

VIOLENCE AND URBAN SPACE; A CASESTUDY OSHODI- ISALE, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Violence or its threats have been a part of many cities since the beginning of mankind. It was also more profound in many African countries that transited from military to civilian rule. While the incidence of organized crime and violent victimization of innocent citizens is not new to many West African cities, the emergence of terrorist organizations, armed bandits, kidnappers and armed gangs in a city like Lagos has created new security challenges. Oshodi community is a renowned violent spot that poses an impending havoc to the neighboring communities. The challenges include the inability to control violence in the study area and also how this challenge have influenced the urban structure and form of the study area. in order to cope with the rising number of young people involved in crime rate and the threats to peace and stability in Lagos metropolis. This study is designed to investigate and analyze the impact of violence on the urban morphology of the study area. In the course of carrying out this analysis, 22

Introduction

Urban violence is a broad concept encompassing urban warfare, terrorism, gang violence, and riots, as well as psychological and structural violence. On most occasion, we focus on physical violence manifesting in public urban space as communal violence, violent protests, and organized armed violence. One particular activity that certainly does have the potential to make an enormous impact on the production of urban space is the use of violence. Violence can result in no-go zones for specific people in specific neighborhoods. Urban violence is a serious development constraint in developing countries and

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community stakeholders were interviewed. The mixed survey strategy was utilized in this research work and the result of findings was derived from both primary and secondary data source.

Keys; Urban morphology, violence, community stakeholders, urban spatial planning approaches

Increasingly dominates the daily lives of citizens across the globe. The accompanying increase in fear and insecurity has led to a wide-scale preoccupation with the phenomenon, but there is little agreement on the underlying causes of such endemic violence or of its costs and consequences. Equally, the capacity of various sector-specific violence reduction interventions to address this pervasive problem is often questioned.

Recently there has been growing acknowledgment that urban residents themselves may be the key to a better understanding of such violence and to identifying appropriate interventions. Participatory urban appraisals offer a practical way for local people to articulate their perceptions of the complexity of everyday violence. Complementing existing knowledge, such assessments assist in developing a more holistic framework that positions violence in terms of three interrelated components; first, the social, economic, political, and institutional categories of violent manifestations; second, the underlying causal factors, not only structural factors but also individual identity and agency; and third, the costs of violence in terms of its impacts on the assets of poor households.

This provides the necessary context for framing an integrated policy, one that reconciles the bottom-up views of local people with the top-down solutions offered by professionals. A useful matrix distinguishes among seven predominant prevention or reduction policies, ranging from well-known interventions such as criminal justice and public health, through conflict transformation and human rights—more commonly associated with conflict reduction—to newer more innovative urban solutions such as citizen security, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), and the community-driven social capital approach. As governments, the private sector, and civil society alike increasingly prioritize violence reduction, they need to take up the challenge to provide more innovative cross-sector solutions that better address

the complexity of the endemic violence, fear, and insecurity that permeates the everyday lives of local populations.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to the urban crime statistics carried out in developing countries in Africa, it was revealed 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 where the 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 is aggravated by poverty, the breakdown of traditional value structures and social norms, psychological disorientation, child abuse, street trading, unemployment and violence for example, in television programmes. Urban violence has influenced urban spaces in developing cities like Lagos, Nigeria and on most occasion have resulted in Urban decay when neglected, a typical example is the Oshodi-Isale and Ajegunle-Apapa areas in Lagos. In some areas, it has affected the sense of safety and security, leading to the abandonment or underutilization of public spaces. Additionally, it may hinder economic development and social cohesion in Lagos can have a significant effect on the results/

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research is to analyze the impact of urban violence in the urban space and form of Oshodi-Isale Local government and establish various implementation strategies to subdue the effect of urban violence in the study area. Some of the objectives are as follow;

- i. To understand the key factors of urban violence in the study area.
- ii. To analyze the urban morphology of the study area and how it can be influenced by violence.
- iii. To examine the various stakeholders that could relieve the impact of violence in this area.
- iv. To recommend urban spatial planning approaches that will promote a sustainable and aesthetically pleasing ambience that will subdue the influence of violence in this study area.

STUDY AREA

The topography of Lagos is dominated by its system of islands, sandbars, and lagoons. The city itself sprawls over what used to be the four main islands: Lagos, Iddo (now attached to the mainland), Ikoyi (now attached to Lagos Island), and Victoria (now the tip of the Lekki Peninsula); because of land reclamation efforts over the years, some of the original main islands are no longer true islands. A system of bridges connects some of Lagos's islands to each other and to the mainland. All the territory is low-lying, the highest point on Lagos Island being only 22 feet (7metres) above sea level. The original settlement on the northwestern tip of Lagos Island is now a slum area characterized by narrow streets, poor housing, and overcrowding. The main business district occupies Lagos Island's southwestern shore and contains an increasing number of multistory buildings. This is the heart of the city, the center of commerce, finance, administration, and education. The principal manufacturing industries in Lagos include the production of electronics equipment, automobile assembly, food and beverage processing, metalworks, and the production of paints and soap. Textile, cosmetic, and pharmaceutical manufacturing are also economically important. There is a fishing industry as well.



Figure 1: Map of Lagos, Nigeria showing the 16 LGAs

Source; Google, 2024

The port of Lagos consists of Apapa Quay, on the mainland, which serves as the principal outlet for Nigeria's exports. The creeks and lagoons are plied by small coastal craft. The city is the western terminus of the country's road and railway

networks, and the airport at Ikeja provides local and international services. The Lagos metropolitan area is a major educational and cultural center. The University of Lagos (1962), the National Library, the Lagos city libraries, and the National Museum (1957), with excellent historical examples of Nigerian arts and crafts, are all located in the city or its suburbs. Pop. (2006) 9,113,605; (2016 est.) urban agglom, 13,745,000.

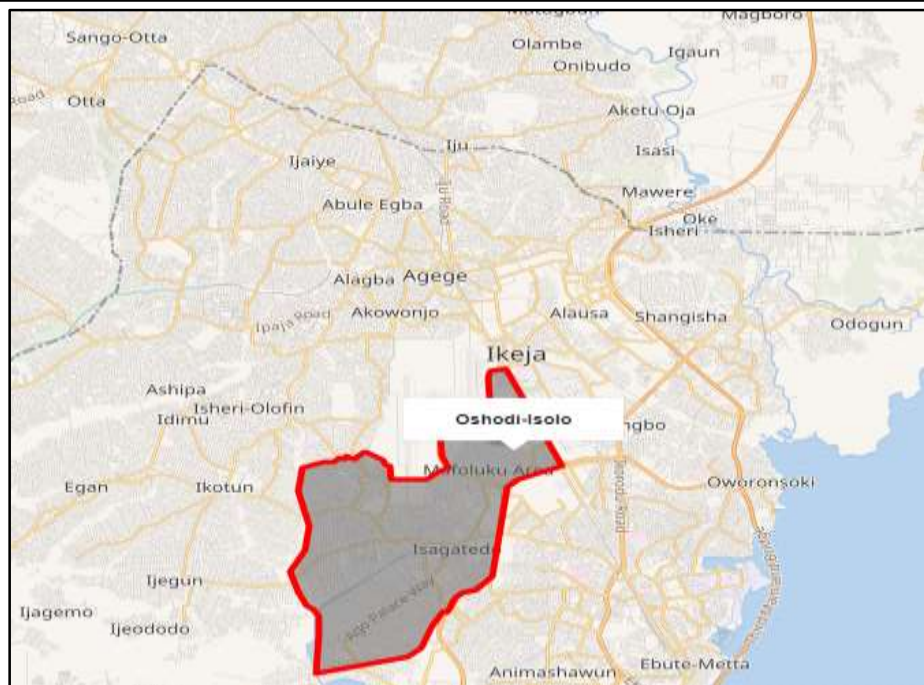
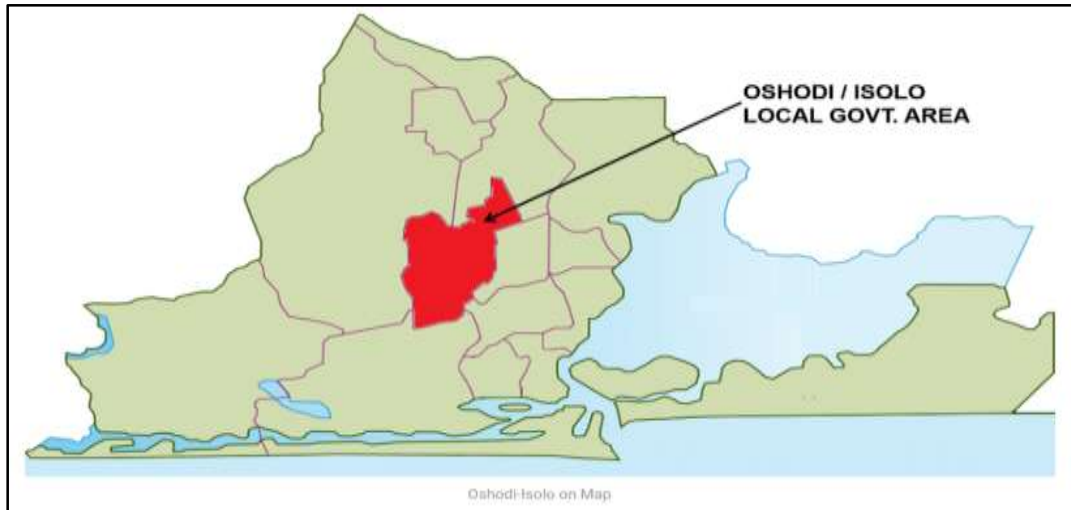


Fig 2. Showing the location map of Oshodi Isolo Source; Google Map, 2024



Fig 3. Showing the Oshodi Isolo

Scope of study

Oshodi-Isolo (Yoruba: *Oṣòdì-Ìsọlò*) is a Local Government Area (LGA) within Lagos State. It was formed by the second republic Governor of Lagos State, Alhaji Lateef Kayode Jakande, also known as 'Baba Kekere' and the first Executive Chairman of the Local Government was late Sir Isaac Ademolu Banjoko. The LGA is part of the Ikeja Division of Lagos State, Nigeria. At the 2006 Census it had a population of 621,509 people, and an area of 45 square kilometers. On the 1st of August 2021, Honorable Kehinde Oloyede Al-Marroof was elected for a first term into office as the Executive Chairman.

Total land area	17 sq mi (45 km ²)
Population size	931,300
Population density	54,000/sq mi (21,000/km ²)

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Urban violence in Lagos can have a significant impact on public spaces. For instance, areas that experience high levels of violence may become less frequented by residents, leading to a decline in their use and maintenance. This can result in neglected parks, playgrounds and other recreational areas. Additionally, public spaces may be seen as unsafe or dangerous, discouraging people from visiting or utilizing them. Similarly, some areas in Oshodi have been

impacted by urban violence, leading to a decline in the functionality, aesthetics as well as the sustainably-friendly environment.

Violence can have profound effects on urban spaces, and Oshodi, Lagos, is no exception. Oshodi has historically been known for its bustling market, transportation hub, and unfortunately, a reputation for crime and violence. Here are some ways violence may have affected the urban space of Oshodi:

Economic Impact: Violence can deter investment and economic activity in an area. In Oshodi, frequent reports of violence may discourage businesses from setting up shop or expanding their operations. This can lead to stagnation or decline in the local economy, affecting employment opportunities and livelihoods for residents.

Social Fragmentation: Violence can fracture social cohesion and trust among residents. In Oshodi, communities may become divided along ethnic, religious, or gang lines, leading to heightened tensions and conflicts within the urban space. Fear of violence can also isolate individuals and communities, reducing opportunities for positive social interaction.

Infrastructure Neglect: High levels of violence may divert resources away from infrastructure development and maintenance. In Oshodi, the focus of authorities and urban planners may shift towards addressing immediate security concerns rather than investing in long-term urban development projects. This can result in deteriorating infrastructure and inadequate public services, further exacerbating social and economic challenges in the area.

Spatial Segregation: Violence can contribute to the spatial segregation of urban spaces. In Oshodi, certain areas may become associated with higher levels of crime and violence, leading to the stigmatization and marginalization of those communities. This can further entrench socio-economic inequalities and limit opportunities for residents living in these areas.

Displacement and Gentrification: In some cases, violence may lead to the displacement of residents as they seek safer living environments. This can result in gentrification, where wealthier individuals or developers move into the area, driving up property prices and forcing out long-time residents. In Oshodi, this dynamic may contribute to the reshaping of the urban landscape and the displacement of vulnerable communities.

It's important to note that efforts to address violence in urban spaces like Oshodi require a multi-faceted approach, including investments in community policing, social services, economic development, and infrastructure improvements. By

addressing the root causes of violence and promoting inclusive urban planning, it's possible to create safer and more vibrant urban spaces for all residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the unrelenting social issues that face humankind is crime. Not easily wished away or ignored, crime has become a thorn in the flesh of human beings, especially in terms of human disposition, property and legitimate authority (Louis et al., 1981). In the complicated contemporary world, the situation is exceedingly disquieting. However, quite unlike many countries in Western Europe that have witnessed a large decline in crime over recent decades (McVie, 2017), police statistics do not indicate a declining crime picture in Lagos State. Therefore, the crime drop across different countries may sufficiently reflect the reality in some countries to have spurred some scholars to describe it as a 'near-universal drop' (Van Dijk et al., 2007: 16). Nevertheless, the same claim may not be correctly made with regard to the Lagos reality.

Paradoxically the world's poverty capital, Nigeria is today grappling with frightening crime rates, as armed robbery attacks, pickpocketing, shoplifting and advance fee frauds have multiplied owing to rising poverty levels and unemployment (Gulumbe et al. 2012, Adejoh et al., 2019). With the combined pressures of rising population growth and fast urbanization, crime has become a key social crisis in towns and cities throughout the world (Adigun, 2013; Badiora and Afon, 2013; Jayamala, 2008). Indeed, crime has become a global spectacle to which towns and cities are vulnerable (Kinsella, 2012; Pope, 2010). Victimization appears inevitable because the organization of towns, cities and urban centers is now not just complex but highly inhibiting of conformity to all social rules by the inhabitants (Badiora, 2012; Kinsella, 2012; Porter, 2010). To be sure, crime is not a spiritual occurrence since it has identifiable social causes. While some causes of crime are culture-driven (family values), others are system-induced (educational, political, law-enforcement, economic) and yet others are personality-induced. To this extent, poor parenting skills, peer pressure, drug and alcohol abuse, access to guns, joblessness and poverty are some of the root causes of crime (Melkonyan, 2012).

Considering the trends in situational or victimological criminology, crime is seen as the outcome of interactions between potential offenders and potential victims (Felson, 2002). It is in the context of this relationship that the 'act of crime alters the social definition of all principal role players and even bystanders in the

event – the actor, the person acted upon and yet the person who was present when the offence was committed' (Ayodele and Aderinto, 2015: 20). Therefore, the assumption that the characteristics and behavior of potential victims are the key factors in determining the levels of crime at the individual and collective levels (Van Kesteren and Van Dijk, 2010) is almost flawless. As such, as noted in the victimological literature, certain segments of the city population are more predisposed to being victims of crime. Several theoretical models exist in the literature to explain how the differential weakness of individuals to criminal victimization is influenced by their lifestyle or routine activities (Felson, 2002; Hindelang et al., 1978). For property offences, those owning easily stealable items such as electronic consumer goods are obvious targets. The criminal opportunity assumption holds that the more attractive targets there are in a particular place, the more crime poses a threat (Felson, 2002). Surveillance and other impediments prevent crimes from happening. It is not very likely that a bicycle will be stolen if its owner is closely watching it or if it is stored in a secure shed. In public spaces, the use of a secure lock decreases the likelihood that the bicycle will be stolen. In the same vein, a wealthy person is likely to seek more protection for their person and property.

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used for carrying out this research is based on the objectives of the paper and the availability of relevant information. Since the aim of this research have already been established as analyzing the factors that influence violence in relation to urban space in Oshodi- Isale Local government. The methodology used for the study involves qualitative, quantitative, personal observation, as well as desktop study. Thus, the study structure technique was utilized for this research work. The illustrative and systematic research strategy was utilized over the span of this investigation. However, the design strategy applied to this research was mixed design strategy; quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach stresses more on the situational constraints (which is very suitable for obtaining the analysis of the research problem) that sharpens inquiry and emphasizes on the qualities of entities and processes not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quality, amount of frequency making this strategy a well-detailed and rich data. The inductive analysis i.e., quantitative approach was however considered for the details or specifics of the

data to discover important patterns, inter-relationship of findings and guided analytical principles.

In order to effectively carry out this research, the satellite image of the study area was generated from Google earth pro to analyze the geographical overview of the study area. A reconnaissance survey was also done by the researcher to update the secondary information that was provided online.



Source- Google earth, 2024

Fig 4: Satellite imagery of Oshodi-Isolo Local government and its environs

Sampling Frame- From the satellite imagery above, it is already established that there are about 33 streets within Oshodi-Isale, Lagos.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| i. Adejumbi street | ii. Adekunle street | iii. Adewale crescent | iv. Adeyemi street |
| v. Afariogun street | vi. Akinpelu street | vii. Alimi Oke street | viii. Araromi street |
| ix. Banjoko Street | x. Boladale street | xi. Boye street | xii. Brown street |
| xiii. Church street | xiv. Enialonbinu street | xv. Ganikale close | xvi. Igbehinadun street |
| xvii. Inasa street | xviii. Ewenla street | xix. Ireti Oluwa street | |
| xx. Ishola Anigbujumo street | xxi. Kunle Akinosi street | xxii. Magbayoje street | |
| xxiii. MacCarthy street | xxiv. Mafoluku road | xxv. Mosaku street | |
| xxvi. Okun Owa street | xxvii. Oredeyin street | xxviii. Orona street | |

xxix. Owoeni street

xxx. Oyetayo street (tertiary road)

xxxi. Sabiolegbe street

xxxii. Seinde Callisto street (tertiary road)

xxxiii. Soneye street

Sampling size: in every 3 streets was randomly selected (A total of 11 streets were surveyed for this research). They are;

Adejumobi street, Afariogun street, Araromi street, Banjoko Street, Brown Street, Church Street, Igbehinadun street, Ewenla street, Mafoluku street, Seinde Callisto street, Soneye street.

Data Need Matrix; The data required for the purpose of the study is based on the three research objectives and is summarized below;

S/N	Objectives	Data and Information	Sources
1.	To understand the key factors of urban violence in the study area.	Social, economic and environmental effects of this implementation strategies.	Field survey
2.	To analyze the urban morphology of the study area and how it can be influenced by violence.	Social and Economic impact the entrance fee cost.	Field survey
3.	To recommend urban spatial planning approaches that will promote sustainable environment to subdue the impact of violence in this study area	Various factors that could influence recreational planning and tourism development in Lagos state.	Field survey and secondary data

SOURCE; AUTHOR'S FIELD SURVEY, 2024.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In the course of this research work, the use of both quantitative and qualitative approach was used to gather information. The quantitative approach used primary data gotten from 11(sampling frame) out of the 33streets (sampling size) captured on the satellite imagery that falls under the Oshodi Isale zone. The qualitative approach focuses on the secondary data gotten from the internet to influence the result of the data collected from the primary data.

The interview method was utilized for this analysis, as well as the use of online journals and articles (Secondary data). The interview was conducted with community's stakeholders and the following questions were asked;

1. How long have you been in the community?

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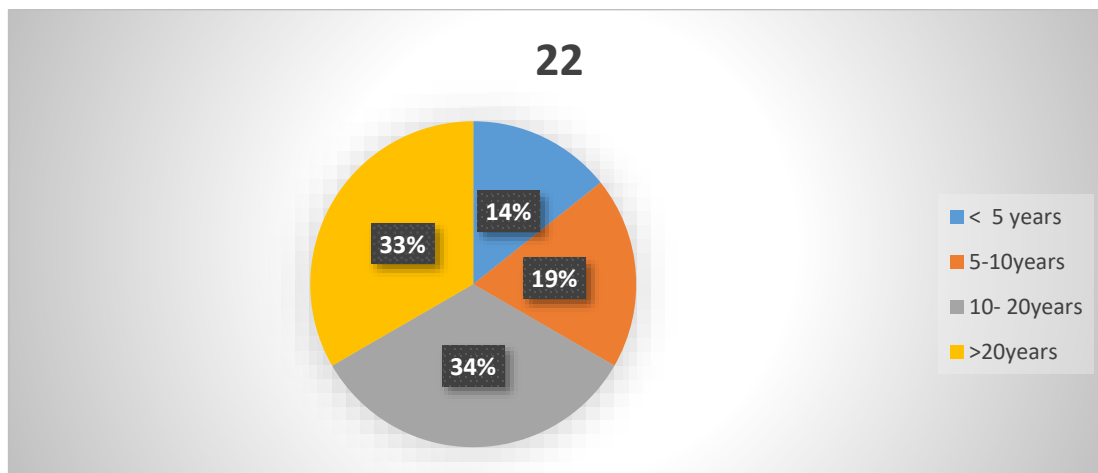
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2. Are there government authorities in charge of the community orderliness? If yes, please signify
3. What are the facilities needed to make your community more sustainable?
4. In your opinion, how peaceful is your community and rate it from 1-5 ?
5. Oshodi community is known as one of the most violent places in Lagos, what do you think could be the reason(s) for this?
6. How have the arrangements/pattern of this streets influenced crime rate in your community?
7. Are there any organizations that engage unemployed youths in the community. If yes, please signify
8. Do you have any suggestions as regards how to solve the violence invading your community?

From each of the 11 streets, I got two community stakeholders to answer this interview questions and this was the summary of the analysis from all 22 respondents.

How long have each respondent been living in the community? -

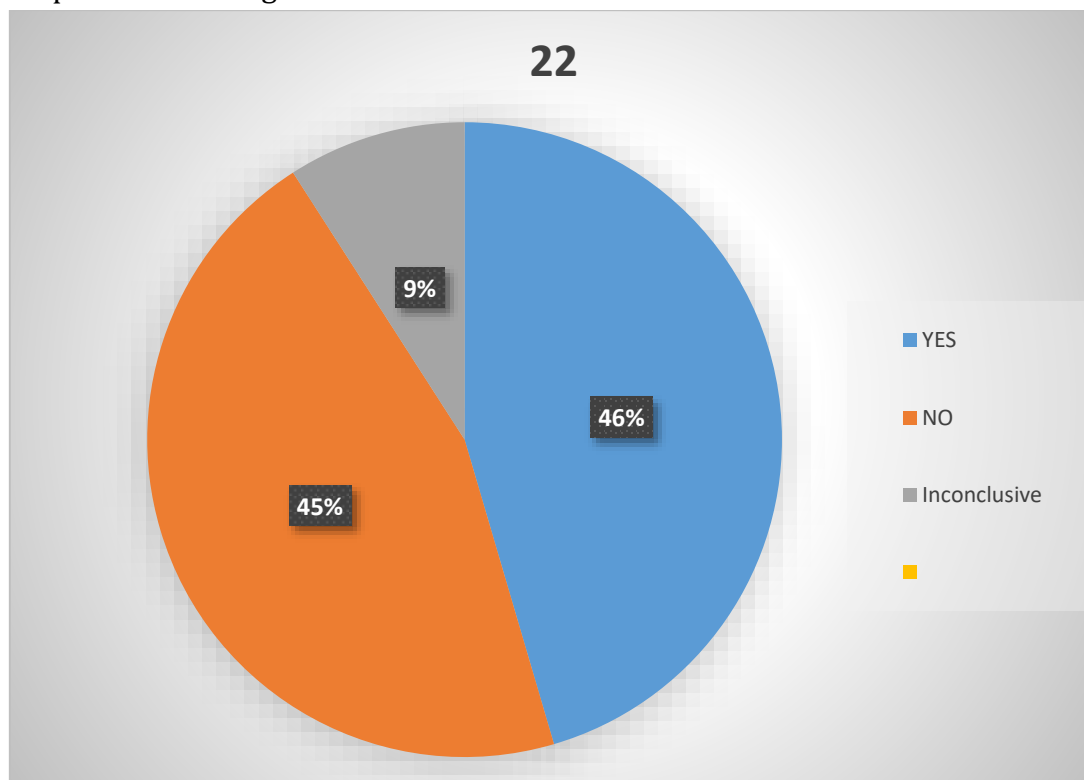
From the analysis below, majority of the respondents have been living in Oshodi Isale for over 10years while very few of them have lived there for less than 10years. It was earlier established from the secondary data gathered in our previous chapters that majority of the residents' of this community have their cultural background in the study area thus making our analysis a more refined one.



Source; field survey, 2024

Are there government authorities in charge of the community orderliness?

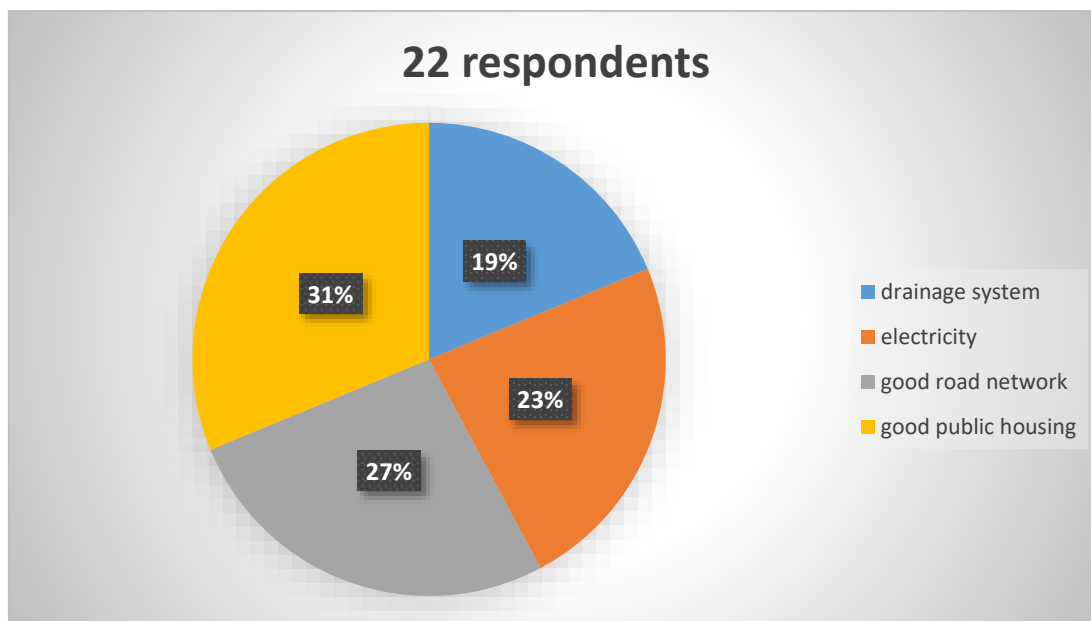
Imperatively, the government authorities in charge of environmental orderliness in the Oshodi-Isale community includes LAWMA, LASPPPA, LASBCA and some other relevant authorities. from the analysis below, 45% of the respondents are of the opinion that there are no government authorities in charge of the orderliness of the community, 46% of the respondents are of the opinion that there are government authorities in charge of environmental orderliness in the study area while the remaining 9% of the respondents are indecisive. This implies that a large number of the respondents are unsure of the statutory responsibilities of government authorities.



Source; field survey, 2024

What are the facilities needed to make your community more sustainable?

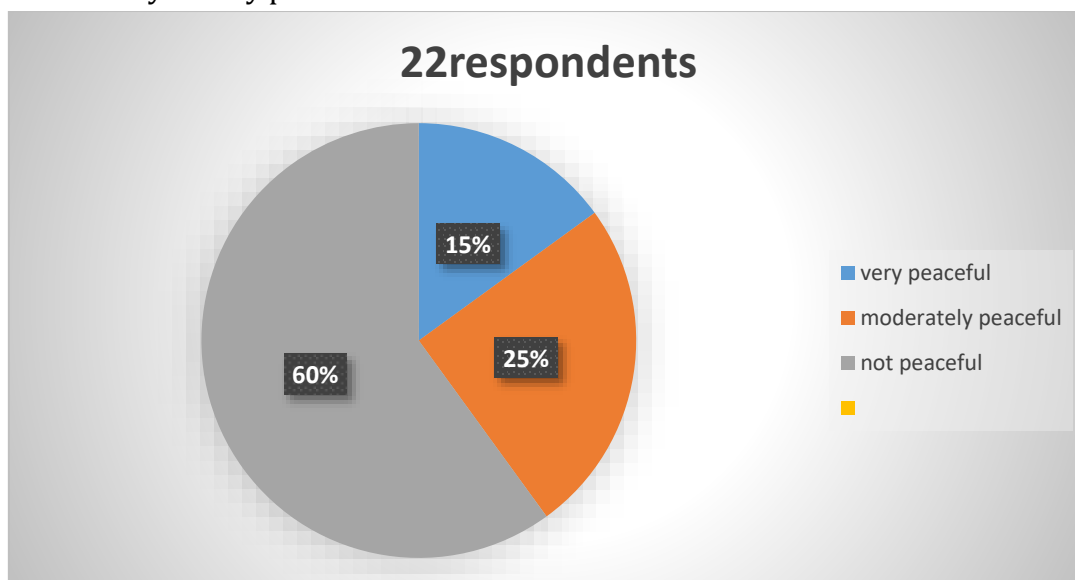
From the analysis below, 31% of the respondents are of the opinion that the most needed infrastructural facility is good and affordable public housing, 19% assumes that the most needed facility is good drainage system, 23% assumes that the most needed facility is electricity, 27% of the responded suggested that the most needed facility is good road network.



Source; field survey, 2024

In your opinion, how peaceful is your community and rate it from 1-5?

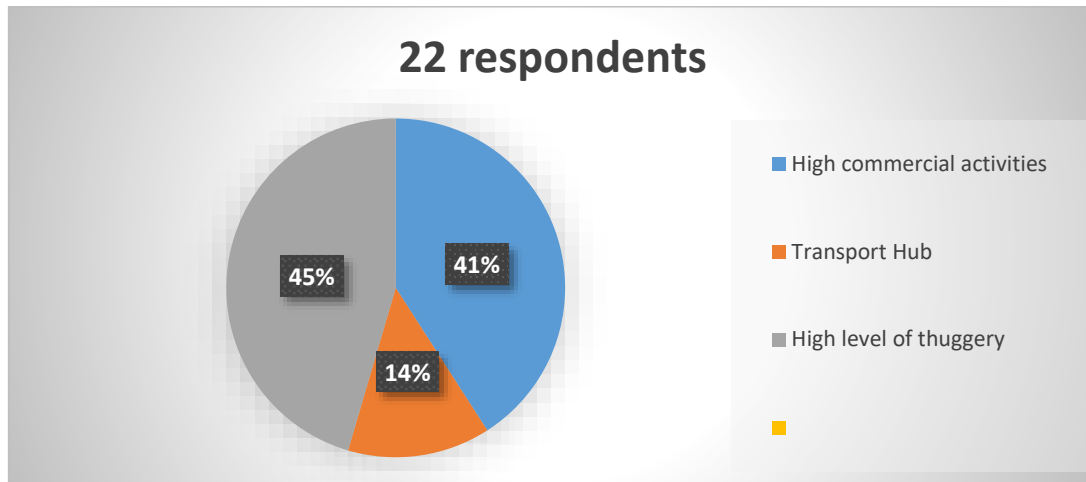
From the analysis carried out, the chart below shows that 60% of the respondents opined that the community is not peaceful, 25% of the respondents said that the community is moderately peaceful, and 15% of the respondents opined that the community is very peaceful.



Source; field survey, 2024

Oshodi community is known as one of the most violent places in Lagos, what do you think could be the reason(s) for this?

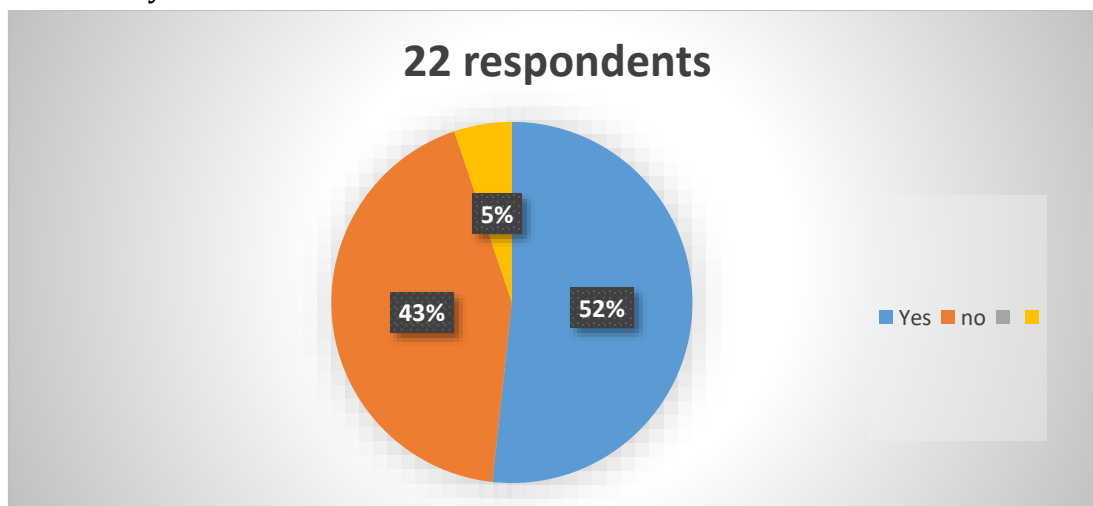
A large of the respondents are of the opinion that the major reason why the community is one of the most violent places in Lagos is because of the high level of commercial activities.



Source; field survey, 2024

Have the arrangements/pattern of this streets influenced crime rate in your community?

From the analysis carried out over 57% of the respondents suggested that the arrangement and the pattern have influenced crime rate in the Oshodi community as a whole.



Source; field survey, 2024

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

All over the world, violence can have a significant effect on the space and arrangement of any urban area. It is a more prevailing issue in Oshodi, Lagos because of the presence of various factors such as high crime rate as a result present of thugs, high commercial activities, increase in development of shanty towns in the area and is gradually turning into slum development. Imperatively, the transport system has also sprung up further development of violence because of the high number of NURTW (both official and non-official workers). Violence can have a significant impact on the sense of safety and security, discourage economic activities, and hinder community development. The case of thuggery and crime rate is definitely a subject of concern and in order to reduce the impact of violence in the area, implementing effective environmental policies is crucial. Some possible policies could include improving street lighting, increasing police presence, enhancing community engagement, and promoting urban regeneration initiatives. These measures can help create a safer and more vibrant environment for the residents of Oshodi.

In order to promote urban regeneration in Oshodi, specific initiatives can be implemented, such as;

1. Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized spaces- transforming unused areas into parks, recreational spaces, or community gardens can revitalize the neighborhood and provide safe and inviting environments for residents.
2. Infrastructure improvements- upgrading roads, sidewalks, and public transportation systems can enhance connectivity and accessibility within the area, making it more attractive for businesses and residents.
3. Mixed- use development- Encouraging the construction of mixed-use buildings that combine residential, commercial and recreational spaces can create a vibrant and diverse community attracting investment and improving the overall livability of the area.
4. Community involvement and empowerment – engaging residents in decision-making processes and empowering local community organizations can foster a sense of ownership and pride, leading to sustainable urban development.



Fig. 5. shows the level of activities going on along Bolade, Oshodi community



Fig. 6. shows a side view of the Brt buses packed along the road



Fig. 7. shows the view of activities going on Along Brown Street in Oshodi.



Fig. 8. Shows the view of parking activities going on at Bolade street in Oshodi.



Fig. 9. shows a view of the market section

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