

THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN NIGERIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PEACEKEEPING AND COMMUNITY SECURITY

FASUAN E. OLAWALE

Institute of Peace, Security and Governance,
Ekiti State University, Department of Peace and Security Studies
E-mail: olawale_fasuan@yahoo.com

Abstract

A peaceful and secure environment is observed as one of the requirements for the development and attainment of good and quality of human life. This is also one of the fundamental responsibilities of governments across all levels. However due to the increased security challenges in the society and the overstretched nature of the security agencies especially the Nigeria Police, both private and public entities, neighbourhoods and communities have resorted to the use of Private Security Arrangements to combat and prevent crime in their domain. This study examines and analyzes the role of private security arrangement in some Nigeria's neighbourhood and community safety. The study adopts a field survey research; primary data were collected through oral interviews from the sample population in Ado, Ekiti State; Akure, Ondo State; and Ilesha, Osun State Nigeria. The study found out that private security arrangements play a remarkable role in crime prevention and control. It therefore recommend that private security arrangement should be encouraged and accommodated in the policing system in order for communities to maximize their full crime control potentials, since no government has the wherewithal to provide one hundred percent security for its people. This would help to complement efforts of the police in community crime prevention and control.

Keywords: Crime prevention, Community policing, Private Security Arrangement.

Introduction

Private security arrangements can be considered as a form of situational crime prevention, it is often used to target places and specific types of potential victims such as warehouses, manufacturing sites, housing estates, office complexes, critical infrastructure site, individual houses; and community of peoples. The legitimacy and right of any state over the people can best be upheld only to the extent at which it can guarantee the protection of life and property of its citizens. In a crime prone society, only those with strength survive, the feeble are left at their own mercy Shane [2008]. Meanwhile, long in the past, earlier before the beginning and formation of communities, states and nations; safekeeping were in the hand of individuals, and each person stands to defend himself and the immediate environment against possible danger. This has, however led to the coming together of people in order to build up their security and safety against threat and defence against external attackers.

In light of this, major communities across the globe created their own based private policing arrangements to ensure the security of their entire people. Even, after the formation of state and state security institution like state police, these arrangements continued. Though, constantly, the arrangements were mainly to complement the state security institutions in identifying and handing over criminal suspects to the appropriate authorities. In Webern definition, quoted in Olaniyan A. (2011), the state was regarded as the community of human beings that has the monopoly of legitimate use of force within the given territory.

Study Enquiries

However; particularly, there has been some challenges to this important security function of state, hence given rooms to mushrooming of private incursion into the provision of security, this has however makes

this paper to inquire in order to find explanations to the following disturbing questions which the situation had singled out:

- Does this mean a relapsed to pre-state historical age where safekeeping was left to the hand of individuals?
- Does it mean the weakening of the state institutions in its discharge of its basic security responsibilities?
- Could this situation bring adequate and assurance of security?
- Would the situation sustained peaceful coexistence of community of people?

Contemporary Views and Arguments

It is however becomes needful to subsist on available literature and related contemporary views which were alienated from the various characterisations and from different authorities. Shearer (1998:18) affirms that the use of private securities can upset the delicate balance between a country's political leaders and its military, which may view employment outside force as an indication of its own failure. Mbutu (2010:55) contends that, privatising security may imply the surrendering of state sovereignty on matters of law and order; that state were unable to fulfil its obligations to provide protection and security.

In any case, going by the Shearer and Mbutu assertions, they were silent on the fact that a private security structures or an arrangement does not affect the setups of the regular state security. The two establishments were not the same in the sense that, the use of private security arrangements only serves as a supporting or an alternative hand to complement the state security institutions in crime prevention and community safety to keep law and order in the state.

William R. (1997:11) in his arguments, which Shearer (1998:18) in some way agreed with maintained that, by privatising security and the use of force, removing it from the domain of the state and giving it to private interest, the state in these instances is being both strengthened and disassembled. While groups such as these were attempting to reconstruct the state in order to ensure stability and security sufficiency for economic activities, they are also removing the state control over violence and war.

Mean while, William Reno's argument was right but in one side, because while private security arrangements provides satisfactory security for community activities in complementing the state securities, this is by no way removing any state control over violence and war because states stands as the only authority that regulates the activities of any private security activities. No private security of any form or engagements can operate outside the state regulations and authorities, either their mode of operations or the kinds of ammunitions in their possession as Joachim established that, the changing in state control of security does not always imply deterioration rather, it has under certain circumstances led to increase in flexibility and functionality of state securities such as the USA and UK (Joachim 2010:4). Therefore, state control is not removed from the use of security might; rather, the use of private securities increase the functionality of state and improves the safekeeping of communities.

Conceivably, these arguments' or contentions may not at all significant any longer, the private security structures has become a reality in the current century. Private and public clients do make arrangements for private security services; even both government and non-governmental organizations employed the services of private securities to safeguard their properties Olaniyan (2011). Arising from these, the reality of private security arrangements or privatisation of security provision has become a global practice and which is one of the ways in which government meets its basic responsibilities of security provisions. Joachim (2010) proved that use private securities for safekeeping has however, led to increase in flexibility and functionality of state in crime control. Against this background, many communities have created their own community based security structures/policing system in form of private arrangements in order to ensure the security of lives and properties in their domain.

Roles of Private Security Arrangements in Policing and Crime Control

The private security arrangements seek 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:

- i. Security against property crime (e.g. theft, vandalism),
- ii. Security against financial crime (e.g. fraud)
- iii. Security against personality and threatening of life (e.g. assault, threats, kidnapping).
- iv. Security against fear and surge of violence (e.g. violence conflicts)

In other words, the role is largely to prevent or protect and most often accomplished especially those that involves in highly visible presence, both static presence and mobile (most often foot and/or vehicle) patrols. Secret camera and motion detector can also be used, as both a visible deterrent and a means of observation of persons and spaces. In recent years, we have seen an explosion in several states, in mass public spaces, such as large shopping malls and sporting and entertainment complexes, event centres. Although; private ownership, but they invite large numbers of the public together. This call for security vigilance.

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 organisations. 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.

A research conducted by Phillip J. Cook and John MacDonald in (2011), indicated a positive economic impact on business groups in such circumstance along with a drop in incidents of criminal or unsafe behaviour. However, there were reports by Darcie Bennett (2008) indicated that, in some instances, private security arrangements were used specifically to target homeless persons, ethnic minorities and mentally ill persons in order to keep them out of some public areas. In addition according to Mark W. LaLonde (2011), he recorded that in some states; private security arrangements are not only provided to guard physical assets or locations, the arrangements were also used to include the guarding of persons such as dignitaries and celebrities. There were also examples of private security arrangements being used to protect witnesses to significant crimes. Mark further pointed out that private security arrangements in some states are often to protect and for the movement of valuables commonly referred to as "cash in transit", for which some states permit the arming of guards as part of the duties designed to prevent crime. He further stressed that the significance of private security arrangements in crime prevention ranged from general to vital and most typically, these crime prevention services do fall into one or more of the following categories:

- i. Prevention or detection of intrusion, unauthorized entry or activity, vandalism and trespassing on private property.
- ii. Prevention or detection of theft.
- iii. Protection of individuals from bodily harm.
- iv. Providing a reassuring presence.
- v. Adherence to, and enforcement of established rules, regulations, measures, policies and practices relating to crime reduction.
- vi. Reporting and apprehension of violators.
- vii. Reporting on incidents and calls.

Assessment of the Use of Private Security Arrangement: Instance Studies

To certify how private security arrangements has helped in crime prevention and community safety, some studies were carried out from different domains across three states in Nigeria which includes: Ekiti State; Ondo State; and Osun State, where private security arrangements are used to keep peace, prevent crime and secure lives. These selected samples illustrated the wide-ranging role that private security arrangements has/can play in policing and in crime control. The study also highlighted the positive contributions that private security services can make in crime prevention, community and property safety, and some other things pertaining to use of private securities.

A Study in Shopping, Leisure and Retail Facilities in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

This is a study carried out in Akure, Ondo State in May, 2017. The study found out that there were many large shopping malls in Akure, Ondo State, being the capital city of the state, which includes multiple retail outlets, restaurants, bars, banks, etc. These were often areas of private space, but freely open to the public. In the City of Akure, this status poses challenges because public police are to take on the primary security role, as their duty is to serve the public, not the property owners. This can be combined with the sheer challenge of providing the necessary resources. Consequently, for these reasons, combined with the preferences of many facilities owners, private security arrangements were provided and used in form of guard services to provide crime prevention and safety functions.

For example, ShopRite super-market, one of the largest shopping complexes in Akure, with an estimated 52 thousand visitors shopping per year, security provision is divided between private security staff and the police where police will only hang around outside while private securities secure the insides. In an assessment of this, it was found that using private security arrangements help in more preventive work, responding to incidents but also arresting people. The police, by contrast, were more enforcement-driven, intervening in cases of anti-social behaviour, among other things. This study illustrates a partnership between the police and private security personnel with the latter numerically superior which according to Olaniyan (2011) is an employment opportunity.

In another separate study carried out on how Banks in Ado, Ekiti State secure their facilities, it was realised that the use of private security arrangements provide the primary security functions, including questioning and arresting suspects while the police usually stays outside to monitor the movement in and out of the banks and that private security personnel generally working well with the police.

A Study in Entertainment and Events Centre Venues in Ado, Ekiti State, Nigeria

This is a study observed in Ekiti State Capital, Ado Ekiti in June 2017. It was discovered in the study that, events and entertainment venues regularly host large numbers of people, including sporting matches especially football, athletics, and basketball matches, concerts, nightclubs, weddings, burial and religious events, to name some of the most popular. These events vary significantly in their risk profile, but one striking theme across them all is the growing contribution of private security arrangements in the provision of community safety and crime prevention functions at them. This study investigated a football match between Fountain Football Club and Sunshine star held at the Oluyemi Kayode Stadium, where the capacity is around 10,000 people. It was found that, on the main day of the match, there were 20 police officers with more than 60 private security officers, providing guard services. The latter under took mostly access control functions, bag-checking and controlling the outside.

Also, a study conducted in two event centres, one in Ado, Ekiti state and another in Akure, Ondo State known as Great Eagles event centre and The Dome International event centre respectively where the capacity is 4,000 people each, it was found that there were always 4 police officers with numbers of private security officers. The police usually dealt with any breaches of the law, but at this event private security officers dealt with breaches of hall regulations, such as contraband brought into the event centre. In some places, the provision of security at such events is, and has been found shifting from the public police to private security officer.

A study in Residential Security and Community Policing in Ilesha, Osun State Nigeria

This is a study carried out in Ilesha, Osun State, in February 2017 on security arrangements in residential security and community policing. The study found out that, the high demand for a presence of security on the streets in residential areas which cannot be met by the public police, combined with the growth of streets and communities has fuelled a boom in the provision of residential and community private security arrangements in Ilesha Osun State. Also, it was found that most communities where residential houses were divided off from their surroundings by border fences are protected through private security arrangements by providing guard services in form of undertaking access control and patrol functions. According to a street in Ilesha 'Oke-isha', this system has grown substantially there and it has proved to be reliable and enhance security sufficiency and effectiveness. It has also found that most communities in Ilesha are using self-help forms of security through vigilante and it assumed a degree of success in addressing crime problems.

Findings

This study, however has exposed that, to confront the current security challenges in our society, the use of Private Security Arrangements should put into consideration for safety and security because it could be deduced here that the insecurity to lives and property around the communities were pervasive calling for an action which the police had no capability to handle, this apparent failure of the state security apparatus led to various strategies for self help, the manifestation of this is exemplified in the use of various categories private security arrangements.

This were also found to have agreed with the studies by Amnesty International (2002), Alemika and Chukwuma (2008), Abrahamsen and Williams (2005), Adinkrah (2005), Persom (2010) and Adejoh (2013) which opined that private security arrangements emerge in response to the citizens' quest for safety and security and it flourish when there is the perception of increased criminality or social deviance which threatens social order. The work found that private security arrangements could be through community jointly organized (Vigilante), engagements of private security companies, Individual house/facilities and owner/occupant employed watchers and the use of secret cameras and motion detectors. These arrangements did help to ward away the petty thieves around and alerting the police of the hoodlums around the communities. The Government also supported this stressing that the police cannot be everywhere.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

There has been a comprehensive movement towards the community policing lately, where policing becomes a collaborative effort between the public police and the communities to control the teething troubles of crime and disorder and to develop solution through communal effort. However, in most of the developed societies, private security arrangements have remained very noticeable part of their security measure on crime control, it continued as a prominent part of the society's entire security landscape (Kantor & Person, 2010). Indeed, rather than being the monopoly of the public police, policing functions is being carried out by private security agencies outside the realm of the state though with state control of the activities where people arrange for different forms of private securities which may be better suited for their protection at that very moment. The existence of community private security arrangements has become strengthened by the severe security challenges of our time and the clear inability of the public police to effectiveness arrest the situation.

This work was conceived against this background, and as it was coming alongside with the circumstantial of the need to know if community private security arrangements could be strengthened and leveraged upon in the quest for an inclusive and holistic response to the current security challenges being faced across the country.

The work therefore established that, private security arrangements were extremely thrived where is being used. The reasons for their existence and proliferations lie deeply in the persistence of criminal attacks and the obvious inability of the public police to absolutely arrest the situation, guarantee the safety and security in the study are and the state at large.

Based on the forgoing, a conclusion is reached in this study to the effect that rather than dwell on the nit-picks of weakness, insufficient and limitations of the public police; A community private security arrangements has thus been seen and therefore presented as a genuine initiative that is committed to improving the human security of the local populations; hence, its operation should be strengthening and enriched especially in this epoch of terrorism, uprising of militia and guerrilla groups, anti-state sects, thugs, hooliganisms, violence radicalisation and others hullabaloo; all which usually produced disturbances' and threat to the general public, intimidation to the individuals and crime to the communities and above all threat to the national security. However, to enhance intelligence led policing and community crime control, these community private security arrangements have therefore been presented as an enviable platform that could be leveraged upon for more inclusive policing of our communities. This may as well be what is needed to come to terms with the prevailing insecurity across the country today.

Recommendations

Since the solution to identify and control criminal activities and safekeeping of the neighbourhood were aided by the community private security arrangements (CPSA), this work, therefore recommends that:

- a) Communities, facilities owners and neighbourhoods should be allowed to making their own community based private security arrangements in a bid to improve their community safety, security and to minimally minimise the criminal attacks.
- b) Policing system should be transformed from reliance on the monopoly of state as a provider of public services system of policing and procedures and adopt a conceptual extra strategies in community security and crime control through the self-participation and state partnership with the communities in arrangement for a private security to provide guard services.
- c) The strategy should be used to re-build relationship between the Nigeria police and the public, in this case, police should regularly visit communities, facilities owners and neighbourhood to have the security update and give advice as appropriate; community leaders and facilities owners should also visit police station at a regular interval to rub mind together with the police on the security of their communities and environments.
- d) Part of the money for security votes, should go to assisting local vigilance teams and state private security operatives to encourage community security self-help efforts because security of state starts from the individual security self-help; and secure home will give secure environment and secure community and this could graduate into a secure state.
- e) Residential and community private security arrangements should be backed by law so to make their operations and engagements legal and to define their roles, responsibilities and guidelines for their operations.
- f) Governments should makes grants available for the communities to spend on private security arrangements in order to enhance security sufficiency and effectiveness as it is been practice in South Africa, Zwelethemba. (Johnston, L. and C., Shearing 2003)
- g) Government should establish and encourage specific training programmes for the private securities personnel so that their operations and conducts could be regularly moderated.
- h) Government should design and carryout, in partnership with Universities, research relating to crime prevention and community safety.

Suggestion for Further Study

Private security arrangements are a means of confronting the current security challenges in many parts of Nigeria as ways of complementing the effort of the police and other official security providing agencies of government. This work has therefore exposed our understanding of the practice and the use of private security arrangements as a major aspect of crime control and prevention in Nigerian cities; by focusing

on Ado-Ekiti, Akure and Ilesha Metropolis respectively, the study becomes a micro-study of communal efforts in crime prevention, it is therefore suggested that, this basis could be used for thoughtful in the use and dynamics of private security arrangements at the level of states, National and even at the International level.

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