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# An Assessment of the Challenges of Public and Private Security Organisations in Nigeria

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**Abstract**
One of the most important responsibilities of the government in any country is the protection of life and property. Ensuring security brings with it many challenges. This paper examined the challenges of public and private security organisations in Nigeria. The paper relied on secondary data sourced from the existing literature including textbooks, journals, newspapers, government publications, and online sources. The content analysis method was employed for the analysis. Using the Securitisation Theory of Clara Eroukhmanoff as a guide, the paper concluded that public and private security organisations faced enormous challenges. For public security organisations, the challenges include inadequate funding, corruption, logistics constraints, quality of personnel, and technological integration. Challenges of private security organisations include lack of funding, lack of firearms, lack of supervision, sabotage, lack of regulatory compliance and lack of cooperation from the police, untrained and uneducated personnel, and poor welfare package, among others. The paper recommended a reform in the security sector; an increase in budgetary allocations to public security agencies to improve their operational capabilities, modernise equipment, and ensure adequate personnel training. There should also be adequate investment in modern security technologies such as

surveillance systems, biometric access controls, and cybersecurity measures to address evolving security threats more effectively. The government should develop and enforce comprehensive regulations for private security companies to ensure standardisation, accountability, and professionalism in the sector. Also, there should be regular and advanced training programmes for both public and private security personnel to enhance their skills, knowledge, and operational efficiency.

**Keywords*:*** Security**,** Public Security Organisation, Private Security Organisation, Corruption

## Introduction

The crime rate in the world is becoming alarming. According to Aderounmu (2021), Nigeria is the second country in Africa with the highest risk of mass killing and the sixth in the world.

There has been an increase in the crime rate in Nigeria and the major crimes committed in the country include murder, terrorism, kidnapping, burglary, rape, bribery and corruption, fraud, money laundering, oil bunkering, armed robbery, advanced fee fraud (419), drug trafficking, cultism, cybercrimes, sale of babies, banditry, human trafficking, arms manufacturing and arms trafficking, smuggling, and violent crimes. Security is essential for the existence of human societies. No doubt, security is everyone's business; the government is primarily responsible for the protection of lives and property (Fischer et al., 2008). The history of security is as old as human history when human beings sought protection from predators, harsh environments, and rival tribes (Nagenborg, 2014). The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588– 1679) in his "Leviathan" in 1651, argued that security has to be provided and maintained by the state (Nagenborg, 2014). As civilizations developed, security evolved to include the protection of property, resources, and territories (Ikpi, 2020).

The security industry is divided into public and private security organisations. Public security organisations are those that are undertaken by the state or by agencies of the state while private security organisations are those firms that are privately owned and managed (Ikpi, 2020). The functions of the public security structure are primarily for the maintenance of public order, and the prevention, and detection of crimes in the state. It also protects the life, liberty, and property of the people. As the crime level increases by the day with changing patterns, the role of public security has become more important and more demanding than before. In this context, Sarre & Prenzler (2011) observed that without public security, there would be chaos in the society; and a direct invitation to the Hobbesian state of nature where life was not only solitary but also nasty, brutish and short.

Since public security is set up by the government with specific functions to perform, criminal law remains their watchword (Ikpi, 2020). Public security organisations are to maintain law and order, investigate crimes and enforce the criminal law. It provides the necessary check against the inconsistency of human nature. They, therefore, remained the recognised law enforcers in society. Thus, the role of public security outfits in any society is of paramount importance in ensuring public safety. Examples of public security organisations in Nigeria are the Nigeria Police Force, the Military (Army, Navy and Air Force), Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps, the Nigerian Correctional Service, and many others. The rising incidence of crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, murder, terrorism, and human trafficking among others has demonstrated that the police have failed to provide the required protection for the citizens. It is as a result of the weaknesses in the public security architecture that private security services were introduced to play complementary role.

Strom et al. (2010) defined private security as "those individuals, organizations, and services other than public law enforcement agencies that are engaged primarily in the prevention of crime, loss, or harm to specific individuals, organisations, or facilities". Under the broad definition offered by Strom et al. (2010), the term private security can represent a wide range of organisations, including corporate security, security guard companies, armoured car businesses, investigative services, and many others. Personnel hired by these companies can be armed or unarmed and can be employed either in-house or contracted. Also, Sarre & Prenzler (2012), described the private security industry by distinctions based on the proprietary or contractual nature of security departments, the type of security provided (physical, information, or employment-related), services provided (e.g., guarding, armoured transport), and markets (e.g., critical infrastructure, commercial venues). Examples of public security organisations include private security companies (PSCs), Corporate Security Departments, and Community Vigilante Groups.

Scholars, such as Abdulqadir (2016), Achumba et al. (2013), Alao (2019), Brown et al. (2024), Inyang & Abraham (2014), Nwachukwu (2014), Sarre & Prenzler (2011) and

Opara (2024) have conducted studies on the challenges of public and private security organisations in Nigeria, but assessing the challenges of selected public security organisations (NPF, NSCDC, NCS, and NIS) and private security organisations (private security companies, corporate security departments, and community vigilante groups) for comparative purposes were not considered in the literature. This is the gap that this study intends to bridge.

## Conceptual Framework

### Concept of Security

According to Ikoh (2021), defining security as a concept can sometimes be confusing due to the different positions taken by scholars from different schools of thought. This confusion still surrounds security discourse in the 21st century. Jore (2019) opined that security is now often understood as both a state and process that can reduce risks, and protect against potential threats or build resilience. Jore (2017) defined security as the perceived or actual ability to prepare for, adapt to, withstand, and recover from threats and crises caused by people's deliberate, intentional, malicious acts, such as terrorism, sabotage, organised crime, or hacking. Security refers to protection from physical or direct violence and freedom from fear or danger. Security entails the total well-being of the individual and society. In other words, security is "the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information, and property against hostile persons, influences and action" (Achumba, et al., 2013:80).

### Concept of Public Security Organisation

According to Mbachu (2020), one of the most important responsibilities of the government of any country is to ensure security to protect or preserve people's lives and property. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria therefore expressly establishes various security and intelligence agencies that form part of the national security architecture, including the military (Nigeria Army, Nigeria Navy and Nigeria Air Force), Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS), and other security and intelligence agencies. National security activities are regulated by laws enacted by the National Assembly. These laws define the powers of security and defence agencies, establish guidelines and boundaries for their activities, and guide Presidential orders that shape their operations.

### Concept of Private Security Organisation

The private security sector is often described by distinctions based on the proprietary or contractual nature of security services, the type of security provided (physical, informational, or employment-related), services provided (for example, guarding and armoured transport), and markets (for example, critical infrastructure and commercial venues). Experts disagree on what constitutes private security and have used different definitions. Definitional differences tend to include the focus of job tasks, the influence of profit and the client, and the inclusion of products, such as the manufacturing, distribution, and installation of equipment and technology (Strom et al., 2010).

Private security is essential to ensuring the security and safety of persons and property, as well as intellectual property and sensitive corporate information. Private security personnel are responsible for protecting many institutions and critical infrastructure in the country, including industry and factories, utilities, transportation, healthcare facilities, and schools. Companies are also heavily invested in private security, hiring security firms to perform functions such as store security, private investigations, pre-employment screening, and information technology (IT) security. These services are used in a variety of markets,

from commercial to residential. Some companies hire their security guards, while others contract with security companies for these services or use a combination of both proprietary and contract services. Chinwokwu & Igbo (2018:3) defined private security as "a security service provided by self-employed individuals and privately funded business organizations to specific customers for a monetary payment".

In short, private security is responsible not only for the protection of public institutions and critical infrastructure systems but also for the protection of private intellectual property and sensitive corporate information. Individuals, corporate entities, and government institutions in Nigeria also rely heavily on private security for a wide range of functions, including protecting employees and property, conducting investigations, conducting pre-employment screenings, providing information technology security, and many other tasks.

## Theoretical Framework

The paper was guided by the Securitisation Theory of Clara Eroukhmanoff developed in 2018. Securitisation Theory argues that national security policy is not naturally given, but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers. According to the theory, political issues are constituted as extreme security concerns that must be dealt with instantly, especially when they have been labelled as 'dangerous', 'menacing', 'threatening', 'alarming' and so on by a 'securitising actor' who has the social and institutional power to move the issue 'beyond politics'. So, security issues are not simply 'out there' but rather must be articulated as problems by securitising actors. Calling immigration a 'threat to national security', for instance, shifts immigration from a low-priority political concern to a high-priority issue that requires action, such as securing borders. Securitisation Theory challenges traditional approaches to security and asserts that security issues are not essentially threatening in themselves; rather, it is by referring to them as 'security' issues that they become security problems (Eroukhmanoff, 2018).

Securitisation Theory is useful in this paper as it contests traditional approaches to security that are overly focused on the security of the state, rather than on other referent objects. Adopting a securitisation framework entails challenging hegemonic and taken-for-granted ideas about security and emphasises how security is prioritised and driven by interest. The theory reminds us that securitisation is not a neutral act but a political one. The utility relevance of this theory offers a versatile framework for analysing how threats are constructed, enabling a deeper understanding of security dynamics and aiding in the development of more balanced and effective responses. This theory expands the concept of security beyond traditional military concerns to include economic, environmental, social and political issues. This broader perspective allows for a more comprehensive understanding of what constitutes a threat.

## Methods and Materials

The paper adopted the descriptive research approach to examine the challenges of public and private security organisations in Nigeria. The paper relied on secondary data sourced from the existing literature including textbooks, journals, government publications and Internet materials. The content analysis method was employed for the analysis.

## The Role of Selected Public and Private Security Organisations

### The Nigeria Police Force (NPF)

The Nigeria Police Force is the principal law enforcement agency in Nigeria. It operates under the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) (LFN, 1999), the Nigeria Police Act (LFN, 2020), and various legal frameworks to maintain law and order, protect lives and property, and enforce laws across the country (Obialo, 2020). The primary

purpose of the NPF is to enforce laws enacted by the federal and state governments. This includes crime prevention, investigation, and prosecution. The NPF is responsible for maintaining public order and safety. This involves crowd control during public events, managing protests and demonstrations, and responding to civil disturbances. The NPF aims to protect citizens' lives and property, ensuring a safe environment for all residents and visitors in Nigeria. Preventing crime through patrols, intelligence gathering, and community policing initiatives is a core purpose of the NPF. Additionally, they investigate crimes, gather evidence, and apprehend suspects for prosecution (Nigeria Police Act, 2020; Obialo, 2020).

Regular patrols and surveillance activities are conducted to deter criminal activities and respond quickly to incidents. These include foot patrols, vehicular patrols, and the use of technology such as CCTV. The NPF has specialized units for intelligence gathering and criminal investigations, such as the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). These units work to uncover and solve complex crimes. Engaging with communities to build trust and cooperation is a key operational strategy. Community policing involves collaboration with local leaders, businesses, and residents to identify and address specific safety concerns. The NPF includes various specialized units to handle specific types of crime and emergencies. Examples include Anti-Robbery Squad (Tackles armed robbery and violent crimes), Anti-Cultism Squad (Addresses issues related to secret cults and gang activities), Cybercrime Unit (Focuses on internet and technology-related crimes), and Bomb Disposal Unit (Handles explosive threats and incidents). Continuous training and professional development programs are conducted to enhance the skills and effectiveness of police officers. This includes basic training for recruits and advanced courses for specialized units (Nigeria Police Act, 2020; Obialo, 2020).

The NPF provides emergency response services to incidents such as accidents, natural disasters, and violent crimes. The force operates emergency hotlines and rapid response teams. Public safety campaigns and awareness programmes are conducted to educate citizens on crime prevention, personal safety, and the legal system. The NPF facilitates crime reporting through various channels, including police stations, hotlines, and online platforms. They provide assistance and support to victims of crime. The NPF is involved in the issuance of licenses and permits for various activities, such as firearm ownership, vehicle registration, and security services. The NPF collaborates with other law enforcement agencies, both domestic and international, to combat crime and enhance security. This includes joint operations, intelligence sharing, and training exchanges (Nigeria Police Act, 2020; Obialo, 2020).

**The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC)**

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps is a paramilitary organisation established to enhance the security and safety of Nigeria (Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (Amendment) Act, LFN, 2007). The NSCDC is saddled with responsibility to safeguarding critical national assets such as pipelines, power plants, telecommunications installations, and other essential infrastructure from vandalism and sabotage; provide rescue, relief, and management during emergencies and disasters, including natural disasters, industrial accidents, and civil disturbances; maintain public order and safety through crime prevention, law enforcement, and community engagement; and regulate and supervise private security companies to ensure compliance with national standards and enhance overall security services (Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (Amendment) Act, LFN, 2007).

The NSCDC conducts surveillance and gathers intelligence to identify and mitigate threats against critical infrastructure and public safety; deploy specialized units trained in search and rescue, first aid, and disaster management for rapid response during emergencies; engage with local communities to build trust and cooperation, addressing specific security

concerns and promoting public safety; provide continuous training and development programs for personnel to enhance their skills in areas such as counter-terrorism, disaster management, and security operations; and work in partnership with other security agencies, including the Nigeria Police Force, military, and international organisations, to ensure comprehensive security coverage and response (Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (Amendment) Act, LFN, 2007).

The NSCDC monitors and protects vital infrastructure and assets, deploying personnel to prevent vandalism, terrorism, and other threats. Provide rescue and relief operations during natural disasters and emergencies, coordinating with other agencies for effective disaster management. License, regulate, and monitor private security companies to ensure they adhere to national security standards and practices. Conduct public education campaigns on safety, security, and emergency preparedness to enhance community resilience and awareness. Engage in community conflict resolution and mediation efforts to promote peace and prevent violence. Carry out operations to prevent and respond to acts of vandalism against national infrastructure, including oil pipelines and power installations (Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (Amendment) Act, LFN, 2007).

**The Nigerian Customs Service (NCS)**

The Nigerian Customs Service is a government agency responsible for regulating and facilitating international trade, collecting revenue, and ensuring the security of the nation's borders (Nigerian Customs Service Act, LFN, 2023). The primary purpose of the NCS is to collect customs duties, excise duties, and other taxes on behalf of the federal government. This includes tariffs on imported goods and fees for various services. The NCS aims to facilitate legitimate international trade by ensuring the smooth and efficient movement of goods across Nigeria’s borders. This involves streamlining customs procedures and reducing trade barriers. Ensuring the security of Nigeria’s borders by preventing the smuggling of prohibited and illegal goods, including drugs, arms, and contraband. They also enforce government trade policies, including import and export regulations, tariff policies, and international trade agreements (Nigerian Customs Service Act, LFN, 2023).

The NCS inspects and examines goods entering or leaving Nigeria to ensure compliance with customs regulations. This includes physical inspections, document verification, and the use of technology such as scanners and X-ray machines. Assessing and collecting duties on imported goods based on their classification, value, and quantity. This involves calculating the correct duties and taxes payable and ensuring their timely collection. NCS conducts anti-smuggling operations to prevent the illegal import and export of goods. This includes patrolling border areas, conducting raids, and using intelligence to intercept smuggled goods. NCS also implement programmes and initiatives to facilitate trade, such as the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme, which provides benefits to compliant businesses, and the Single Window system, which streamlines customs procedures (Nigerian Customs Service Act, LFN, 2023).

The NCS has to provide customs clearance services for importers and exporters. This includes processing declarations, assessing duties, and issuing necessary documentation for the release of goods. NCS offer services related to the classification and valuation of goods to determine the appropriate duties and taxes. This includes providing tariff information and resolving disputes over classifications and valuations. NCS also provides information and guidance to traders on customs procedures, regulations, and requirements. This includes publishing tariffs, providing updates on policy changes, and offering advisory services. NCS also ensure effective border control and enforcement to prevent smuggling and other illegal activities. This includes patrolling borders, conducting checks at border posts, and collaborating with other security agencies; and conducting training and capacity-building

programs for customs officers and other stakeholders to enhance their skills and knowledge in customs operations and trade facilitation (Nigerian Customs Service Act, LFN, 2023).

**The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS)**

The Nigeria Immigration Service is the government agency responsible for the regulation of immigration, border management, and enforcement of immigration laws in Nigeria (Nigeria Immigration Service Act, LFN, 2015). The primary purpose of the NIS is to regulate the entry and exit of people into and out of Nigeria, ensuring compliance with immigration laws. Managing and securing Nigeria's borders to prevent illegal immigration, human trafficking, and other cross-border crimes. NIS enforces immigration laws and regulations to ensure national security and public safety and also issues passports, visas, and other travel documents to Nigerians and foreigners (Nigeria Immigration Service Act, LFN, 2015).

The NIS processes applications and issues Nigerian passports to eligible citizens, as well as renewing expired passports; issues visas to foreign nationals seeking to enter Nigeria for various purposes, including tourism, business, education, and residence; monitors and controls Nigeria's land, sea, and air borders to prevent illegal entry and exit. This includes patrolling border areas and conducting checks at ports of entry; conducting investigations and operations to identify and apprehend individuals violating immigration laws, such as illegal immigrants and human traffickers. NIS could deport illegal immigrants and repatriate Nigerian citizens stranded abroad or involved in illegal activities. NIS also manages the issuance of residence permits to foreigners living in Nigeria and regulates the employment of expatriates through the expatriate quota system (Nigeria Immigration Service Act, LFN, 2015).

The NIS provides services related to the issuance, renewal, and replacement of Nigerian passports. This includes online application systems and expedited processing options. NIS also issues various types of visas, including tourist visas, business visas, student visas, and transit visas. This includes both regular and e-visa options. Issuing residence permits and regulating the employment of foreigners through the issuance of work permits and expatriate quotas. Conducting border checks, patrolling border areas, and using technology to monitor and secure Nigeria's borders; ensuring compliance with immigration laws through inspections, investigations, and enforcement actions; and educating the public about immigration laws, regulations, and services. This includes providing information on legal entry and exit procedures and the consequences of illegal immigration (Nigeria Immigration Service Act, LFN, 2015).

**Some Private Security Organisations in Nigeria**

**Private Security Companies (PSCs)**

Private Security Companies in Nigeria play a crucial role in providing security services to individuals, businesses, and institutions (UNODC, 2011; Inyang & Abraham, 2014). For example, Eliezer Group, Proton Security Company Limited, Ashaka Security Company, Eyespy Security Service Limited, Halogen Security, Damon Guards, Kings Guard Private Security Company, McDon Security, ASA Security Nigeria, Armor Group and many others (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023; Inyang & Abraham, 2014). The primary purpose of Private Security Companies (PSCs) is to offer protective services to clients, safeguarding their assets, personnel, and property from various threats. PSCs help clients mitigate risks by conducting security assessments, implementing preventive measures, and responding to security incidents effectively. They supplement the efforts of public security agencies by providing additional security layers, especially in areas where public security may be insufficient or inadequate (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023; Inyang & Abraham, 2014).

Conducting security assessments to identify vulnerabilities and develop customized security plans tailored to clients' needs; deploying trained security guards and personnel to patrol premises, monitor surveillance systems, control access points, and deter unauthorized activities; monitoring premises through CCTV systems, alarm systems, and patrols to detect and respond to suspicious activities promptly; providing rapid response to security breaches, emergencies, alarms, and client requests for assistance; and offering consultancy on security best practices, risk management strategies, crisis management and threat assessments (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023; Inyang & Abraham, 2014). Providing armed or unarmed security guards to protect clients' properties, facilities, events, and personnel; monitoring and managing CCTV systems, alarms, and other security technologies to enhance situational awareness and response capabilities; securing corporate events, public gatherings, concerts, and other gatherings to ensure safety and crowd control; offering personal security services for executives, dignitaries, high-profile individuals, and their families; and providing cybersecurity services, including threat detection, incident response, and data protection measures (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023; Inyang & Abraham, 2014).

**Corporate Security Departments**

Corporate Security Departments within businesses play a critical role in safeguarding assets, personnel, and operations (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023). The primary purpose of Corporate Security Departments is to protect physical assets, including facilities, equipment, inventory, and intellectual property, from theft, vandalism, and other threats; ensuring the safety and security of employees, visitors, and contractors within corporate premises, including during emergencies and crises; and identifying, assessing, and mitigating security risks that could impact business operations, continuity, and reputation (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023).

The corporate security department **c**onducts comprehensive security assessments to identify vulnerabilities and develop tailored security plans and strategies for mitigating risks; implements and manages physical security measures such as access control systems, perimeter fencing, surveillance cameras, and security patrols; develops and implements emergency response plans and procedures for various scenarios, including natural disasters, fires, medical emergencies, and security breaches; providing security awareness programs and training for employees to promote a culture of security vigilance and response readiness; and establishing protocols for crisis management, including communication strategies, incident command systems, and coordination with external response agencies (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023).

The organisation manages access to corporate facilities through badge systems, visitor management protocols, and security checkpoints; monitors corporate premises and facilities using CCTV systems, alarms, and other surveillance technologies to detect and respond to security incidents; provides personal security services for executives, key personnel, and visitors during travel and high-profile events; conducting internal investigations into security breaches, thefts, workplace violence incidents, and other security-related issues; and offering consultancy services to senior management on security best practices, regulatory compliance, risk assessments, and crisis management strategies (Obumneme & Abdulrashid, 2023).

**Community Vigilante Groups**

Community Vigilante Groups in Nigeria are grassroots organisations formed by local communities to enhance security and address crime within their neighbourhoods (Brown et al., 2024; Olawale, 2017). For example, Vigilante Groups of Nigeria, Neighbourhood Watch, Hunters Association of Nigeria, Volunteer Security Outfits (VSOs) in North East Nigeria, Amotekun in South Western region of Nigeria, Eastern Security Network (EbubeAgu) in South Eastern region of Nigeria, Ibom Community Watch in Akwa Ibom State and many

others (Jack-Rabin et al., 2023; Chikwendu et al., 2016). The primary purpose of Community Vigilante Groups is to improve local security by deterring crime, maintaining order, and protecting residents and property; complementing the efforts of formal law enforcement agencies (like the police) by providing additional surveillance and response capabilities at the community level; actively preventing crimes such as theft, burglary, vandalism, and communal conflicts through patrols, monitoring, and community engagement (Brown et al., 2024; Olawale, 2017; Jack-Rabin et al., 2023; Chikwendu et al., 2016).

Community Vigilante Groups can conduct regular patrols within the community to monitor activities, identify suspicious behaviour, and deter potential criminals; organise community members to act as vigilant observers and report any unusual or criminal activity to law enforcement agencies; coordinate and cooperate with the police and other security agencies to share information, support investigations, and respond to emergencies; and engaging with residents through awareness campaigns, meetings, and educational programs to promote safety, crime prevention, and cooperation (Brown et al., 2024; Olawale, 2017; Jack-Rabin et al., 2023; Chikwendu et al., 2016). They provide an immediate response to security threats, emergencies, and distress calls within the community; mediate disputes and conflicts within the community to prevent escalation and promote peace and harmony; and educate community members on crime prevention strategies, safety measures, and how to collaborate effectively with law enforcement (Brown et al., 2024; Olawale, 2017; Jack-Rabin et al., 2023; Chikwendu et al., 2016).

**Discussion and Findings**

Both the public and private security organisations face a myriad of challenges. For instance, the Nigeria Police Force faces challenges such as corruption and misconduct which undermine public trust, inadequate resources (limited funding, outdated equipment, and inadequate facilities hinder the effectiveness of the NPF), inadequate training and professionalism and crime proliferation including arms manufacturing and arms trafficking, human trafficking, sale of babies, drug trafficking, advanced fee fraud, armed robbery, money laundering, oil bunkering, piracy, cultism, terrorism and banditry among others. This conclusion is supported by Ikoh (2021) and Obialo (2020). Similarly, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) face many challenges in responding to emerging crimes in Nigeria. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of weapons and gadgets necessary to combat the rising crime in society, especially with the rise of groups like Boko Haram, bandits, farmers-herders conflict, IPOP in the southeast, and militants in the Niger Delta. Additionally, the NSCDC is hampered by factors such as understaffing, corruption, and illiteracy, which further limit their ability to effectively address insecurity. These challenges underscore the need to increase resources and build capacity building in the NSCDC to adequately respond to the security threats in Nigeria. This result is supported by Abdulqadir (2016) and Idowu (2019).

The challenges facing the Nigeria Customs Service include smuggling and under-declaration, valuation and classification, inadequate infrastructure, corruption and compliance issues, policy and regulatory framework, environmental and safety standards and socio-political factors. Also, personnel of NCS are being challenged by transnational security actors and vulnerabilities as well as well as numerous inherent weaknesses from within the agency itself. This finding is supported by the works from Opera (2024), Emejo (2024), and Alao (2019). In the same vein, the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), as the government's immigration management agency, is grappling with the increasing influx of migrants into the country. The basic problem is the handling of cross-border activities and crimes. Nigeria's extensive and porous borders pose serious challenges to effective monitoring and control, leading to issues such as illegal immigration and smuggling. Poor border management has harmed the NIS's capacity to prevent cross-border human trafficking. There are indications

that approximately 1,400 routes are unknown by security forces and such border areas remain unguarded. Inadequate personnel contribute to poor border management in Nigeria. This conclusion is supported by Ifeanyi-Aneke et al. (2021) and Nwachukwu (2014).

Various factors militate against the performance of private security organisations in Nigeria. These include prohibition from carrying firearms; public awareness of public security organisations' role in society; lack of training, certification and education; lack of funds and poor welfare; intra-agency and inter-agency squabbles, and a lack of synergy between public security companies and government agencies. This finding is supported by Chinwokwu & Igbo (2018), Obumneme & Abdulrashid (2023), Inyang & Abraham (2014), Olawale (2017) and Jack-Rabin et al. (2023). The absence of a formal gun licensing system has led private security organisations to rely on the police in the execution of high-risk contracts requiring firearms protection. This resulted in the sudden death of many private security guards in Nigeria. The services they provide are only procured by people who can afford to pay for their services. The implication is that people do not have sufficient knowledge of their responsibilities or even their role in the security architecture of society. This lack of public awareness of their role and functions places a smack on their importance in society.

There is a widespread belief that private security guards are poorly educated, school dropouts, and undisciplined and do not know the basics of industrial security practices. Most private security organisations have a habit of hiring security guards with little or no training, considering them physically fit to take on a job without any training. If any training is provided, it is ad hoc and perhaps inadequate to expose the guard to the actual job requirement. Financing is of great importance for the functioning of private security organisations. Hence, the lack of funding has affected private security organisations negatively.

The private security system is one area that has encouraged unhealthy rivalry and competition among private security companies. Aside from the struggle for juicy contracts, private security companies also struggle for dominance in the security market economy. This has led to a polarisation within the private security sector. Private security personnel on the other hand argue that public law enforcement officers have limited knowledge about the private security industry and do not appreciate their important role in solving and preventing crime. PSCs and other government agencies like the Police and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) are expected to have strong bonds and inter-networking relationships, but this is not so. In Nigeria, private security organisations and the police do not have a synergy of working cordially in crime control. This is because the Police see private security organisations as incompetent, uneducated, unskilled, and unprofessional.

## Conclusion

This paper examined the challenges of selected public and private security organisations in Nigeria. The challenges facing public and private security organisations in Nigeria are multifaceted and deeply rooted in the country's socio-economic and political landscape. Porous borders, high unemployment significant poverty levels, and significant rural-urban migration contribute to an environment where crime and terrorism flourish. Public and private security organisations play crucial roles in maintaining law and order, safeguarding assets, and ensuring public safety. Public security organisations, such as the Nigerian Police Force, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, Nigerian Customs Service, and Nigerian Immigration Service, are primarily responsible for law enforcement, border control, and internal security. They face challenges including inadequate funding, corruption, and logistical constraints among others.

Private security organisations, including private security companies, corporate security departments, and community vigilante groups, complement the efforts of public security agencies by providing additional protective services, risk management, and localized security solutions. These entities address specific security needs of businesses and communities, though they also encounter challenges such as regulatory compliance, quality of personnel, and technological integration. These efforts when coordinated and well executed can significantly enhance the security and stability of Nigeria. These issues collectively undermine both national security and economic stability, deterring foreign investment and hampering business operations.

**Recommendations**

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations ensued:

1. There should be an increase in budget allocations to public security agencies to improve their operational capabilities, procure modern weapons and ammunition, and equipment, and ensure adequate personnel training.
2. The government should develop and enforce comprehensive regulations for private security organisations to ensure standardization, accountability, and professionalism in the sector. There should be adequate investment in regular and advanced training programmes for both public and private security personnel to enhance their skills, knowledge, and operational efficiency.
3. There should be a collaboration between public security agencies and private security organisations to share intelligence, resources, and best practices for a more integrated security approach. Community policing and the involvement of local communities in security initiatives to build trust, improve information sharing, and enhance the effectiveness of security measures should be encouraged.
4. The government should invest in modern security technologies such as surveillance systems, biometric access controls, and cybersecurity measures to address evolving security threats more effectively. There should be regular assessments and audits of security operations and policies to identify gaps, measure effectiveness, and make necessary adjustments to improve overall security performance.

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