



ABSTRACT

This research is set out to examine the role of PSCs in crime prevention and control in Bauchi LGA. The research is aimed to determine the factors that predisposes the emergence of PSCs in combating crime, to study the clients of PSCs in Bauchi LGA, to identify the strategies used by PSCs in combating crime, to assess the achievements of PSCs in combating crime and to find out the challenges of PSCs in crime prevention and control. The target population is both males and females of Bauchi local government who are between 18 years and above. The study employed survey design method. Six

THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANIES IN CRIME PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN BAUCHI LGA.

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Introduction

Any society folks live together as a group, security problems become inevitable. Security of life and properties has become a very important issue to contend with in every society. It has become a necessity in every human society and its absence pose danger to the survival of individuals and their properties. However, no state can claim to give one hundred percent safety for her populace, hence, no society is devoid of crime and insecurity (Iyang and Abraham, 2014). Daily reports on criminal activities by various security agencies around the world shows that crime is a marvel that cannot be eradicated completely from any society. In fact, Durkheim as one of the founding fathers of Sociology was of the view that crime is normal and functional to the society. Consequently, various means of containing and managing security to attain the lowest likely crime rate with optimum resource spending have been developed by state governments around the world and Nigeria inclusive. Crime and insecurity remain the largest danger to humanity in Nigeria because many people no longer sleep with their eyes closed. Criminal acts like kidnappings, armed robbery, corruption, terrorism, cybercrimes, conflicts, pipe vandalism to mention but a few, has become the order of the day (Bamidele, Akintola and Nuhu, 2016). As such, it is therefore, safe to say that Nigeria is no longer a secured society. In several states across Nigeria, groups and communities increasingly rely on informal security providers as their response to rising insecurity and declining confidence in formal state institutions, particularly the police (Kwaja, 2014). Thus, the seeming inability of formal state institutions to



wards were selected to serve as clusters. And in each of the clusters 20 respondents were selected using simple random sampling (SRS). The total is 120 respondents. For the qualitative data, 5 respondents were selected purposively; this comprise of comprise 2 NSCDC officers, 2 private security guards and 1 individual client. The sub total of respondents for quantitative data (120) and the sub-total of qualitative data (5) give the sample size of 125 respondents for the study. One hundred and twenty questionnaires were administered to the respondents but only 116 were completed and returned. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22 was used to process the quantitative data and the qualitative data collected through IDI were transcribed and used to complement the quantitative data. Situational Crime Prevention Theory were used as theoretical frame of reference for the study. The study revealed that, PSCs emerges as a result of the high rate of crime. However, risk of violent attacks, lack of logistics, lack of adequate training and poor wages and working condition are the major problems confronting PSCs in combating crime. The study therefore, recommends that there is the need for establishing mutual understanding between the PSCs and the formal security agencies which will help to improve PSCs in combating crime. It is expected that the findings of this study could be utilize by the private security companies, police authorities or any other law enforcement agency for reassessments of crime prevention programs in the communities of Bauchi and Nigeria at large.

Keywords: Private Security Companies, Crime Control, Private Security Guards, Private Security

adequately provide security, effectively maintain law and order, and efficiently dispense justice in the society have underpinned an increase in the existence and activities of non-state security actors in Nigeria (Ogbozor, 2016; Fourchard, 2011).

According to Igbo (2011), the end of the civil war witnessed not only the return of old criminals to the street; but also the 'graduation' of new and more sophisticated ones'. This singular assertion indicates that the current state of security networks in the country may be under serious threat as crime waves continue to rise unabated. The most recent of the threats to security in Nigeria is the emergence of kidnapping, banditry, and terrorism which have been enhanced by the widespread use of firearms by criminals. This indeed facilitated the modus operandi of these criminals, thereby enhancing complete change in criminal activities as cases of assassinations and bomb explosions in various corners of the country became rampant.

Therefore, the ineffectiveness of the Nigerian police and the concern of Nigerians for security led to the emergence of guards and private security companies in the country to augment the activities of the security agencies and work in line with the laid down rules and regulations. Just like the vigilante, private security companies are also an informal arrangement to keep the pace of the rising crime rate in Nigeria. However, as is the case in all countries, the citizens of Nigeria are highly concerned about their security and this concern has been expressed through the growth of Private Security Companies (PSCs). The last decade has seen a proliferation of PSCs in a country of over 140 million people (Census, 2006). Private Guard Companies in Bauchi local government primarily engage in supplying guard and patrol services, such as bodyguard, guard dog, parking



security, and security guard services. Some of these companies engage in supplying advanced special operations services if the client demands it. Services supplied by these companies include; the control of unauthorized activity or entry, traffic regulation, access control, fire and theft prevention, and detection. These services are broadly described as the protection of personnel and assets. Other security services such as bodyguard, and guard dog services are also included, but occupy a small portion of the industry. The Private Security Companies in Bauchi local government also offer services designed to create an impact on the security of persons and property. These services range from logistical support, crisis and risk management to physical protection of people and goods, and even operational combats.

Based on the above and most especially considering its growing importance, the activities of the PSCs necessarily became a subject of study. This has led the researcher to the choice of the role of private security companies in crime prevention in Nigeria with Bauchi local government as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

The Private Guard Companies Act of the Federal Republic of Nigeria enacted in 1986 has statutorily empowered the private security sector to operate and perform security functions in the country. However, it appears that it is only the public security sector that is working assiduously to curb the ravaging security problems affecting Nigeria in recent times. Daily, the media portrays more of the services offered by public security agencies to control crime situations in the country, while that of the Private Security Companies with the similar task is left widely unpublicized. Furthermore, agents of the Private Security Companies are often seen at work in multinational companies, banks, supermarkets, hospitals, eateries, and schools across the country conducting checks at entrances of these establishments although their attempts to prevent serious crime situations in the country is yet to be assessed.

Therefore, this situation calls for an inquiry. Private security companies were purportedly established to complement the efforts of the public security sector and help breach the existing security gap, yet their contribution to crime control is still doubtful. These observations, therefore, formed the basis of this study, prompting an investigation into the activities of private security companies and their contribution to crime control, achievements, challenges their effectiveness, and how the study will contribute to the betterment of PSCs.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the roles PSCs play in crime prevention and control
2. To examine the challenges hampering the effectiveness of PSCs
3. To evaluate effectiveness of these PSCs in their security functions

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Roles of Private Security Companies in Nigeria

The private security seeks to assist police and prevent crime by identification and apprehension of offenders. Typically, private security arrangements are provided to safeguard lives, properties, assets and personalities against various forms of criminalities and violence attacks. These includes:



security against property crime (e.g. theft, vandalism), security against financial crime (e.g. fraud), security against personality and threatening of life (e.g. assault, threats, kidnapping), security against fear and surge of violence (e.g. violence conflicts) Blevins (2018). Private security arrangements have also been used for the control of crime by groups of businesses (or private individuals) who come together to share costs and direct services in pursuit of a common goal i.e. Corporate organizations Argote (2012). In some states this is best exemplified by groups of retail, entertainment or other commercial businesses that form business associations or business districts. Some of these private security arrangements are to protect against retail theft, provide a visible deterrent to other types of crime and project a sense of safety and security to the public. The private security companies play important role in preventing and detecting crimes at all levels of their duties. They offered wide range of services to the following segments of the society. In Nigeria, there are large shopping malls, which include multiple retail outlets such as Shoprite, restaurants, bars, banks, etc. These are often areas of private space, but freely open to the public (Afolabi, et. al., 2016).

Challenges Hampering the Effectiveness of Private Security Companies in Nigeria

- **Prohibition from Carrying Firearms**

One of the greatest obstacles facing the operations of private security company in Nigeria is the prohibition of the private security sector from carrying firearms. PSCs in Nigeria are prohibited from carrying firearms in their operations. This has resulted in the untimely death of many private security guards in Nigeria (Abubakar, 2017). It has also reduced the recognition and entry of PSCs in Nigeria into the international security market. The lack of legal framework for permission to carry firearms has made PSCs to rely dependently on the police in the execution of high risk contracts requiring firearms protection.

- **Public Awareness of PSCs' Role in the Society**

PSCs are said to fill a gap left open by inadequate public police policing. The services they provide are only procured by individuals who can afford to pay for their services. Thus, it is not a protection which the ordinary man in the street benefits. The implication is that members of the public lack adequate knowledge of the duties they perform or even their role in the security architecture of the society. This lack of public awareness of their role and functions places a smack on their importance in the society.

- **Lack of Training, Certification and Education**

One other major challenge of private security companies in Nigeria is lack of adequate training of their staff (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2015). There is a general believe that private security guards are poorly educated, school dropouts and indiscipline and lacking knowledge of the industrial security practice. It is important to know that the fact that someone is an ex-military, police or any of the government security outfits does not confer a pre-requisite knowledge to operate an industrial security company. The training, knowledge, operational base/site and practice of public policing are entirely different from that of industrial security.



- **Lack of Funds and Poor Welfare**

It is believed that the issue of funding is very critical for the functionality of private security companies. It is one of the areas that have encouraged unhealthy rivalry and competition amongst private security companies. This is because in an effort to keep afloat in the security market economy, some of the private security companies have reduced their market worth by accepting contracts requiring the payment of less than ₦10,000 or \$28.6 US dollar per month as guard's salary thereby depriving others of an expected potential profitable contract (Chinwokwu, 2016). This is a confirmation of Chinwokwu (2012), who observed that in spite of high cost of living, many security guards earn salaries as low as ₦6,000 or \$17.1 US dollar per month.

- **Intra-agency and Inter-Agency Squabbles**

Aside from struggle for juicy contracts, private security companies also struggle for dominance in the security market economy. This has led to polarization within the private security sector (Balogun, 2017). The situation is that there is no single association in Nigeria under which private security companies can voice their agitations for recognition. Today, the private security company has such associations as: Society of Security Practitioners of Nigeria (SSPN), American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS – Nigerian branch), National Professional Security Association (APSA), Society and Safety Association of Nigeria (SSAN), Association of Industrial Security and Safety Organization of Nigeria (AISSON), Nigeria Institute of Industrial Security (NIIS), International Foundation for Protection Officers (IFPO) and many such others.

- **Lack of Synergy between PSCs and Government Agencies**

PSCs and other government agencies like the Police and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) are expected to have strong bond and inter-networking relationship, but this is not so. In South Africa, United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia intelligence information, sharing and gathering of evidence forms the basis for PSCs and Police collaboration in crime control. In addition, PSCs collaborate with the police in mapping out hotspots for crime in order to ensure effective crime control and prevention (Ruddell, Thomas & Pattern, 2010; Sotlar & Mesko, 2012). In Nigeria, PSCs and the police do not have a synergy of working cordially in crime control. This is because the Police see PSCs as uneducated, unskilled, and unprofessional.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of PSCs

It is now obvious that private security guards are everywhere both in public and private sectors. The big challenge however, is to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of these PSCs in discharging their primary duties to their clients. According to Prenzler, (2013) private security companies have played important roles in detecting crime at different levels. He argued that the effectiveness of the PSCs could be seen in the roles they play as undercover agents outside the formal authorities especially among industrialized countries. The PSCs have assisted in reporting and suppressing cult activities in some of the tertiary institutions across the country's universities. The involvements of these PSCs have in no small measures helped in curbing the menace of cultism in Nigerian campuses. Brauch (2015) argued that the essence of a state is to guarantee the security



of lives and property and ensure law and order through its political sovereignty and monopoly of violence. Therefore, a secure or guarded target may not always be a victim of crime (Cook and MacDonald, 2012).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Situational Crime Prevention Theory

Clarke (2017) opines that situational crime prevention is a significant theory in criminology, criminal justice, and security studies widely applicable in crime prevention. It advocates for the introduction of environmental and managerial changes that seek to reduce crime opportunities and the rewards obtained out of commission of the crime. Smith and Clarke (2012) outline the five crime prevention strategies advanced by Cornish and Clarke. Among them includes increasing the effort needed to commit crimes, increasing the risks of detection and getting arrested, reducing the rewards for committing crime, reducing provocations that lead to offending, and removing excuses for engaging in crime. Smith and Clarke (2012) further allude that the risk of detection and getting arrested can be increased through extending guardianship on a property or a particular location which can be achieved physically through the use of private security service providers and electronically through the use of CCTV cameras which can be manned remotely by private security service providers.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed survey design method. Six wards were selected to serve clusters. And in each of the clusters 20 respondents were selected using simple random sampling (SRS). The total is 120 respondents. For the qualitative data, in-depth interviews were conducted with 5 respondents who were purposively selected; it comprises this comprise of comprise 2 NSCDC officers, 2 private security guards and 1 individual client. The sub total of respondents for quantitative data (120) and the sub-total of qualitative data (5) give the sample size of 125 respondents for the study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 24 was used to process the quantitative data and the qualitative data collected through IDI were transcribed and used to complement the quantitative data.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that majority of respondents hires the services of private security guards for access control and static guard (checking or control of persons at entrance and exits of a place a stationary position). It is a pro-active preventive measure adopted to deter kidnappers and other potential criminals. This finding corroborated the study conducted in Lagos state by some scholars, which highlighted the essence of security in such gated residential areas (Argote (2012). Other reasons for hiring PSC services include the use of security guards as security drivers, customer services and housekeeping. This is in consonance with the observations of various scholars who assert that there is an increasing rise in the number of private security companies globally with the simultaneous increase and expansion of services offered by private security companies (Afolabi, et. al., 2016).

The implication of this finding is that the scope and duties of PSCs are expanding, thereby revealing the diversity of the services of private security companies which implies that they are moving away



from their traditional duty of just watching, opening and closing gates (security surveillance) to other services that are non-core policing functions. The study finding showed that over two third of the respondents said that there were high incidences of crime before they decided to engage the services of PSCs. This means that the absence of security, both police and security guards could cause an area to be vulnerable to criminal attacks and criminal victimization. This supports Smith and Clarke (2012) further allude that the risk of detection and getting arrested can be increased through extending guardianship on a property or a particular location which can be achieved physically through the use of private security service providers and electronically through the use of CCTV cameras which can be manned remotely by private security service providers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Private security has come to stay not only in Nigeria but globally. They have assumed a very vital role in the security provisioning in the country. The growth of private security companies has been driven by the ever-increasing insecurity, inadequate police presence and the growth of enclosed estates in springing up across the length and breadth of the nation. They have become an area of business activity with great potential for profitable reward and investment, providing a variety of security and allied services that have impacted directly on the lives and property of their clients. Private security companies will develop better in crime control duties and reduction of fear of criminal victimization if competent persons, are recruited, adequately trained and properly motivated and equipped for security duties especially if adequate, workable and proper efforts are geared towards improving the private security sector. The following recommendations are provided for the improvement of the performance and effectiveness of private security companies.

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