INSECURITY AND COMMUNITY POLICING: IMPACT ON ADOLESCENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Nigerian has seen a rise in ethnic based killings, militancy, herdsmen-farmers clashes, kidnapping, ritual killing, and insurgency in the North-east to mention but a few. This worrying levels of insecurity has called for the adoption of a more community based approach to policing. This community based approach otherwise called "community policing" creates an avenue for collaboration between the community and the police. Scholars highlight that community policing has immensely impacted the crime levels of societies positively. However, questions continue to arise on the effectiveness of community policing in governance challenged societies such as Nigeria, particularly with the implications of insecurity to the education of adolescents who are exposed to rape, kidnapping and trafficking in the country. This paper therefore explored the use of community policing in tackling security challenges posed in the education of adolescent in secondary schools in Nigeria. It identified the insecurity problems in the country as well as the challenges faced by the Nigerian police in curbing these problems, while highlighting and analyzing the benefits of community policing on educational attainment and society in general. In addition, the paper investigated the challenges of community policing in Nigeria. For the purpose of this, a structured questionnaire titled "The Impact of Community Policing on Adolescent Educational Attainment in Kogi State" was used for data collation and the data obtained analyzed employing simple descriptive statistics. The research revealed that the main cause of insecurity in the country can be attributed to lack of education and poverty while corruption ridden was revealed as the disturbing perception of the Nigerian police force. Furthermore, the study established that the main consequence of insecurity in the attainment of education by adolescent is increased rate of school dropout as well sexual abuse and rape while in effective community policing influences school enrollment by adolescents and academic performance. The paper offered a number of recommendations which include that members of the community policing groups should cut across ethnicity, religious and political inclinations, sensitization campaigns should be carried out to educate and enlighten the public on the importance of education, tolerance should be advocated by the Government and non-governmental bodies, greater efforts should be put into researching and discovering ways in which the Nigerian police can build its image and trust to the Nigerian citizenry and awareness campaigns should be carried out to enlighten the public on the need to collaborate with the police to mention but a few.*

KEYWORDS: insecurity, community policing, adolescent education

INTRODUCTION

Insecurity in Nigeria has developed into a phenomenal plague with security challenges such as kidnapping, suicide bombing, militancy, ethnic related conflicts, armed robbery and politically induced violence which has significantly impacted the development of the country. It is estimated that over 2 million persons have been displaced as a result of insecurity in the country (UNHCR, 2019). This insecurity has destroyed the very foundations of national unity and as such fear, suspicion and apprehension have become the order of the day in today's society (Imhonopi & Urim, 2012). According to Onifade, Imhonopi & Urim (2013) the level of insecurity in the country has struck at the fabrics of the country forcing ethnic groups to agitate for the restructuring of the country. According to Egwu (2001) the prehistoric tendencies of numerous ethnic groups to resort to violence and religious fundamentalism has intensified the size and propensity of the insecurity as well as its spread the scope of its complications. Recently, the Nigerian government admitted its challenge in tackling the menace of the book haram crises plaguing the North east region of the country in spite of the programmes and initiatives initiated by the government.

This has further heightened the calls for state and community policing in the country with a view to decentralizing the police force to ensure communication and cooperation between police officers and the citizens in the community.

Considering that the traditional police approach to crime has done little or not to abate this ugly trend as the police force is associated with abuse of human rights, arbitrary arrest, coercion, torture of detainees, disregard of law and cover ups. As such, there was a dire need for community policing to bridge this gap and correct some of the misconceptions about the Nigerian police. The initial approach to community policing in Nigeria was the formation of vigilante groups across the countries that were tasked with combating the rising waves of crime since the police could not effectively handle the exploits of armed robbery and other violent crimes (Vanguard, 2020). Scholars highlight that the fundamental proposition in this idea is that everyone in the community knows each other and thus prevent, mitigate and monitor deviant activities in the community (Odeh & Nanji, 2015).

According to available records as early as 1988, a semblance of community policing known as "Operation Sunlight was introduced by the Borno state governments in the North while in later stages, the Hisbah, Bakassi and Egbesu boys were introduced in the some parts of the North, South East and South South respectively to tackle the rising crime in this regions. However, scholars have continued to highlight the judicial complications of these community policing groups who are in the real sense vigilante groups and have stressed that the Nigerian police are those duly charged with the security of the citizens by the constitution.

Historically, the Nigerian policing structure is designed and operated based on the traditional British structure of policing which places emphasis on the centralization of powers. Based on the Nigerian 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the police has be empowered to be

protecting , detecting and apprehending perpetrators of crime. (Brownson, 2012) This is further buttressed by Alemika & Chukwuma (2000) who opined that the fundamental role of the police is in the implementation of law and order, prevention of violence and disorderliness while safeguarding the lives and properties of the citizens. These definitions do not take into account the fundamental essence of maintaining a cordial and collaborative relationship with its citizenry as such the requirement of community policing.

Numerous scholars have offered various definitions of community policing, according to Benit-Gbaffou (2006) community policing offers and improves community participation in securing the neighborhood. While, Kpae & Adishi (2017) asserts that community policing places emphasis on the decentralization of power of policing and improves the relations with citizens in the community. Furthermore others define community policing as a strategy that employs full service personalized policing that sees a particular police officer patrolling and working in the same area on a permanent basis that allows the officer develop a proactive partnership with the citizens in order to identify and tackle challenges (Ikuteyijo, 2009; Yero et al., 2012). Iyang & Abarham (2013) opine that community policing is an institutional wide belief and management method that improves community and police partnership, proactive brainstorming and community involvement in solving the cause of crime as well as other communal issues.

As such, it can be deduced that community policy is an elusive term that generates varying interpretations amongst scholars and stakeholders (Kasali & Odetola, 2016). Nevertheless, this study describes community policing as a symbiotic collaboration between the police and members of the community they operate that deters criminal activities in the region. Numerous scholars have highlighted the critical role community policing plays in security and as such have continued to advocate for its implementation (Moolman, 2003; Forman, 2004; Cossyleon, 2019). According to a report by the United States National Institute of Justice in 1992, community policing successfully reduced the statistics of crime in the country as well as improved the quality of life of citizens (Ikuteyijo, 2009). Community policing historically initiated from the United States of America as a philosophy as well as approach of policing to assimilating the public as collaborators in the security affairs of the country during the 1970s (Wong, 2009; Kasali & Odetola, 2016). According to Kpae & Adishi (2017) the Kansas City preventive patrol experiment was one of the pioneer use of community policing.

In the case of Nigeria, community policing was introduced by the former IG Tafa Balogun in 2003 and was targeted at improving the relationship with the citizenry and the police with a view to reducing the crime rate in the country. This introduction by the IGP was centered on key agendas which comprised of:

1.   Massive onslaught against robbery, manslaughters, assassination and other crimes of violence
2.   immediate key crime/conflict management
3.   Community collaboration in policing and implementing the modern applicable globally.

4.   Comprehensive anti-corruption crusade within as well as outside the police force.
5.   All-inclusive training programme suitable for qualitative policing.
6.   Robust public relation with the citizens (Ibeanu, 2007; Kpae & Adishi, 2017).

Challenges Facing Community Policing

Unavoidably, most social system or subsystem is at one point or another challenged with obstacle that impact its smooth operations, management and success and community policing is no exception. It has long be established that the fundamental duty of the police is enforcing law and order while safeguarding the lives and property of citizens and rendering other essential services in the society (Ordu & Nnam, 2017). As such, community policing offers increased access to these services as a result of the collaboration between the community and the police (Albrecht, 2008; Meyer & Van Graan, 2011). Scholars however, highlight that there are a number of challenges that impacts its enforcing and effectiveness (Altbeker, 2007, Marks, Shearing & Wood, 2009; Ordu & Nnam, 2017). According to Meyer & Van Grann (2011) community policing is seen as undependable and too all-encompassing for nations challenged with problems in governance. According to Delsol & Shiner (2006) lack of trust and collaboration between the police and communities prevents effective community policing in most countries. According to Flynn (2004) the effectiveness of the collaboration between the police and the communities is reliant on the level of trust that the partnership generates. Kasali & Odetola (2016) portends that community policing collaboration creates an avenue for the exchange of information regarding crime concerns, active crimes, location of stolen properties to mention but a few whereas the police provides the community with information regarding community challenges, advice on how to prevent and avoid crime as well as tactical information.

Furthermore, researchers highlight the communities that are misled about community policing as well as political charged communities find it challenging to embrace community policing as thus impact the efficiency of community policing (Lyons, 1999; Okeshola & Mudiare, 2012).

In the case of Nigeria challenges such as inadequate manpower, poor funding, trust and confidence in the police, ethnicity, bribery, "godfatherism", no clear regulatory back up as well as poor implementation of schemes have continued to challenge the implementation of community policing (Otu & Aro, 2013).

Scholars have long argued the devastating impact bribery/corruption has had on the image and effectiveness of policing in the country as communities tend to conspire with the police in carrying out illegal activities (Carter & Radelet, 2002). This has seen the police deliberately employ unconstitutional means to make arrest that in most situations get thrown out in courts.Ordu & Nnam (2017) highlight that a significant challenge in community policing in the country is more or less the system of selective enforcement of law that sees the police carry out enforcement on minorities and the financially challenged whereas the rich and privileged go scout free in the same scenarios. According to Ijewereme (2015), politicians, elites and leaders of communities are not policed the same way the poor and financially challenged are policed.Peyton et al (2019) highlights that police brutality has impacted the effectiveness of community policing in the country as these

activities alienate them from the community and strains the relationship with the communities. A typical example of this is the activities of some of the SARS officials who paint a bad image for the police force.Nwaubani, Anyikwa & Azuh (2014) assert that inadequate manpower continuous to present obstacles to effective community policing in the country as challenges occur in recruiting, training , discipline have impacted the recruitment of police officer in the country. This is critical in the area of adolescent education in the sense that the security challenges in the country has made it inevitable that adolescents must be protected to avoid being kidnaped, abused sexually, exploited or used for rituals.

Adolescent Education
Adolescence based on the definition offered by the World Health Organization refers to the phase in the life of an individual between the ages of 10 and 19 (WHO, 2011). According to Hashmi (2013) it is a phase that is discomforting and challenging for a person and is characterized by changes in behaviors. In the sense that during this phase, the hormones of the individual peaks and they struggle to understand the changes (Rogol et al., 2002). According to Chinawa et al (2014) it is the phase of development that comprises psychological, bodily as well as cognitive alterations.

At this stage, they are mentally susceptible to learn and experiment new things. As such the process of acquiring education for an adolescent represents a critical part of the process of development for an individual.Scholars highlight that adolescence education is essential if the individual is to attain smooth as well as positive evolution to adulthood (Jaser, Reeslund, Keller, Merchant, Benson & Compas, 2007). It is a stage that seeks to develop competencies that empower them to respond to real life circumstances positively and responsible in their adults.

Objectives of the Study
The study seeks to investigate the impact of community policing on educational attainment. The specific objectives were to;
1.   Determine the causes of insecurity within the study area
2.   Determine the impact of insecurity on the educational attainment within the study area
3.   Investigate the consequence of community policing on educational attainment within the study area.
4.   Proffer solutions to the problems discovered in the research study.

Hypotheses
Ho1: There is no significant relationship between insecurity and adolescent educational attainment.
Ho2: There is no significant relationship between community policing and educational attainment

Significance of the Study
Education has been recognized as an essential part of societal advancement. This is particularly true because no society can experience sustainable development with it. Scholars highlight that it impacts the spread of poverty, disease and technology to mention but a few (Okoroafor et al.,

2014). As such, impediments such as insecurity, child abuse, corruption, lack of funding and gender inequality impede educational advancement of societies. Community policing has been identified as an instrument for mitigating, curbing and elimination some of these impediments to educational attainment particularly, insecurity in the country. This can be attributed to its ability to create avenues for collaboration between the citizens and the police to exchange information, ideas and concerns. Therefore, this research work will be beneficial to policy makers, school administrators, the police force and the government in general. Particularly towards legislations and programs that will improve application and effectiveness of community policing that mitigate and prevent insecurities that impact educational attainment in the country.

METHODOLOGY

The research design of the study was a survey approach that saw a total of 60 participants randomly selected from the police force in the local government and secondary schools in the state. The instrument of the study was a well-structured questionnaire titled "The Impact of Community Policing on Adolescent Educational Attainment in Kogi State"

Population of the Study
The population of the research comprises of the police force, school teachers and secondary school students in Ankpa local government, Kogi State.

Method of Data Collection
The instrument employed for data collation was a well-structured questionnaire which was administered to the participants. The questionnaires were divided into three sections which included students, school teachers and police officers. The opinion of the respondents was elicited to make generalizations that reflected the perception on community policing on educational attainment.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques
For the purpose of the study, the sample size was selected from 4 selected secondary schools and Divisional police Head Quarters in Ankpa local government area namely; Government Girl Science secondary school, Government Technical College and Community secondary school. To acquire its sample size simple random sampling technique was employed to obtain a total of 60 respondents comprising secondary teachers, students and police officers in the four selected locations. The questionnaire comprised of items that elicited the data on the impact of community policing on adolescent educational attainment.

Data Analysis Procedure
Data collated through the questionnaires administered were tabulated and analyzed employing simple descriptive statistics comprising frequency distribution tables and percentages. The percentages were employed to test for significant relationship between personal characteristics of the participants and their responses on the topic of research.

DATA RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of the participants based on the causes of insecurity

CAUSE OF INSECURITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Poverty	15	25
Lack of education	20	33.3
Religion	10	16.6
Ethnic sentiments	10	16.6
Politics	5	8.3
TOTAL	**60**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 2: Distribution of participants based on the perception of the Nigerian police force

PERCEPTION OF POLICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
Corruption	20	33.3
Brutality	10	16.6
Level of professionalism	15	25
Level of efficiency	15	25
TOTAL	**60**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 3: Distribution of the participants based on the impact of insecurity on educational attainment in secondary schools

IMPACT OF INSECURITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
School Drop out	23	39
Sexual abuse and rape	14	23.3
Increase in violence related incidence	12	20
Poor educational performance	11	18.3
TOTAL	**60**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4: Distribution of the participants based on the consequence of community policing on educational attainment in secondary schools

IMPACT OF COMMUNITY POLICING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
Collaboration with school administrators	10	16.7
Reduced rate of sexual abuse and rape	11	18.3
Academic performance	24	40
School enrolment	15	25
TOTAL	**60**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 5: Distribution of the participants based on the challenges of Community policing in Nigeria

PERCEPTION OF POLICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
Ethnicity	6	10
Funding	15	25
Public trust	17	28.3
All of the above	22	36.6
TOTAL	**60**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

DISCUSSION

In the table 1 above, it can be established that 33.3% of the participants of the study perceive that the cause of insecurity in Nigeria can be attributed to lack of education while 25% of the participants perceive that poverty is the reason behind insecurity in Nigeria whereas 16.6% of the participants perceive that insecurity in Nigeria is caused by ethnic and religious sentiments respectively. Although, 8.3% of the population opine that it is caused by political sentiments. It can be deduced therefore from the results above, that the main cause of insecurity in Nigeria is lack of education and poverty which limits and affects the mindset of citizens. This shows that poverty influences how adolescents are educated and lack of education exposes them to ridicule and vulnerable to be exploited by mischief makers. This conclusion by the respondents is in agreement with a number of scholars. According to Amzat (2010) poor planning, management of resources and materials has caused wide spread poverty that continues to tear the educational sector apart causing school dropout who join street gangs that cause insecurity in their communities. Furthermore, Oghuvbu (2007) highlights that political instability, insecurity to mention but a few are causes of poverty that impact the educational attainment of citizens and long lasting implications on national development.

Table 2 above indicates that corruption is the main perception of the Nigerian police force based on the responses by the participants of the questionnaire with 33.3% of the participants having this viewpoint and is followed by poor level of professionalism (25%) and efficiency (25%) while brutality (16.6%) was the least perceived opinion about the Nigerian police.

It can therefore be asserted that a corruption is the common perception of the Nigerian police as expressed in the responses of the respondents and this agrees with the assertion of Aborishade & Fayemi (2015) who postulates that corruption in the police is a universal challenge, but is particularly becoming alarming in the Nigerian state undermining elections, trials, human rights to mention but a few and this has consequential implication on the development of the police institution in the Nigerian state.

From table 3 above, the views of the participants on the impact of insecurity of educational attainment in secondary schools in Nigeria indicate that 39% of the participants perceive that school dropout has the most significant impact. Although, 23% of the participants perceive that the rate of sexual abuse and rape increase in the educational sector when the security of an area is in disarray. Nevertheless 20% and 18.3 % of the respondents perceive that violence related incidences and poor educational performance increase in the educational sector during insecurity. This conclusion by the participants in this survey is in line with the viewpoint of Onyido & Brambaifa (2019) who asserts that parents are increasingly choosing to have their children unschooled than exposed to insecurity. According to Murray-Bruce (2013), insecurity is impacting the levels of education in the country.

Furthermore, in table 4, the results seeking to investigate the consequence of community policing on adolescent educational attainment in secondary schools indicate that 40% of the respondents perceive that academic performance of adolescents in areas where community policing operates spikes while 25 % of the respondents perceive that adolescent school enrollment increases in areas where community policing is in effect. Reduced rate of sexual abuse (18.3%) as well as increased collaboration between school administrators and the police in these areas (16.7%) was perceived by the participants as the least consequence of community policing on adolescent educational attainment in secondary schools in Nigeria.

As such, it can be deduced from the results that a significant number of the respondents (40%) perceive that there is an increase in the academic performance of adolescent in secondary school as a result of the operations of community policing in their area. This is in line with the assertions of Wali (2018).

From Table 5 above, it can be established that public trust (17%), funding (15%), ethnicity (6%), were strongly perceived as challenges to community policing in Nigeria in the sense that 22% of the respondents perceiving that public trust, ethnicity and funding are all significant challenges to community policing in Nigeria. This viewpoint by the respondents is in agreement with the propositions of Delsol & Shiner (2006) and Ordu & Nnam (2017).

CONCLUSION

Community policing currently is growing in prominence in the Nigerian space. Nevertheless, there is no consensus on the interpretation of community policing. The recent moves by Governors in the South west to introduce a form of community policing known as "operation Amotekun" is the most recent effort to adopt a semblance of community policing in the country. The study therefore primarily recognized and analyzed the causes and the impact of insecurity on educational attainment as well as the consequence of community policing on educational attainment. The data for the study was collated through the use of sixty well-structured questionnaires that were administered within the area of study to obtain perceptions of respondents on community policing and educational attainment of adolescents.

The research revealed that the main cause of insecurity in the country can be attributed to lack of education and poverty while corruption ridden was revealed as the disturbing perception of the Nigerian police force. Furthermore, the study established that the main consequence of insecurity in the attainment of education by adolescent is increased rate of school dropout as well sexual abuse and rape while in effective community policing influences school enrollment by adolescents and academic performance.

A number of challenges were identified by the study impacting the effective implementation of community policing and upon investigation revealed that funding, ethnicity and public trust were the main challenges facing the effective implementation of community policing in the country.

Recommendations
- The image of the police needs to improve and this can be achieved by the police sanitizing their rank and file.
- The members of the community policing groups should cut across ethnicity, religious and political inclinations.
- Government should fund and regulate the activities of members of community policing units.
- Sensitization campaigns should be carried out to educate and enlighten the public on the importance of education.
- Tolerance should be advocated by the Government and non-governmental bodies
- The Nigerian police should monitor the activities of vigilante groups.
- Greater efforts should be put into researching and discovering ways in which the Nigerian police can build its image and trust to the Nigerian citizenry.
- Awareness campaigns should be carried out to enlighten the public on the need to collaborate with the police

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