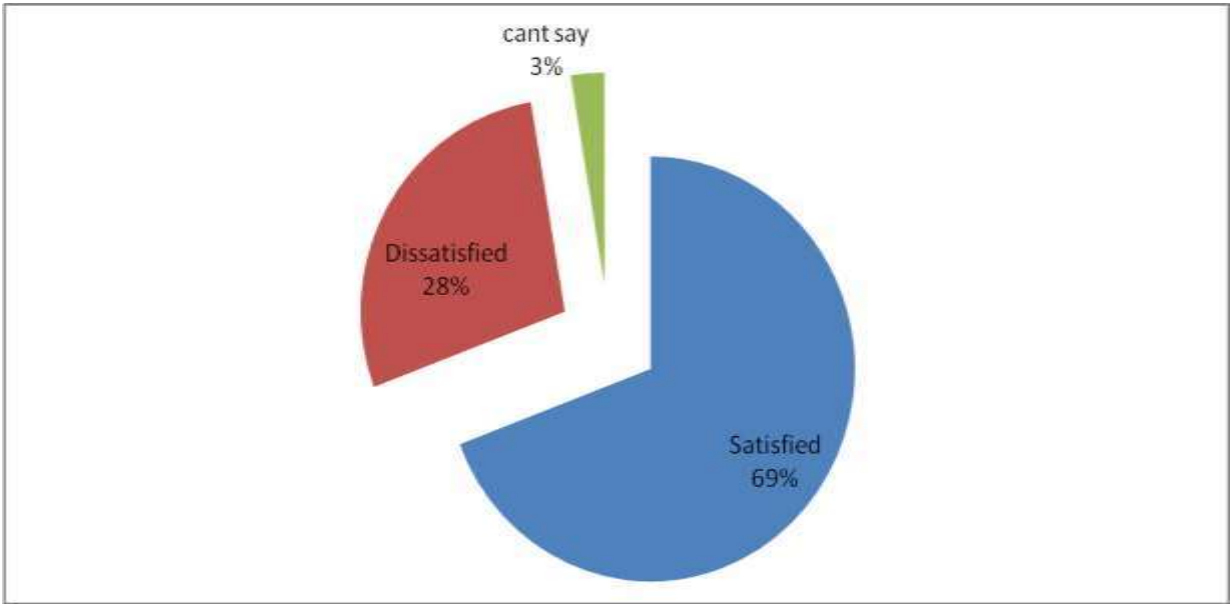


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of respondents (Beneficiaries) by degree of satisfaction with the performance of PSCs in crime control (N=904)

Figure 1 shows that majority of the respondents (69.0%) were satisfied with the performance of private security companies while 28.0% were dissatisfied and 3.0% were neutral. The implication of the finding is a confirmation of the increasing importance and demand for PSC services in Lagos metropolis especially by those who can afford to pay for their services. An NSCDC male officer in Ikeja said in an IDI session that “Private security guards are doing their best to ensure crime control within the area of their operation. You must remember that they are in business to provide security for their clients in order to maintain their contract”. This was supported by an NSCDC male officer in Ikeja in an IDI session when he said: Private security guards are doing their best to ensure crime control within the area of their operation. You must remember they are in business to provide security for their clients in order to maintain their contract. I am satisfied with the level of their job in as long as there are no complaints from their clients. They are really trying.

4.3. Factors that affect PSC Performance and Effectiveness

This section discussed some of the identified factors which affect the operations of PSCs and which may have far-reaching consequences on their performance and effectiveness as perceived by respondents. In order to achieve this, the respondents were asked “whether they perceive any challenges in the performance of private security guards”

Table 5: Distribution of respondents (beneficiaries) perception of lapses on the performance of private security guards

Are there lapses that can affect performance in crime control	PSCsFrequency	Percentage
Yes	972	95.9
No	42	4.1
Total	1014	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 5 indicates that majority 95.9% of the respondents perceived that PSCs have some lapses that might affect their operations while insignificant 4.1% said no. This assertion was confirmed by majority of respondents during IDI sessions. A male DPO in Ikeja – Lagos during an IDI session said “Yes, PSCs have many lapses. They do not know how to approach security issues. Some do take to jungle justice. They also abandon their duties and connive with criminals to steal”. The study probed further to identify those lapses that have been associated with PSCs.

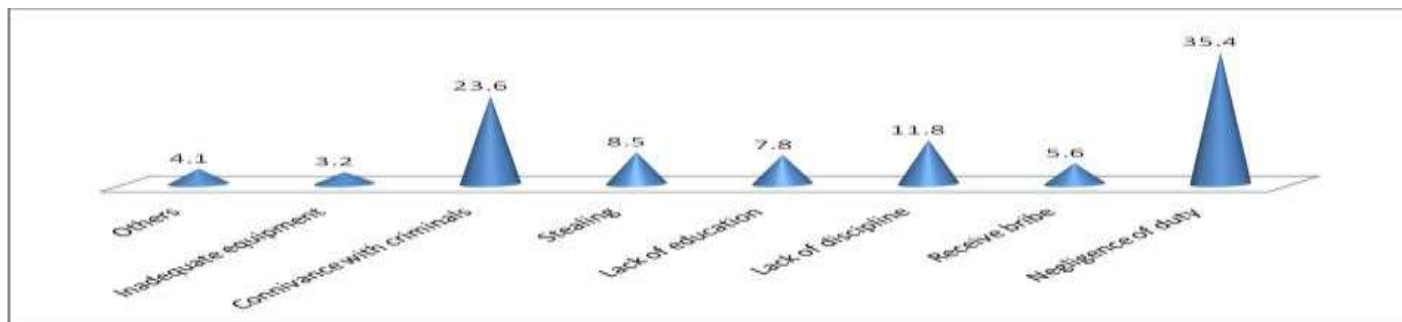


Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents (Beneficiaries) by Perception of PSC Lapses (N=972)

Figure 2 shows that majority of the respondents (35.4%) were of the view that one of the major lapses or challenges facing private security companies was negligence of duty while 23.6% said it was connivance of security guards with criminals. This is very critical because many security guards arrested, charged and prosecuted in court were for gross negligence of duty. In most cases, where such acts of gross negligence of duty had resulted to product loss, armed robbery or vandalization, the security guards were charged for committing the actual offence. Other challenges found were lack of discipline (11.8%), stealing (8.5%), lack of education (7.8%), receiving bribe (5.6%), and lack of skill (4.1%). In all the IDI sessions conducted most of the participants unanimously stated that some of the lapses that have been associated with PSCs include: leaving beat without permission, inadequate training and experience, lack of technology, inability to provide personal protection equipment, lack of education, lack of professional certification, corruption and stealing from clients. These assertions were supported by majority of respondents during IDI sessions. A male DPO in Lagos during an IDI session said: PSCs have many lapses. They do not know how to approach security issues. Some do take to jungle justice. They also abandon their duties and connive with criminals to steal. Some of the cases which we have investigated against them borders on gross negligence of duty which resulted to criminal act in their location. This was further reiterated by a male NSCDC officer in Lagos Headquarters during an IDI session when he said:

Some of the PSC lapses I can say are that the guards are not vetted to know their background. Therefore, it is easy for one guard who has committed criminal act in one company to move to another without being found. Perhaps, because private security companies obtain indemnity as condition for the award of contract they don't bother checking guard's backgrounds. This was corroborated during an IDI by a female DPO in Victoria Island when she said:

Some of the lapses that have been identified with security guards include: poor training, they provide information for criminals or they themselves are criminals and as they leave one PSC to another, they not are profiled which can be very dangerous to the new company. A female DPO in Lagos Mainland in an IDI said "When a security guard who is hired to protect your property turns out to be the man to fear, what would you do? Definitely, some guards of private security companies have rubbished their companies and given them bad name".

4.4. Effects of the Challenges on PSC Performance and Effectiveness

This section interrogated the extent to which the identified challenges or lapses may affect the operations of PSCs.

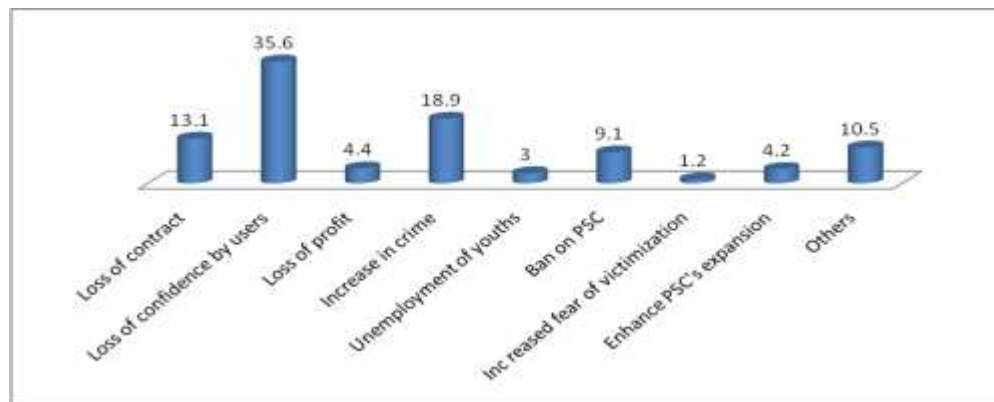


Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Perception of the Consequences of PSC Lapses

Figure 3 indicates that majority of the respondents (35.6%) were of the opinion that one of the main consequences of the challenges or lapses on private security companies was loss of confidence by users. Two other serious consequences identified by respondents include increase in crime (18.9%) and loss of contract (13.1%). It is very common to see that the contract agreement between private security companies and their employers (business and private) are often times terminated, once private security companies commit any kind of breach of trust. This was supported by a male PSC Manager in Yaba, Lagos, during IDI session when he said that “There are some serious effects on PSCs when security guards are involved in some kind of lapses. Apart from losing the contract, we still pay for the cost of the lost items”. In all the IDI sessions conducted, participants agreed overwhelmingly that some of the lapses identified with PSCs have serious consequences. Some of the consequences mentioned include cancelling of existing contract with them, prosecution of the company for breach of trust and repayment for items lost. “This is the reason why most beneficiaries demand for insurance cover before hiring PSC services” affirmed by male PSC Manager in Ikoyi Lagos in IDI session. However, private security companies are vicariously liable for any act of criminality committed by their guards in the process of performing their duties within the area of their responsibility. Having identified specific consequences of the challenges to PSCS, it was probed further to know whether respondents can recommend the services of PSCs to their friends and colleagues in spite of the challenges they experience from PSC operations.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents (Beneficiaries) by whether they can recommend PSCs’ services to their friends

<u>Can you recommend the services of PSCs to your friends?</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes, I can recommend their services	729	71.9
No, I can’t recommend their services	116	11.4
Don’t know	169	16.7

Total 1014 100.0 Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 6 shows that in spite of the consequences of the lapses on the image and performance of private security companies, the study established that majority of the respondents (71.9%) said they can recommend the services of private security companies to their friends. This may just be one of the main secrets behind the expansion and growth of private security companies and an indication that private security companies have potential future and place in the national security policy making in Nigeria. The push-pull factor hypothesis is very relevant in explaining this trend. In the overall, it shows that PSCs have come to stay in Lagos metropolis and its future in the drive for socio-economic growth and sustenance to national development is a force to reckon. This was subjected to testing of a research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1

H₀ Respondents who perceive that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control are less likely to recommend PSC services to their friends than those who do not. **H₁** Respondents who perceive that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control are more likely to recommend PSC services to their friends than those who do not.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents' perception of PSC contribution to crime control and their willingness to recommend their services to their friends

PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control	Willingness to recommend PSC services to friends			
	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Yes	618(84.8%)	90(77.6%)	131(77.5%)	839(82.7%)
No	111(15.2%)	26(22.4%)	38(22.5%)	175(17.3%)
Total	729(100%)	116(100%)	169(100%)	1014(100.0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2018 $\chi^2 = 7.500$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.024$ Critical χ^2 value = 5.991

Table 7 shows that out of the respondents who perceive that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control 84.8% said they were willing to recommend PSC services to their friends, 77.7% said no while 77.5% said do not know. On the other hand, out of all those that said they have not contributed effectively to crime control, 15.2% said they were willing to recommend them to their friends, 22.4% said no while 22.5% said they do not know whether they will recommend them or not. Again, the calculated value of Chi-square ($\chi^2 = 7.500$) This is less than the critical χ^2 value of 5.991 at degree of freedom (df) of 2, P value of 0.024 which is less than 0.05 standard level of significance. Hence the substantive hypothesis is upheld while the null hypothesis is rejected.

4.5. Ways of Resolving the Challenges for effective PSC Performance

The result of ways of improving the services of PSCs in order to enhance their contribution, performance and effectiveness in crime control is presented hereunder.

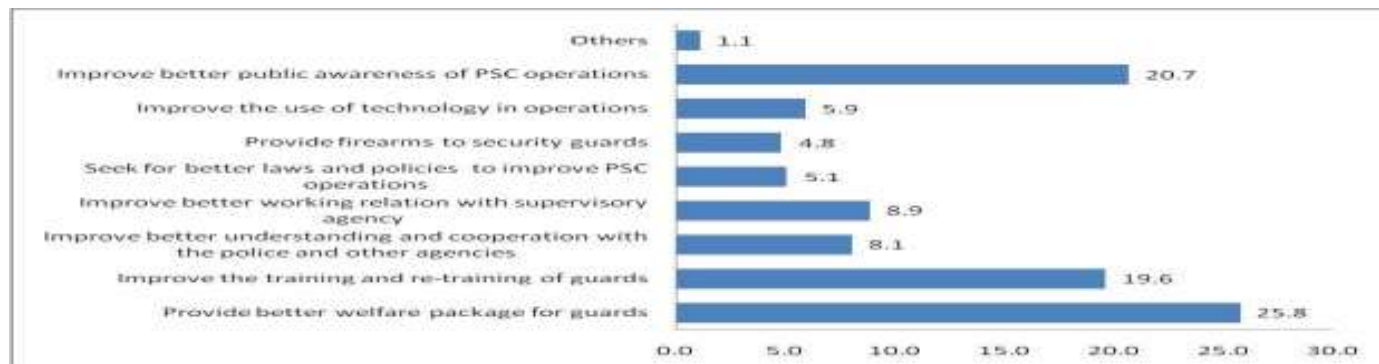


Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Ways to Improve PSC Services (N=372)

Figure 4 indicates that majority of the respondents (25.8%) were of the opinion that PSCs should provide better welfare package for guards as a way of overcoming their challenges while 19.6% of the respondents said they should improve the training and retraining of guards to overcome their challenges and thereby improve their performance and effectiveness. Most of the respondents in the IDI sessions were of the opinion that payment of good salary will act as a motivating factor to any employee. They also aver that poor and delay in salary payment of security guards have caused some of them to be involved in criminal acts, indiscipline and negligence to duty. According to a male NSCDC Officer in an IDI session “This is important because currently there is no law in Nigeria that talk about how much a guard should be paid and this is why most of them are paid as low as ₦10,000 or \$28.6 US Dollar in a month. Although, there is a national minimum wage in place in Nigeria, yet PSCs flagrantly ignore it. Figure 4 also shows that 20.7% of the respondents suggested that PSCs should improve better public awareness of their operations while 8.9% said that PSCs need to improve their working relationship with their supervisory agency (NSCDC). The finding suggests that public awareness of the activities and role of PSCs in crime control in Lagos metropolis is low. Similarly, the working relationship of PSCs and NSCDC is somewhat not cordial. 8.1% said that PSCs should improve their relationship with the police and other agencies for a better understanding and cooperation, 5.9% said they should improve their use of technology and 5.1% said they should seek for better laws and policies for their operations. These are very vital suggestions that will enhance the value of the PSCs in the global market economy. A male Manager of PSC in Lagos Mainland said in an IDI session: We need to improve the use of technology in our operations in order to boost our services and give security a new look. We acknowledge that our patronage have not been all that wonderful in Nigeria because the public sometimes don’t actually believe in us. We need to enlighten the public through workshops and use of radios and television. When the public understand our work, they will appreciate us. This was attested to by a male NSCDC officer in Ikeja, Lagos in an IDI session when he said: The security guards are exposed to a lot of occupational hazards, poor welfare conditions and inadequate training. Therefore, the operators of PSCs need to improve their welfare package and give them good training. In most, cases the guards are not paid on time, this need to change to boost their morale for effective performance. And further supported by a female DPO in Ikeja Lagos in another IDI session when she said: There is urgent demand for PSC operators to provide adequate training and retraining of their

guards in order to improve their performance. They need to compensate them adequately for their work to prevent them from engaging in criminal acts that may be detrimental to their image and contract.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that majority of respondents hires the services of private security guards for access control and static guard (checking or control of persons at entrance and exits of a place a stationary position). It is a pro-active preventive measure adopted to deter kidnappers and other potential criminals. This finding corroborated the study conducted in Lagos state by some scholars, which highlighted the essence of security in such gated residential areas (Ilessanmi, 2012; Ajibola & Ogungbemi, 2012). Other reasons for hiring PSC services include the use of security guards as security drivers, customer services and housekeeping. This is in consonance with the observations of various scholars who assert that there is an increasing rise in the number of private security companies globally with the simultaneous increase and expansion of services offered by private security companies (Ruddell et al., 2010). This also supported the study of Lerer (2007) in the United States when he found that most organizations in the United States employ security drivers (as personal guards and escort) for their top business executives to ensure their personal protection. This is because they feel that top business executives are assets which must be protected (as cited in Strom, Berzofsky, Shook-Sa, Barrick, Daye, Horstman, & Kinsey, 2010). The implication of this finding is that the scope and duties of PSCs are expanding, thereby revealing the diversity of the services of private security companies which implies that they are moving away from their traditional duty of just watching, opening and closing gates (security surveillance) to other services that are non-core policing functions. The study finding showed that over two third of the respondents said that there was high incidences of crime before they decided to engage the services of PSCs. This means that the absence of security, both police and security guards could cause an area to be vulnerable to criminal attacks and criminal victimization. This supports the Cohen and Felson's (1978) routine activity theory where they argued that the absence of a guardian provide opportunity for crime to occur. Similarly, two third of male respondents described their area as safe after engaging the services of PSCs while one third of female respondents said their area was safe after employing PSC services. This attests to Dambazau (2007), who had observed that the presence of private security is effective and could serve as deterrence to criminal offenders and might have accounted for the reduction of crime occurrence. This is in agreement with the applied theoretical framework in this study. Thus, there is statistically significant ($F(2, 923) = 19.623, N=923; df=2; P= 0.000$) relationship between respondents' description of the current situation of security in their area after the employment of PSC services. It means that the future of PSCs is bright if both genders perceive that employment of PSCs would provide the desired protection in their environment. The study found that overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that PSCs have contributed effectively to crime control in Lagos metropolis. This finding also agrees with earlier studies (Ajayi & Aderinto, 2008; Alemika & Chukwuma, 2004) which found that informal security structures were rated effective in reducing criminality in the area by the people. Similarly, over two third of respondents said they were satisfied with the performance of PSCs in crime control. This finding was in consonance with the findings of Qehaja,

Vrajoli and Peteshi (2009), who had found in their study of Kosovo that 70% of their respondents were satisfied with the performance of private security companies. Major lapses or challenges identified in the study that could affect the effectiveness and performance of PSCs were negligence of duty, connivance of security guards with criminals and lack of discipline. This finding was in line with the study findings of Trinidad and Tobago when (Anyanwu, 2012), found that guards working with PSCs were alleged conspiring with criminals to commit serious crimes. This was further buttressed in the study of Urban Ghana when Owusu, Owusu, Oten-Ababio, Wrigley-Asante & Agyapong (2016), found that respondents view that PSCs compromised household and security by permitting criminals to infiltrate their neighbourhood thereby increasing crime incidences in their area. The study found that major consequences of that the lapses may have on PSCs were loss of confidence users, loss of contract and placing of ban on PSC. Nonetheless, over two third majorities of the respondents said they will recommend the services of PSCs notwithstanding their lapses or challenges. This is in support of the findings of Goede (2008) study of Democratic Republic of Congo when he found that private security companies have become very vital in the national security arrangement of the country because of their contributions to security. It further buttresses the human need for security and an indication that no matter the challenge or lapses that may militate against PSC performance and effectiveness, their demand is not directly adversely affected by such challenges. The implication of this finding is the narrative that the driving force for PSC proliferation is not necessarily their effective performance but the human need for safety and peaceful environment. In this regard, therefore, it does not really matter whether PSCs were performing wonderfully or not, they feeling of safety with their presence in an area is all that counts. The study found a statistically significant relationship between respondents' view of PSC effectiveness in crime control and their willingness to recommend them to their friends.

The study found that some of the major ways of resolving the challenges facing PSC operations include provision of better welfare package for the guards, improvement of better public awareness of PSC operations, improvement of the training and retraining of guards and improvement of better working relationship with Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study brought to the fore fundamental issues that need to be addressed urgently to make PSCs more viable, relevant, professionally driven and sustainable in order to derive the expected potential boom or destination point for graduate youth employment. The study showed that PSCs are filling a yearning need in the affairs of those who subscribe their services in particular and Lagos metropolis in general. It is radically an expanding business sector whose potentials are yet untapped. There is little or no effort by government to encourage its development or enhance its relevance in national security discourse, despite its enormous contributions to the society and the great potentials it has for future security architecture of the country. The private security companies are confronted with many challenges which pose great threat to their performance and effectiveness. Although, the study findings show that the problems facing PSC operations have little or no effect on their acceptance by the clients, yet there is much to be desired from

them, if they aspire to be given the professional respect they deserve. The study established that private security companies have come to stay and likelihood of making great contribution to the overall national security policy in future. Based on the foregoing, the study therefore recommends the following:

1. PSCs should improve on their services by employing verified, educated, trained and experienced security guards. This will help in mitigating some of their lapses identified in their operations.
2. It is pertinent and imperative for government to demonstrate some level of commitment towards the conditions of private security companies in Lagos metropolis. In this regard, government should not only approve a minimum welfare package for private security companies to enhance their growth and expansion but also fast track the process of legislative framework for a robust private security industrial sector.
3. Private security operators should formulate professional self-monitoring or regulating policies that is effective enough to clampdown on erring members who violate professional ethics that dent their organizational image. They should blacklist defaulting members for specific period as a way of punishment as deterrence to others.
4. There is need for a stakeholder's forum in which clients and private security companies discuss on the best way to improve their services and in which clients' rights are also brought to their knowledge. Efforts must be made to establish a neutral body for the regulation and supervision of the entire private security sector.
5. PSCs in collaboration with government should embark on massive public awareness of the relevance and role of PSCs in the security architecture of the country. This will increase public knowledge of the role of PSCs and enhance their demand and their complementary role of government efforts.
6. There is need for PSCs to establish a better bonding relationship with the police and other government security agencies to ease their operations and provide better service delivery for their clients.

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