

**SECURITY GOVERNANCE AND CRIME PREVENTION IN LAGOS STATE,
NIGERIA: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED SECURITY
FRAMEWORK**

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Abstract

Security governance has become increasingly important to the management of crime and public safety in rapidly urbanising societies. In Lagos State, Nigeria, population growth, spatial inequality, urban informality, youth unemployment, mobility pressures, and the proliferation of both state and non-state security actors have created a complex environment for crime prevention. This paper examines the relationship between security governance and crime prevention in Lagos State, with particular attention to community policing, police legitimacy, public trust, private security, vigilantism, institutional coordination, and the exercise of discretion by street-level security actors. The paper adopts a qualitative conceptual approach based on a critical review of recent peer-reviewed literature published between 2015 and 2026. The analysis demonstrates that effective crime prevention in Lagos cannot depend exclusively on conventional, centrally controlled policing. Rather, sustainable security requires a governance framework that integrates state institutions, local communities, private security organisations, traditional and community leaders, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders within a clearly regulated and accountable institutional structure. The paper argues that police legitimacy and public trust constitute critical foundations of effective security governance. Where citizens perceive security institutions as procedurally unfair, ineffective or unaccountable, they are more likely to withdraw cooperation and rely on informal security mechanisms, potentially reinforcing vigilantism and extra-legal practices. The paper proposes an integrated security governance framework based on community co-production, intelligence-led policing, institutional accountability, public-private collaboration, technological innovation, procedural justice, and socioeconomic crime prevention.

It concludes that Lagos can improve its crime-prevention capacity by moving from a predominantly reactive policing model towards a participatory, preventive, intelligence-driven and accountable security governance system.

Keywords: security governance, crime prevention, community policing, police legitimacy, vigilantism, private security, Lagos State, Nigeria