

POLICE, CRIME AND URBAN KANO SECURITY

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Abstract

Various researches have shown that police is the most important element in public security management (Williams & Williams, 2007; Sanders and Henderson, 2012; Kusha, 2013). In line with this, urban Kano as a cosmopolitan centre has some security issues related to crime and policing that need to be redressed (Ahmed et.al, 2013). For this purpose, secondary sources of data were used in the paper to address these issues with the aim of highlighting the true picture of the situation. The results indicate that; drug abuse among the youth, unemployment, and inadequacies in police and policing are some of the challenges observed. Hence, immediate measures such as; public enlightenment, improved school system, vocational trainings, and increased police personnel should be initiated by the stakeholders to make urban Kano a safe haven for all.

Keywords: *police, criminal activities, security challenges, unemployment/poverty, urban security.*

INTRODUCTION

Today, the issues related to crime and insecurity are of major concern to various communities and societies. The primary mission is to guarantee security, prosperity and overall growth of citizens and civilians (Azahalu, et.al 2013). However, Nigeria, as a nation is argued to have failed in meeting the minimum standard of united nation standard of 1:450 ratios of police to civilian population (Eme, 2009). The concept of security is defined as “a class of human rights’ that guarantee “freedom from basic insecurities – new and old’ (Commission on Human Security 2003; Zedner, 2003). Accordingly, Annan¹ (2003:4) argued that; security “.....encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and healthcare and ensuring each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her own potentials. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth, preventing conflict, freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment... (Commission on Human Security, 2003: 4)

The proliferation of political and economic related assassinations, extra-judicial killings, armed robbery; kidnapping, human trafficking, drug related crimes and abduction in Nigeria are some common security challenges that generally disturb the nation (Mijah, 2007; Eme 2009; Oluwaniyi, 2011). In this regard, the delivery of security is delegated to police personnel with

¹ This is extracted from some speeches of Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of United Nations.

limited training, inadequate education and no real commitment to professionalism making the situation more difficult (Parfomak, 2004; Button, 2009). Nigeria (not only Kano state) is the 148th secured nation out of the total 162 covered by the global peace index survey presented (IEP, 2013).

However, the current statistical estimate reveals police strength of Kano state as 7,000 deployed to man a population of 12, 052,530. Meanwhile, out of a total 44 local government areas, urban Kano comprises of only 8 with a population of 3,007,107 (NBS, 2014). Thus, the ‘security systems’ that are created to counter these and many other risks vary significantly in their complexity, effectiveness and implications (Johnston & Shearing, 2003). This presentation relates issues of crime proliferation, security management and the police/policing nexus in the context of urban Kano, Nigeria.

Brief History of Urban Kano

Geographically, Kano town is about 840 kilometers from the edge of the Sahara. It is 472.45 meters above sea level (Olofin & Tanko, 2002). The main Kano town is said to have developed over 1000 years ago (Dokaji, 1975). Dominant religion is Islam and major ethnic group being Hausa/Fulani (Fika, 1978). Kano state was created in 1967 after the Nigeria’s independence in 1960. Eight LGAs out of 44 made up the urban Kano, namely; Municipal, Gwale, Dala, Nassarawa, Fagge Kumbotso, Tarauni and Ungogo (NPC, 2014). The area has over 3 million out of more than 12 million population of the state (NBS, 2014). It is highly cosmopolitan and a commercial state of the federation. And, over 80% of its working population today, engaged directly in farming, animal husbandry, fishing, poultry, processing and marketing (Smith, 1997).

Brief history of the Nigerian Police

The genesis of modern police system came with colonial domination. The forces were created to defend British economic and political interests against threats, especially from the colonized (Ahire, 1991; Alemika, 1993; Tamuno, 1970). The colonial occupation in Nigeria became consolidated between 1861 and 1903 (Onoge 1993; Tamuno 1970; Ahire 1991, 1993; Rotimi 1993; Alemika 1993). The Native Authority Ordinance (No. 4 of 1916) conferred on the Native Authorities, the responsibility for maintaining order in their respective areas under which they were allowed to prevent crime and arrest offenders. Police powers were increased under the Protectorate Laws (Enforcement) Ordinance (no. 15 of 1924) (Tamuno 1970: 90).

By 1930, the Nigeria police was made to co-exist with local administration police in local government areas in the west and the native authorities in the north. Although later disbanded because of poor training, corruption and partisan politics purposes, the dual system of policing continued until 1966, when Nigeria experienced her first military coup (Ahire 1993; Rotimi 1993; Ohonbamu 1972). In 1979, the Constitution made a provision for the existence of Nigeria Police Force alone (Alemika, 1993). And, in recent return to civil rule, the 1999 Constitution in Section 214(1), made provisions on the existence of Nigeria Police Force, Police Council and the Police Service Commission (Reiner, 2000).

Security Challenges and Criminal Activities in urban Kano

A number of studies have indicated how social problems exist in Kano state (Ahmed, Muhammad, Mohammed & Idris, 2013; Radda, Bello & Aminu, 2011; Siro, 2008). As statistics show, it is currently the first with high number of people with drug consumption habit out of which the metropolitan area is the most evident (NDLEA, 2013). This is proved echoing the six year record of the same agency in 2008 where the consumption hiked in a relative ascending order. Accordingly, from January 2003 – November 2008, the Kano office recorded over 1528 arrests made by the agency for drug abuse incidences. The ages of the offenders ranged between 15-33 years.

The statistical flow of incidences revealed thus; in 2003 only 8.7 percent of the total six year arrests were recorded. By 2004, the arrests increased by 2.5 percent reaching 11.2 percent. By 2005, it dropped to 10.6 percent thereby reducing 0.6 percent from the previous incidences. In 2006, the arrests were 17.7 percent adding 6.1 percent. By the end of 2007, the arrests reached 20.3 percent making a difference of 2.6 percent. And, lastly, 32.5 percent were recorded by November 2008 adding a difference of 12.2 percent over the previous year. The overall difference of these six year arrests record is about 22.8 percent. The following table summarizes these incidences.

Table 1

Year	% of +/- in Subsequent years	% of Incidences/year
2003	8.7	
2004	+2.5	11.2
2005	- 0.6	10.6
2006	+6.1	17.7
2007	+2.6	20.3
2008	+12.2	32.5
Total difference	22.8	

Similarly, the record of *Dawanau*² psychiatric clinic indicated that from January – November 2008 alone, over 9,799 mental cases were reported to the hospital. Out of this figure, 6,365 (64.9 percent) cases were youth from Kano metropolis. Over 5,103 (80 percent) of this figure were drug induced patients (D.I.Ps.). Subsequently, 4,791(93.9 percent) were males. The implication of this is that, the trend of drug abuse behaviour shows increase (NDLEA 2008-2013). This leads to a number of social vices such as; rape, murder, inter-gang rivalry and other property related crimes. Consequently, with the situation at hand, the community is at risk being subjected to insecurity. The tragedy also relates to law enforcement corruption in the security sectors of the

² *Dawanau* is a name of a town where the popular Psychiatric clinic (to which most urban Kano cases are referred) is a located.

nation. Affirming this, in a study on drug abuse in Kano metropolis, an NDLEA official was reported saying:

“...To tell you the truth, anybody arrested who gives me money; I will collect and let him go, because even if I did not, one very big politician from the top will ask my boss to release the culprit without proper judgment. Most of these bandits have behind them, very big and influential politicians...” (Siro, 2008:89)

Corroborating further, another official in the same agency supports:

“...Authorities should allow NDLEA and other agencies such as Police, *Hisba*³, *Adaidaita Sahu*⁴, Vigilant groups to do what is right for the better. Improper intervention produces lapses, leaving the society suffering the negative consequences of drug abuse...” (Siro, 2008:91)

In the same study, a relationship between drug abuse and political thuggery indicated that 44.0 percent (51 out of the total 116 respondents) engage in political violence. Therefore, crime increase in urban Kano affects the security of the populace. Another threat that is connected to high rate of criminal activities in the area is the issue of unemployment. In the year 2000 alone, over 299 companies were forced to close down due to harsh economic climate in the state. As a result, 5000 jobs were lost. The implication of this retrenchment is the possibility of broken homes due to significant others inability to maintain families. Effect of which might have led to juvenile delinquencies and crimes (Radda, 2009).

In another study, Radda, Bello and Aminu (2011) found that, out of the total 152 industries in Sharada/Challawa industrial area⁵, 106 industries (69.7%) were closed down as at October 2010. Similarly, out of the 179 industries in Bompai industrial area⁶, 126 industries (70.4%) were also closed down. This shows the level of unemployment affecting the urban economy. According to these authors, the study also indicated the frequent police visits in some urban Kano hotspots. These places identified largely attract more policing than others. A police respondent during an interview posited:

“...We as security providers make efforts to protect lives and property. We know all the black spots in our divisions. In some divisions, police are challenged by ‘*Yan Daba*’⁷ who sell and smoke Indian hemp and other dangerous drugs. In other black spots, women are sexually assaulted while other people’s properties are robbed. There are commercial areas where pick pocketing, shoplifting, shop breaking etc. happen, while in *Sabon Gari*⁸, police personnel contend with quarrels, assault and

³ *Hisbah* is a government agency established in 2000 to assist police and other Law Enforcement Officials in solving especially domestic disputes among the public

⁴ A *Daidaita Sahu* is a societal re-orientation Programme introduced by Kano State government (2003-2011) to encourage moral governance among community members.

⁵ Areas of second phase of industrial development in the state launched in middle 70s.

⁶ Area of first phase of industrial development launched in early 70s immediately after the civil war

⁷ ‘*Yan Daba*’ is a plural word referring to the urban thugs/gangs that move as a mob to perpetrate crimes of any sort. Groups are usually belonged to various areas that can be an enemy to another of its kind.

⁸ *Sabon-Gari* is a Hausa word referring to “new town” located in Fagge local government (urban Kano) largely dominated by the non-Hausas (Christians mostly) since colonial era and where most urban gangs frequently visit.

personal violence. In some areas, strangers usually going to motor parks are attacked. Therefore, the hot spots are usually identified and given more priority...’’ (Radda, Bello and Aminu 2011:9).

Raping especially paedophiles’ is found to be another security factor endangering majority families in urban Kano. In a recent analysis, over 179 cases were reported and recorded by the relevant agencies in 2013 alone excluding the dark figures⁹. Out of this number, 126 (70.4%) recorded cases were said to have occurred only in the months of November and December of the year. The remaining 53 (29.6%) cases occurred between January-October (KSGD, 2014). As Kano metropolis turned vulnerable after the 20th January 2012 tragedy by *Boko Haram*¹⁰, a law was passed forbidding any motorcycle ride after 6 p.m. and not by more than one person at a time. This was made to curtail unprecedented assassinations using “*kill and run*” strategy that followed the attack (KSGD, July 2013).

Police and the tasks of security management

In his study, Solar (2001) identified the characteristics of a highly effective police officer as; objectivity, innovation, self-motivation, application of social skills, reason and forethought, and the use of mediation skills. Also, the author identified the organizational factors used to describe an effective police agency, which consist of cooperation among members, trust between management and officers, focus on rules and procedures, focus on positional authority, openness among members, and perceived autonomy level of members. The final revelation of the study shows that, there is a measurable correlation between a police agency’s moving away from the traditional bureaucratic model and increased officer effectiveness’ (p. 43). Overall, Solar found that officer effectiveness was greater in agencies where supervisors focused less on rules and procedures, and more on cooperation among members. Being the most populous state of the federation, Kano is faced with a shortage of police personnel to man the exponentially growing population (Ayila, Oluseyi, & Anas, 2014). By the end of 2014, the population expects to reach three million, seven thousand one hundred and seven (3,007,107) which is largely affected by this security dilemma (NBS, 2014). The following table shows the trend.

Table 2 Showing the Local Government Areas, Police Divisions, Police Outpost and the population projection figures of 2011.

No	L.G.A	No. of Police Divisions	No. of Police Out posts	Population
1	Nassarawa	8	9	596441
2	Dala	1	4	418759
3	Kano Municipal	4	11	371243
4	Ungogo	4	8	365737
5	Gwale	2	2	357827

⁹ Consist of three categories: Undetected, detected unreported, and detected, reported but unrecorded.

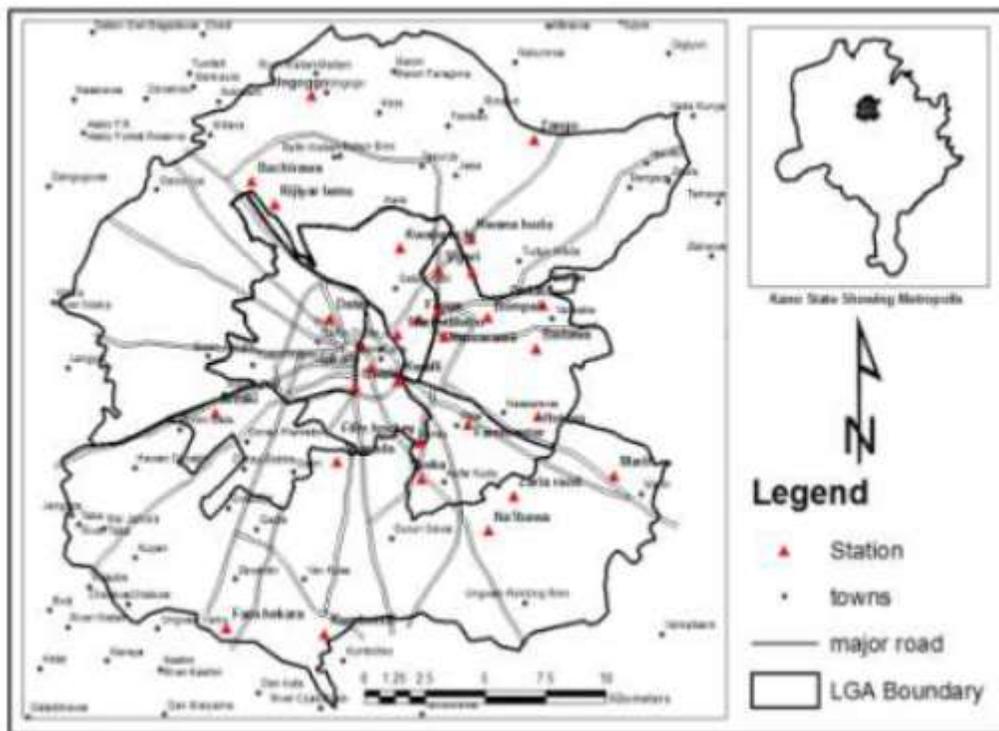
¹⁰ *Boko Haram* is a religious fanatic group whose main ideology is fight against western education and usually attack the security forces.

6	Kumbotso	5	8	294391
7	Tarauni	4	4	221844
8	Fagge	5	6	200095
Total		33	52	2,826,337

Source: Adapted from fieldwork (Ahmed et al 2011)

It can be observed that, the number of police stations (both divisions and outposts) are inadequate. Although Nassarawa had the largest population and the highest number of divisions, the outposts were only nine as against municipal which had eleven and the third in terms of population. Again, Dala was the second in terms of population but had only one police division (which happened to be the least of all) and only four outposts. Also, Fagge had the least population, but became the second with the highest number of divisions. And, falls draw with Kumbotso which occupied the sixth position in population. Meanwhile, Fagge maintained six outposts as against Tarauni, Gwale and Dala that all had higher population than her. The discouraging factor is that Gwale, although the fifth position in population but had only two each of divisions and outposts. The fig 1 below explains more on this.

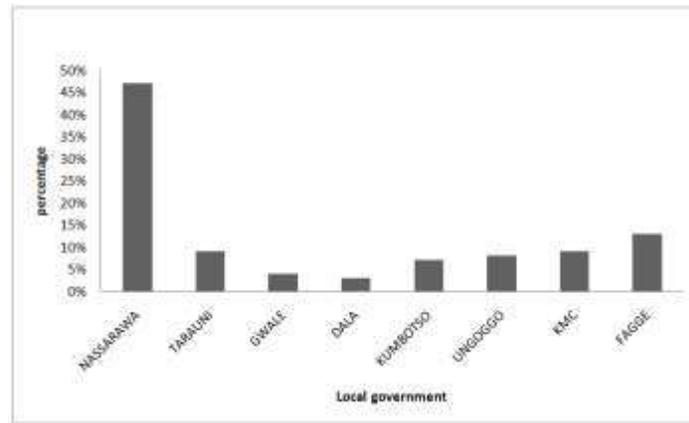
Fig. 1 Spatial Distribution of Police Stations across Kano metropolis.



Source: Adapted from fieldwork (Ahmed et al 2011)

The figure presents an uneven spatial distribution of the police stations. Forty seven percent (47%) of the total police personnel were deployed to Nassarawa. Possibly due to the fact that the State headquarters and the government house are all located in the area. However, the remaining fifty three percent (53%) were shared among the other seven local government areas. The next fig 2 explains further.

Fig. 2 Police personnel distribution across the eight Local Government Areas of Urban Kano.



Source: Adopted from fieldwork (Ahmed et al, 2011)

The descriptive statistics shows that, Dala is the least in terms of police personnel although is the second in terms of population after Nassarawa.

Table. 3 Ratio of Police personnel to a Population as at 2011

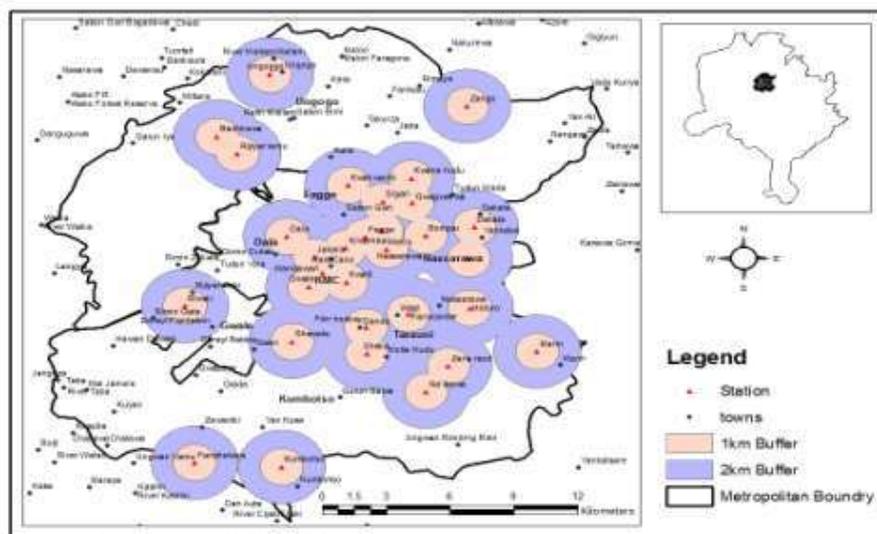
L.G.A	Police Personnel	Population Representation
Nassarawa	1	252
Dala	1	2755
Kano Municipal	1	821
Ungogo	1	841
Gwale	1	1754
Kumbotso	1	753
Tarauni	1	452
Fagge	1	293
Total	8	7921

Source: Adapted from the fieldwork (Ahmed et al 2011)

Considering the disproportionate distribution of the police stations in the urban Kano as shown in figs 1 and 2, the only local government areas where the United Nations police civilian ratio criterion of 1:450 was met were Nassarawa and Fagge. The remaining six were having security deficit with Tarauni having a slight difference of two as it had 452 instead. Cumulatively, as at

2011, for every seven thousand nine hundred and twenty one (7921) people living in the metropolis, eight (8) police are deployed to provide security and safety. This is not only discouraging but unbelievable in terms of security management.

Fig. 3 Buffer zones of urban Kano.



Source: Cartography and GIS Unit, BUK 2012

The country had no standard distance from police stations to peoples' residences. Therefore, the above buffer zones illustration revealed that, as the towns marked with tiny *black* spots and the police stations with tiny *pink* spots, it can be speculated that the ancient city was relatively served while the eastern part of the metropolis was not only underserved is in a total security neglect. Generally, the police, crime and security nexus need to be re-visited.

CONCLUSION

It is evidently clear that, police and policing are the most important elements in security management. However, their inadequacies causes serious havoc to the safety of the populace. The literature explored indicate unemployment within the metropolitan economy serves as a source of threat; leaving crime as the only available alternative of survival to meet the urban demand. Majority of the teeming youth found in the underworld today commit a lot of atrocities such as drug abuse that may lead to other related offences. On the other hand, government is indolent to provide adequate police personnel to cater with the growing population. Corruption has been systemic for decades now. Not only within the police but across law enforcement agencies in the security enterprise. As such, crime/policing nexus is at the ideal inverse. And unfortunately, the former is always at the hike. The paper therefore concludes that, the resultant of afore mentioned is impediment to human progress. To abate this obstacle and achieve societal objectives, measures shall be put in place. They include; creating employment opportunities,

public enlightenment, recruitment and training of the police and provision of working tools for the personnel. Others are quality school system, general welfare improvement in the security sector. These will manage the situation if all things are to function as wanted.

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