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Providing Adequate Security for Sustainable Development of Residential Neighbourhoods in Oyo Town

Arc. Rasheed Sekore Busari, PhD[1]; & Abdulhameed Folorunso Busari[2]

[1]Department of Technology Education, Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Oyo. [2]Architecture and Building Division, ARKRAS Consultancy Services, Oyo.
Corresponding Author: sekorerasheed@gmail.com
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Abstract

Security is a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable development in residential neighbourhoods, as it directly influences economic growth, social cohesion, and overall quality of life. In Oyo town, rapid urbanization has led to increased security concerns, including burglary, armed robbery, kidnapping, and property vandalism. These challenges hinder external investment, disrupt community harmony, reduce residents' confidence in law enforcement, and lower property value. The study examines the security landscape of residential neighbourhoods in Oyo town, identifying the key challenges and assessing the effectiveness of existing security measures in fostering sustainable development. Different crime prevention options in the residential neighbourhoods in the three local governments in the town were examined to establish the surveillance strategies being employed by the residents and their effectiveness in the safety of lives and property. It was found that areas with improved security infrastructure, such as street lighting, neighbourhood watch programs, and community policing, experienced lower crime rates and enhanced economic productivity, while some areas were not able to provide enough facilities for crime prevention. The study revealed that there is an urgent need for comprehensive security measures that integrate community-based policing, smart surveillance technology, improved urban infrastructure, and active citizens' participation in security provision efforts in the neighbourhoods in particular and the town in general. Utilizing the data from the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the current security landscape and offers recommendations for enhancing safety in these neighbourhoods.

Keywords: Residential Neighbourhood, Sustainable Development, Urbanization, Security Architecture, Security Landscape, Security Surveillance.

Introduction

The rapid urbanization of many developing countries has exposed cities and towns to multiple security problems being witnessed nowadays. This rapid urbanization is a global phenomenon (Ghosh et al., 2021; Nourbakhsh, 2023; Francis, 2023; Adedeji, 2023; World Cities Report, 2020), which has been responsible for economic, social, and environmental challenges such as increased population growth and infrastructure development (Qui et al., 2021), threatening the sustainable development of urban areas (Kanchana, 2022; Li et al., 2024; Yasin, 2020; Hove et al., 2013; Cobbinah et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2021; Shen et al., 2022). The unchecked growth has given rise to numerous challenges (Zinkernagel et al., 2018), of which security is actually one of the major concerns plaguing the communities (Obasa, 2023), as the United Nations Development Programme (2022) reported that six in seven people worldwide are plagued by feelings of insecurity. Nigeria is experiencing rapid and unprecedented urbanization, putting enormous strain on its resources and infrastructure (Farrel, 2018; Aliyu, 2017; Awwalu, 2023; Bloch, 2015; Fox, 2018; Kolo et al., 2023; Ojo, 2022; Abubakar and Aina, 2019), with great challenges in security and significant consequences, since urban areas like Oyo are increasingly popular destinations for those seeking improved quality of life and household opportunities (Adedeji, 2023; Telema, 2023; Gebre and Gabremedhin, 2019; Pratomo et al., 2022; Abdullal, 2022; Pastha et al., 2011), which creates an environment that is conducive to criminal activities. This unbalanced situation has resulted in increased vulnerability to crime, undermining the quality of life and hindering sustainable development. Security, as a cornerstone for achieving sustainable residential environments and an indicator for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 (Yan et al., 2023), which aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, is becoming more complex to face in present housing estates. Ensuring that cities and communities are secure is crucial for overall sustainability and the well-being of the residents (United Nations, 2020). Security and sustainable development are interconnected (Granit, 2015; Du Plessis, 2016; Omwirhiren, 2021; Nwambuko and Iloh, 2021; Siloko, 2024; Julnar and Debo, 2024), with security being essential for realizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and sustainable development contributing to a more secure community. UNDP (1994) envisioned sustainable human development as the means of achieving security. Security, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is a state of being free from danger or threat, but it is indeed a complex and multifaceted concept that can be interpreted in so many ways (Akanji, 2022), and is also a contested concept (Floyd, 2008; De Bhal, 2014; Crawford and Hutchinson, 2016; Riaz, 2023). The definition lacks consensus among security experts and is used in different ways, but still connotes safety in

whichever way it is used. Security plays a very crucial role in responding to and preventing crimes, and is a basic and necessary condition for the development of any society (Ivancik, 2021), and serves as a foundation for healthy communities and societal development (Kapuku et al., 2024; Mourariev and Avramenko, 2020; Busari, 2022; Khadiji and Gbalehteimouri, 2024; Uzuegbu and Ogbofa, 2020). The concept of human security, as defined by UNDP (1994), is safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression, as well as protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily lives, whether in homes, jobs, or communities. This definition falls in line with urban security, which is defined as measures and strategies put in place to ensure the safety, stability, and well-being of people, infrastructure, and the environment in cities and towns (Kielek, 2022; Cavalini, 2021). Insecurity in urban areas leads to crime, which can be caused by various factors such as poor infrastructure, limited community engagement, resource constraints, environmental factors, socio-economic factors, and lack of effective governance (Oluwaseun et al., 2024; Thusi and Miambo, 2023). Infrastructure provision significantly affects the level of insecurity in the built environment, as poorly designed or maintained infrastructure can create opportunities for crime and violence (Ukim, 2021; Hussein et al., 2024). The built environment witnesses these crimes and insecurity as a result of infrastructure provision and infrastructure deficit (Harre-Young et al., 2012; Shach-Pinsly, 2016; Shach-Pinsly and Ganor, 2021; Agboola et al., 2018), which make the communities uncomfortable for the residents.

Security measures are vital for both preventing crimes and responding to them effectively in order to provide a safe environment. Effective crime prevention in residential neighbourhoods involves a multifaceted approach, which Md Sakip (2018) and Akigbami et al. (2024) categorized into four. These are the legal system or the enforcement of police control systems, social approaches, approaches relating to crime perpetration, and approaches through environmental design. These methods aim at reducing the future risk of crime (Olayede and Lizam, 2016) and do not eradicate crime completely in neighbourhoods (Piroozfar et al., 2019; College of Policing, 2022; Onucha et al., 2024; Weisburd and Eck, 2004).

Crime prevention can be achieved through both the legal system and police enforcement, otherwise known as conventional justice. Police enforcement is aimed at preventing crime by apprehending offenders and maintaining public order in the community. The Nigerian Police Force is at the forefront of the fight against insecurity of various categories in the country (Arisukwu et al., 2020). The rate of crime is alarming and worrisome, with the involvement of various categories of citizens participating in this heinous act that leads to loss of life and property (Kapacu et al., 2024; Iherue, 2023).

The police are regarded as the major agent of security that protects lives and property, both within the home and outside the home. This big expectation has not been effective and has been faulted by citizens and organizations. Even the number of police in the Nigerian environment is such a low figure to cope with the expansion and situation of residential neighbourhoods (Olajide and Diah, 2016). This is causing serious concern, impacting various aspects of human life and hindering development to the extent that people are displaced from a general feeling of fear and unease. The Nigerian police officer-to-citizen ratio of 1:66, which

is a serious concern (Badejo, 2020), calls for other strategies, which brought in community policing, a philosophy that promotes partnership and a problem-solving approach to public safety. Community policing is a broader approach that involves various strategies, collaboration, and a focus on improving the quality of life in a community (Friedman, 1996). This concept recognizes the fact that the police do not have the necessary proactive and reactive capability and capacity to meet the challenges of combating crime. Community policing meetings involve a broader scope of residents, religious groups, occupations, and age groups in the community so that all residents' needs and perspectives are included in discussions of issues and problems facing the community (Ikuteyijo, 2009; Oyinloye et al., 2023). This institution is normally led by the police, which is formal, and operates Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) in major towns and urban centres. Community-based policing is another notion borne out of the lack of trust or access to formal policing, which refers more broadly to informal, grassroots efforts initiated by the community itself (Aina, 2024). This system fills the security gap left by formal policing, with a view to improving community participation in policing and creating support for the formal policing system (Albert and Adeniji, 2025; Akinyemi, 2021). This created the Amotekun Corps, Western Nigeria Security Network, which operates with deep community involvement, using local knowledge and traditional methods, although they share intelligence with formal police or operate under a state framework. Their community-led efforts play a crucial role in maintaining security and order without direct involvement from formal police institutions (Soluade, 2025).

The social approach to crime prevention focuses on addressing the underlying socio-economic factors that contribute to crime, with the aim of reducing crime through community development and intervention rather than solely relying on law enforcement. These efforts support law enforcement by influencing macro-structural social factors contributing to crime in communities (Bruce and Gold, 2005; Siegelaar and Ballard, 2023). Social methods of crime prevention adopt a community participation approach by engaging people in community empowerment activities through education and information programmes. The approach discourages people from partaking in criminal activities caused by poverty, unemployment, and lack of education (Mussa, 2019; Mussa, 2023).

Traditional approaches to crime prevention, particularly related to the perpetrators, often focus on retribution, deterrence, and incapacitation (John, 2024; Olayinka, 2021; Raymond, 1979). This crime prevention is based on where individuals commit crimes and relates to the area they live in and the tradition of the community against such acts (Farrington, 1995). Traditional methods in which native people controlled crime and maintained order made use of elders' councils, chiefs, village heads, etc., who functioned to interpret the norms of behaviour in a particular community and adjudicate justice as laid down from generation to generation (Ogbonna et al., 2023). Retribution aims to punish offenders for their actions, deterrence seeks to discourage future crimes through the threat of punishment, and incapacitation aims to remove offenders from society to prevent them from committing further crimes. In addition to the three mentioned, other traditional approaches to crime prevention

include rehabilitation, which seeks to reform offenders, and restitution, which focuses on compensating victims. Traditional crime control methods include fine payment, compensation, ritual cleansing, trial by ordeal, ridicule and gossip, masquerade institutions, banishment, confinement, ostracism, capital punishment, ritual cleansing, etc. These traditional styles are effective in managing immediate threats, enforcing laws, and deterring criminal behaviour in communities. They are best used in combination with social and community-based strategies for a more balanced and sustainable approach to crime prevention (Muhammad, 2024; Igbashangev, 2024), and underscore the importance of traditional crime prevention methods in maintaining law and order.

Approaches through environmental design, otherwise known as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), is a multidisciplinary strategy aimed at deterring criminal behaviour through thoughtful design and effective use of the built environment (Macano et al., 2018; Cozens et al., 2005; Sohn, 2016; Crowe, 2000; Cozeus, 2015). The concept of CPTED was first introduced in criminology in 1971 (Jeffery, 1971), emphasizing the role of environmental design in crime prevention. The concept integrates principles from urban planning, architecture, and criminology to reduce crime and enhance the quality of life by influencing the physical environment (Adigun et al., 2024; Ceccato and Bratingham, 2024; Arabi et al., 2019). The research on CPTED has evolved through multiple stages, each adding new dimensions to how the built environment can deter criminal behaviour (Marzbali et al., 2016; Piroozfar, 2019; Lee, 2016; Komal, 2023; Wen et al., 2024; Olajide and Diah, 2016; Olajide and Diah, 2017). These evolutions reflect a growing understanding of the relationship between spatial design, community interaction, technology, and environmental sustainability. There are three generations of CPTED and their relevance to crime prevention in the built environment. The first generation by Jeffery (1971) emphasized the use of the built environment to deter crime through natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance. Oscar Newman's Defensible Space Theory further explained how spatial design enhances a sense of ownership and control in communities (Newman, 1972). These principles have been implemented in urban layouts, including residential fencing, street lighting, and visibility improvements in neighbourhoods (Ramadhoan and Ufran, 2024). This includes providing support through architectural designs (Folorunso et al., 2022; Ni et al., 2018) and planning procedures to combat crime and improve quality of life (Armitage, 2016; Cozens and Love, 2015). The second generation of CPTED, which is social and community-oriented prevention, incorporates social ecology, emphasizing community participation, social cohesion, and cultural awareness as critical components of crime prevention (Saville and Cleveland, 1997). This has also been applied in various urban settings. The most recent evolution is the third generation CPTED, which integrates environmental sustainability and technology into crime prevention strategies. This includes the use of smart surveillance systems, eco-friendly infrastructure, and resilient urban design (Cozeus and Love, 2015; Cozeus, 2008). Another one is Situational Crime Prevention (SCP), which is categorized into three generations. The first generation is otherwise known as social prevention, which is focused on the root causes of crime, such as poverty, inequality, family background, and

education (Crawford, 1998). The second generation of SCP is focused on immediate and physical opportunities for crime (Clarke, 1995), while the third generation is the community-oriented and holistic prevention focused on integrated, multi-agency, and place-based solutions that include both environmental and social strategies (Ekblom, 2001). Situational crime prevention focuses on the settings where crime occurs, rather than those community-specific criminal acts (Clarke, 1995; Shariah, 2017; Gnerrette, 2017). SCP does not focus on the motivations of the criminal, but indeed on how situations and environments can be managed to reduce opportunities for crime. The two principles are related and co-opted into CPTED for effective crime prevention. They are target hardening, which consists of supplementary measures to physically reinforce safety, while access control is a core principle for directing and limiting movement in and out of spaces.

The security landscape of residential neighbourhoods in Oyo town has undergone significant changes over the years, transforming from periods of relative stability to phases of heightened insecurity concerns surrounding the town. The town is sprawling at a rapid rate and is not exempted from various crimes that many cities in Nigeria are experiencing due to urbanization (Okegbola, 2019; Salam, 2023; Rafiu et al., 2018). Oyo's expansion presents security challenges in its neighbourhoods, including increases in various kinds of crime rates, disputes over land and other resources, and potentials for violence. These challenges require proactive measures to address the combating strategies of crime prevention being used and their effectiveness to ensure the safety and well-being of residents for sustainable development of the residential neighbourhoods in Oyo town.

Literature Review

Globally, the security of residential communities has been linked to sustainable development, with effective policing and community engagement seen as critical for social stability (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2011). These authors highlight the need for a holistic and collaborative approach to ensuring neighbourhood security, which is essential for achieving sustainable development goals. Urban safety is not only a matter of reducing crime but also of creating secure environments that enable economic and social flourishing (UN-Habitat, 2020). Strategies such as community policing, environmental design interventions, and inclusive security governance have been emphasized as vital to promoting sustainable urban development.

In Nigeria, security remains a pressing developmental challenge. Rapid urbanization, with high youth unemployment and weak formal policing capacity, has combined to produce rising insecurity across cities (Akinlabi, 2017; Akinlabi, 2024; Kenku and Umar, 2025). Studies highlight that while the Nigerian Police Force is the primary state actor, its operational capacity is limited, often resulting in reliance on informal mechanisms, such as vigilante groups, community self-help, and regional outfits like the Western Nigeria Security Network, regarded as Amotekun (Otu and Apeh, 2022). Evaluations of Amotekun show that it has been welcomed in many southwestern states, including Oyo, as a supplement to formal policing, although coordination and accountability issues persist (Dogi et al., 2024; Chi and Dayil, 2020;

Olubade and Ogunnoiki, 2020; Araba and Ajao, 2024; Omitola et al., 2024; Ajiboye, 2024; Shaibu et al., 2024).

In addition, infrastructure factors such as inadequate street lighting and poor urban planning contribute to feelings of insecurity and actual criminal incidents. Oyelami and Olamiju (2023) found a strong positive correlation between adequate lighting and reduced crime, particularly at night, and increased perception of crime risk, underscoring the role of environmental conditions in shaping security outcomes. This form of weakened infrastructure increases crime rates, fostering an environment of fear and constituting a major concern for urban safety.

Despite its cultural and historical significance, Oyo town has received relatively limited academic attention in terms of security provision. One of the most notable contributions is the study by Ojedokun and Ogundipe (2017), which explored motorcycle theft victimization in Oyo town through qualitative interviews with commercial motorcyclists. The study revealed systemic policing inadequacies, such as delayed response times and ineffective patrol systems, and showed how riders developed self-protective coping strategies in the absence of reliable state protection. This work highlights the lived experiences of urban residents but does not extend into broader community-wide prevention strategies. Ayodele (2015) also examined crime-reporting practices among market women in Oyo town. The findings revealed significant underreporting of crimes, driven by fear of reprisals, lack of trust in the police, and perception of inefficiency in the justice system. This points directly to a critical disconnect between residents and formal security institutions. Ekpo et al. (2024) also conducted an evaluation on the location of security installations in Oyo using geographic information systems, which revealed that the town is underserved with security provisions. These studies exposed the challenges which the town is facing.

The foregoing clearly demonstrates that studies specific to Oyo town are fragmented and narrow in scope. The literature covered focuses on specific crime categories, such as motorcycle theft and market-related crime, rather than overall community security systems. The documents on perceptions and experiences of insecurity lack the mapping of strategies being used by the residents to prevent crime in various communities. The literature did not offer insight into the role of environmental conditions without considering broader urban design and socio-cultural dimensions of security.

Therefore, there is no holistic empirical study that examines security provisions across residential communities in Oyo town, integrating formal policing, informal/traditional security actors, and environmental features. The gap underscores the need for the present study in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of how security is structured, experienced, and sustained in Oyo town, and how it can be strengthened for sustainable community development.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Oyo Town, comprising three different local government areas with a large expanse of land and a preponderant increase in the size of residential neighbourhoods. The three local government areas are Oyo East, Oyo West, and Atiba Local

Governments. Four residential neighbourhoods were purposively selected from each of the three local governments. The study adopted a qualitative and explorative case study design. This design is suitable for investigating security and sustainability issues as lived and observed in their natural settings. The researchers were able to interact directly with the physical environment and community stakeholders while conducting systematic audits of the communities.

Residential areas purposively chosen represent variations in settlement type, density, socio-economic class, and planning status, covering diversity of security conditions and built environment forms. A guided walk through each residential community with local leaders was conducted to identify areas of concern, hotspots, and spaces considered safe and unsafe. Community leaders, e.g., bales, estate agents, youth leaders, religious leaders, and neighbourhood watch coordinators, were engaged through informal and conversational interviews. Discussions were focused on security challenges experienced in the communities, measures currently adopted for crime prevention, local initiatives and cultural mechanisms for maintaining order, and perception of environmental features that support or undermine safety. An interaction with the Divisional Police Officers (DPOs), crime officers, and community policing units was also held to examine crime trends, hotspots, effectiveness of existing patrols, partnerships with community vigilantes, and other relevant security interventions. This allowed adequate understanding of the collaboration, trust, and gaps in the communities. Efforts were made to anonymize crime records and details obtained from these security officers. Group discussions were also held with residents and other groups in the communities to explore perception of safety and community-based strategies being employed in various communities.

Table 1: Residential Neighbourhoods for the study

Local Government	Residential neigbourhood	Location
Oyo east	Araromi Layout	Araromi
	AsamuLayout	Kosobo
	Abojupa/Asamu	Akinmorin Road
	Mabolaje	Mobolaje
Oyo West	Gedu Housing Scheme	Iseyin Road
	Celestial Area Layout	Celestial
	Irepodun Housing	Iseyin Road
	Oyo State Housing Corporation	Iseyin Road
Atiba	Oyegbolu Layout	Saabo
	Oyekola Housing Scheme	Boroboro
	Irepodun Layout	Oyo / Ogbomoso Road
	Elegbo Housing Scheme	Bale Agbe Road

A recent map of the town was also acquired to locate the strategic positions of the security outfits in the three local governments. This was carried out using hand-held Global Positioning Systems to establish their coordinates, locate them on the map, and examine their distribution

within the local governments they serve. Global Positioning System (GPS) data on the locations of security outfits in the town were also used to create visual maps showing security locations in the three local governments.

CPTED was also carried out in different neighbourhoods with elaborate observations to ascertain and carefully study the gadgets in use for security operations. The neighbourhoods were also examined through movement along the roads to ascertain the compliance of the architectural and physical plan of the neighbourhoods with the CPTED strategy. The elements examined are:

(i) Natural surveillance: Sightlines, visibility across public spaces, presence of blind spots, windows, overlooking streets.
(ii) Territoriality: Clear boundary markers, fencing, compound demarcations, neighbourhood signage, evidence of ownership
(iii) Access control: Gates, barriers, cul-de-sacs, controlled entry points
(iv) Activity support: Existence of communal spaces and social activities in public areas
(v) Maintenance and management: Conditions of streets, buildings, vegetations, street lighting
(vi) Surveillance technology: CCTV cameras, alarm systems, watch posts or local patrol stations
(vii) Environmental hazards: Abandoned buildings, overgrown vegetations, blocked alleys, poorly lit paths.

The elements were documented through field notes and photographs detailing security features in each community. Data obtained were organized into categories corresponding to CPTED elements and narratives. The transcribed interaction notes were coded inductively and deductively, focusing on the CPTED themes as listed

Results and Discussion

a. Legal system or the enforcement of policed system

The security provision of the police in Oyo town plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety of residential neighbourhoods. The Oyo State Police Command has administrative headquarters in each of the local governments in order to maintain law and order. They provide regular patrols in some residential areas, which assist in preventing crime and responding quickly to incidents, whereas some areas are too far from their offices. This is shown in the map (Figure 1), whereby the administrative headquarters of the Nigerian Police Force are located along the same route in Oyo town. Atiba Local Government and Oyo East Local Government are about 1 km apart, which is from Durbar to the opposite of the Federal School of Surveying, where the office is located. The interior of Atiba Local Government areas is not well served from this office, as it is located on the federal road boundary between Oyo East Local Government and Atiba Local Government. Likewise, Oyo West Local Government is also badly affected, as the location also falls on Iseyin Road (Gedu Area), while other areas are completely not attended to due to distance, as shown in Figure 1.

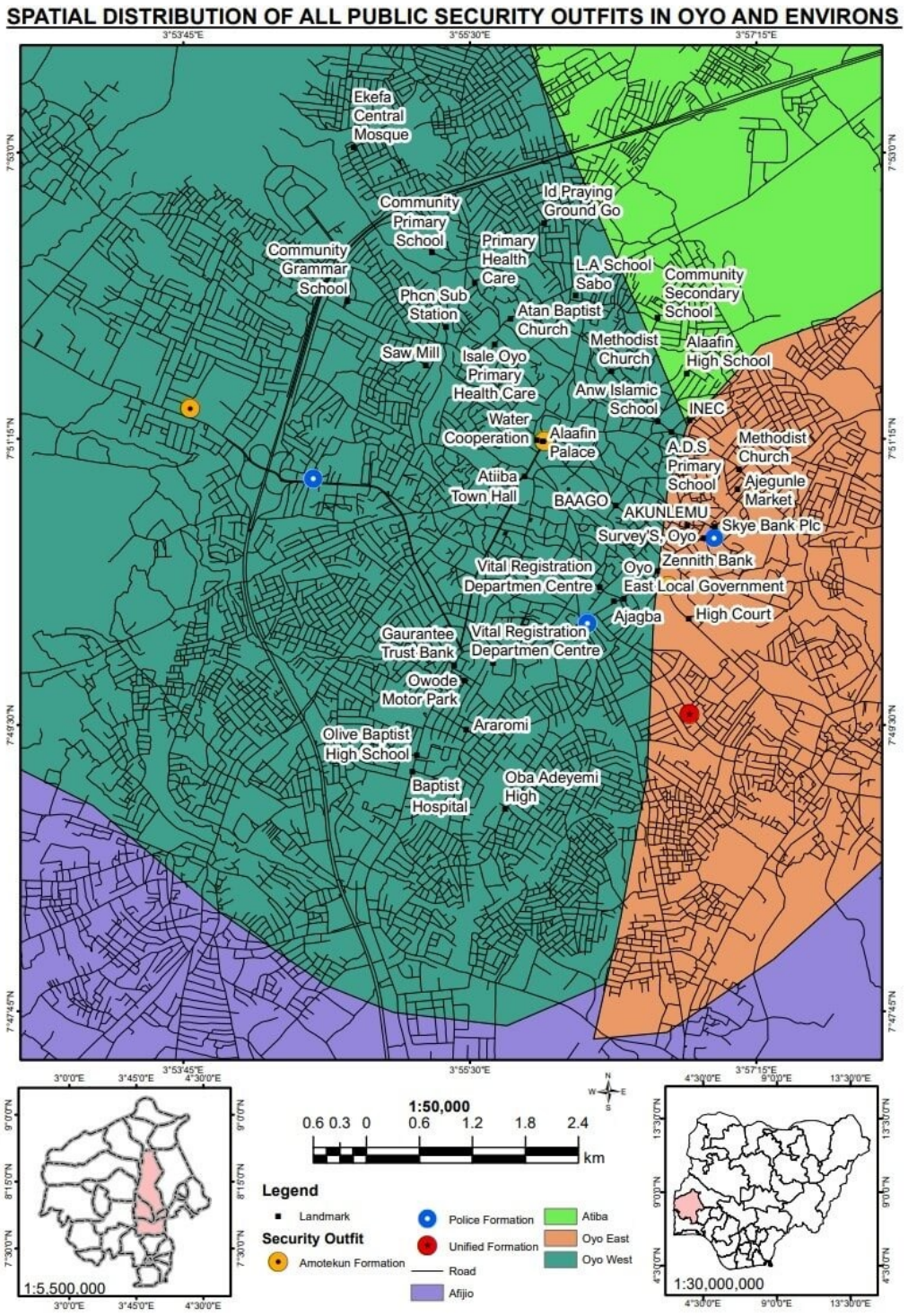


Figure 1: Public security outfits in Oyo Town

Community policing provided by the Western Nigerian Security Network (Amotekun Corps) is also affected by these poorly planned locational factors. Amotekun Corps for Oyo East, Oyo West, and Atiba Local Governments are located in Government Reserved Area (Ori Oke),

Iseyin Road (AISU), and Alaafin Palace Roundabout, Oyo. Effective surveillance of the residential neighbourhoods is also difficult because they are not centrally placed to serve people in residential neighbourhoods. The majority of the residential neighbourhoods in the town find it difficult to contact these law enforcement agencies when the need arises. In Atiba Local Government, where the residential neighbourhood of Elegbo is located, a high cost outlay is required to get in touch with these security agents for security operations. These residential neighbourhoods rely heavily on community-based initiatives, such as neighbourhood watch, for effective security in the area. The community leadership also works with these community-based initiatives and participates in the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), which is a community-based organization that aims to promote positive relationships between the police and the public and trash out security issues affecting residential neighbourhoods. The communities in the various neighbourhoods studied are members of the PCRC of their local government councils.

The findings here corroborate the study of Badejo (2020), which effectively emphasized the failure of the police to handle the security of the neighbourhoods effectively, with the lower number of officer-to-citizen ratio. Amen (2020) and Albert and Adeniji (2025) also corroborate the need for community policing for effective surveillance of the neighbourhoods to enhance safety. The community-based efforts support security initiatives that promote safety and security in the communities (Soluade, 2025).

b. Social Approach to Crime Prevention

In Oyo Town, different empowerment initiatives are experienced at different times in order to stem the tide of insecurity. These empowerment programs focus on skills development, entrepreneurship, and job creation that can help address underlying issues that may contribute to insecurity in residential neighbourhoods. Politicians at various levels, such as senators, House of Representatives members, House of Assembly members, etc., do play a vital role in addressing security problems in different residential neighbourhoods. The Oyo State Youth Empowerment Programme also does this in the state by potentially equipping youth with skills and knowledge to contribute positively to their communities. Oyo Town is noted for institutions that offer professional diploma programs that can equip individuals with valuable skills, enhancing their employability and contributing to a more stable community. The rich in the town also empower people to reduce security risks, and the newly installed Alaafin of Oyo has commenced the programme to empower 2,000 youths in various vocations. These youths would be drawn from various communities and trained for two months in vocations such as hair making, barbing, cream and soap production, make-up, catering, pastry making, shoe making, driving, tailoring, and security services. This study is in line with the earlier research of Mussa (2019) and Mussa (2023), which emphasized the use of the social approach as a good instrument for discouraging citizens from taking part in criminal activities.

c. Traditional Approach to Crime Prevention

Traditional approach to crime prevention in residential neighbourhoods involves community-based initiatives and social control mechanisms. This approach relies on community members taking an active role in preventing crime and promoting safety through informal means. Each community has leaders who control the regular meetings to discuss security concerns and share information. Traditional leaders in Oyo Town are also linked to this community, where they discuss security appropriately with Kabiyesi and other ruling agents in the town. These meetings promote strong family and community bonds that can help prevent crime by promoting social cohesion and internal social control. The communities also engage traditionalists to treat criminals who are involved through cultural practices, such as rituals or ceremonies, to cleanse and rehabilitate offenders. The approach may vary depending on the specific community, cultural context, and nature of the offence. This is in line with the study of Ogbonna et al. (2023), who emphasized the use of traditional councils and elders to adjudicate proceedings in the community, and also agreed with Muhammed (2024) and Igbashanger (2024) on the use of social and community-based strategies for combating crimes in the neighbourhood.

d. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Table 2: CEPTED in Residential Neighbourhoods Selected

Local Govt	Neighborhood	Territorial Reinforcement	Surveillance	Access Control	Activities Support	Maintenance	Target hardening
Oyo East	Araromi	• Housing plots not fenced • Poor road infrastructure • No street name • Poor environmental maintenance	• Good street lanes • Lack of public lighting • Lack of tech aids • Clear sight to the road	• Fencing not well maintained • Lack of signage • Escape route partly available	• Shared spaces partly available • No local retail shop • Lack of organized activities	• Lack of green spaces • Low quality maintenance • Wastes not properly kept	• No security doors/windows • No alarm/detection system • Lack of CCTV
	Asamu	• Housing plots fenced • Good road network • No street names • Good environmental maintenance	• Street lines are good • Surrounding is fairly lit • Lack of tech aids • Some have clear sight to road	• Fencing well defined • Lack of signage • Escape not available	• Purely residential • Retail shop not available • Lack of organized activities	• Green spaces well kept • Maintenance is adequate • Proper management of wastes	• Security doors/windows used • No alarm/detection system • Lack of CCTV
	Abojupa	• Housing plot partly fenced • Fairly good road • Street names partly placed • Environment is neat	• Fairly good street lines • No public lighting • Lack of technology aid	• Well defined fence • Lack of signage • Escape route partly available	• No shared spaces • Retail shops unavailable • Lack of organized activities	• Green spaces partly used • Adequate maintenance • Proper waste management	• Security doors/windows unavailable • No alarm/detection system • Lack of CCTV

Local Govt	Neighborhood	Territorial Reinforcement	Surveillance	Access Control	Activities Support	Maintenance	Target hardening
			• Poorly clear sight of the road				
	Mabolaje	• Housing plots not properly fenced • Fairly good road network • No street names • Fairly good environment	• Fairly good street lines • No public lighting • Lack of tech aid • Partly clear sight of the road	• Fencing not adequate • Signage unavailable • Escape route available	• No shared spaces • Retail shops partly available • No organized activities	• Green spaces NA • Maintenance partly • Waste management okay	• Security doors/windows unavailable • No alarm/detection system • No CCTV
Oyo West	Gedu	• Housing plots well fenced • Good road network • No street name • Good environment maintenance	• Very good street lines • Fairly lit • Lack of technology aids • Fair clear sighting of road	• Well fenced • Escape route available • Signage not available	• Spaces only for residential • Retail shops partly available • No organized activities	• Green spaces available and well kept • Good quality maintenance • Proper waste management	• Security doors/windows available • Alarm partly available • CCTV partly available
	Celestial	• Incomplete fencing • Road network is fair • Streets not named • Good environmental maintenance	• Very good street lines • No public lighting • Lack of technology aids • Fair clear sight of road	• Undefined fencing • Escape route available • Signage not provided	• Shared activities snot available • Retail shops partly available • No organized activities	• Green spaces unavailable • Fairly good maintenance • Proper waste management	• No security doors/windows • Alarm/detection system • Lack of CCTV
	Irepodun	• Fencing partly completed • Good road network • No street names • Good environment management	• Very good street lines • Fair public lighting • Fair technology aids • Good clear sight of road	• Partly defined fence • Escape route available • Signage not available	• Shared spaces partly available • No retail shops • Shared activities not available	• Neatly kept green spaces • Maintenance is adequate • Proper waste management	• Security doors/windows used • Alarm/detection system partly available • Lack of CCTV
	Oyo state Housing	• Housing plots not completely fenced • Fair road network • No street names • Good environmental management	• Good street names • No public lighting • No technology aids • Clear sight of road	• Fencing not completed • Escape route not available • No signage provided	• Shared spaces not available • No local retail shop • Lack organized activities	• Green spaces not kept • Poor maintenance • Waste management is adequate	• Security doors/windows partly used • No alarm/detection system • No CCTV

Local Govt	Neighborhood	Territorial Reinforcement	Surveillance	Access Control	Activities Support	Maintenance	Target hardening
Atiba	Ojegbolu	• Plots not properly fenced • Road network is fair • No street names • Poor environment management	• Fair street lines • Lack of public lighting • Lack of tech aid • Clear sight of the road	• Inadequate fencing • Escape route available • No signage	• Shared spaces available • Retail shops provided • Lack organized activities	• Lack of green spaces • Low quality maintenance • Waste not properly managed	• No security doors/windows • No alarm/detection system • No CCTV
	Oyekola	• Fencing nearly completed • Road network is good • No street names • Poor environmental management	• Very good street lines • Partly lit • Lack of tech aids • Clear sight of road	• Fencing well defined • Escape route provided • No signage	• Shared spaces unavailable • No local retail shop • Lack organized activities	• Green spaces available and well kept • Good maintenance • Proper waste management	• Security doors/ windows used • Alarm detection fairly available • No CCTV
	Irepodun	• Fencing partly completed • Road network is good • Streets not named • Good environment management	• Very good street lines • Inadequate public lights • Fair technology aid • Clear sight of the road	• Fencing partly done • Escape route available • No signage provided	• No shared spaces available • No retail shops • Shared activities not available	• Green spaces well kept • Good management • Adequate waste management	• Security doors/ windows used • Alarm detection partly available • Lack of CCTV
	Elegbo	• Housing plots unfenced • Poor road network • Streets not named • Poor environmental management	• Very poor street lines • Poorly lit • No technology aids • Good sight of the road	• Very poor fencing design • Escape route partly done • No signage provided	• No shared spaces available • Retail shops provided • Lack organized activities	• Green spaces NA • Poor management • Waste not adequate	• No security doors/windows • No alarm/detection system • CCTV not available

Source: Authors' Field Survey

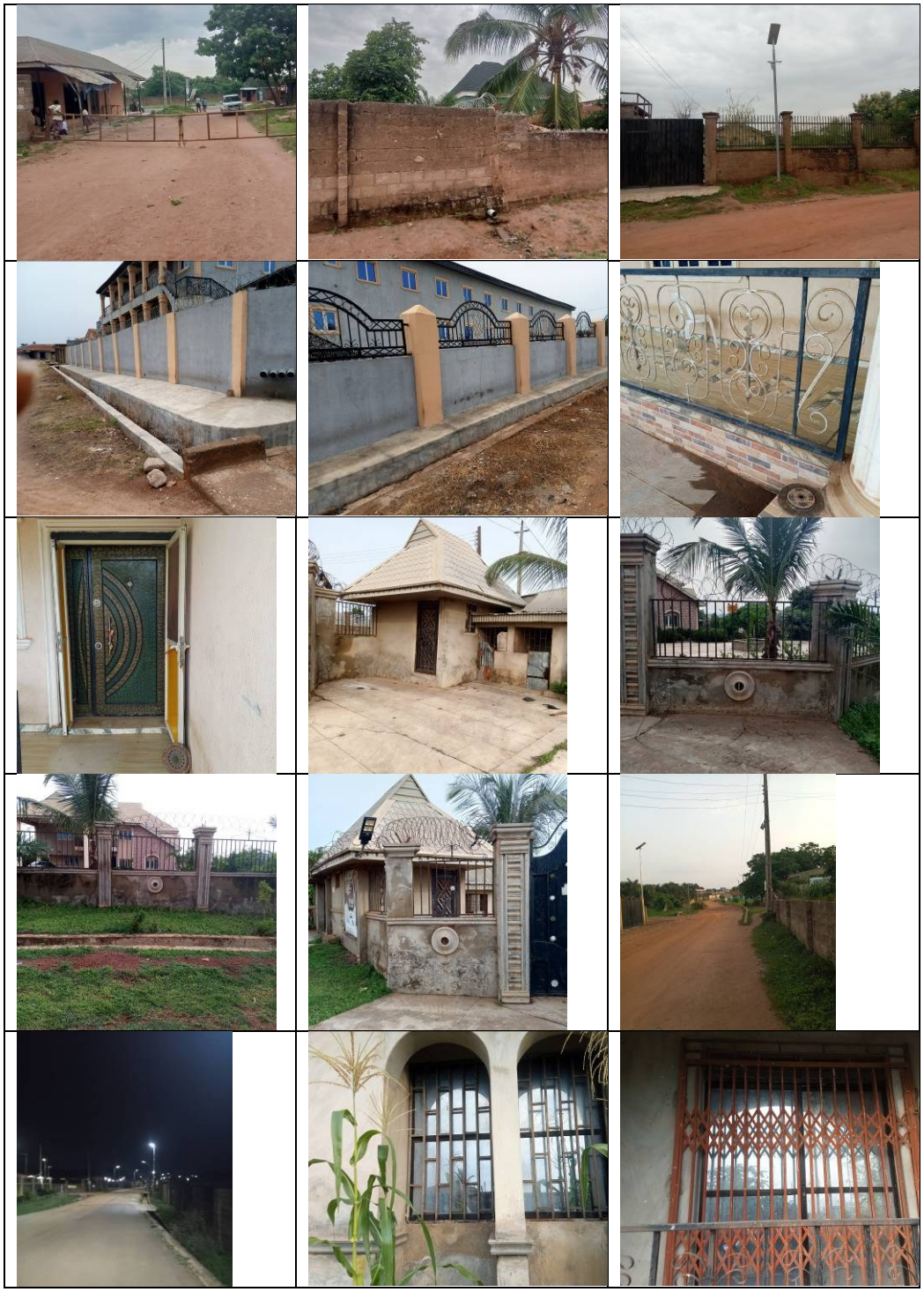


Figure 2: CPTED principles illustrations in the three local governments (Source: Authors' Field Survey).

CPTED in Oyo Town involves applying design principles to reduce crime opportunities and promote safety in the neighbourhoods. The study made use of six important principles of

CPTED, which were used in evaluating the safety of the selected environments. The principles are territorial reinforcement, surveillance, access control, activity support, maintenance, and target hardening. The neighbourhoods were visited, and a thorough examination was carried out to arrive at Table 2 below.

From Table 2, it was evidently revealed that the majority of the neighbourhoods failed to give adequate recognition to these items, as they were not taken care of in their buildings and surroundings. Residential neighbourhoods like Araromi, Mobolaje, Celestial, and Ojegbolu layouts were built in the 1970s and 1980s, when crime rates were not as high as what is being witnessed today. These communities are porous due to the non-availability of these designs that protect environments against crimes. Residential neighbourhoods with good security lights at night are well protected, and crimes in these areas are committed during the daytime. The new generation and contemporary housing schemes adequately took note of all these security measures, and they were adequately installed into the buildings and the environments. Security preventive mechanisms need to be properly installed in various sections of the buildings and environments to ensure sustainable livelihood. The criminals in the communities are making use of deficiencies in the chosen principles, such as incomplete wall fences and other necessary attachments, to inflict nefarious activities on the residents, and these are the reasons why all forms of insecurities are perpetrated in Oyo Town.

The study concurs with the findings of Ceccato and Bratingham (2024) and Arabi et al. (2019) that the use of architectural design and planning strategies reduces crime and improves the quality of life of residents, and the research that the built environment can deter criminals from perpetrating crimes (Koomal, 2023; Wen et al., 2024).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Adequate security is not a luxury but a prerequisite for the sustainable development of residential neighbourhoods in Oyo Town. This study has shown that four methods of prevention strategies are being put into use in various communities of the town. The conventional system using policing has been relaxed, and community policing now takes charge of security implementation in different localities. The social and traditional methods are also being used to ensure the security of lives and properties.

The fourth strategy, CPTED, is integrated into design and construction practices in various quarters in the town, although some of the indicators were not given adequate attention in some neighbourhoods. The principles used are territorial reinforcement, natural surveillance, access control, activity support, target hardening, and rigorous maintenance. Evidence from the research revealed the importance of all these environmental security indicators in achieving a sustainable livelihood.

Physical plan or design is insufficient in combating these problems. Sustainable security also depends on transparent governance, resident participation, and adaptive management. Local planning authorities must therefore embed crime-prevention criteria into layout approvals, enforce maintenance standards, and support neighbourhood associations through training and macro-grants. Also, state-level agencies should update building codes to incentivize burglar-

resistant materials, expand smart-lighting programmes, and link policing data with community-led monitoring platforms. Further efforts should also be put in place to link buildings and environments with the police for adequate security.

If these multi-scalar recommendations are adopted, Oyo Town can transform its residential quarters into safer, more resilient, and environmentally responsible places, setting a replicable model for other medium-sized Nigerian cities. Conversely, postponing coordinated security action will perpetuate cycles of fear, disinvestment, and unsustainable sprawl being experienced in the planning landscape of the town. The findings of this research therefore call for an urgent, collaborative agenda by uniting planners, security professionals, civil society, and residents to make safe growth an integral pillar of sustainable urban development in Oyo Town and beyond.

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