

## Security Management: The Achievements and Challenges of Police Force in Urban Kano Nigeria

Ali Ado Siro<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Sundramoorthy<sup>a\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Sociology and Anthropology (Criminology Section), University Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM Pulau Pinang, Penang, Malaysia

<sup>b</sup>Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Federal University Dutse, 7156, Ibrahim Aliyu Bye-Pass, Jigawa State-Nigeria

\*Corresponding author: moorthy@usm.my

### Abstract

Domestic insecurity management in developing societies has been one of the key elements following United Nations Summit in 1994. This problem becomes a common characteristic of some northern Nigerian states in the contemporary times. Being in the affected region, urban Kano suffers from this ailment calling for public total concentration in ameliorating the situation. However, police Agencies are always central to security management the world over. The main thrust of this research is to elucidate the prospects and challenges of the force toward urban Kano security management. The study utilized the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews with the five selected police officers in the state headquarters. The results indicated that, although trying their best in protecting the lives and properties of the civilian populace, the agency faces some serious challenges. These include; inadequate personnel and working tools, poor welfare, lack of motivation, nepotism and corruption. Collaborative efforts from both government and the public are therefore needed if the police force is to work efficiently in safeguarding the security of the civilian populace.

*Keywords:* Security agencies; security management; urban Kano; police force; civilian populace

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Security is the most vital element in human's life. Without it, social, economic and political achievements cannot be attained. Immediately after the Soviet disintegration, end of cold and gulf wars in the early 1990s, the global attention was redirected from territorial (traditional) to domestic (non-traditional) aspects of human security. Provision of job, income, health, environmental sustainability, food, water resources and crime prevention securities were some of the promising avenues believed to ensure human security especially in the developing nations. Following the invocation of United Nations Summit in 1994, the issue of domestic insecurity becomes peculiar (United Nations, 1994).

The research focuses on the achievements and challenges of police force in the course of urban Kano security management. However, a number of researches were conducted in relation to police vis-à-vis security management (Nilson & Oliver, 2006; Williams & Williams, 2007; Alemika, 2009). Apparently, all studies provided a macro level analyses on the subject matter. In addition, crime management/security issues literature especially at the micro level remain scarce. This as elucidated is a knowledge gap which the current study strive to bridge. The analyses enumerate the visions vis-a-vis achievements and major obstacles being faced by the agency at the grass root level in the course of its operation.

### 2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The 1999 Constitution (when Nigeria returned to civilian rule after a long military rule) had provisions on the Nigeria Police Force, Police Council and the Police Service Commission. Their primary roles include the prevention of crime, protection of lives and properties through maintenance of law and order. In reference, Chapter IV sections (1) & (2) in sub sections a, b and c of the constitution contains the fundamental rights of every citizen. Accordingly, the police have the obligatory role of providing and maintaining human security and sustainability at all times and by all means necessary (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003).

In spite of these powers, police is faced with a number of challenges. These problems circumnavigate around personnel, welfare and enabling environment. This situation is the motivating factor behind this write up. The thrust is mainly the efforts being made by the police

force vis-à-vis security management accompanied by the outgrowing challenges that may need a total overhaul. This is a scenario which Blaikie (2010) refers to a problem worth sociological investigation.

### ■3.0 LITERATURE REFERENCE

The background studies of police force provide some argumentative basis for scholarly explorations. Wentz and Schlimgen (2011) in a Midwestern city survey argued that for police agency to be effective quality must exist. In their theory driven qualitative research, Nilson and Oliver (2006) cross-border study concluded that, police is an inherent significant segment through which policing strategies are applied to maintain security in human societies. Kusha (2013) in an analytical research revealed lack of police professionalism, justice reliability and democratization as factors always affecting human security negatively. Williams and Williams (2007) qualitative research indicated that, unavailability of modern devices to police play a negative role in the management of crime and security. Sanders and Henderson (2012) in an observational study found that poor information sharing, and some organisational cultures affect the police activities in security management. Similarly, in the course of observing the colonial and post-colonial police status in Nigeria, Alemika (2009) added that, poor adopted policing model is a major impediment to security management in the country.

Most of the Nigerian based researches assessed police force in terms of the outstanding problems and need for a total emancipation. Some studies touched on personnel numerical strength (Ahmed et.al 2013). Some researches stressed on general working environment (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003). Meanwhile, studies such as those of Okunola and Ojo (2012) argued that, major problems of police work in the country center around resources inadequacies. Coming to specifics, Ladapo, (2012) revealed inadequate funding as a major impediment to the police agency. However, Kasali (2012) identified police force as elitist. Although these challenges were national based, the insecurity dilemma in the country seems systemic.

In an urban Kano based GIS analysis, it was revealed that, inadequacies in police such as communication, transportation, and other working tools were dominant. Following terrain in the police force, the strength in the study area accounts for 1:1722 police/civilian ratio which quite violates the United Nations standard of 1:450 (Ahmed et.al 2013). Despite all these shortcomings, yet the agency is saddled with the task of security provision to the metropolitan teeming populace. However, little has been researched on the police crime prevention security role at micro level although it has been invoked during United Nations summit on internal security of developing societies like Nigeria (United Nations, 1994). Following the current security challenges the country suffers, studies similar to this are imperative to facilitate security policies aiming at emancipating the civil communities.

### ■4.0 METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

As indicated from the study synopsis of the study, the research is purely qualitative. The primary target population remained the police agency in Kano state. Meanwhile, the state Headquarters was the main data source. The method of data analysis was manifest/latent method (Draper, 1997). In the analysis method, a direct quotation from the primary respondent is reported (manifest). Then, a meaning is derived from the reported quotation (latent) through which analysis is made accordingly.

One of the advantages of this method is that, it enables the researcher to arrive at a logical conclusion which is usually offered through face to face consultations (interviews). Therefore, achievements and or the challenges being faced by the police in the course of discharging their duties were only extracted. This had helped in pinpointing the actual situation upon which conclusion of the research is made.

#### Research Instrument and Participants

In-depth interview was primarily used as a tool for data collection (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1993). Accordingly five relevant police officers were selected via snowball sampling technique (Kodracki et.al, 2002). They consist of; the police public relations officer (PPRO), Inspector Crime, Inspector Admin, Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and Divisional Crime Officer (DCO). A set of interview questions were utilized for the five sessions with the respondents. And, each interview session lasted between a minimum of thirty (30) to a maximum of sixty (60) minutes.

### ■5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### The Police Force Achievements in Urban Kano

This sub-section highlight on the police visions toward security management in the study area. Some of the highlighted views tried to elaborate on security agency functionality and the ways forward to achieve maximum utilization. The following excerpts digested further on this issue and provide a better clarification. In a due response, one police officer mentioned:

It is evidently clear that the amount of crimes being committed has reduced to a bearable minimum. The reason behind this is the tireless efforts by the police to ensure peace reign in the state and even beyond. Violent crimes such as political thuggery, street mobs, and armed robbery have all decimated in recent times. Recruitment of more officers, provision of more working tools are some measures being taken to well manage the problem at hand.

Taking shot from the excerpts, it is evidently clear that, the police in the study area are doing all they could to ensure crime is fought to the bearable minimum level. It has indicated that, a number of violent crimes that disturb the area before were no longer active. Speaking about the possible challenges, the view argued that, there are currently measures being taken by authorities to ensure those problems are concurred. This goes to show that, despite the trials the agency passes through, efforts are always in place to make sure law is maintained against all odds. Such is indeed a remarkable move by the police to make the study area a safe haven for all. Another view states:

As we know, insecurity is a serious issue which concerns insurgency, robbery, theft, mob actions and thuggery. We look at illiteracy as a source of societal evil. 'An empty mind is a devil workshop'. Most of the criminals we parade are found wanting in terms of their literacy level. To curtail this, I think our schooling system must be given a second thought so that the literacy level could be improved and checkmate crime from the grassroots especially among our teeming youth.

The view expresses insecurity as an impediment brought by the aggravation of certain violent crimes. Meanwhile, those crimes were channeled to the amount of ignorance the criminals had which is always responsible for their engagement in criminal activities. We can also speculate that, it is the poor schooling system which breeds the half-baked and or school dropouts that could turn into deadly criminals. Accordingly, to fight insecurity, measures from the grassroots need to be taken which include overhauling the education system from the primary level. Primary socialization within the various families is another way through which schooling system could be remediated. Hence, without the assistance from families, education will fail even if the concerned authorities have tried their best for quality transformation. Similarly, in their further efforts to combat criminality, another police officer stressed on some vital measures:

The three vital measures we always take in ensuring and maintaining peace and order in the state include among other things, good human relations, intelligence gathering and proactive policing. In addition, we also have a good human relations with our sister agencies such as, military, immigration, custom, NDLEA and *Hisbah*.

Some of the strategies being utilized by the police in ensuring a lasting peace is through collaborative efforts. It is believed police alone cannot cater with the current security challenges, without these accompanied measures, success in security management may be unrealistic. Hence, although police is identified with primary responsibility of managing security, other organizations are equally important to ensure human security in the metropolitan Kano. However, the excerpts does not elaborate on the extent of the initiated collaboration between the police and other sister law enforcement agencies. To rectify this, another view vindicated:

Although all sister organizations contribute toward an effective security management, NDLEA's and *Hisbah* are in most cases the most pronounced. The former assist us whenever it comes to drug related crimes. The latter is more on general issues including civil cases. Police must come in because they do possess more powers in crime/security management. Unlike these two peculiar to Nigeria, police conventionally remain the prime actor in criminal justice system.

This view elucidated further on the closely utilized organizations when it comes to police functionalities vis-à-vis crime control and security management. It shows that, despite being important, the two outlined bodies appear the most helping in policing issues in the state. However, it is also made clear that, none of these agencies possesses an equal power as the police, neither is any an actor in the judicial system. This conglomeration of powers enable police to be at the forefront in an organized system of modern security management. By evaluation, it is indicated from the excerpts that, police are working tirelessly to connect with the relevant agencies so that peace could reign for the majority of the civilian populace. The view has also acknowledged how unity among law custodians is very important when it comes to peaceful coexistence of the state. This indicates that, collective efforts must remain intact if the present security achievements are to be improved. Another officer interviewed had this to contribute:

Other strategies considered important in dealing with crime prevention consist of frequent patrol, arresting crime perpetrators and enlightening the public on police roles where we use media houses on key security issues. The public response has been so far satisfactory.

The excerpts stressed the importance of constant patrol, immediate arrests and public enlightenment. Media sources both public and private in the state are being used to ensure public awareness and its role in crime prevention policy. The main point is that, security management has not been restricted to police and other law enforcement organizations, but the general populace. This is so much essential for intelligence gathering that aid the structural crime prevention in the human security enterprise. However, the media utilization is so much helpful so that the campaign for public awareness on policing will remain functional. Therefore, in dealing with crime hotspots, these utilizable avenues are not underestimated. In another attempt to elaborate how policing measures are being assisted through other means, an officer interviewed added:

Despite the multifaceted challenges in the force, we found the business entrepreneurs, traditional and religious leaders helpful in cooperating with the relevant security agencies. The major unified aim is a general peace for the state and to device ways through which it could be sustained.

The view acknowledged the existing problem in the police generally. However, it is an encouraging clause that, the most public proximity leaders cooperate toward security sustainability. It also took into account the relevance of business movers and preachers in the state for a secured community. Considering these excerpts, it could be ascertained that, peace is a virtue that sustains only by certain unifying forces within and outside the security enterprise. It has also enlightened on how the stated groups turn utilizable in intelligence gathering that

always keeps the police at the track of crime control and security management. This as the data entail is a remarkable achievement in the contemporary war against insecurity. In a rider comment to the forgone, another view opines:

I think it is not only the security agencies and traditional authorities that shall contribute to the impending insecurity issues. Parents, religious scholars are also saddled with security management. The former can contribute through socialization from early childhood through adolescence to adulthood. The latter can preach against any antisocial behavior so that people can shun away from evils.

As has been earlier elucidated, the view digested the efforts needed from other societal sectors that are equally helpful. While emphasizing about parental role, it stresses the scholarly and or religious preaching. This is because family and religion are considered as integral components in urban Kano public's life. Without these two institutions, remarkable achievements in security management will remain unrealizable. Hence, their contribution shall not be overemphasized. Furthering the discussions, another police maintained:

One of the ways of handling insecurity is that, community must comprehend what the police task is, therefore, community must assist the police to abet insecurity. All unwanted behaviors must be reported to the relevant authorities. Nooks and crannies should have a common network, otherwise, attaining success in achieving security goal is going to be difficult.

This view extends community role in security management. Community policing is therefore suggested in the interview excerpts. The public's role in assisting the police work is essential and becomes integral in a daily business living. The complexities of human societies necessitate this approach for support must be coordinated to achieve an everlasting successes. It is believed that, coverage in security management will only be possible if such measures are considered and applied. However, unlike the forgone views, this has extended other roles as general in the community rather than specific to certain categories of people. Thus, security management must be systemic in theory and practice if success is to be actualized. In Table 1, the police source revealed that, in the last six months of the year 2015, crimes statistics had certain fluctuations showing some successes of the agency. Except in the last two months (November and December), crime reduction was achieved. Hence, more efforts need to be staged so that security improvement could be realized. The table also indicated that, the community suffered much from property crimes. This is followed by violent types and lastly public order. By speculation, unemployment and poverty can be said to have characterized the community in question. A situation that would have forced people into crime in a quest for livelihood. It also indicated an element of relative disorderliness.

**Table 1** Crimes reported to police in the third and fourth quarters of 2015.

|              | July       | August     | September  | October    | November   | December   |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Violent      | 282        | 182        | 77         | 98         | 119        | 167        |
| Property     | 400        | 330        | 110        | 134        | 241        | 280        |
| Public Order | 39         | 33         | 215        | 43         | 42         | 26         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>721</b> | <b>545</b> | <b>402</b> | <b>275</b> | <b>402</b> | <b>473</b> |

Source: Kano State Police Headquarter

### Police Force Challenges in Urban Kano

According to the results obtained from these excerpts, police in Kano state generally suffers from personnel inadequacy. The interviews revealed that, the agency suffers from the lacks of personnel and working tools. The obtained results by [7] indicated largely the problems of police in urban Kano as personnel oriented. Meanwhile, the current work force of the agency runs arbitrarily at 7000 personnel only. This number is expected to provide security for over 12 million people. Thus, the ratio of police to civilian population, is on 1:1722. This violates the United Nations standard of 1:450 ratio. This brings security set back although the problem is systemic. This is confirmed by another output. It reads:

It is obvious that our workforce is below the desirable. Although Kano is currently the most populous state of the federation, yet the number of police to cater with the security issues of the state is quite discouraging. However, with the coming of the new administration and looking at some transformation strategies being introduced, we are optimistic that things will change for the better.

The quotation above is rather a confirmatory statement to justify the long historic dilemma in the force as identified by some forgone studies. Although the observed security obstacle has been vindicated, optimism was rather invoked as things will get better for proper security management policies. However, techniques of how these transformations are being integrated in the agency were absent. In otherwords, the statement has been vague in peculiar issue clarifications. Meanwhile, the most essential point from the excerpts is that personnel problem exist and demands some urgent actions Hence, the concerned authorities should put more efforts to make things better for the citizens. In an effort to further clarify the above view, an officer opined:

It is not only the working tools that are lacking in the force. Welfare issues (across all ranks) is a major challenge. As usual, police normally operate at various levels; Zonal command, State command, Area command, Divisional Headquarters and Outposts. It is obvious that the challenge is enormous as both levels of operations are being affected. This is quite inimical as the country's population grows exponentially with no complimentary efforts being put in place.

The view indicates that, not only at urban Kano levels, the police force in Nigeria is being faced with irreparable challenges. Some of which cannot allow the agency to compete with its contemporaries the world over. Poor motivation, welfare, are some additional obstacles. These bring setback to the success of the agency. To achieve success in the police, modern crime fighting tools need to be provided to meet the security demand. Police welfare need to also be improved. Hence, more resources should be injected to make the desired goals a reality. In line with this, Nigeria's national population statistics indicates that, Nigeria in December 2015 had, 187,295,748, Kano state had 12,383,935 while urban Kano had 3,067,363 people. By the end of 2016, the country is expected to have 193, 046, 056, Kano state to have 12,715,340 while urban Kano expectation is 3,127,619. At both levels, no United Nations policing criteria of 1:450 is being met. Another officer interviewed has an evaluating view:

It is something acceptable that many shortfalls exist in the force. The fact that crimes increase is because of some obvious realities of our weaknesses. There exists problems of poor welfare, poor motivation and even corruption from the top down. Meanwhile, this does not mean we make no impact in managing the public security no matter how little. I believe, with the current reformation in the police sector, things will get better. One thing is, the change shall come gradually.

The view extended the blame to internal factors within the police organization. The view has elaborated that, the police work tirelessly to ensure that security in the state is managed. It has also expressed optimism that sooner or later, things will get better in the public security industry. However, the populace must bear with the situation as the quality change is non-radical. The most alluring element about this point is that, hopes about future security is invoked and set to be assured overtime as all efforts gain momentum of acceleration height. In another effort to further evaluate the major problem in the Nigeria's police force at urban Kano level, a response to this effect states:

Police deficiencies are numerous, but the most pertinent include working equipment that are currently lacking to face the security challenges of the modern times. Transportation, arms and ammunitions and effective communication devices are inadequate to cater with the security needs. As such we face challenges in combatting insecurity of urban Kano, although this is a common phenomenon in the force all over the country.

It is clear that, the obstacle to police vis-à-vis security management is multidimensional. Therefore, personnel problems were not the only problems being faced by the force. Rather, inadequate equipment in addition affect the effective functioning of the agency. To provide an enabling environment for the police toward security management, authorities have to rise from the slumber and equip the agency sufficiently. Unlike the first quote, this excerpt argued that, the problem is systemic across the country. It has also expressed clearly that, the current urban Kano insecurity largely occurs as a result of these deficiencies. In a shocking view, an officer exposed:

The most tragic of police work in Nigeria generally is this corruption accompanied by nepotism issue. As far as I am concerned, it cut across all law enforcements, although the police's is the most pronounced. Unless the ongoing transformations checkmate corruption, nothing will be achieved in security management. To me, the first is to improve the welfare vis-à-vis salary structure and allowances which can impinge our lives and boost our morale for proper police function.

It has been made clear that, corruption and favoritism are a major problem in the Nigeria's police force. The evils are systemic at all levels in the agency. General welfare in the force by the concerned authorities is sought as the only avenue through which zeal will be infused. It indicated that, the current situation is largely discouraging which seriously affect the security management industry. In a more elaborating stand, an officer added:

The introduced MSS (Mechanized Salary Scheme) is at the detriment of the junior officers. The irony is despite being federal agency, no uniformity exist between salaries of the same cadre in different states, and this is dependent upon the discretion of the top officers who decide on what to do, when, how and to whom.

The view clearly established that, the idea of discrimination along corruption effects take the front in the agency. The force is so immersed in exploitation, domination and dehumanization of ranks and files by the superiors. This goes to show lack of proper organization and management in the agency. There was also poor bureaucratic procedures governing the force. The whole however, push the officers into corruption and bribery scandals that negatively affect civilian populace in a larger extent.

## ■6.0 CONCLUSION

Being central to internal security, the current study concentrated on police functions vis-a-vis security management. This micro level qualitative analysis identified corruption, nepotism, lacks of adequate personnel, funding, general welfare and working tools as the major problems of the force. Notwithstanding, achievements of the police force were rather digested providing suggestions using which better quality could be established. Unless those remedies are considered, pessimism is likely to remain in the agency which automatically affects the proper functioning of the security industry. However, it is recommended that future researches should focus on traditional authorities' role being an accompanying partner in security management. This is because, cultures and traditions become an integral part of urban Kano civilian populace.

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