

Assesment of Stakeholders Views on Use of Arms by School Security Guards in Kebbi State: Role of School Manager as Policy Advocates

Sani Dantani MANGA, Ph. D

*Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education and Extension Services
Usmanu Dafodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria
Phone: +2348020527038*

Abstract: Nigeria is currently confronted with multi-faceted security challenges. Schools that formally were regarded as sacrosanct have become soft targets for insurgents, bandits and Kidnapers. This paper is the position that one of the greatest challenges in the school security architecture in Kebbi State, Nigeria is the lack of use of arms by school security guards who are ironically shouldered with the responsibility of protecting lives and property in schools. The paper examined the views of stakeholders on the possibility and desirability of coming up with a policy for the use of arms by school security guards and the role of school managers as policy advocates to achieve this goal. The study use a descriptive survey design conducted ex-post-facto. A sample of 500 participant comprising 250 teachers, 150 school managers and 100 parents drawn from 50 schools were taken using purposive, cluster and simple random sampling techniques. A self-designed structured four point Likert scale questionnaire was validated and pilot tested with a reliability index of 0.73 at 0.05 level of significance based on Chronbach alpha was used to collect data. A cut off mean of 2.50 and above was used for acceptance while below 2.50 was used for rejection in decision making. Findings of the study show that there is the need to develop an official policy on use of arms by school security guards. School managers are expected to serve as policy advocate towards institutionalizing the use of arms by trained school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Policy, Security Guards, Arms, Advocates, School Managers.

I. Introduction

From ancient of times, the need for security has been and will always remain a basic instinct in man. The early man in all places on earth has always focused on self defence particularly from wild animals and attacks from hostile tribes. The need for security has compelled man to fashion diverse kinds of weapons for defense and attack. Wherever a hamlet or village existed, there has always been provision for the defense of live of inhabitants and their properties. This situation has not changed today as evidenced-by the way and manner nations have gone beyond amassing weapons of self defence to accumulation of weapons of mass destruction. Every country today has military formations and well-armed security agencies to protect their citizens. In spite of this, however, criminal elements have not relented in their murderous efforts to acquire sophisticated weapons to terrorize innocent citizens and perpetrate various crimes. In the case of Nigeria, the security situation has become an issue of great concern to citizens in all parts of land. Although security threats differ from one part of the country to the other, security issues of today have become more complex, dramatic and exceeding multi-dimensional (Nwankwo 2013 & Isah, 2013). Insecurity to life and property has become a subject of concern more especially as it is affecting educational institutions which hitherto were globally considered as hallowed grounds but are now viciously attacked and destroyed. For example, between 2009 to 2018 Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria specifically targeted schools for systematic, sustained and comprehensive annihilation (Haruna, 2018). In 2011 Boko Haram terrorists attacked Bayero University Kano, killing 16 persons and injuring many. In July 2013 they attacked Mamudo Secondary School Yobe killing 42 and injuring more than 60 people. In April 2014 Boko Haram kidnapped and abducted 276 Girls from Chibok Secondary School in Bornu State. In February 2018 Boko Haram attacked and kidnapped 110 Girls from Dapchi Girls Secondary School in Yobe State. (Haruna 2018) The United Nations (2018) estimated that Boko Haram had destroyed 1,500 schools, killed 1,280 students and teachers and rendered over three million children out of school. All this deadly attacks involved the use of all sort of fire arms to disable security guards so as to achieve unhindered access to any school that was targeted.

The attacks on schools has taken a new dimension as kidnapers, armed robbers, bandits and cattle rustlers have now joined Boko Haram terrorists in unholy alliance to perpetrate mayhem in Nigerian schools.

Thus in May 2019, bandit attacked and kidnapped six people in Girls Secondary School Moriki, Zamfara State (Aluko, 2019). The attacks in school especially by Kidnappers have spread to Lagos and other parts of Nigeria where millions and billions of naira are demanded as payment for ransom (Adepegba & Adeoye, 2017). Armed attacks on schools and abduction of school personnel have become a lucrative business for criminals and are an issue with diverse political dimensions.

In view of the frightening security situation in Nigerian, (schools as custodies of property must be protected at all cost. The protection of schools and indeed all citizens is largely the responsibility of government. This is in line with section 14 (2) of constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 1991) which states that "The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Although Government of Nigeria have been spending billions of Naira on the defense budget and doing everything it could to fulfill its constitutional responsibility, the security challenges affecting schools have persisted over time and are getting worse by the day (Harura, 2019). In other to ensure safety and security in schools, government at state and Federal level employ and post school security guards. But the security guard~ are neither armed nor permitted to use arms in the discharge of their security duties. Thus when schools are under attack by armed bandits, insurgents or kidnapers, the unarmed school security guards remain helpless, ineffective and impotent to respond appropriately. In the event of danger school security guards have no option than to take flight to save their lives just like any defenseless students and teachers would do. Today in many school security guards who are on official duty avoid wearing uniform so that they will not be easily identified by criminals and targeted for elimination. Whenever unarmed school security guards they sense the slightest danger, many of them do not hesitate to discard their uniforms to enhance their chances of escape from attack by irrational and merciless criminals.

The dynamics of security situation in Nigeria has clearly revealed that the security of schools is a collective responsibility. (Ronalds, 2018). According to Shuni (2018) the matter of security is too serious an issue to left solely in hands of government security agencies alone. Being a collective responsibility, schools to this extent have an important role to play in protecting themselves. School security guards are primarily employed and positioned to play that role in collaboration with state security agencies. But schools cannot discharge this statutory responsibility if they are not armed or permitted to use arms especially in these perilous times. Thus the main thrust of this study is to examine the justification for a policy proposal for in the use of arms by school security guards in educational institutions in Kebbi State and what role school managers can play as policy advocates achieving this goal.

The theoretical framework for this paper is drawn from Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory cited in Manga (2015) which emphasizes the need for security for any organization to operate smoothly. Schools as institutions of learning are respected to provide a peaceful and secured environment for efficient running of educational programmes. The paper therefore examined the gap between the theoretical requirement for provision of security and the standard of security actually enjoyed by schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria. In this regard, this paper operationalizes school security to be all the efforts put in place to protect lives and properties in school setting. Stakeholders refer to student, teachers, school administrators and policy makers at the legislative houses and ministry of education. School security guards are trained security staff employed or posted to schools as permanent staff to maintain security in schools at all times policy advocates strictly and narrowly refer to school administrators who are expected to mount pressure on government and other stakeholders towards the formulation and approval of policy for use of arms by school security guards. Arms refer to small weapons particularly portable pistols and knives that can form part of the uniform of school security guards.

II. Review of Related Literature

The need to arm school security guards has become increasingly urgent and. While school security guards have remained unarmed, there is an alarming existence of a huge number of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) not only in the hands of criminals but also in the hand of private Law abiding citizen (Abiodun, Ay-Adeyakan, Onatowara & Nwannanya, 2018). The United Nations estimated that Nigeria accounts for about 70% of 500 million illicit weapons existing in West Africa (Fribake, 2019). This translates to a frightening figure of over 300 million weapons. In view of section 7 (2) of the Firearms Act of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1990) which prohibits possession of fire arms without a license, in addition to other stringent conditions for possession of fire arms millions of citizens have resorted to illegal acquisition of weapons as they deem it necessary in their homes for the protection of their families (Kelvin, 2007). Illegal sources of arms acquisition include local fabrication, theft from government armory, smuggling of weapons, purchase from accredited but dishonest importers, corrupt custodial officers, donation from foreign insurgents, Nigeria civil war arm residue among others (Ade, 2005). So far the government of Nigeria has not been able to effectively and completely block these illegal sources of arms. Since criminally have continued to acquire arms

through legal and illegal means, it has become necessary to arm, school security guards so as to enable them complement and support the operations of state security agencies in keeping schools in Nigeria safe.

A policy on arming school guards will help to actualize the right for self defence as provided in section 31 of the Nigeria constitution (FRN, 1999), which allows for self defence by individuals, organizations and institutions in the face of serious life threatening aggression. Moreover there have been serious calls by prominent Nigerians for people to arm themselves for self-defences more especially as security agencies have failed to adequately defend people who come under attack in many instances. Currently, schools in northern Nigeria are generally considered to be on red alert as they can fall victims of attack at any given time. Making a policy to arm school security guards will therefore give schools the priority and eminence they deserve in the security architecture of Nigeria.

It is very common to see politician and other high ranking government officials being assigned armed policemen, and other security agents to guard and protect them with their families. In a similar vein, financial institutions such as banks that are custodians of money and other valuables are heavily guarded by well-armed security agents and the police. Money in the banks can easily be replaced if lost, but are not replaceable. In this regard, schools have a double right of being guarded by well-armed school security guards. A policy on arming of school security guards should not be considered as proliferation of illegal arms as all the arms to be supplied to schools will have to go through the legal processes of procurement, registration, licensing, distribution, storage, maintenance and retrieval. More so there will be clear records on quantity supplied, caliber of weapons supplied, to whom, when and where supplied. Besides whether school security guards are supplied with arms or not, the proliferation of illegal arms in the hands of criminal and terrorists already exist and the stock pile have continue to grow in the hands of insurgents, militants, Bandits, Kidnappers and other destabilizing agents (Guarcia, 2006).

Therefore it will be suicidal and unfair to leave school security guards unarmed while criminals of various categories are fully armed to the teeth. Although the Federal Government of Nigeria directed for immediate disarmament and recovery of prohibited fire arms, ammunition and other weapons in the country, the situation seem to grow worse by the day (Ronald, 2018). This is because it is not easy to track down and disarm all citizens in possession of illegal arms. Since the arms are acquired in absolute secrecy, this makes it difficult to pin down the source of supply, ownership and places of storage of the weapons. Thus the unfortunate proliferation of arms will continue whether schools security guards are allowed to use arms or not.

Due to high level of crimes and insecurity in the country, Nigerians are increasingly arming themselves more so as there is no law that completely prohibits ownership of guns to individuals who have met the criteria of obtaining a gun permit (Imobighe, 2003). Section 1 of the 1990 Firearms Act state that subject to the discretion of the President or Inspector General of Police any law abiding citizen may be granted license to own fire arms if he is above 17 years, is of sound mind and is not of defective eyesight, is not a person of intemperate habits and has not been convicted of crimes involving violence or threat of violence "during the previous five year's (FRN, 1990) Based on this criteria, school security guards are qualified to legally issued guns for the protection of staff and students in schools A policy to arm school security guards will enable them to return fire whenever their school is under attack by murderous intruders. According to Umar (2018), armed bandits, kidnappers, terrorists and cattle rustlers are using sophisticated weapons with various tactics. It which despite deployment of more security operatives, their atrocities and boldness -are increasing by the day. School security guards who are supposed to liaise with local vigilante groups and other security agencies in the event of an attack on schools need to be well armed and well trained to be able to provide a level of ground for effective cooperation in school security, School guards in uniform without arms are worse than defenseless students and teachers. The attackers who spot them will try to neutralize or eliminate them to enable them have easy access to execute their destructive mission (Abiodun, 2016).

Possession of arms by school security guards will improve internal security of schools by serving as a deterrent to criminally minded individuals who are usually armed and have been perpetrating violent crimes on campuses. It may to some extent deter armed bandits, Kidnappers and terrorist from attacking schools as well as offer armed resistance and especially if the school receives help from security agencies in time of emergency. It will become very difficult for bandits to attack schools at their own leisure, abduct students and walk away peacefully without any resistance as has hitherto been the trend in attacked schools

The possibility of school security guards and school managers misusing the arms for personal benefits as well as chance of disarming the security guards are likely to be very remote and insignificant to nullify the gains of a school policy on arming school guards such cases have been recorded by the Nigeria police where they are sometimes-accused of arbitrary extra-judicial killings and cases where army formation and police stations are attacked by terrorists who disarm the security forces and cart away arms and ammunition. This does not however, stop the government from continuing to arm the security forces and should therefore not be a reason to deny arms to school security guards. More so, school policy on use of arms will provide strict guidelines to deal with misuse of arms by security guards and school managers.

Nigeria has enough resources to fund the policy on arming of school security guards. According to Mutum (2019), it is estimated that six trillion naira has been expended on security over the past five years, with arguably little gains in terms of security of lives and property in Nigeria. Budget estimate for defence and security sector increased every year from ₦932 billion in 2014. ₦969 billion in 2015; ₦1.063 trillion in 2016; ₦1.142 trillion in 2017 and ₦1.334 trillion in 2018; which amount to ₦5.44trillion. The amounts usually budgeted for the Defence Ministry each year are more than enough to accommodate and adequately cater for arming of school security guards in public schools while proprietors of private schools should fund the arming of their security in their schools guards in line with the standard{and guidelines to be provided the policy. When it comes to making financial provisions for the protection of lives of precious children in various schools, no price is too high to be paid. Investing on' arming school security guards will definitely have a positive and significant imparted that will touch the life of every Nigeria.

School managers have an important role to play in serving as policy advocates for the enactment of school security policy on use of arms by security guards. School managers could form pressure groups to bring to public consciousness, the need to arm school security guards in the interest of the nation. They are expected to lobby and persuade the legislature to pass bills on arming of school security guards and prescribed the executive to sign the bills into law (Babalola, 2010) School managers have the capacity to use multimedia approaches to reach out to the public to support for the policy. They could also engage multi- ministerial cooperation to support the quest for the implementation of policy on' arming of school security guards (Dror, 2013). School managers could brainstorm and come up with a comprehensive blue print on school Security policy on use of arms by security guards for eventual implementation (Dye, 2009). They should be able to come up with strategies for internally generating revenue and developing programs to support the policy on use of arms by school security guards (Compbel, 2006).

III. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

1. examine the justification for a policy proposal for arming of school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria; and
2. determine the role of school managers as policy advocates for use of arms by security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

IV. Research Questions

1. What is the justification for a policy proposal for the arming of school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria?
2. What are the roles of school managers as policy advocates for use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria?

V. Methodology

The descriptive survey design of the ex-posit facto type was adopted for this study. The population of the study was made up parent teachers and school managers in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Kebbi State of north western Nigeria. Multi-stage, purposive and simple random sampling technique were used to select 500 participants drawn from 50 schools, made up of five Tertiary Institutions, 20 Secondary Schools and 25 Primary School in 5 existing Education Zones in Kebbi State. The population of the study comprised of 100 parents represented by Chairmen of Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and School Based Management Committee (SBMC) for each of the schools. The study sampled 150 school managers made up the Heads of Schools with their Deputies, and 250 teachers. The study adopted a structured four point Likert scale questionnaire titled: "Policy Proposal on Arming School Security Guards Questionnaire" (PP ASSGQ) which was used to collect data. The questionnaire was validated by experts in school security and policy issues. The instrument was pilot tested and a reliability index of 0.73 was obtained using test re-test method and Pearson correlation coefficient at 0.05 alpha levels. Data was analyzed using Means and Standard Deviations. The cut off mean of 2.50 and above was used for acceptance while below 2.50 was used for rejection.

VI. Results

Two research questions were answered, analyzed and presented sequentially:

Research Question 1

What is the justification for use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria?

This research questions was answered and presented in table 1

Table 1: Justification for use of Arms by Security Guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria

S/N	The need to arm School Security Guards	N	\bar{X}	Std
1.	To protect lives of students and staff	500	3.390	.662
2.	To complement efforts of state security agencies	500	2.460	1.188
3.	To enforce constitutional rights for self defense	500	2.718	.888
4.	To make school security a top priority	500	2.862	.953
5.	To control illegal arms proliferation	500	2.948	.981
6.	To train school security guards on use of arms	500	3.324	.713
7.	To empower school security guards to resist force	500	3.336	.701
8.	To improve internal security of schools at all times	500	3.412	.616
Average Mean		500	3.035	.838

Table 1 shows that the average mean of 3.03 is an indication that parents, teachers and school managers agree with all the items on the need for a policy to arm school guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria. This means that the participants to this study accepted that there is the need to have a clear cut policy on use of arms by school security guards in order to ensure the protection of lives and properties of staff and students (3.390); to make it possible for school security guards to complete the efforts of State security agencies (2.460); to enforce the constitutional right for self-defense (2.718); to make school security a top priority (2.860); to train school security guard on use of arms (3.324); to empower school security guards to return fire for fire when responding to armed attacks on their schools (3.336); and to improve the internal security of schools at all times (2.412). This confirms the need to develop a comprehensive policy on use of arms by school security guards in order to guarantee safe schools in Nigeria.

Research Question 2

What are the roles of school managers as policy advocates for use of arms by security guards in schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria?

This research question was answered and presented in table 2

Table 2: School Managers as Policy Advocates for use of Arms by School Security Guards.

S/N	Role of School Mangers as Policy Advocates	N	\bar{X}	Std
1.	They can form pressure group to press for arms policy	500	3.278	.6012
2.	The can lobby legislature to enact school arms security policy	500	2.948	.9814
3.	They could do public debates on arming of school guards	500	3.364	.6390
4.	They could use multi- media approach to enlighten	500	3.336	.7015
5.	They could use multi ministerial approach to pressure	500	3.438	.7558
6.	They could brainstorm to design arms security policy	500	3.412	6156
7.	They could use internally generated revenue to fund security	500	2.718	.8877
8.	They could develop training programs on school security	500	2.862	.9533
Mean		500	3.177	.07670

Table 2 shows that the mean of 3.17 is an indicating that parent teachers and school managers agree with all the items on the role of school managers as policy advocates for use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria. This means that the participants to this study accepted that school managers could play an important role as policy advocates for use of arms by school security guards as they can form a strong pressure group to press home their demands (3.278); they can lobby legislators to enact laws in use of arms by school security guards (2.948); they could engage in public debates to enlighten the public on the need for use of arms by school security guards (3.364); they could use multi-media approach to enlighten people (3.336); they could brainstorm to design a comprehensive school security to guide security operation in schools (3.412); they could internally generated revenue (IGR) to finance security activities in their school (2.718) and they could develop training programs on school security (2.860). This means that school managers could play a leading role in advocacy for formulation of policy on the use of arms by school security guards.

VII. Summary of Major Findings

The following findings were made in this study:

1. The justification for developing on use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi State Nigeria include the need for complementing the effort of State security agencies, protection or lives and properties as well as fulfillment of the right for self defence arming others.

2. The role of school managers as policy advocates for the formulation of a policy on the use of arms by school security guards include formation of pressure group, lobbying, and use of multimedia approaches to archive the objectives among others.

VIII. Discussion of Findings

The first item on the findings of this study shows that the participants were strongly of the view that the protection of lives of students and teachers is the most cogent reason for the need to arm security guards. This view was in line with Abiodun (2016) who argued at human lives are the most important resource in any organization and that people must be protected by all means and if necessary, by the use of arms. The findings indicated that if school security guards are to be enabled to complement the efforts of state security agencies they should be equally armed for the job. This agrees with Ronald (2018) who argued that there is no way unarmed school security guards should be expected to commit suicide by confronting armed criminals empty handed. The participants in this study agreed that school security guards must be armed as a strategy of fulfilling the constitutional right for self defence. This is in line with Mobighe (2003) who maintained that use of arms by school security guards will enable them to meet force with force and will guarantee better school security.

In sum, the findings of this` study indicates that there is the need for a coherent and comprehensive policy on the arming school security guard Kebbi State. This is line with Abiodun (2016), Ronald (2018), Garcia (2006), Mobighe (2003) and Umar (2018) who in their various submissions gave various justify the formulation of policy for use of arms by school security guards. If the policy is formulated and security guards in schools are armed as appropriate, it will boost the confidence of security guards by generating feelings of being secured, as well as boosting the morale of staff and students for better concentration on learning tasks. Use of arms by school security guards will guarantee the protection of lives and properties in schools.

The second finding of this study shows that school managers have an important role to play as policy advocates because they have the capacity to form a strong and well-articulated pressure group that can effectively press their demand for a policy on use of arms by school security guards. This finding agrees with Babalola (2000) who notes that teachers are very powerful when they have to press for a demand. The findings also show that school managers have the means to engage in public debates and the skills of combining multi-media and multi-ministerial approaches to enlighten stakeholders on the need to develop a comprehensive policy on use of arms by school security guards. This finding is an elite group, school managers have the possibilities of pressing more the demands for school security policy or use of arms by school security guards.

In brief the second finding of the study show that parents, teachers and school administrators agree that school managers have an important role to play in-serving as policy advocates for the use of arms by school security guards. School managers as professional educators and Chief Security officers of their schools have a duty to champion the formulation of policy on the use of arms by security guards in their schools. The findings agree with Babalola (2000), Dror (2013) and Dye (2009) all of whom highlighted the role of school managers as policy advocates. This has been extended in this paper to include serving as advocates in the formation and execution of the policy on use of arms by security guards in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

IX. Conclusion

Nigeria and Kebbi State in particular, need a comprehensive policy on arming school security guards to enhance their defence capability and maximize the quality of security enjoyed by staff and students in schools. The use of arms by school security guards is necessary in view of the ever increasing need to contain the relentless security challenges posed by bandits, terrorists and Kidnappers also have been attacking schools. School managers must rise to the challenge of advocating for the policy on the arming of school security for optimum security in Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. There should be a comprehensive policy on arming of school security guards in Kebbi State. The legislative and the executive arms of Government should positively consider passing bills to enact policy on use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi state, Nigeria.
2. School managers should serve as reliable and well informed advocates for formulation of school security policy for use of arms by school security guards in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

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