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Security Challenges and Crime Prevention in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

Abstract
This study was aimed at analyzing the effectiveness of crime prevention and the security of lives and properties. To achieve this objective is investigate the effectiveness of the Police Force in the prevention of crime while utilizing the secondary sources of data. This data was collected from paper based sources (books, essays, journal articles, newspaper reports, research reports, conference papers relevant to the objective of the research) and from electronic sources. The literature review took into cognizance what crime is, the causes of crime, crime prevention and security. The review also took into cognizance the role of police as protecting lives and properties and prevention of crime. The researcher also discussed the effectiveness of the Nigerian Police Force in the protection of lives and properties looking at the challenges they face especially in areas of funding or salaries, welfare and in the purchase of sophisticated weapons. As a result of this, the police is engaged in several corrupt practices which caused the distrust from the citizens. Therefore this study infers that government should initiate empowerment schemes like tutoring programmes, skills acquisition, employment and volunteer opportunities to inhibit the causes of crime. The Police force should be overhauled, initiating training and retraining of personnel to achieve optimum performance and the government should also provide adequate funding for an effective and efficient force.

Keywords: Crime, crime causation, crime prevention, Police force, security, social bonds, social control and security apparatus

Introduction

Peace and security have been identified as basic conditions for sustainable national transformation and development within the globe (Madu, Ewelum, & Chieke, 2015). Scholars believe that failure of governance, national transformation, sustainability, development; insecurity and conflict are related (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004).

Societies have had to deal with criminal activities which include loss of lives and properties, terror, political instability, victimization by conventional criminals amongst others all over the world (Fayeye, 2010).

Parson (2007) posited that richer and more powerful organizations manipulate the poor, so poverty and inequity should become a security concern for all. These conditions can eventually tend towards crime which can subsequently affect both the poor and rich in the society.

There have been several drug wars in the world and this is predominant in Mexico. Since the drug groups in Mexico are the leading suppliers of cocaine, and other hard drugs (CFR.org Editors). The activities of these cartels have triggered an environment of violence and crime in Mexico, contributing to the series of homicides every year.

Boko Haram has covered a large area in the northern part of Nigeria, causing a massive destruction of lives and the economy of the people especially in the North Eastern part. The terrorist also brainwash and hypnotize the young women and men who they use as suicide bombers. In 2013, it was stated that more than 3000 people had been killed by the terrorists since it became active in 2009 (Akande, 2013) and this statistics have increased over time. The group holds extreme religious ideology, which they use as the basis to commit their terrible crimes (Adesoji, O., Adilaja, A. L. & Penar E., 2016). Banditry is also not left out in the North West. This group have turned the North western part of Nigeria into a living hell for residents with their criminal acts, killings, rape and kidnapping of inhabitants of the area.

A report on the rate of violence in Nigeria (2006-2011) by Nigeria Watch Data base shows that the second main cause of violence is crime. Most crimes, breach of peace, chaos, fights or fatalities could be curbed if people concerned are steadily conscious of their behaviour and environment. Crime impacts on society in different ways in line with the nature and degree of the crime perpetrated and threat comes with the increased incidence of crime in the society.

From the National Bureau of Statistics report on crime statistics, about 125,790 cases of crime were reported in Nigeria for the year 2016 and about 2,994 cases were reported in Rivers state. From the total of 134,663 cases reported in Nigeria in 2017, about 1,570 were reported for Rivers State. In 2016 Offences against Persons reported was 1,683 which decreased to 467 in 2017, while Offence against Properties increased from 897 in the year 2016 to 1,103 in 2017. This data from the National Bureau of Statistics also reveals that most criminal cases are not recounted. Hence it is very imperative that issues that border on crime are given serious intellectual and proactive approach. It is of utmost importance to understand delinquency and crime and the scientific approach

given to curb it. The effect of crime on the society is worrisome and the federal and state government should include subjects that will help to inculcate moral values to the young people at the different levels of education.

According to the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, crime prevention provides opportunities for a more cost effective approach to the problem of crime.

Security is usually discussed in relation to the State rather than individuals (Bilgan, 2003). Other ways of reasoning that gives priority to individual and societal dimensions of security have been taken into cognizance in this study. This study also focuses more on security of people's lives and properties in relationship to crime and its prevention.

Due to the mandate of the citizens, national security remains a priority to any nation which Nigeria is not an exception thus security entails a situation when a nation feels free from political pressures, economic coercion, external aggression, and situations when the nation can develop and progress freely (Uffot, Peter & John, 2014)

The security challenges facing Nigeria and Rivers State are enormous – terrorism, insurgency, communal crises, crime (armed robbery, kidnapping, vandalism, theft, financial fraud, and gangster action), cultism and so on. Imobighe and Eguavoen (2006) posit that acts of terror are intended for private material gains, which also translates into kidnapping people for ransom.

Before now the target victims of kidnapping were foreign oil workers (mostly expatriates), which later revolved into kidnapping of those who are considered to be wealthy and can afford the ransom. In recent times, kidnapping has been extended to the common man.

The residents of Woji, Aluu, Rumuji, Rumuokoro, Ozuoba, Agba-Ndele and other communities in Obio-Akpor, Port Harcourt City, Ikwerre and Emohua Local Government Areas, Rivers State, have been raising alarm over the easy way kidnappers and armed robbers abduct, rob and kill citizens in these areas.InObio-Akpor LGA, the prevalence of crime is high and this can be shown in several incidences of crime in the study locale. According to the Guardian Nigeria Newspaper of 3rd July, 2021, with heading Police parade 37 suspected kidnappers, others in Rivers state, the Police paraded 27 kidnappers, 6 cultists and three armed robbers. Amongst these suspects was a 19year old Richard Okumma, from Ogba/Egbema/ Ndoni LGA, who killed a 21 year old Mr. Wisdom Chetachi in one of the hotels in Rumuekini community in Obio-Akpor LGA. (Godwin, 2021).

In recent times gunmen killed at least five Policemen and two civilians in Rivers state. The attack took place at Rumuji community in Emuoha LGA in Rivers state. During the attack several security vehicles were burnt. In same vane there was another attack at Elimgbu Police station still in Obio-Akpor LGA. During this attack, three Police

Officers were beheaded (Iheamnachor, 2021). This was also followed by the Divisional Police Officers (DPO), of the Rumuokoro Police Station in Obio/ Akpor LGA, CSP Cliff Igwebe and his Divisional crime officer (DCO) for responding to a distress call from citizens of that area (Iheamnachor, 2021). This led to the state Governor Nyesom Wike's imposing a night time curfew in the state between the hours of 10:00pm and 6:00am, and 8:00pm to 6:00am for various entry and exit points in the state (Iheamnachor, 2021). Several kidnaps have been taking place in this study locale but not adequately documented. From the online Punch Newspaper dated 25th, November, 2022, three Police officers were shot dead by gunmen at the Rumuokoro area of Obio-Akpor LGA and their lifeless bodies in pool of blood, found on the major road. It was further revealed that the Policemen were killed while providing escort for oil company workers in a Hilux vehicle when the incident occurred and they eventually kidnapped the oil firm boss (Naku, 2022).

Societies have promulgated polices and laws that help in detecting and curbing crime yet the degree of crime is still a huge problem globally. Crime has become a source of worry to both private organizations and the government. Therefore the government of any country should contribute toward the prevention of crime by formulating adequate policies which cut across social, economic, educational (to acquire self-sufficiency), employment, health and justice is very vital to preventing crime (Shaw & Travers, 2007) and government policies should cut across this area.

Crime prevention and security covers the measures individuals can take to prevent crime and protect themselves, their families and their properties from harm and danger. Therefore the researcher identifies gaps in the security, crime management and prevention processes in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State and views that due to the neglect in the creation of adequate security awareness and measures, there should be ample inclusion of crime prevention and security mechanisms within the research location. In Obio-Akpor LGA, one of the security measures put in place is the Nigerian Police Force, a government security agency. Hence this study will escalate the crime prevention mechanisms and its effectiveness in the security of lives and properties within the study locale.

Statement of the Problem
The several security challenges in Rivers state are a reflection of ineffective security prevention mechanisms. This could be connected to the long neglect of essential elements of security planning and control in Nigeria. Nations that ignore the significance of security to development are surely bound to go through numerous challenges, like instability and threats to her corporate existence. There has been neglect in prioritizing basic aspects of security threats to its national security. Politicization of security issues and Lack of funds have also increased the poor security conditions faced in Nigeria. There is no adequate will and genuine purpose by the different levels of government in Nigeria to free the society of criminal activities, since

those in governance are also culpable of corruption and fraud (Adebayo, 2013).
 The Nigerian security architecture allows for the federal government to be in control of the police while the state government are the chief security officers of their various states. This is also a challenge facing governance in Nigeria, which can also lead to the insecurity of lives and properties in this area (Nwokaeze & Dawaye, 2020). Insufficient funding by the government also leads to poor condition of service for the Police force (Oyemuinmina & Aibieyi, 2016). This has also been one of the major challenges facing the security of lives and properties in Obio-Akpor LGA.

Lack of security consciousness of the populace, especially in Obio Akpor LGA, coupled with the inadequate training of security personnel, also increase security challenges in the study locale. As a result of these recent security uncertainties, the LGA cannot guarantee peaceful atmosphere for people to go about their legitimate activities. We realize that no major economic activity can occur in a chaotic environment (Ekpe, 2007) and this explains the necessity for the complete application of important forms of security to derive the needed stability.

In the Niger Delta, there are countless cases of abduction for ransom by the youths who see it as a means of economic survival. Other related criminal activities are also taken into cognizance. To support this Imobighe and Eguavoen (2006) posit that acts of terror are intended for private material gains, which also translates into kidnapping people for ransom.

According to Peterside (2009), increased exploitation of oil and gas resources resulting in various consequences which have been disastrous as the area continues to suffer massive pollution of land, water, and living and non-living things there in has led to the devastation of the environment. This and the lackadaisical attitude of the government towards the plight of the people have given rise to prolonged economic crises leading to aggravation of poverty, unemployment and hunger. These have fuelled an atmosphere of anger, bitterness, frustration, tension, aggression, conflict and crime (Peterside, 2009), thereby leading to an emergence of different pressure groups demanding for resource control. Various cult groups also emerged from these pressure groups who involve in several criminal activities like kidnapping, robbery, killings, rape and so on (Sowunmi, 2006).

The struggle for resource control in the Niger Delta has given rise to several issues and criminal activities in the region. The youths in their struggle deviated into militancy which gave rise to cultism and the result is the high rate of crime as witnessed in the region, with Rivers State not left out. According to Peterside (2009), the consequences of oil exploitation and its negative effects on the environment led to hunger, and poverty fuelling an atmosphere of anger, tension, aggression, conflict and crime, tending towards an emergence of different pressure groups demanding for resource control. Various cult groups also emerged from these pressure groups that involve in

several criminal activities like kidnapping, robbery, killings, rape and so on (Sowunmi, 2006). Before now the target victims of kidnapping were foreign oil workers (mostly expatriates), which later revolved into kidnapping of those who are considered to be wealthy and can afford the ransom. In recent times, kidnapping has been extended to the common man.

These security conditions trickle down to the various States, Local Government Areas (LGAs) and communities with the same effects. With the high rise in crime in Obio-Akpor LGA being one of the main centres of economic activities in Nigeria, the necessity for crime prevention mechanisms cannot be over emphasized in this area. There have been cases of cult activities and crime in the study locale and in a society where people are increasingly falling victim to criminal activities, it is important for every person to be security conscious. It is not enough to provide security; the people also have a role to play.

Several studies have been conducted on crime, but few have been successful in relating crime prevention mechanisms to security of lives and properties and how effective it has been particularly in addressing security challenges, especially in the study locale. Showing that when there is increase in crime prevention the security challenges reduces and the security of lives and properties also increases as a result of these. Several Scholars like Adebayo (2013) carried out a research on the Social Factors Affecting Effective Crime Prevention and control, Fayeye (2010) conducted a study on Criminal Violence in Nigeria, Dambazau (2007) conducted a study on Criminology and Criminal Justice, Shaw and Travers (2007) Investigated the Strategies and Best Practices in Crime Prevention Particularly in Relation to Urban Areas and Youth at Risk but this contribution which focuses on the role of crime prevention through urbanization was not extensive enough.

This study therefore investigates if crime prevention contributes to address security challenges and the security of lives and properties in Obio-Akpor LGA of Rivers State.

Aim and Objective of the Study
This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of crime prevention and the security of lives and properties. Specific objective is to;
1. Investigate the effectiveness of the Police Force in the prevention of Crime.

Literature Review
The literature review of this study takes into cognizance crime causation and prevention, and measures for preventing crime and the effectiveness of the Police Force in the security of lives and property.

Crime causation
Crime causation, in this work, was discussed and detailed using the strain theory, while

the theory of Social Bond/Control was utilized in discussing and detailing crime prevention.

Tenibiaje (2010) sees crime as acts that contravene the laws of the land or serious offence against the laws of the society leading to severe consequences and penalties by law. This shows that crime is a liable action or omission prohibited by law and likely to be penalized by the state. Crime is a union of criminal component for criminal acts which include property and victims and the place to execute these criminal activities (Tabangin, Flores and Emperador, 2008). Therefore from this we realize that crime isn't only about offenders and the offences but also about the place or location.

Usman, Yakubu and Bello (2012) while reviewing Dambazau's (1997) arguments looked at crime from four areas like crime against persons like murder, assault, rape, crime against property such as forgery, burglary, arson, vandalism, violent stealing, petty theft, crime against lawful authorization and crime against local act or the public order such as traffic offences, liquor offences, narcotic and substance abuse etc.

Ajaegbu (2012) posited that poverty and lack of employment have led many youths especially graduates to committing various forms of crime. Therefore this is relevant in the explanation of the situation in Nigeria, where many youths are involved in criminal activities as a result of poverty and high level of unemployment.

According to Agnew (1992) strain theory argues that strains increase the likelihood of negative emotions like frustration and these lead to crime as a possible response to ease the frustration. Scholars like Robert (1957)from whom other arguments of strain theory emerged from drew on Emile Durkheim's (1951) idea in explaining criminality and his theory argues that crime occurs when there is gap between the cultural goals of a society (material wealth, status etc), and the structural means to achieve these (education, employment, etc). This strain between the means and goals results in frustration and resentment, and encourage some people to use unlawful means to succeed. Criminality can be a method of reducing strain and this could be seen from people who steal money for sustenance or for sustaining a particular lifestyle.

According to Agnew (1992), for this strain to result in crime, it comes from the functions of the characteristics of the individual going through the strain. Strains result in crime when the individual lack the skills and resources to cope with the strain in a legal manner. issues and life challenges like lack of food, shelter, economic instability and deprivation and others are examples of strain that may lead individuals to commit crime (Burton & Dunway, 1994).

Piquero and Sealock (2000) realized that emotional and physical abuse of juveniles in households can lead to delinquency. Parental neglect, Parental separation and other family conflict can also lead to delinquency. When people are faced with unjust situations and seek justice, most times they indulge in crime to get the justice they yearn

for. With the unstable economic situation faced by Nigerians, unemployment and poverty are on the high rise, inflation and high rise in cost of goods and services, adequate sources of livelihood are unavailable especially in this location which makes residents prone to crime for survival.

Other scholars have argued that youth violence and crime can be caused by only economic deprivation, despite other pressure (Baron, 2004; Eisler & Schissel, 2004). Other Scholars argue that the link between economic deprivation, youth violence and crime is more complex.

Some sociological factors from early sociologist like Emile Durkheim (1951) posit that people commit crime because the state and its authorities do not enforce the law, controls or morals adequately, so retributive justice then becomes the penalties of man's actions in societies like this (Chukwunka, 2009).

Chukwunka (2009) discussed the arguments from another sociologist Karl Max, who argued that crime can be caused by unequal and insufficient social conditions. His theory is linked to the ownership of the factors of production in the capitalist society. These ownership statuses are concentrated with a few persons called the bourgeoisie while the other people are classified as the proletariat – the poor people who provide the labour. The proletariats are at the mercy of the bourgeoisie and the outcome of this has been a lot of economic repression and hostility.

Lea and Young (1993) also in agreement with Max's theory further posited that the causes of crime are social lack, unequal representation of the labour force and the nature of the basic lifestyle of a group to resolve their challenges in a capitalist society. This tends to create hostilities against the Police, security and law enforcement agencies as a whole. When conflict occurs people who reside in disadvantaged neighbourhoods tend to resolve the conflict themselves rather than involving the police and this is due to the lack of belief in them, so the people resort to violence (Anderson, 1999). Inturn, law enforcement agents are less thorough in maintaining order especially in neighbourhoods prone to poverty and insecurity. Therefore as a result of this, when prescribed forms of control and prevention decrease, crime and the infiltration of illegal markets boom (Ludwig, 2001).

Chukwunka (2009) discussed the arguments from the neo Marxist who argued that crime is an outcome of relative lack, from the privileged few who govern society using the law as a tool to infringe on the rights of the less privileged founded on the conspiracy of the elites. From the Marxist background, Hagan (2009) while reviewing the social control theory presented Quinney's (1970) arguments which looked at delinquency and crime as behaviour that conflicts with the interests of certain segments of the society, suggesting that crime is a product of poor social conditions in a capitalist society. Therefore Hagan (2009) suggests that capitalism itself needs to be eliminated in order to control and prevent crime. From this argument we understand that for people to shun crime there should be equal distribution of wealth between all the classes and opportunities for people to create wealth should be created.

Crime Prevention and Security

Chris (2007) while reviewing Hirschi (1969) described social bonds as the solution to resolving issues linked to law-abiding and delinquent behaviour. If social bonds were not working, people would eventually turn to delinquency and crime due to the rewards it offers. Hirschi (1969) in his research believes that all humans are animals and are culpable of committing criminal acts and when the moral values and control in people are weakened, they are likely to commit crime. These criminal acts develop from childhood influences and create the pattern of behaviour in the family and the street. Social bonding also identified as Control theory emphasizes on the practices and processes that restrains us from committing crime, rather than on the forces that drive or motivate us to engage in criminal acts. The assumption is that those drives are in all of us as humans and the existing social bonds we engage in or are forced into act as a brake on those drives. Social bonds check us from engaging in criminal acts and if effective, can prevent crime.

Social Control describes major restraints to crime. This control takes into cognizance direct control which may be exercised by family members, neighbours, Police and other security agents. This type of control allows for family members, the security agents and others to provide the person with clearly defined rules that prevents criminal behaviour which restricts the chances of indulging in crime (Gottfredson, Michael & Hirschi, 1990). The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the criminal justice system also implements this.

There have been several critiques on the social control based on diverse grounds. It has been faulted as being an absence-of-something not there (Downes, Rock & McLaughlin, 2011). They assumed that crime happens because of what is absent or what has not happened (social bonding). Hence we can assume that there is no explanation for why people commit crime as regards to what drives these people to do so, rather than an assumption that crime is potentially in all humans. Control theory cannot help to explain why people commit specific crime like violence or property crime, and in other words, it fails to explain type of criminal response. Therefore the neighbourhood systems that decrease crime and delinquency like residents' societal ties and the extent to which people apply social control in their neighbourhoods are very important (Kubin & Weitzer, 2003). The informal control system such as informal surveillance of the streets and intervention in problems (inquiring about suspicious activities, reprimand bad behaviour and report children bad behaviour to parents) are ties that increase residents capacity to engage in social control over persons in the society thereby reducing and preventing crime (Kubin & Weitzer, 2003). Some people develop the fear for criminals and their activities like burglary and other criminal activities can reduce residents' willingness to involve in social control over criminal behaviours (Makowitz, Bellair, Liska & Lui, 2001).

Criminologists, the United Nations and the World Health Organization (2004) have all agreed that government should look beyond criminal justice system and law enforcement to confront the risk that cause crime because it is more cost effective and

more beneficial than the usual ways of responding to crime. Waller (2006) in his book talks about curbing crime through better prevention strategies. He assumes that the approaches that bring about the confinement of persons are not very effective, but somewhat more effective to confront the risk factors and threats to crime. He shows that rather than hiring more police, banning hand guns tackling with drugs and substance abuse through public health, it is preferable to hire health nurses and invest in helping youths at risk to complete their education and get good job trainings for them to be empowered and distracted from engaging in illegal means of livelihood, this he said is also better than confinement. Getting close neighbours to look out for us and using developed devises are more effective than criminal courts, smarter and effective policing is better than more police; these examples are indefinite. Therefore addressing these social concerns that bring about crime is better than tackling crime after it had taken place or putting stiffer penalties in place. These will add to creating a safer and better society, while keeping children, youths and adults away from taking the wrong path toward a life of crime.

Hughes and Lai (2011) in reviewing Security as argued by Ullman (1983) looked at security as when vulnerability is on the decline. Therefore when people are secured their chances of being helpless towards insecurity is reduced. Vulnerability could lead to displacement, health issues, insecurity (such as food insecurity, safety). When people are vulnerable they are disposed to these problems pointed out and there can be a redefinition of security when it manifests through the change in the mindset of policy makers and Pinar (2003) posits that the conception of security is usually related more to states than to people. Therefore as the contemporary system of states started emerging since the seventeenth century, internal security has been explicit and practiced with priority to states. Although during the early years the state was viewed as a tool for providing security for citizens. In contemporary times concepts of security as regards people have emerged but not as considerable as state security.

Hughes and Lai (2011) in reviewing Security by Booth(1991) argued that security ought to be viewed from the freedom of persons from issues of poverty, education and political oppression and not from wars alone. They posit that security of persons should come first when considering the prioritization between persons and governments security issues. This assertion counters the notion that states cannot be solely responsible for providing security for the people due to the instances where they willingly make many of their population insecure just to protect themselves at the detriment of their people. They concluded by noting that the states do not implement a total approach to security, both in their strategies and capacity, which indicates that state based approaches to security do not allow us to adequately examine the insecurities of persons and communities within the states. This is critical because states should be accountable for the security of persons and communities within the states.

Sources of Insecurity Manifestation in Nigeria

Poverty has been identified as one of the factors that have contributed to the rate of insecurity in the country. Aigbakhon (2008) define poverty as a state of long-term deprivation of well-being, a situation considered inadequate for decent living. Decent living in this context can be narrow down to mean access to things like qualitative education, safe drinking water, affordable health care and sanitary facilities, nutrition, shelter and clothing. It is a dynamic process of socio-economic, political or other form of deprivations, which affects the individuals, households, or societies and usually brings back lack of access to basic and elementary requirements of human survival.

Adegba, Ugwu and Eme (2012) in Achumba el al (2013) aver that outcome of high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths, adversely attracted violent crime. Nwagboso (2012) in the same vein argued that failure of successive administration in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one the major causes of insecurity in the country. Poverty and unemployment are like Siamese twins. They give support to each other. In Nigeria, unemployment is one of the most enduring social problems (Aigbakhon, 2010). Katsina (2012) argues that employment means the number of people working for wages in cash or kind in public and private enterprises. This includes those that are gainfully employed or engage. The above stated differences or categories of unemployment can be found in large quantity in Nigeria, this can be blamed upon the government in ability to equip its people with requisite skills that will help them get employment and also the creation of necessary environment for meaningful employment opportunities.

The emergence of the Nigeria Police

The Nigerian Police was established in 1981 and this consists of the 30men Hausa cosular guard under the authority of the then governor of British West Africa in October of that year which marked the beginning of the first modern police in the history of Lagos. According to Tamuno (1970), in 1861 governor of Lagos colony, McCoskry, organised and established the nucleus of the first police force- Hausa constabulary of 30 men. It was also the first modern police force in the territories later designated Nigeria by the British (Tamuno, 1970). In 1879 there was the establishment of the constabulary of Lagos colony, with the appointment of the first commissioner of police in 1896. Later came the royal Niger constabulary in 1886 which was established by the royal Niger Company for the northern territories. The British colonialist established the police institution for the purpose of advancing the European colonial commercial and strategic interests against the natives especially in the colony and the protectorates (Odikalu, 2004). Allure (1991) argue that the emerging ruling class in colonial Nigeria was a foreign and illegitimate one which sought to dominate and exploits the indigenous people in the interests of its own metropolitan (British) economy.

In 1900 the royal Niger constabulary splitted into two groups, the northern Nigeria police force for the colony and police force and regiment for the protectorate. The force

of the colony later emerged with the southern Nigeria police force. 1914 amalgamation had two different police formation for both Northern and Southern Nigeria. In 1930, colonial government established Nigeria Police force headed by an Inspector-General. However, regionalization of police formations remained (Ochikalu, 2004). Aina (2014) postulate that the duties of the police are stationary and the police owe these duties to the generality of Nigerians and all other persons lawfully living within Nigeria. They are therefore answerable to the law in performance of their duties. The question then is does Nigeria police perform this duties effectively and efficiently as they ought to. Majority of Nigerians are of the opinion that police performance has being below good commendation. What does effectiveness and efficiency mean to police work? Effectiveness means task performance. Effective organisations are those which meet challenges put to them and satisfy demands for services or solve problems. Also, Efficiency is defined in terms of processing costs. Efficient organisations are those which convert inputs into outputs with less organisational efforts. Efficient organisation gives us more for our money. Odekunle (2004) posited that effectiveness is the ability of the force to successfully perform its assigned tasks; and by efficiency it is the capacity to perform its functions with the least amount of "waste", in terms of time, material, personnel public good will, and lives. Therefore, efficient police is the one that achieve a level of input- output conversion with less effort on the part of the organisation: fewer men, less equipment, or lower expeditions (Skogan, 1976).

The importance of policing the society and the people's perception of the government which the police represent cannot be overrated. Odekunle (2004) gives three points that will clarify this;
1. Policemen are the government officials that are most close to crime and the frontliners in crime prevention or control and in the law enforcement process.
2. Policemen's honesty, integrity and observations of procedural laws in handling offenders and non-offenders have deep implications for the citizens' perceptions: fairness and justice and for the degree of respect the average citizen has for the law.
3. The police are highly visible (compared to the courts or prisons) and as the major government authority lawfully approved to use force on citizens, their behaviour goes further to affect the citizen's view about their government.

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Adagba, Ugwu and Eme (2012) in Achumba el al (2013) aver that outcome of high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths, negatively attracts violent crime. Nwagboso (2012) also argued that failure of successive government in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the main causes of insecurity in the country. Poverty and unemployment are linked and they give support to each other. In Nigeria, unemployment is one of the most enduring social problems (Aigbakhon, 2010). Katsina (2012) argues that employment means people working for wages in cash or kind in public and private enterprises and this includes those that are gainfully employed or engage. The above stated differences or categories of unemployment can be found in large quantity in Nigeria, this can be blamed upon the government failure to equip its people with basic skills that will help them get employment and also the creation of necessary environment for meaningful employment opportunities.

Effectiveness of the Nigerian Police Force
The way, in which government enforce the control of crime in Nigeria is through the use of formal security apparatus like the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the Nigerian Police Force except in cases beyond them where the Military is then introduced (Oladele, Falaki and Olabode, 2014). Since the available security personnel are not adequate for the Nigerian population, the people can also take part in their own security through the establishment of neighbourhood watch and modern community policing (Oladele, et al, 2014). These can be more effective with the use of other security devices and gadgets to prevent crime.

Formal control also has positive influence in preventing and curbing crime in communities. Velez (2001) discovered that increase in police activity in neighbourhoods reduced the occurrence of crime and the chances of people being victimized and this is after controlling other factors with stronger effects for persons living in poor neighbourhoods but weaker in more rich neighbourhoods. According to Njoku and Elom-Obed (2021), the major function of the police is to control and prevent crime. The police force stands in between the people and crime, but they are caught between various challenges like lack of adequate salary and welfare package, poorly equipped, lack of well rained force and others.

According to Osayanda (2017), in Nigeria the police have been criticized, battered and torn into pieces and that the police have been corrupt to the extent that they need a total overhaul.

The police in Nigeria are dreaded and not trusted, neither are they respected, they are also despised by the Nigerian public (Ibidapo-Obe, 2003).The researcher is of the opinion that despite the poor performance of the Nigerian Police in preventing and controlling crime the challenges they face like poor condition of service, including

their salaries, allowances, office infrastructure, residential accommodations and others affect the performance of the police force. Insufficient funding by the government leads to poor condition of service for the Police force (Oyemuinmina & Aibieyi, 2016). Lack of the acquisition of modern police equipments is also as a result of poor funding. The researcher is of the opinion that inadequate personnel, training and illiteracy. Are also challenges the police force is facing. There are inadequate police personnel as against the citizens and the available ones are not adequately trained which calls for the need of training and retraining of the personnel. It is generally known that the police is now a tool for electoral malpractice. The police have been identified with having political influence which most times interfere with accepted democracy Olong & Agbonika (2013). According to Oyemuinmina and Aibieyi (2016), the police in Nigeria are engaged in corrupt practices, extorting money from the public and also lack accountability. Moneys are demanded to secure bail while they claim that bail is free and collection of money from transporters like buses and taxis.

Throughout history it is likely to trace the emerging concepts of conflict prevention and security as a response to and an indication of a changing society, not just revealing only the social formation but also its economic conditions, conception of law and perception of crime, and its values.

Conclusion

Any effort made towards poverty alleviation automatically translates to effort made towards crime prevention and control in the society. Social control methods through the society, family and a structured criminal justice system are also necessary for the prevention and reduction of crime to the barest minimum. The security apparatus like the police force Public are inadequate to go round the citizenry. The police force is supposed to prevent crime and protect lives and properties, but they are faced with several challenges like inadequate funding which lead to in-depth corruption within the police force. This causes distrust from the citizens who do not appreciate the police force. This study concludes that success cannot be achieved without taking cognizance of the effectiveness of the police in preventing crime and the total overhauling of this security apparatus. With the collaboration between the citizens, community rulers, leaders and the government towards attaining a crime free environment or reduction in the rate of crime in the society the Nigerian Police force can be effective and efficient in the society.

Recommendations

1. In order to inhibit the causes of crime, the youths need to be empowered to alleviate the poverty rate such as tutoring programmes, skills acquisition, employment and volunteer opportunities. These engagements can be initiated by the government, the community, Non-Governmental Organizations and the youths themselves. These activities and programmes will keep them busy and empowered in order to generate wealth for themselves rather than the quick way of making money like criminal

activities.

2. The security apparatus such as the police force and others should be restructured. There should be a total overhauling of the police force and others to achieve optimum performance. This could be in form of policy formations, employment of qualified personnel and training and retraining of these personnel. The government should provide adequate funds, salaries and welfare for the Police force. The police force should also be equipped with sophisticated weapons including security gadgets.

3. The introduction of Community Policing is necessary. This will include the community members as part of the security architecture. This Community Policing could be in form of neighbourhood watch working in collaboration with the state police to address problems of insecurity and crime within the communities, where community members inform the police on activities of crime. This process should be collaborative, transparent and has to meet the provisions of the policy objectives. This will result in a more coordinated grass-root crime prevention effort. Other communities can also introduce Neighbourhood watch or Vigilante. Community members should be very conscious of the security situations in their neighbourhoods. Residents should provide adequate information to security personnel to enable their effective and efficient performance. The police cannot fight crime alone; therefore intelligence gathering is a veritable tool for the prevention of crime and control. This is why community members should wake up to assist the police in its functions. The public should be ready at all-time to give necessary information to the police.

4. There should be collaboration between the Police, other private security guards and the vigilante with the support of other measures and security gadgets like fencing, residential gates, street gates and lights, security cameras and others which can increase the effectiveness of the Police in carrying out their functions.

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