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THE POLITICS OF CHECK POINTS: A REVIEW OF SECURITY PROTOCOLS IN SOME ESTATES IN CHEVRON DRIVE LEKKI, LAGOS

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Abstract: In recent years, the demand for stringent security measures in high-end residential estates has intensified, particularly in areas like Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos. This study explores the politics of security checkpoints and their impact on estate security protocols. The primary objective is to analyze the effectiveness of these protocols, understand the socio-economic influences on security measures, and identify potential vulnerabilities. The study also aims to provide recommendations for enhancing estate security while maintaining social inclusion. The theoretical framework for this research is grounded in Michel Foucault's theory of Panopticism, which elucidates the politics of security checkpoints in the estates along Chevron Drive. In gated estates, checkpoints and surveillance systems, reflecting Panopticon principles, shape behavior and social relations by perpetually monitoring and controlling access, thereby establishing power dynamics and potentially marginalizing perceived outsiders, as explained by Foucault's theory. The research design includes a qualitative approach, utilizing interviews and personal observations as the primary data-gathering methods. Data were collected from residents, security personnel, and individuals living outside the estates. The findings reveal that while the estates have comprehensive security systems, including advanced

access control and continuous surveillance, significant vulnerabilities exist. These include inconsistent enforcement of access control measures, misuse of resident stickers, selective vehicle checks, and manipulation of security personnel. The study also highlights the socio-economic divide created by stringent security measures, fostering feelings of exclusion among neighboring communities. The thesis statement emphasizes the need for a balanced approach to estate security that ensures safety without compromising social inclusion. Recommendations include stricter enforcement of access controls, improved training for security personnel, and the integration of advanced identification technologies. Further research and open discussions about inclusive security measures are essential for developing effective security protocols in gated communities.

Keywords: Estate security, security checkpoints, politics, access control, surveillance.

Introduction: Background of the Study

The phenomenon of gated communities has undergone a significant surge in popularity in recent years (Hamama & Liu, 2020). Residential areas are commonly identified by the presence of physical barriers, such as walls and fences that serve to limit the entry of individuals from external sources. The increasing prevalence of gated communities can be attributed to a larger societal transformation that places a higher emphasis on safety and exclusivity. The perceived need for enhanced security is influenced by a range of factors, such as the increasing prevalence of crime, the pursuit of privacy, and the appeal of residing in a regulated and protected setting. Estate security protocols encompass a range of systematic measures that are put in place to facilitate the safety and safeguarding of properties and their occupants (Byrne, & McArdle, 2020). The measures discussed in this context encompass a diverse array of activities, which include surveillance, access control, patrolling, and the growing utilization of checkpoints.

Checkpoints play a crucial role in maintaining control over access points, allowing security personnel to effectively monitor and regulate the movement of individuals entering and exiting the premises. This practice serves to bolster security measures and mitigate potential threats (Walter, et al 2024). The emergence of the concept of the politics of security has become a crucial framework for comprehending the implementation and management of security measures, such as checkpoints, within various spaces.

The study of the politics of security encompasses an analysis of the intricate power dynamics, decision-making mechanisms, and socio-political ramifications surrounding security practices (Sykes, 2020). These checkpoints impact on the security measures and on different stakeholders, such as residents, security personnel, and the wider community. These measures further mirror and perpetuate prevailing social hierarchies and power dynamics.

The city of Lagos is characterized by notable socio-economic disparities, with Lekki, the specific area where Chevron Drive is located, experiencing rapid development. This region showcases a diverse blend of gated communities and less affluent neighborhoods. Chevron Drive, in particular, is home to numerous upscale estates designed to cater to the needs of specific social and economic groups, offering secure and exclusive living environments.

Among the estates located on Chevron Drive are Lekki Paradise 1 and 2, North Pointe, Bera, Vectoria Nest, Lekki Garden, Grey Garden, Chevyview, Dream Estate, Bouillon Court, Hampton Lake, Victoria Crest Homes, SS Court Estate. These estates, situated on Chevron Drive, serve as exemplary illustrations for investigating the "politics of checkpoints" in estate security protocols, contributing to the overall socio-political landscape of the area. These gated communities have adopted security protocols that prominently feature checkpoints as a means of ensuring the safety and exclusivity of their environments. The juxtaposition of secure, exclusive estates like those on Chevron Drive against less affluent neighborhoods provides a distinctive framework for investigating the wider ramifications of estate security protocols. The potential disparity in socio-economic profiles between residents of these estates and the average Lagosian population may significantly impact their perceptions and expectations regarding security. This contrast offers a unique context for examining how security measures influence social dynamics and power relations within and around these communities.

Security checkpoints play a crucial role in the protocols of these estates, serving as both physical barriers and points of interaction between security personnel and residents. These checkpoints are designed to monitor and regulate access, thereby prioritizing the safety of residents (Lee, 2021). The central focus of this study revolves around comprehending the operations of these checkpoints, encompassing their effectiveness and the impact they have on different stakeholders, including residents, security personnel, and members of the surrounding Lekki community. Each estate on Chevron drive contributes to the complex mosaic of

security and social interaction in the area.

Statement of the Problem

The growing prevalence of estate security protocols, specifically the implementation of checkpoints, has significantly transformed residential spaces into extensively regulated environments. These measures aim to improve safety and security for residents. However, they also bring about intricate socio-political dynamics with significant implications for different stakeholders (Kapoor 2023).

Despite the perceived advantages, the operational dynamics of enhanced security protocols remain largely unexplored. The impact of checkpoints on the daily lives of residents, the responsibilities and interactions of security personnel, and the wider consequences for community relations and social cohesion have not been thoroughly investigated (Herrera Nájera, 2021). Questions arise regarding the balance of power, the allocation of security obligations, and the possibility of these measures exacerbating social exclusion or inequality.

Furthermore, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of security politics on decision-making procedures, the implementation of security protocols, and the general perception of safety and welfare among residents. The issue extends beyond mere functionality, encompassing broader societal and political ramifications of these security practices.

This research endeavors to fill existing gaps by conducting a comprehensive examination of estate security protocols implemented in various estates along Chevron Drive, such as Lekki Paradise 1 and 2, North Pointe, Bera, Vectoria Nest, Lekki Garden, and others. The study focuses specifically on checkpoints, aiming to understand their functioning and impact. It seeks to illuminate how these protocols affect residents, security personnel, and the wider community.

Study Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to better understand the relationship between security, social inclusion, and the politics of checkpoints in gated communities. The study will focus on several key objectives to achieve this goal. First, it will carefully investigate the security protocols of various estates on Chevron Drive, such as

Lekki Paradise 1 and 2, North Pointe, Bera, Vectoria Nest, Lekki Garden, and others, with a particular focus on the functionality of checkpoints. This involves examining the techniques employed, their justification, and their effectiveness in ensuring safety.

The study will explore the opinions and experiences of residents regarding security checkpoints in these estates. This includes understanding how these safeguards impact their sense of security, privacy, daily routines, and social interactions within the estate. Additionally, it will assess the perspectives of security personnel, examining their challenges, interactions with residents, and views on the efficacy and broader implications of the security measures.

The research will also investigate how security protocols affect the surrounding Lekki community, specifically examining nearby residents' perceptions of access, inclusion, and social cohesion. This aspect of the study aims to understand the broader community impacts of security measures in gated estates. Furthermore, the study will delve into the decision-making processes, distribution of authority, and how these dynamics influence social control and hierarchies within the estates. It will critically analyze whether the checkpoints function as effective crime prevention measures or merely serve as "Security Theater," providing an illusion of safety without substantially enhancing security.

Finally, the study seeks to offer practical recommendations for policymakers, estate developers, and security professionals to design more inclusive and effective security measures. The ultimate goal is to generate insights that can be applied to other gated communities in Nigeria and worldwide, contributing to a broader understanding of the complex interplay between security, social inclusion, and checkpoint politics in residential spaces.

Scope

This study focuses on the political dynamics surrounding security checkpoints within the context of various estates along Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos, Nigeria. By adopting a multi-stakeholder approach, it will examine the experiences and perspectives of residents, security personnel, and potentially, members of the surrounding Lekki community. The scope includes a comprehensive investigation of estates such as Lekki Paradise 1 and 2, North Pointe, Bera, Vectoria Nest, Lekki Garden, and others, to provide a detailed exploration of the complex interplay between security practices, social dynamics, and power relations within these gated communities. This focused approach aims to yield in-depth insights

into how security protocols influence social cohesion, access, and inclusion in this rapidly developing area.

Significance

This investigation explores the human impact of security checkpoints in the estates along Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos, Nigeria, including Lekki Paradise 1 and 2, North Pointe, Bera, Vectoria Nest, Lekki Garden, and others. The research aims to document the lived experiences of security personnel and residents, highlighting how these practices affect social interactions,

sentiments of belonging, and overall security within the estates. This human-centered approach seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the social repercussions of security protocols.

Additionally, the research goes beyond merely observing the consequences of checkpoints. It delves into the power dynamics between the broader community, security personnel, and residents. By examining these power relations, the study aims to uncover how security measures function as a form of social control within gated communities and reveal the underlying social hierarchies. The study does not stop at examining social consequences; it also evaluates the efficacy of these security protocols. It will investigate whether checkpoints primarily serve as "Security Theater," creating an illusion of safety without significantly deterring crime, or if they genuinely enhance safety. This analysis is crucial for assessing the true value of security protocols.

Literature Review Conceptual Review Estate Checkpoints

Estate checkpoints refer to designated security control points strategically positioned at the entry and exit points of gated estates. These checkpoints serve multiple functions that are central to the security protocols of these gated communities (Rugik Gomes 2021). Checkpoints within gated communities such as those along Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos, are primarily designed to control access. They monitor and regulate the flow of individuals and vehicles entering and exiting the estates. This involves verifying the identity of residents, visitors, and service providers to prevent unauthorized access, thereby enhancing the overall safety of the community (Ikani, 2021).

Additionally, checkpoints serve as key surveillance points where security personnel can observe and

record activities at the gates (Eshkuvatov, et al 2021). This surveillance capability helps deter potential criminal activities and enables a quick response in case of security breaches. By maintaining a visible security presence, checkpoints contribute significantly to the deterrence of crime and the protection of residents.

Moreover, checkpoints function as critical interaction points between security personnel and anyone entering the estate (Kapoor, 2023). These interactions are crucial for maintaining security protocols and ensuring compliance with the rules and regulations set by the estate management. The face-to-face engagement at checkpoints not only reinforces security measures but also helps in building a rapport between security staff and residents, fostering a sense of community trust and cooperation.

Furthermore, checkpoints symbolize the authority and control exerted by the estate management and security personnel over the residents and visitors. This dynamic reflects broader social hierarchies and power relations within the gated community. The presence of checkpoints can create a sense of exclusivity, making residents feel secure while potentially leading to social exclusion of those who are perceived as outsiders (Peña-Alves, 2022). This dichotomy influences the social fabric of the estates and their surrounding communities. Checkpoints contribute to the residents' perceptions of safety and security. However, they may also evoke feelings of surveillance and loss of privacy, affecting the overall sense of community and belonging (Herrera Nájera, 2021).

The effectiveness of checkpoints in deterring crime is a critical aspect of this study. This involves assessing whether these measures genuinely prevent criminal activities or merely create an illusion of security. The impact of checkpoints on community relations, both within the estates and with the surrounding neighborhoods, is another important dimension. This includes examining how these security measures influence social cohesion, trust, and interactions among different groups.

Estate Security Protocol

Estate security protocols refer to the comprehensive set of measures and procedures implemented to ensure the safety and protection of residents within gated communities. Central to these protocols is the regulation of entry and exit points through checkpoints (Landman, 2020). This involves verifying the identities of residents, visitors, and service providers, thereby preventing unauthorized access and ensuring the

community's safety. Surveillance systems, including CCTV cameras and security personnel stationed at checkpoints, are integral components. These

systems monitor activities within the estate, deter potential criminal behavior, and enable rapid response to security incidents (Zahorna, 2023).

Regular patrols by security personnel and physical barriers such as gates, fences, and walls further enhance security. These measures help maintain a secure perimeter and address any security concerns promptly. Additionally, estate security protocols include procedures for responding to emergencies such as medical incidents, fires, or security breaches, ensuring that residents receive timely assistance and that any threats are swiftly neutralized (Almutairi, 2023).

Security protocols also reflect the authority of the estate management and security personnel, establishing a clear hierarchy and control within the estate. This influences interactions between residents, security staff, and visitors (Allan, 2021). The implementation of security protocols can create a sense of exclusivity and safety for residents while potentially leading to social exclusion of those perceived as outsiders. This dynamic affects the social fabric and community relations within and around the estate. The presence of security measures influences residents' perceptions of safety and their behavior. Effective protocols can enhance the feeling of security, while overly intrusive measures may lead to discomfort or a sense of surveillance (Prenzler, 2021).

The effectiveness of security protocols heavily relies on the training and professionalism of security personnel. Well-trained staffs are essential for implementing protocols effectively and responding to incidents appropriately. Adequate resources, including technology and manpower, are crucial for the successful implementation of security protocols. This includes maintaining and upgrading surveillance systems, ensuring sufficient staffing levels, and providing necessary equipment.

One of the key challenges in implementing security protocols is balancing the need for security with residents' privacy and convenience. Effective protocols should minimize disruptions to daily life while providing robust protection. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of security protocols are necessary to address emerging threats and changing needs. This involves regular reviews of security measures, feedback from residents, and incorporating new technologies and strategies.

Theoretical Review

Foucault's Theory of Panopticism

Michel Foucault's theory of Panopticism, derived from his analysis of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, provides a compelling lens through which to examine how surveillance and power intersect in society (Bashir, 2021). The Panopticon, a circular prison design allowing a single guard to observe all inmates without their knowledge of being watched, serves as a potent metaphor for understanding modern surveillance dynamics.

In gated estates, checkpoints and surveillance systems echo the Panopticon's principles. They create an environment of perpetual observation and control, shaping the behavior of both residents and visitors. Through monitoring access and regulating movement, security personnel wield authority over who enters and exits the estates, thereby establishing power dynamics reminiscent of the Panopticon (Nautiyal, 2021).

Foucault's theory underscores how surveillance systems not only monitor but also shape social relations and power structures. Within gated communities, estate management and security personnel hold sway over residents and visitors, influencing interactions and perceptions of safety. This control over access can lead to the marginalization of perceived outsiders, akin to the divide between observers and observed in the Panopticon, thus affecting social cohesion within both the community and its environs (Gandy, 2021).

Moreover, just as the Panopticon induces inmates to self-regulate their behavior, the presence of checkpoints and surveillance in gated estates prompts residents to conform to security expectations. This self-regulation permeates daily life and social interactions, reinforcing the influence of surveillance on the community's dynamics.

Foucault's Theory of Panopticism provides a comprehensive framework for examining surveillance and power dynamics within Chevron Drive estates (Hope, 2022). Firstly, the study can explore how surveillance measures like checkpoints shape residents' behaviors and social interactions. Secondly, it can delve into power relations between estate management, security personnel, residents, and the broader community, analyzing authority dynamics and resistance. Furthermore, the impact of constant surveillance on residents' perceptions of safety, privacy, and

social inclusion/exclusion can be studied to understand how surveillance shapes everyday experiences. Lastly, the study can assess the effectiveness of surveillance practices in genuinely enhancing security versus creating an illusion of safety, contributing to discussions about ethical and practical considerations in gated community governance.

Empirical Review

Security Dynamics and Sustainability in Gated Communities

In recent years, scholarly attention has increasingly turned towards understanding the dynamics of security protocols within gated communities, particularly in urban settings. Makinde (2013) investigates the interplay between urban sustainability and security in gated communities, focusing on Victoria Garden City Estate in Lagos State. Makinde's research elucidates how the quest for security drives residents towards gated communities, shaping patterns of urban development. While highlighting the economic benefits of such enclaves, Makinde also underscores the importance of environmental and social sustainability, particularly amidst criticisms surrounding gated communities' contribution to urban growth.

Pütz (2012) meticulously examines the concept of non-events within the context of airport security checkpoints. Through participant observation at various airports, Pütz elucidates how physical proximity at security checkpoints does not necessarily translate into meaningful interaction. The analysis underscores the significance of standardized procedures in creating a sense of order and detachment, where individuals navigate security measures with minimal face-to-face engagement. This study provides a lens to scrutinize how security checkpoints function as junctions of security and mobility, with implications for understanding the dynamics of interaction and surveillance within enclosed spaces.

Drawing from these studies, the current study can provide a comprehensive understanding of how standardized security procedures shape resident interactions and perceptions of safety within Chevron Drive estates. Additionally, it can evaluate the balance between maintaining security and fostering an environmentally and socially sustainable community.

The Paradox of Security in Residential Estates

Security in residential estates encompasses everything from traditional gated communities to the futuristic vision of smart cities. Understanding these diverse perspectives is crucial for navigating the complex interplay between security, urban development, and social inequality. One perspective to consider is the concept of golf estates, as explored by Hopkins (2012). While criticized for their environmental impact and social exclusivity, golf estates often use enhanced security as a major selling point, particularly in regions with high crime rates. This highlights the way security considerations shape the appeal of certain residential developments and exposes the intricate relationship between security provision, environmental sustainability, and socio-economic dynamics within these communities.

The allure of safety and security is a powerful magnet, drawing residents towards gated communities and secured estates. However, a closer look reveals a complex landscape where security measures, while influencing housing choices, don't always guarantee true safety. Studies by Osagie and Ilechukwu (2016) demonstrate the economic impact of robust security arrangements in gated communities. Their research shows a clear link between strong security and higher property values. This suggests a symbiotic relationship, where good security attracts residents and investors, leading to increased property valuations.

On the other hand, Monahan's (2018) examination of smart cities raises concerns about the growing reliance on surveillance technology as a security solution. By questioning the neutrality of such technology and its potential to exacerbate social inequalities, Monahan underscores the importance of critically analyzing the social and political implications of these security paradigms within urban development initiatives.

However, security is not a simple equation. Geldenhuys (2016) and Kempen (2016) delve deeper, exploring the motivations behind choosing secure estates and the potential shortcomings of security measures. Both highlight the dangers of overdependence on physical barriers and technology. These can create a false sense of security, making residents less vigilant, which criminals can exploit. Their findings point towards a more holistic approach to security management. Going beyond walls and cameras, it should address underlying vulnerabilities and foster a sense of community engagement. Residents who feel connected and responsible for their environment can be a valuable security asset.

The conversation on security in residential estates needs to expand beyond immediate concerns. Monahan

(2018) offers a critical perspective by analyzing the trend of smart cities, where surveillance technology is touted as a security solution. He questions the underlying politics and potential for social inequalities. Surveillance solutions driven by profit motives and neoliberal agendas raise concerns about who benefits and who loses in a society increasingly reliant on technology for security. Unintended consequences such as exacerbated social divisions need to be considered when evaluating these solutions.

Public-Private Security Collaboration and Privatized Urbanism

Recent studies examining the dynamics of security and urban development, particularly in Lagos, Nigeria, have highlighted the critical relationship between private security companies (PSCs) and law enforcement agencies as a fundamental aspect of crime prevention strategies. Chinwokwu (2018) delves into this relationship within the context of Lagos Metropolis, emphasizing the importance of operational collaboration and networking between PSCs and the police. The study underscores the positive impact of such collaboration on crime reduction, while also revealing areas for improvement, including training, intelligence sharing, and joint investigation and prosecution efforts.

In parallel, Herbert and Murray (2015) provide valuable insights into the evolving landscape of urban development, particularly in post-apartheid Johannesburg, where privatized urbanism has become increasingly prevalent. Their study elucidates the emergence of new self-contained cities, such as Waterfall City and Lanseria Airport City, which operate outside the administrative purview of public authorities. These privately-managed cities represent a global trend towards privatized urbanism, wherein real estate developers assume control over infrastructure, security services, and governance functions traditionally within the domain of public institutions.

Thus, this study reflects on the insights gleaned from both Chinwokwu's examination of public-private collaboration in crime prevention and Herbert and Murray's analysis of privatized urbanism. This study can explore the potential for leveraging partnerships between private security firms, residents' associations, and law enforcement agencies to enhance security measures within gated communities. By assessing the strengths and weaknesses of existing collaborative efforts, the study can propose recommendations for improving interagency coordination, enhancing training programs, and fostering greater information sharing and joint operations.

Moreover, the study can reflect on the implications of privatized urbanism for security governance within gated estates, considering how the outsourcing of security functions to private entities may impact accountability, transparency, and access to justice. By situating the examination within the broader context of urban development trends in Lagos and beyond, the study can offer valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of security provision and governance in rapidly changing urban landscapes

Gaps in Literature

There is dearth in knowledge as regards estate security measures and the politics of checkpoints within estates. The current body of research lacks dedicated empirical studies on security protocols within Chevron Drive estates. Existing research offers valuable theoretical frameworks, but the intricacies of security practices, community dynamics, and resident experiences in this specific context remain largely unexplored. This paper aims to fill this gap by providing empirical data and analysis tailored to the unique socio-cultural and geographical milieu of Chevron Drive estates. An empirical review of security measures in these estates can offer a comprehensive assessment of existing practices and identify potential areas for improvement. By focusing on Chevron Drive estates, this research aims to bridge the gap in the current literature and provide valuable insights applicable to gated communities beyond Lekki.

METHODOLOGY

This study will employ a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of security practices within residential estates along Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos. Semi-structured interviews in the form of engaging discussions will be conducted with key stakeholders, including security personnel, residents, and estate management representatives. A total of 30 persons will be interviewed. Observational visits to selected estates will also be carried out to observe security measures in action and gain firsthand insights into resident and security personnel interactions. The findings from all data collection methods will be discussed to create a more comprehensive understanding of the security landscape in Chevron Drive estates.

Findings

Existing Estates Security Measures

- I. Physical Security
 - Perimeter Security

The estates in Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos, prioritize a robust perimeter security system to ensure the safety of residents. This is achieved by erecting high fences

around the estates, which act as a physical barrier against unauthorized entry. Security guards are stationed at all access points, providing constant monitoring and quick response capabilities. These guards are trained to handle various security scenarios, ranging from minor disturbances to more serious threats, ensuring that the perimeter remains secure at all times.

- **Limited Access Points**

To enhance security, the estates have minimized the number of vehicle entry points to just two terminals: the front and back gates. This limited access approach reduces the potential for unauthorized entry and makes it easier to monitor and control traffic flow. The front gate is open to both residents and visitors, facilitating easy access while still under the watchful eyes of security personnel. The back gate is more restricted, accessible only to residents who have been issued special stickers, ensuring that only authorized individuals can use this entry point.

- **Access Control Levels**

The access control system is designed to differentiate between residents and visitors, ensuring that security measures are appropriately applied based on the individual's status. At the front gate, guards are tasked with checking the identity and purpose of visitors before allowing entry, while residents can pass through with minimal delay. The back gate, however, is strictly for residents who possess the necessary stickers, which are likely issued based on residency and possibly background checks. This tiered access control helps in maintaining a high level of security while also allowing for smooth entry and exit for those who live in the estate.

- **Surveillance**

Continuous surveillance is a critical component of the security protocols in these estates. Surveillance cameras are strategically placed throughout the estate to cover key areas, including entry and exit points, common areas, and less frequented spots. The surveillance system operates 24/7, providing real-time monitoring and recording of activities. This constant vigilance acts as a deterrent to potential intruders and helps in quickly addressing any security breaches that may occur.

- **Lighting**

Adequate lighting is essential for maintaining security, especially during nighttime. The estates are well-lit, with streetlights and additional lighting in critical areas ensuring that there are no dark spots where intruders could hide. Proper lighting not only enhances the effectiveness of surveillance cameras but also

increases the sense of safety among residents and deters criminal activities.

- **Backup Power Supply**

To ensure that security measures are not compromised during power outages, the estates are equipped with a backup power supply. This system kicks in automatically when the main power supply fails, ensuring that all security operations, including surveillance cameras, access control systems, and lighting, continue to function without interruption. The reliability of the backup power supply is crucial for maintaining constant security and peace of mind for the residents.

II. Personnel

- **Armed Police Officers**

Armed police officers are deployed within the estates primarily for handling emergencies and critical situations. Their presence is a crucial aspect of the security infrastructure, providing a rapid and authoritative response to serious threats. These officers are equipped with firearms and receive specialized training to deal with high-risk scenarios, including armed robbery, violent confrontations, and other significant security breaches. Their role is to act as a deterrent to potential criminals and to intervene swiftly to protect the residents and property within the estates.

- **Supernumerary Police Officers (SPY Officers)**

Supernumerary police officers, commonly known as SPY officers, play a vital role in augmenting the estate's security operations. These officers are a unique category within the Nigerian police force, specifically trained to support regular police activities and provide additional security measures. In the estates, SPY officers supplement the work of private security guards and ensure that security protocols are effectively enforced. They oversee the operations of the private guards, providing a supervisory layer that enhances the overall security management. Their presence helps in maintaining a seamless and coordinated security operation, ensuring that all security personnel work together efficiently to safeguard the estate.

- **Private Security Guards**

Private security guards form the backbone of the day-to-day security operations within the estates. These guards are stationed at various strategic points, including the front and back gates, and patrol the estate regularly. Their duties include monitoring entry and exit points, conducting routine checks, and responding to minor security issues. Private security guards are often the first point of contact for residents and visitors, making their role crucial in maintaining order and enforcing access control measures. They ensure that only authorized individuals gain entry into the estate,

and their visible presence serves as a deterrent to potential intruders. Regular patrols by these guards help in identifying and addressing any security concerns promptly, contributing to a secure and safe living environment for all residents.

III. Access Control Systems

- Technology

The estates in Chevron Drive, Lekki, Lagos, utilize advanced technology to streamline and enhance their access control systems. A key component of this technological integration is the Clannit app, which plays a pivotal role in granting and managing visitor access. The Clannit app is an innovative tool that allows residents to grant access to visitors electronically. By installing the Clannit app on their devices, visitors can be granted electronic access to the estate, ensuring a smooth and controlled entry process.

The app provides a secure and efficient way to control who enters the estate, leveraging different access levels based on residency status and the purpose of the visit. This not only streamlines the entry process but also creates a digital record of all visitors for enhanced security. This system enhances security by providing a digital record of all entries and exits, which can be monitored and audited. Residents can use the app to authorize visitors in real time, reducing the need for manual checks and paperwork. The app's user-friendly interface makes it easy for residents to manage visitor access, ensuring that only pre-approved individuals are allowed into the estate. Additionally, the Clannit app offers functionalities beyond access control, including emergency alarms, payment management, and a platform for community/estate announcements.

- Access Levels

The access control system is designed with multiple access levels to ensure that security measures are appropriately tailored to different categories of individuals entering the estate.

- Permanent Resident: Permanent residents are issued a sticker; however, domestic staffs are also given a permanent resident card which is valid for up to one year. This allows them seamless access to the estate and ensures that security personnel can easily verify their identity and residency status.

- One-Time Password (OTP): Pre-registered visitors receive a one-time password, which grants them temporary access to the estate. This OTP system ensures that only those who have been vetted and approved by a resident can enter, adding an extra layer of security.

- Clannit Mobile App: Visitors can be authorized through the Clannit mobile app, with the resident

providing electronic approval. This method allows for quick and efficient visitor management, reducing delays at the gate and ensuring that access is granted only to those with proper authorization.

- Pedestrian Access: Pedestrian access is managed based on behavioral profiling, ensuring that individuals entering on foot are screened and assessed for any potential security

risks. This approach helps in identifying and preventing unauthorized or suspicious individuals from gaining entry to the estate.

IV. Security Vulnerabilities

Limited Security Checks for Residents

Several issues have been observed with the thoroughness and consistency of security checks.

- Sticker Misuse: A significant vulnerability identified is the misuse of resident stickers. Some residents share their stickers with unauthorized vehicles, which undermine the security system. This practice allows vehicles that have not been properly vetted to gain entry into the estate, posing potential security risks.

- Inadequate Vehicle Inspections: Not all vehicles are subjected to comprehensive checks, such as inspecting the boot or backseat. This lapse can allow unauthorized items or individuals to enter the estate unnoticed.

- Bribery and Non-Compliance: Instances have been reported where residents tip security personnel to avoid thorough checks. This practice compromises the integrity of the security architecture and increases the risk of non-compliance.

- Suspicious Deliveries: There have been cases where dispatch riders attempted to deliver prohibited items such as drugs or arms. This highlights the need for more stringent screening of delivery personnel and packages.

- Manipulation by Residents: Female residents have been known to use emotional intelligence to manipulate security personnel, gaining entry without proper checks. This vulnerability exploits the human element of security enforcement.

- Refusal of Checks: Some residents refuse to have their vehicle boots checked, using their residential number as a means of passage. Security personnel often allow this, which compromises the security protocols.

- **Selective Inspections:** The type and condition of a vehicle, particularly SUVs, influence whether it will be checked. High-end vehicles or those with tinted windows are often not inspected thoroughly, if at all. Tinted windows in SUVs hinder thorough visual inspections, allowing potential security threats to go undetected.
- **Overwhelmed Security Personnel:** During peak times, long queues can overwhelm security personnel, leading to rushed or bypassed checks. This increases the risk of security breaches.
- **Confidence Trick:** Some vehicles bypass checks by mimicking the behavior of confirmed entries, such as following closely behind an authorized vehicle. This tactic exploits the trust and routines of security staff.

Non-Resident Access

Unidentified individuals sometimes gain access to the estate without undergoing proper security checks. This vulnerability is exacerbated by several factors:

- **Lack of Strict Enforcement:** There is a lack of strict enforcement of security protocols, such as allowing interchangeable stickers and bypassing checks. This makes it easier for unauthorized individuals to gain entry.
- **Limited Vehicle Identification:** The absence of advanced vehicle identification systems, such as barcode readers, makes it difficult to accurately track and verify vehicles entering the estate.
- **Inconsistent Security Checks:** The inconsistency in conducting security checks, especially for tinted vehicles and SUVs, as well as during busy periods, allows non-residents to enter without being properly vetted. This inconsistency undermines the overall security framework.

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings on the security protocols at Chevron Drive estates reveal a complex interplay of security efficacy, socio-economic dynamics, and exclusivity, drawing strong parallels to the body of existing literature. Each facet of the security framework reflects an attempt to address unauthorized access and maintain resident safety, yet it also contributes to the broader socio-political environment within and around these gated communities. The Chevron Drive estates demonstrate a strong emphasis on perimeter security, characterized by high fencing, limited entry points, and stationed security personnel, particularly with reinforced restrictions at resident-only gates. These measures align closely with research by Landman (2020) and Lee (2021), which identifies perimeter fortification and limited access as primary tools in gated communities

to deter unauthorized entry. Similarly, Makinde (2013) suggests that these restricted entry systems foster an environment that is both secure and self-contained, yet also exclusory by nature. In Chevron Drive, the use of resident-only gates and restricted access underscores the aim of balancing accessibility and security but also reveals an inherent exclusivity that exacerbates socio-economic divides between residents and neighboring communities. This exclusivity, as noted in Makinde (2013), remains a recurring theme in the gated community literature, where the pursuit of security often contributes to a socio-spatial divide.

The implementation of advanced technologies, such as the Clannit app, reflects a forward-looking approach in Chevron Drive to streamline visitor management by allowing electronic entry authorization and creating a digital log. These practices resonate with the findings of Prenzler (2021) and Zahorna (2023), who underscore the role of digital security in augmenting surveillance and enhancing user convenience in residential estates. However, Herrera Nájera (2021) presents a cautionary view, highlighting the phenomenon of "Security Theater," wherein technological security can provide a reassuring yet potentially deceptive sense of effectiveness. This concern is echoed in Chevron Drive, where despite the app's efficiency in visitor management, over-reliance on technology could lead to a complacency that undermines security if human vulnerabilities, such as bribery, remain unaddressed. Hence, while technology facilitates streamlined access, vigilant oversight and regular assessments are necessary to avoid reliance on the mere perception of security efficacy.

The Chevron Drive estates' round-the-clock surveillance, strategic lighting, and backup power systems contribute to an environment designed for heightened security and uninterrupted operations. Eshkuvatov et al. (2021) affirm the value of continuous surveillance and lighting as essential deterrents to unauthorized access, while Geldenhuys (2016) discusses the necessity of reliable power to prevent surveillance gaps. The Chevron Drive estates' comprehensive approach confirms that while continuous surveillance forms the backbone of estate security, as Herrera Nájera (2021) indicates, its effectiveness ultimately depends on operational consistency, particularly during low-traffic hours when lapses may be more likely to occur. Thus, these security components are foundational but rely heavily on steady and rigorous enforcement to maintain their intended protective function.

Chevron Drive employs a layered security model that includes armed police, SPY officers, and private guards, each responsible for different aspects of estate security. However, the study reveals issues with selective

inspections, bribery, and resident manipulation, all of which compromise the overall security framework. This multi-layered approach aligns with Chinwokwu's (2018) observations on the complexities of multi-agency collaboration in security, where cooperation can enhance crime prevention but may also lead to inconsistency and protocol gaps. Similarly, Byrne and McArdle (2020) argue that multiple layers of security can invite selective enforcement, particularly in areas with diverse socio-economic populations. In Chevron Drive, the manipulation of security personnel by influential residents and instances of bribery point to a need for standardized, enforced protocols and highlight the necessity for ethical oversight. These issues reinforce the importance of strong ethical standards and periodic audits, as unchecked vulnerabilities in a layered security model may inadvertently weaken the security it seeks to uphold.

The study identifies key vulnerabilities in the form of resident sticker misuse, inconsistent inspections, and the influence of social hierarchies on protocol adherence. This aligns with Peña- Alves (2022) and Monahan (2018), who discuss how socio-economic biases and human factors can compromise robust security protocols. Monahan specifically cautions that high-tech or well-resourced security measures can sometimes obscure underlying biases, where preferential treatment is extended based on perceived status. Chevron Drive's reliance on easily manipulable resident stickers, despite technological integration, highlights vulnerability where socio-economic biases are embedded within the security processes. These findings confirm the necessity of impartial, regular enforcement to ensure that high security standards are consistently applied, regardless of residents' social influence.

The stringent security protocols in Chevron Drive foster a socio-economic divide, promoting exclusivity and eliciting potential resentment from neighboring communities. This outcome reflects findings from Herrera Nájera (2021) and Hamama and Liu (2020), who argue that gated communities often contribute to social exclusion and reinforce hierarchical socio-economic structures. Further, Foucault's theory of Panopticism, as discussed by Gandy (2021), sheds light on how surveillance-oriented security protocols may lead to feelings of exclusion among non-residents, intensifying social divides between those 'watched' and 'unwatched.' In Chevron Drive, the division between residents and outsiders aligns with the panoptic model, where surveillance facilitates a separation between in-groups and out-groups. This finding suggests the need for mechanisms, such as open-access events or community programs that could

bridge the socio-economic gap and reduce tension. Addressing these exclusory effects may require a more inclusive approach that balances the need for security with a commitment to fostering community integration and cohesion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, strengthen perimeter security and vehicle access protocols by integrating advanced vehicle identification technologies. Implement a system where resident stickers have unique barcodes or RFID tags linked to the specific vehicle and resident information. This addition will prevent unauthorized access by ensuring that only verified vehicles with authentic identification can enter the estates. Conduct regular audits on sticker issuance and usage to reduce misuse. Alongside this, establish standardized procedures for thorough inspections on all vehicle types, including high-end and tinted vehicles, to ensure impartial enforcement. Training security personnel on these inspection protocols and incorporating random checks will further mitigate potential socio-economic biases and reinforce the integrity of entry control.

Secondly, invest in consistent and ongoing training programs for security personnel, emphasizing ethics, bias prevention, and handling of manipulation tactics. This training should include scenario-based exercises that prepare personnel to recognize and respond to various security breaches, such as confidence tricks, resident manipulation, and potential bribery attempts. Periodic refresher courses can strengthen these skills and support a security culture of fairness and integrity across the estates. By equipping personnel with a strong ethical foundation and advanced skills, security operations will remain effective and unbiased, reducing vulnerability to manipulation and reinforcing trust within the gated community.

Thirdly, enhance surveillance effectiveness through a robust real-time monitoring system complemented by scheduled review sessions to assess recorded footage. Integrate automated alerts that notify personnel of unusual activities, allowing for rapid responses to potential security incidents. Conduct routine assessments to verify that all cameras are functional, well-positioned, and effectively monitored around the clock. These proactive measures, including occasional reviews of camera footage for insights on security gaps, will ensure that surveillance operates as an active deterrent rather than merely as a recorded observation tool, bolstering the overall security structure.

Finally, initiate a community outreach program that fosters social inclusion with neighboring communities to address the socio-economic divides heightened by stringent security protocols. Organize events and

collaborative programs, such as open-access gatherings, community service projects, or neighborhood watch partnerships that bring together estate residents and neighboring community members. This initiative will help cultivate a sense of unity, improve the perception of the gated community, and bridge gaps created by exclusivity. Strengthening these social connections can mitigate feelings of exclusion, creating a more inclusive environment while maintaining necessary security standards.

CONCLUSION

The Chevron Drive estates exemplify the layered and technology-driven security practices of modern gated communities, with a robust combination of physical, personnel, and digital security measures. However, these protocols also reflect broader socio-political dynamics, where security practices intersect with socio-economic divides and social exclusion. The demand for stringent security measures by high-end estate residents creates a socio-economic divide, fostering feelings of exclusion among neighboring communities. Weaknesses in access control enforcement and inconsistencies in security checks create significant vulnerabilities. These issues undermine the overall effectiveness of the security protocols and compromise the safety of residents. Key findings from the literature review highlight the political dynamics of estate security checkpoints. The study's findings reinforce existing literature, particularly regarding the relationship between gated community security and social exclusivity, and underscore the need for careful, unbiased enforcement of security protocols.

The existing research on this topic has limitations and potential biases, primarily due to the focus on high-end estates and the reliance on qualitative data from interviews and personal observations. Future initiatives should consider balancing security efficacy with social inclusivity, ensuring that security practices support rather than hinder community cohesion. Exploring innovative and inclusive security measures can help balance the need for safety with the imperative of social cohesion. Engaging residents, security professionals, and policymakers in these discussions can lead to more effective and equitable security solutions. Additionally, fostering community outreach and ensuring transparent security practices can help create more inclusive and effective security protocols for gated communities.

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