

## Case Study

# The Impact of Vigilantism and Crime Control in Contemporary Nigeria: A Case Study of Gezawa Local Government Area, Kano State, Nigeria (2010-2015)

Jibrin Ubale Yahaya and Musa Mohammed Bello

Department of Political Science, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Ph.D. Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of Governance and Development  
Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Corresponding Author Email: jibrinubaleyahaya@gmail.com

**Received:** Jan 1, 2019

**Accepted:** Jan 8, 2019

**Published:** Jan 12, 2019

**Abstract:** The inability of the Nigerian Police Force to control the increasing wave of crime has led to proliferation of vigilante groups in contemporary Nigeria. This study was initiated to investigate the impact of vigilante groups on crime control and management in contemporary Nigeria, particularly in GEZAWA L.G.A of KANO STATE. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents were sampled from GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE. Multi-stage, cluster and simple random sampling methods were used as the sampling techniques. Questionnaires were administered to respondents by two (2) research assistants whereas interviews were conducted with various stakeholder (2) traditional rulers, chairman of Gezawa L.G.A or his representatives, 2 Commandants of vigilante groups and 5 vigilante group members from various units. The result indicated that Nigeria Police is ineffective with regard to crime control and vigilante groups in its current form sprang up to make up for this ineffectiveness and fill the gap of insecurity at grassroots level. It also showed that vigilante groups are gaining prominence as an agents of crime control in contemporary Nigeria, particularly, Gezawa L.G.A of KANO STATE. The result equally revealed that vigilante group members are recruited and monitored through their communities and that they are effective in crime control and management. Also, the result indicated that the best way of solving the problem of crime in Nigeria is by increasing the activities of vigilante groups through training and support from local communities and Government. However, lack of working tools, poor funding, and lack of patrol vehicles are the major problems confronting vigilante groups. More so, based on the major findings, it was recommended that vigilante group members should operate within the frame work of law, Vigilante groups needed to have support from both local communities and other relevant stake holders in the process of discharging their responsibilities security at grassroots level. Finally, security committees should be established at the local government level and these committees should meet periodically to discuss security matters in their areas and report back any issues of insecurity to the relevant security agencies for proper management and control of crime in the country.

**Keywords:** Vigilante group, Crime Control, Policing, Community Participation.

## Background to the Study

Provision of adequate security is a social pre-requisite for the survival of any society. Every society takes appropriate measures to protect the lives and property of people living within its boundaries. Business and social activities may not go on freely without adequate security.

This fundamental essence of security may be the reason why societies from time immemorial made efforts to police their neighborhoods in order to secure them from criminal victimization. Security has to do with the act of preventing and protecting in order to ensure that certain facilities, equipment, persons or activities are safe from damage, pilferage, destruction, murder or disruption.

Vigilantism is not a recent development. Before 1900, many vigilant groups were formed in frontier areas of the United States. In 1851 and 1856, concerned citizens in San Francisco organized vigilante committees that forcibly restored peace and order. (World book encyclopedia, u-v20:318, Encyclopedia Americana, vol.24:204). In South Africa, vigilante activity is frequently justified as 'filling a policing gap' due to police inefficiency, corruption and conspiracy with criminals, practical failing in the criminal justice system. In Sierra-Leone, vigilante activities have been explained in terms of police ineffectiveness in combating crimes (Brownyn, 2001).

In Nigeria, vigilantism existed in the pre-colonial era. Human Right Watch and Center for law enforcement and education report, (2002) noted that "vigilante and other self – defense groups currently operating in Nigeria have roots that reach deep into the country's history. In the colonial era, some though not all independent local communities, especially in the South east maintained their own standing Army to defend their territory against the threat of invasion from neighbouring communities. Although there was no equivalent modern day structure at that time, some parallels can be drawn between these groups which were created by local communities for their own protection, and the more recently formed self –defense groups". This is also true in GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE where vigilantism was used as a means of both social and crime control before the advent of colonial rule. The proliferation of vigilante groups in contemporary Nigeria particularly in GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT area of KANO STATE is a response to crimes and criminality that have not only increased in degree, scope and volume but also have witnessed an unprecedented change in techniques, mode of operation and sophistication between 1998 and 1999 (wake of fourth republic) and the apparent failure of the Nigeria police to rise up to the occasion. Igbo (2001:219) has stated that "the apparent failure of Nigeria police to control the increasing wave of crime has led to unilateral public action against crime and criminals in some major cities of Nigeria particularly in the South east of the country".

Gezawa is a local government area in Kano state. Nigeria crime has become an order of the day in every part of the world but our concern here is to find out how the functions of Vigilante groups would help police in prevention a crime in our study area Gezawa local government Kano state, it has its head quarter in the locality of Gezawa main city within the area of Kano.it has an area of 34km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 3,961,669 at 2006 census. The poster code of the area is 700.the local government is bounded from north Gabasawa local government, and west Minjibir local government area. It is made up of predominantly Hausa Fulani population but with various ethnic groups such as Igbos, yorubas, Igalas Bendalist and kanous co-existing peacefully. The occupation of its settlers is trading and a little substance farming. Gezawa local government area has 11 administration wards and has revenue generation from trading market, and motor park and market respectively, Like earlier stated, part of the duty of Nigerian police force is preventing and detecting crime preserving peace and order and enforcing all laws and regulations. The role of Nigeria police force in crime prevention in our democratic societies especially Gezawa local government area of Kano state is enormous and deals with almost every aspect of everyone, in that locality hence the need to research and write about it. A lot of citizens are in the dark with regard to the

activities of Nigerian police force in these two areas due to a reason or the other. This researcher to the best of his ability within a given time frame and available logistic hopes to reduce the population in the dark as regard to this.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, many communities in Nigeria have witnessed crimes of various descriptions. GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE is not an exception. Thus, crime is becoming a serious problem in contemporary Nigeria. The police who are the primary agent in the fight against crime are ineffective. Their ineffectiveness may be as a result of the fact that they are under-staffed, under-equipped, and corrupt and lacked public cooperation. These have created problem of under policing in Nigeria including GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE. Thus, violent and property crimes are committed on daily basis without detection and prosecution. Many people are being dispossessed of their valuable property and others are killed or maimed for life by armed bandits. Many people hardly sleep in their houses at night for fear of criminal victimization. Those who sleep in their houses at Night do so at their own peril. Consequently, GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area has of recent been gripped by insecurity and lawlessness as armed robbery and other violent crimes reached unprecedented levels. Thus vigilantism seems to be gaining more prominence as agent of crime control in GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area. Several vigilante groups now operate in both rural and urban areas in Nigeria. Residents see vigilante groups as an outfit they can always rely on in terms of security. Put differently, the public is skeptical about the ability of Nigeria Police to provide adequate security services alone without the involvement of the community security initiatives like Vigilante groups, Hisba and Corporate Security Guard.

This study, therefore, aimed at finding out the impact of vigilante groups on crime control in Gezawa L.G.A. Generally speaking, when one listen to or watch the news nowadays, read the newspapers or discuss with other persons, most stories up for discursions ranges from one form of ill treatment or the other. From killing, to steeling and armed robbery, human trafficking down to the corruption found in almost all system of government with all their agencies, the stones are all the same. Negatively some of these illegalities don't even have to be or sound negative. They can first be against morality like prostitution, illegal gambling, illegal doing things, or even racism.

Most people are of the opinion that these negatives attitudes usually committed by poor people or people of lower class but this is very wrong, people of higher class or high social status commit wrong too. Embezzlement, tax evasion, insider trading is all forms of wrong committed by not usually persons of low class but the opposite. But what wrong is committed, by whom or where is committed, all have one thing in common which is a name diversion.

The focus of this research is to assess the functions of the role of Vigilante groups in crime prevention and control in Gezawa local government council Kano state in particular and Nigeria in general. Crime prevention is a role of police early defection of crime before it occurs and ability, to stop it from occurring entirely. However there are many cause of crime, but major ones are five, which include need, belief, impulse, influence, and gain. Needful crime , are these crime which are committed because the crime need the gain of the crime, belief criminals are where the criminal feels the law is wrong , impulse is like instructive, influential are the ones committed under the influence of toxicants, while gainful crimes are these committed because of their benefit.

### Research Questions

- 1) What is the rate of crime in Gezawa L.G.A ?
- 2) To what Level does crime constitute a social problem in Gezawa L.G.A?
- 3) To what level has vigilantism helped in controlling crime in Gezawa L.G.A ?
- 4) To what level have police controlled crime in Gezawa L.G.A ?
- 5) What are the measures to be taken to manage and control crime in Gezawa L.G.A. ?

### Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the contributions of vigilante groups in crime prevention and control in GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE.

The specific objectives are

- 1) To highlight the rate of crime in Gezawa L.G.A, Kano State.
- 2) To find out the extent a crime can be constitutes as a social problem in Gezawa L.G.A, Kano State.
- 3) To determine the extent vigilantism has help in controlling crime in Gezawa L.G.A, Kano State.
- 4) To find out the extent the Vigilante groups have controlled crime in Gezawa L.G.A, Kano State.
- 5) To find out measures the Vigilante groups would use in managing and controlling crime in Gezawa L.G.A, Kano State.

### Significance of the Study

This study has both theoretical and practical significance. From the theoretical point of view, this study will add to the existing literature on vigilantism. It will also build up a data upon which future research can be based or serve as a point of reference for similar studies.

From the practical point of view, this study will show the security gap created in both rural and urban communities and how vigilante groups have tended to make up for this vacuum. To this end, this may stimulate the interest of the government in providing adequate police services in both rural and urban communities or modify and assist vigilante groups to complement security efforts of the police.

In another development, this study will be of great benefit to law enforcement agencies and other stake holders in their quest for police reform. In general, it will stimulate further research in vigilantism and policing.

### Research Method

This paper has uses both primary and secondary data, the primary data has covered administering of Questionnaire and interview while the secondary data the research would review relevant data related the Vigilante groups, police operations and its challenges in Nigeria. The population of studies are People between the ages of 18 years and above resident in Gezawa were used as the population for the study. This is so because, constitutionally, 18years below are regarded as under age and therefore have no capacity for rational thinking. According to the National Population Census of 2006, Gezawa L.G.A has a population of 178,466 people. When projected to 2010 on the 2.5% annual growth rate, the population will be about 196,993.1 approximately. 120 respondents was selected while only 110 respondent of questionnaire was collected, interviews was conducted to the 3 Commandant's of Vigilant Groups, HOD Community Development of Gezawa LGA, representative of Nigeria Police Gezawa Division, Village Head of Gezawa and active

members of the Vigilante group from various units in Gezawa Local Government, Kano State.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **The Concept of Vigilantism**

The word vigilantism is of Spanish origin and means: “watchman” or “guard” but its Latin root is vigil, which means “awake” or “observe” (Johnston, 1996). According to Johnston, six elements of vigilant activity are

- A. Minimal planning, preparation or premeditation.
- B. Private agents acting in a voluntary capacity.
- C. Activity undertaken without the states authority or support.
- D. A reaction to the real or perceived transgression of institutionalized norms.
- E. Aims to offer people the assurance that established order will prevail.

According to Chambers 20th century dictionary, vigilantism is an authorized body which in the absence or inefficiency of regular government exercises power of arrest, punishment etc. Dumke, cited in Encyclopedia Americana (vol. 28:113-114) says that vigilante is the name given to self-appointed law enforcement groups who appeared from time to time on the American frontier and occasionally in older communities where established authority seemed unable to cope with lawlessness and disorder.

In Nigeria, the term vigilante is used loosely to refer to a range of different groups, each with different motives. The term has been applied to groups such as the Bakassi Boys, who were initially set up with the purpose of fighting crime without an explicit political agenda, as well as to others such as Odua People’s Congress (OPC), the Yoruba ethnic militia active in south west of Nigeria. The OPC was initially created to advocate for autonomy for the Yoruba people. However, from 1999, the OPC changed its fundamental objective of seeking self-determination for the Yoruba people to crime fighting activities and the settlement of personal disputes. In some of the Northern States in Nigeria, there are other groups known as Hisba groups referred to as vigilantes, which are used to monitor and enforce the observance of sharia laws. Some of them have administered instant punishments to those caught violating sharia law. (The legitimization of torture 2002, Ethnic militia groups of Nigeria) In GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT Area of KANO STATE, the term vigilante denotes a group of people formed by the members of the community to control and prevent crime due to the inability of the formal criminal justice system to bring the increasing crime wave in the local government under control.

### **Origin of Vigilantism**

As noted by Human Right Watch (HRW) and center for law enforcement and education (CLEEN), vigilantism and other self-defense groups currently operating in Nigeria have roots that reached deeply into the country’s history. Their study identified southeast (Igbo) states as the main areas where vigilante groups were predominant in the pre-colonial era. On the contrary and as the report from HRW and CLEEN testifies to, what we know is that the modern employment of vigilante groups in contemporary Nigeria is widespread and ranges beyond Igbo territory (legitimization of murder and torture. 2002).

The Nigeria police are ineffective and corrupt. This fact made the public skeptical about their ability to live up to expectations with respect to crime control. Harry Nwana’s account of the emergence of vigilantism in his home, part of Imo State was anchored on police collaboration and betrayal. According to him, “life was made unbearable by callous activities of armed



bandits. Then something intolerable happened warranting the community setting up local vigilante units. They were to stem the rise in crime, identify the criminals and involve at various crime in places like Minjibir, Gabasawa and Ringim which are all major cities neighboring Gezawa Communities . Before the members knew it, their anonymity was compromised and they were marked for elimination. It did not take a lot of investigation to learn that the culprits were local boys and that the police collaboration was part of their strength. All information placed at the disposal of the police about suspected dare devil, home based hoodlums were passed on to the men no any result. At this stage, a voice suggested and they employed the services of Yan Banga, (Vigilante Group) whose success in other communities had become remarkable. They went to work and well know hoodlums took notice and either fled or stayed at their own peril. In a short time, he continued, locking and bolting gates became only a matter of habit, nobody needed to”.... (Eke, 2002).

### **Vigilantism and the Public**

Public tolerance of vigilante group is very high. After suffering years of violent crime, abuse by the security forces, and government inaction, people appeared to have given up expecting the government or the police to provide protection or security. As center for law enforcement and education puts it, “when Bakassi Boys took on the task of fighting crime, they were hailed as heroes. The overwhelming feeling of many people was relief at being able to sleep with both eyes closed”. This is an indication that the emergence of Bakassi Boys in some eastern states of Nigeria was embraced by the public. The clause ‘being able to sleep with both eyes closed’ described post Bakassi era. (Eke, 2002). Indeed a sociology professor summed up the public attitude towards the Bakassi Boys and other vigilante groups: people tolerance of vigilante groups is very high even among reasonable people.

This general acceptance of vigilante groups has permeated many sectors of the economy. A judge in Anambra State described the situation in the following ways: “no one challenges the Bakassi, no one speaks up, and people just talk about execution as if it were something normal. Even the judiciary are accepting the Bakassi; even some lawyers don’t see what’s wrong”. (Eke, 2002).

Journalist have also glorified the vigilante methods. Some articles have verged on propaganda of fear surrounding their operations. In an article in post express on Sunday, a journalist who visited Bakassi Boys Headquarters in Aba wrote “today, Aba, has the lowest crime rate in Nigeria. While criminals, some of who were chased out of Aba by the ubiquitous Bakassi Boys has virtually over run the country, residents of Aba now enjoy luxury of sleeping with both eyes closed. Indeed, one could drop a valuable article at a street corner all day long without it shifting from its position. Woe betides anyone who touches what does not belong to him. No matter where he might run to, the Bakassi Boys will fish him out and punish him accordingly”. (Sept. 29, 2001).

### **Policing and Crime Prevention**

The involvement of private individuals in law enforcement processes in Nigeria has generated different reactions from different scholars. Policing and crime prevention are inseparable. The essence of policing is to prevent or control crime. Policing is all about ensuring the security of people who reside within a particular geographical location; with a common interest of protecting their lives and property and who have identified that certain acts are reprehensible to community well-being (Dambazau, 2007). Every society has rules and regulations that guide the conduct of individuals. Violation of these rules calls for punishment or sanction by the society. Thus, the need to enforce the rules and regulations in

the society gave rise to police. According to Roberg and Kuykendal (1993:53), “the history of police is the history of rule enforcement in a society, more particularly, the history of enforcement of those rules related to criminal behaviour”. Ried (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) has noted that “the history of policing began with informal policing in which all members of a community were responsible for maintaining order”. In other words, policing from the beginning of human history was carried out by private individuals, groups, associations and organizations in the private sector. Vigilantism is identified as one category of informal policing (Clockar, 1985).

However, as societies became more complex, these informal methods were not effective due to increased division of labour, a more heterogeneous population and lack of social solidarity. This led to a transitional type of policing like the watch system which existed in England and Colonial America. Because of the inability of the watch system to maintain law and prevent crime, modern types of policing emerged. Hence the first modern police force, the metropolitan police of London was founded in London in 1829 by sir Robert Peel. (Reid 5th ed.).

Prior to the onset of colonization by the British in 1862, African policing methods were rooted in the community and closely inter linked with social and religious structures. The enforcement of traditional customs and beliefs was carried out by community structures such as age grades, secrete societies or vocational guilds. Through these diffuse systems of crime control, law and order were maintained, largely without the use of violence. (Nigeria: rest in pieces, 2005). Policing in Nigeria prior to the advent of colonialism was necessarily informal. Age grades, masquerades, extended family, secret cults and other local organizations including vigilante groups were used in policing various communities in Nigeria” (Igbo, 1999; 2007).

The advent of British colonial rule Marked the beginning of formal policing in Nigeria. The Nigeria police force was finally founded in 1930 after undergoing many stages of transformation. It is important to note that the primary purpose of policing during this period was to promote the economic and political interest of the colonial masters. In many areas, the police engaged in the brutal subjugation of communities and the suppression of resistance to colonial rule (Nigeria: rest in pieces, 2005).

Dambazua (2007; 229-230) also noted that the essence of the British Colonial effort to establish police force in Nigeria was mainly for easy colonial administration in serving the colonial government interest and this formed the foundation of Nigeria Police today. One of the major functions of the Nigeria Police is the prevention of crime (Igbo, 1999, Igbo, 2007, Roberg and Kuykendall, 1993, Dambazau, 2007). Crime prevention has been defined as a pattern of attitudes and behaviours directed both at reducing the threat of crime and enhancing the sense of safety and security to positively influence the quality of life and to develop environment where crime cannot flourish (Dambazau, 2007).

It is a truism that one of the objectives of the police organization is crime prevention. It is also a truism that efficient policing depends on public cooperation and support. It is however sad to note that these cooperation and support from the public may be far from being achieved. Police brutality, corruption and criminality in the system have made worst the relationship existing between the police and the public. Talking about the relationship between the police and the public, US commission on civil rights cited in a journal: contemporary crises, law and social policy vol: II (1987) concluded “in 1970, the police subject Chicanos to unduly harsh treatment, including harassment and frequent arrests on

insufficient grounds for investigation. As a result, police are viewed as a source of tension and fear by many barrio residents, where police cannot be trusted, some other group must serve as protectors of the community”. In the Barrio, he continued, this role falls to the young men.

The network of police reforms in Nigeria (NOPRN), an organization that monitors the performance and activities of the police in the country in a report, Dec. 2007, confirmed that “the Nigeria police have become criminalized”. (This Day. Feb. 4, 2008) . According to the same source in an 18 page progress report on its year-long monitoring of over 400 police stations in 14 states and Abuja – the federal capital territory, NOPRN, claimed that police personnel involvement in killing, torture, extortion and rape have become a routine in Nigeria because the police shields its personnel from legal consequences from unlawful conduct. The report concluded that the Nigeria police are now a danger to public safety and security and the conduct of its personnel could be the cause of a major public and mortality emergency on a national scale. Thus, corruption and dishonesty were widespread, engendering a low level of public confidence, failure to report crime and tendencies to resort to self-help.

In the 1980s, serious crime grew to nearly epidemic proportion, particularly in Lagos and other urbanized area characterized by rapid growth and change, by inadequate government services and law enforcement capabilities. Published crime statistics were probably grossly understated because most of the countries were virtually unpoliced—the police were concentrated in urban areas where only about 25 percent of the population lived and lack of public confidence in the police contributed to the underreporting of crimes (global security, 2008).

For decades members of Nigeria police force seem to have betrayed their responsibility to protect Nigeria citizens and have instead preyed on them for economic gains. Indeed, the relationship between citizens and the police is very often characterized by confrontation and exploitation. A research conducted in 2000 by the center for law enforcement and education (CLEEN), a Lagos based NGO, found that the use of violence by the police against the citizens in Nigeria was widespread. Of 637 respondents to a survey carried out in 14 states, 14.8 percent said they had been beaten by the police 22.5 percent said that police had threatened to shoot them in the past and 62.7 percent said they had witnessed the police beating another person.

There is no doubt that the Nigeria police force is seen to be an unfriendly organization whose officers are generally high-handed and abrasive, always using their position to take unfair advantage of people in order to extort money from them. A glaring example is the killing by the police in Apo, Abuja of six young person’s falsely labeled armed robbers. Moreover, there is wide spread corruption among top police officers which is making it difficult for them to caution the rank and file. As reported by Thisday, (4 Feb., 2008:25), “there are currently about 36,000 personnel in the police and notwithstanding its large size, it has a centralized management, command and control structure which lacks both the will and capabilities to deliver policing resources to the points of need in the communities and thrives on diverting policing resources for private gain”

### **Crime Prevention Control by Vigilante Group**

For any crime to occur, three major factors must come together which are as follows

- ✓ An individual or group must have the desire or motivation to participate in a banned or prohibited behavior.



- ✓ At least some of the participants must have the skill and tool needed to commit the crime and
- ✓ An opportunity must be acted upon.

For prevention of crime to occur, these factors have to be worked upon to reduce them to the best minimum or of possible, eradicate them completely. An idle mind it is said is the criminal tendencies are gain fully employed and engaged the desire to present its self because they now have something to lose when crime occurs, they will not want to act upon it. Also, persons with criminal skills can be used to tackle crime. For example a rehabilitated drug addict or use instead of been allowed to go back to his or her old neighborhood to mingle with old partners can be employed, even on a temporary basis to other teach and enlighten against drug abuse or even as a spy or investigation to bust drug rings. Also, the use of community policing is one very novel and effective way of crime control and prevention. The police force is not numerically capable of being everywhere at all-time have the need then, members of the community to also participate in policing their environment prompt reporting of suspicious activities and characters in the neighborhoods is one just because you own house is not affected by the nefarious activities going on does not mean you keep silent about it for tomorrow, it might be your turn.

Knowing your neighbor or a new addition to the community is another way of preventing crime in the neighborhood. Because he or she has the money to afford the rent, then all is well. There is a need to know who the person is, where they are coming from, what they do for a living e.t.c. these details we terms as minor go a long way in letting us who we are telling into the neighborhood to be with our families and friends. Increasing the risk of crime and reducing it rewards are also ways of preventing crime for example, in a locality where uncompleted building abound surplus no vigilantes, no security light, and persons of questionable characters reside, there are risks in crime commitment because the environment is already a criminal know he or she has to pass through the stress of taking out the properties the event of property crime or a venue for personal crime because there are no hiding places, he or she is not at home because one is looking responsible and the criminal stands out a sore thumb in the environment they will be found out.

### **Preventive Methods of Crime by Vigilante Group**

Actually preventive measures are employed by the police or vigilante group to forestall or reduce the opportunity or avenue for committing crime this is in appreciation of the fact that it is cheaper to prevent crime than to detect it. The method usually employed includes:

- ✓ Feasible operational method of checking the menace of criminals.
- ✓ Surveillance on building and suspected criminal individuals. This method affords the police the motorized patrol and foot patrols including highway and border patrols. This remains the most opportunity to collate intelligence on criminals.
- ✓ Cultivation of information: - information is the key to all policing functional activities there is need to continuously gather intelligence reports about criminal individuals and associate receivers of loots operations. Information is vital and investigation must regard everyone they come in good act with as a potential source of information. Information received through this medium is useful in planning strategies to combat crime. Cultivating information is an essential part of police duty and this is achieved by building relationship as well as developing rapport with members of the public with good intention to assist the police , criminals in police custody and victims of criminals activities, every investigation has a moral professional and ethical obligation to safeguard the identity of

an informers. Failure to do this may result in death, injury, or intimidation for the informer and/ or his or her family. As a general rule an informer should not be exposed unless he or she has agreed (for example if he or she is willing to give evidence in court).

- ✓ Decoy methods are strategies employed by the police to destabilize the set plans of the criminals. This is sequel to intelligence gathered on the activities of the criminals and their preparedness to commit crime.
- ✓ Covert operations undertaken by the police to forestall criminal activities who are obviously of such operations until they are apprehended.
- ✓ Raiding of criminal hideouts to apprehend criminals and recover arms and ammunition.
- ✓ Arrest and interrogation of suspected criminals.
- ✓ Simulation of crime situation: the police create scenario by engaging in some activities aimed and selling dummies to criminals who mistakes such actions for real life situation and unwittingly expose their identities.

### **Detective Methods of Crime by Vigilante Group**

Crimes that escape police preventive networks are subjected to rigorous investigation by detectives are guided by the following principles:

1. Ensuring that investigations are thoroughly and exhaustively carried out.
2. Ensuring that the facts about a crime and carefully assembled and closely examined.
3. Ensuring that suspects are painstakingly questioned and their statement obtained.
4. Ensuring that witness statement is properly recorded.
5. Ensuring that exhibits are properly collected, labeled and safety kept.
6. Ensuring neat compilation of case files.
7. Taken the case to the appropriate security agency
8. Seeking legal advice where necessary.

### **Detective Operations of Crime by Police**

Vigilante crime detection is an important part of community security work. Every Vigilante organization has detective unit in its various commands. In Gezawa local government area of Kano city there is not less than 22 divisions of vigilante groups in various villages. This important division is charged with solving or clearing reporting crimes to the relevant security formations. Then after taken the suspect or vital information to the police its traditions of police tradition, a detective or investigator interviews the victim of the crime and any witnesses, collected evidence and processes the crime scene (searches the scene of a crime for physical evidence collects the evidence and forwards it to the police laboratory for analysis). The detective or investigator also conducts canvasses (searches of area for witnesses), interrogate possible suspects, arrests the alleged perpetrator and prepared the case with assistance of the district attorney or prosecution office for presentation in courts.

The detective generally begins an investigation upon receipt of an incident report (complaint report) prepared by the office who conducted the initial interview with the victim. The incident report contains identifying information regarding the victim details of the crime. As the detective begins the investigation, he or she maintains a file on the case using follow-up reports for each stage of the investigation. The incident report and the follow-up reports are generally placed in a case folder and serve as the official history of the crime and its investigation. The case folder is then used by the prosecution to prosecute the case in court. (To prosecute means to conduct criminal procedure in a court of law against a person accused of committing a criminal offence. The people performing this duty are generally called prosecutors, who are the police officers). This follows by the criminal case against Aminu Mai Shanu Vs Multi-System Architecture Company in June (2014) located at in between

Gezawa and Gabasawa local government area. The police officers Used surveillance in detecting the alleged criminal which follow up reports for each stage of the investigation.

### **Surveillance of Crime by Vigilante Groups**

Surveillance is one of the oldest ways of detecting criminal activity. This method is used by vigilante groups when it has an information that a crime will take place at a specific location or when certain people are suspected of criminal activity. When a vigilante group make a surveillance suspected that a crime is committed or about to take place they quickly reported to closest and relevant security formation for necessary action. The first situation is usually handled by fixed police observation known as a stakeout: The second circumstance may require mobile observation as well, perhaps on foot or by automobile. Some situation may call for aerial observation (using aircraft) or electronic procedure (using surveillance equipment that monitors electronic communication).

The observation method must be legal. Surveillance techniques, for example may include placing personnel in strategic locations and equipping them with optical aids, such as binoculars or scopes with the capacity to detect an object illuminated only by moonlight or with electronic devices, sensitive to a conversation taking place at a considerable distance.

### **Interrogation of Crime by Police**

Interrogation is purely a police work because it deals with some aspect some professionalism, the role of vigilante group is to report any crime case to relevant security formation and help them in collection of the witness. The information needed to further an investigation must be obtained from people who have some significant knowledge concerning the crime. Witnesses or victims are interviewed and suspects are interrogated. Eye witnesses to a crime to a crime are often asked to identify the perpetrator, although identification errors have prompted psychologist to explore the processes and pitfalls of memory, recall, and recognition. Experiments under controlled conditions indicate that jurors will convict four times as often if eyewitness testimony is offered, even when the visual activity of the witness is discredited. Interrogation is used when the information sought is not readily forthcoming, perhaps because of hostility or guilt. Often some key to the solution of a crime, such as the location of the weapon in a murder case is known only to the perpetrator. Without information provided by the suspects crime may go unsolved. Legal safe guard against abuse now surround this process before using any information obtained from an interrogation, the court must be assured that the suspect was advised of his or her right.

### **The Nigeria Police Force History and Structure**

The word police come from the Latin word "polita" which mean civil administration. the first body of public order officer to be named police in England was the name police after the English took the word "politia" from the French who took it over from the Greeks. The name police force was established in 1798 to protect merchandise in the part of London. The Nigeria police as we know it body pre-date to colonial rule. Before the coming of the White men, every society had its local vigilantes or law officers'. in the Igbo land, it was the masses. The Yoruba had the agunran while the northenaners had the dogara. the colonial administration created the native authority (NA) politician in the north while the west had the local authority the re-organization called yangadi or Kano city police force but the situation still allowed the dogara, to continue with the police force but situation still allowed the function, later after the adaptation of the system in Kaduna, yangadi were labelled yan-doka. In 1861 the consular guard, comprising of thirty (30) members was timed in Lagos colony which later transformed into the Hausa constabulary in 1878 while the Nigeria cost

constabulary was formed in cabala. In 1888, the royal Niger Company set up a constabulary in Ilo-Ilo after the formation of the protectorates in the north and south, both the royal. Niger Company and southern Nigeria police respectively. It was 1930, both the northern and southern were merged to form the Nigerian police force with its headquarters, in Lagos, in 1943, the Nigeria police act was enacted which gave it structure organization, the 1960 constitution established the Nigeria police force as a federal force changed either the responsibility of maintaining law and order throughout the nation but did not prevent the region from establishing their own local force hence the north retained their native authority while the west retained their local government authority, this dual system local forces and national police under 1966 after the first coup in Nigeria where major general J.J.U Aguiyi Ironsi became head of state. He set on Nigeria police, local government at the responsibility of the unit of the Nigeria police, local government, area and the infection of person. This was because the local been amongst other things as all qualified, poorly trained and behaved and used by politicians and traditional rulers as instrument of oppression.

After the death of major general Ironsi, general Yakubu Gowon consented the leadership of the country and on receiving the report of the panel of long way, accepted it and went ahead to implement the recommendation of the panel which led to the consolidation of the force. The Nigerian police is headed by the inspector general who is usually appointed by the president under the recommendation of the ministry of police affairs it is structured into department A- F. "A" department deals with general administration and the front to communications and transportation. This is when you find the mobile force and anti-terrorism, Airport, railway, and ports authority. "E" deal with training while "F" centre or research and planning.

There are presently twelve (12) zonal commands with headquarters in Kano, Lagos, Ibadan, Makurdi, Benin, Calabar, Abuja, Ilo-Ilo, Enugu, Sokoto, Oyo, and Bauchi.

### **Challenges of Nigerian Police Force in Crime Presentation**

Like every other thing these responsibilities are not carried out without done challenges. One of such challenges is the non-availability of proper welfare and facilities for the police force. It is not on hand for police personnel to be without recommendation for as long as two or three months. Where are they supposed to find from? Even when these salaries are paid how much are they? How is one expected to protect someone who lives in a mansion or their bedroom were on an air-conditioned flats while he or she is staying in a single room with their families? Or protecting a car when you don't even have a bicycle? How can one do it efficiently? You find a police man on patrol at night with only a torch light and stick? While he is expected to combat criminals with guns. These have contributed majorly to their lackadaisical attitude to work. There were cases of police men newly recruited who were asked to go to the market and purchase their complain which is a plague in almost every aspect of the Nigerian society did not spare the Nigeria police. The economic and financial crime commission in its 2014 annual report rated the Nigeria police force as the most corrupt establishment in Nigeria.

The collection of bribes at checking point monetary compensation to prevent or subvert justice, and unlawful detection of suspects for selfish gains has so eaten into the system that one is reminded of the early days when the police were used by traditional rulers and politicians as tools to oppress citizens. This has gone along way denting the image of the police in the public eyes this has given birth to another challenges of the Nigeria police which is the non-cooperation of the public with the police.

The society in general due to apathy towards the police fails to give them the necessary support which is needed to combat crime in any progressive society. All these challenges tend to hamper the proper efficiency of the police.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Social contract theory**

The major proponents of social contract theory are Thomas Hobbes, John lock and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The social contract is an agreement between the state and its citizens that spells out the relative rights and duties of both of them.

In the theory of social contract, Hobbes, pointed out that the citizens owe the sovereign absolute obedience in exchange for protection against domestic law violators (criminals or deviants) and foreign enemies. (International Encyclopedia of social sciences, vol. 13 and 14 :378–380). For Hobbes, order could be achieved if all citizens enter into a contract to surrender their individual powers to the sovereign in return for the protection of life and property.

On the other hand, lock suggested a minimal and irrevocable government anchored on natural laws. Rousseau on his own suggested a contract that is based on equality and democratic participation. This contract is based on “general will”. The general will relies on the coming together once a while of the entire democratic body, every citizen to reach a consensus on how to live together.

The social contract theory is said to have raised many fundamental questions about the nature and objective of government and what an ideal society should look like (Marshall, 1998). The social contract theory formed the theoretical framework of this study.

The main thrust of this theory is that the citizens and the sovereign (state) reached an agreement that spells out the rights and duties of each other: the citizens should surrender their individual powers to the state in exchange for the protection of life and property.

This theory was chosen for the study because in Nigeria, it is the responsibility of government to protect lives and property of citizens that obey the laws of the land by providing adequate security. Howbeit, Nigeria police who is the foremost state agent in the fight against crime seems to be understaffed and ineffective in many areas including Gezawa. As a result, individuals came together to establish their own security organization: vigilante groups. Thus, the people of various communities in Gezawa L.G.A collectively agreed to form vigilante groups and also fund them. Subsequent upon this, they made rules which must be followed by all in order to ensure that their lives and property are adequately protected.

**The respondents were asked to indicate whether vigilante groups exist in their locality**

**Table 1. Percentage distribution of respondents on the formation of vigilante groups in their locality**

| <b>Formation of vigilante groups</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                                  | 110              | 100%              |
| No                                   | Nil              | 0%                |
| <b>Total</b>                         | 110              | 100%              |
| Source: Field work 2018              |                  |                   |



Table 2, shows that 110 (100%) respondents that duly completed the questionnaires accepted that vigilante groups exist in their locality. Their views agreed with the current trend in literature as exemplified by the views of Eke, 2002 in a critical review of the HRW and CLEEN report. He maintained that the modern employment of vigilante groups in Nigeria is wide spread.

The respondents were asked to assess the rate of crime in their community before the formation of vigilante groups in its current form

**Table 2. Percentage distribution of respondents on assessment of crime rate in their community before current vigilantism**

| Rate of crime before current vigilantism | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| High                                     | 67        | 74.06%     |
| Low                                      | 23        | 21%        |
| Normal                                   | 17        | 15.4%      |
| Don't know                               | 3         | 3%         |
| <b>Total</b>                             | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018                  |           |            |

The crime rate has been 74.06% before the advent of vigilantism in the Gezawa communities which raised the need for community security establishment

**Table 3. Percentage distribution of respondents on assessment of crime rate in their community after the formation of vigilante groups in its current form**

| Crime rate after current vigilantism | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| High                                 | 10        | 9.9%       |
| Low                                  | 76        | 69%        |
| Normal                               | 15        | 14%        |
| Don't know                           | 9         | 8.1 %      |
| <b>Total</b>                         | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018              |           |            |

The formations of vigilante group in various communities in Gezawa LGA has led to the reduction of crime with 69% this signified the benefit of its formation in crime management and control.

The respondents were asked what crime was prevalent in their area

**Table 4. Percentage distribution of respondents on prevalent crime in their area**

| Prevalent crime         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Armed robbery           | 79        | 72%        |
| Murder                  | 8         | 7.2%       |
| Burglary                | 11        | 10%        |
| Rape                    | 5         | 4.5%       |
| Other                   | 7         | 6.3%       |
| <b>Total</b>            | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018 |           |            |

The above table 4, shows the availability of armed robbery cases with 72% because Gezawa Local Government has a major roads linking to important states of Jigawa and Yobe that make criminals block roads for collect properties, injured or kill several innocent peoples using the roads.

**The respondents were asked the period crime usually occur in their area**

**Table 5. Percentage distribution of respondents on time of occurrence of crime in their area**

| Time of occurrence      | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Morning                 | 12        | 22.7%      |
| Afternoon               | 5         | 15.2%      |
| Night                   | 93        | 62.1%      |
| Total                   | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018 |           |            |

The above table 5, has indicated that most of the crime occurs in the night with 62.1% while it least happen in the afternoon with 15.2%. This shows the time of crime occurrences in the study area.

**Table 6. Percentage distribution of respondents on what they think is responsible for crime in their community**

| Causes of crime         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Poverty                 | 16        | 14.5%      |
| Unemployment            | 15        | 13.6%      |
| Bad company             | 59        | 54%        |
| Youth taking hard drugs | 20        | 18.1%      |
| Total                   | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018 |           |            |

With the reason of the youth joining crime in the study area problems which indicated bad company with 54% while youth whose take drugs engage in crime 18.1%.

**The respondents were asked how often they see police in their community**

**Table 7. Percentage distribution of respondents on how they rate police performance in controlling crime in their area**

| Police performance      | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent               | 2         | 1.8%       |
| V. Good                 | 5         | 4.5%       |
| Fair                    | 20        | %          |
| Poor                    | 83        | 73.9%      |
| Total                   | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018 |           |            |

The above table 7; has shown the performance of police in crime control with 73% rating Police poorly with little efforts from security formations in the study area.

The respondents were asked what they think led to the formation of vigilante groups in its current form in their area

**Table 8. Percentage distribution of respondents on what they think led to the formation of vigilante groups in its current form in their community**

| Present vigilante groups   | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Police ineffectiveness     | 75        | 68.0%      |
| Lack of presence of police | 20        | 18.0%      |
| Increasing crime wave      | 13        | 12%        |
| Don't know                 | 2         | 2%         |
| Total                      | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018    |           |            |

The above table 8: indicate to us the reason for the formations of vigilante group was the police ineffectiveness in managing crime in the study area with 68% and lack of presence of police with 18%.

The respondents were asked to rate the performance of vigilante groups in crime control in their community

**Table 9. Percentage distribution of respondents on how they rate the performance of vigilante groups in their area**

| Vigilante groups performance | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent                    | 20        | 18.1%      |
| V. good                      | 65        | 59%        |
| Fair                         | 10        | 9%         |
| Poor                         | 15        | 14%        |
| Total                        | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018      |           |            |

The above table 9: has indicate to us the performance of vigilante group with 59% which shows good performance of vigilante group performance in crime control and management.

The respondents were asked whom they think should be given the responsibility of crime control in their community

**Table 10. Percentage distribution of respondents on whom they think should be given the responsibility of controlling crime in their area**

| Controlling crime       | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Police                  | 40        | 36.3%      |
| Vigilante group         | 58        | 52%        |
| Village chief           | 2         | 1.8%       |
| Don't know              | 0         | 0          |
| Total                   | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018 |           |            |

Table 10: This shows the respondent indicate that vigilant groups should be left with securing local communities with because they are the residence of the local areas and has interest of policing their communities, while police has 36.3 % this shows the responsibilities of securing peoples should left with Nigerian police because of the training they obtain.

The respondents were asked the best way of solving the problem of crime in Nigeria

**Table 11. Percentage distribution of respondents on the best way of solving the problem of crime in Nigeria**

| Solving crime problem   | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Increasing the number of policemen  | 42        | 38.1%      |
| Increasing the activities of Vigilante group through improve training and provision | 58        | 53%        |
| Providing equipment to police   | 10        | 9%         |
| Enhancing police cooperation  | 0         | 0          |
| <b>Total</b>  | 110       | 100%       |
| Source: Field work 2018   |           |            |

Table 12: This shows the vigilante groups with 53% which need to be improved in terms of training, provision of working tools and effective working collaboration with other security formations.

### Three hypotheses were tested

#### Hypothesis 1

The formation of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A, has significantly related to people's perception of the role of police in crime control in the area.

To test this hypothesis, variables such as what the respondents think led to the formation of vigilante groups in its current form in their area and their rating of police performance completed by the respondents were cross tabulated.

**Table 12. Distribution of respondents by rate of police performance and cause of formation of vigilante groups in its current form**

| Rate Police Performance | Cause of Formation of vigilante groups |                         |                       |            |        |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|
|                         | Police ineffectiveness                 | Lack of police presence | Increasing crime wave | Don't know | Total  |
| Excellent               | 0.0%                                   | 10.5%                   | 10.4%                 | 0.0%       | 21.8%  |
| V. Good                 | 42.6%                                  | 20.1%                   | 18.6%                 | 0%         | 44%    |
| Fair                    | 48.3%                                  | 50.2%                   | 18.6%                 | 0%         | 27.2%  |
| Poor                    | 52.6%                                  | 56.4%                   | 56.8%                 | 0%         | 0      |
| Total                   | 56.1%                                  | 20.1%                   | 34.1%                 | 0.1%       | 110.1% |
| Source: Field work 2018 |  |                         |                       |            |        |

$$X^2=75.1; df=9; p= \leq 0.05; c=16.919$$

$$X^2 \text{ calculated} = 75.1$$

$$X^2 \text{ critical} (0.05,9) =16.919$$

## Conclusion

With the  $X^2$  calculated (75.1) greater than the  $X^2$  critical value (16.919) at 0.05 level of significant, we accept the alternative hypothesis which states that the formation of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A. is significantly related to people's perception of the role of police in crime control in the area.

This is in agreement with the submission by communities in Gezawa (2001); "The apparent failure of the Nigerian Police to control the increasing wave of crime has led to unilateral public action against crime and criminals in some major cities in Nigeria".

## Hypothesis 2

There is a significant relationship between people's level of education and their reliance on vigilante services in Gezawa L.G.A.

To test this hypothesis, variables such as educational attainment completed by the respondents and their rating of the performance of vigilante groups in controlling crime were cross tabulated. They are items 4 and 20 of the questionnaire respectively.

**Table 13. Distribution of respondents on reliance on vigilante groups by education**

| Education Attainment    | Rating of vigilante groups |          |            |         |          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------|------------|---------|----------|
|                         | Excellent                  | V. good  | Fair       | Poor    | Total    |
| No school               | 20 16.7%                   | 30 14.6% | 44 13.8%   | 2 12.5% | 30 27.2% |
| Elementary              | 34 28.3%                   | 60 29.1% | 88 27.7%   | 5 31.2% | 12 10.9% |
| Secondary school        | 56 46.7%                   | 90 43.7% | 12 138.0 % | 4 25%   | 50 45.4% |
| NCE/HND                 | 8 6.7%                     | 19 9.2%  | 46 14.5%   | 3 18.2% | 10 9.0%  |
| First degree and above  | 2 1.6%                     | 7 3.4%   | 19 6.0%    | 2 12.5% | 8 7.2%   |
| Total                   | 32 100%                    | 48 100%  | 20 100%    | 10 100% | 110 100% |
| Source: Field work 2018 |                            |          |            |         |          |

$$X^2=17.7; df = 12; p \leq 0.05; c=21.026$$

$$X^2 \text{ Calculated} = 17.7$$

$$X^2 \text{ critical } (0.05, 12) = 21.026$$

## Conclusion

With the calculated  $X^2$  (17.7) less than the critical  $X^2$  value (21.026) at 0.05 level of significance, we reject the alternative hypothesis (H1) which holds that there is a significance relationship between people's level of education and their reliance on vigilante services in Gezawa L.G.A. The researcher then concludes that reliance on vigilante services does not depend on one's education in Gezawa L.G.A.

## Hypothesis 3

"There is a significant relationship between people's occupation and their perceived effectiveness of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A." To test this hypothesis, respondents occupation and their rating of vigilante groups performance were cross tabulated. Items 5 and 20 of the questionnaire were used. See Table 14 below.



**Table 14. Distribution of respondents on rating of vigilante groups performance on crime control by occupation**

| Occupation              | Rating of vigilante groups performance |         |         |        |          |
|-------------------------|--|---------|---------|--------|----------|
|                         | Excellent                              | V. good | Fair    | Poor   | Total    |
| Student                 | 46 38.3%                               | 9747.1% | 6119.2% | 318.8% | 4731.4%  |
| Farming                 | 86.7%                                  | 115.3%  | 237.2%  | 16.2%  | 436.5%   |
| Trading                 | 58 48.3%                               | 8641.8% | 5644.3% | 637.5% | 3944.1%  |
| Civil Servant           | 54.2%                                  | 83.9%   | 8225.8% | 425.0% | 6015.0%  |
| Professional            | 32.5%                                  | 41.9%   | 113.5%  | 9.5%   | 203.0%   |
| Total                   | 54100%                                 | 30100%  | 20100%  | 6100%  | 110 100% |
| Source: Field work 2018 |  |         |         |        |          |

$$X^2=92.5; df = 12; P \leq 0.05; C=21.026$$

$$X^2 \text{ Calculated} = 92.5$$

$$X^2 = \text{critical} (0.05, 12) = 21.026$$

### Conclusion

With the calculated  $X^2$  (92.5) greater than the critical  $X^2$  value (21.026) at 0.05 level of significance, we accept the alternative hypothesis which holds that “there is a significant relationship between people’s occupation and their perceived effectiveness of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G. A. The researcher then concludes that perceived effectiveness of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A is related to one’s occupation.

### Qualitative analysis

This part of data analysis deals with the interview schedules. Vigilant group members, traditional rulers, chairman of Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group and chairman of vigilante monitoring group were interviewed to illicit information from them on crime, their mode of operation, their relationship with the police and their relationship with the public.

Semi-structured interview was the second instrument used in collecting data. The two interview schedules were used for vigilante group members and traditional rulers, chairman of Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group and chairman of vigilante monitoring group respectively. Each of the interview schedules was analyzed as follows:

### Analysis of interview conducted with members of vigilante groups

The interview was conducted with four (4) group leaders of vigilante groups and twenty ordinary members in Gezawa.

#### Personal data:

**Sex:** All members of vigilante groups interviewed are males.

**Age:** The age range of members interviewed is 20 – 40 years

**Marital status:** Eighteen (18) of them were married while six (6) of them were not married.

**Educational Qualification:** Three of the interviewees held NCE. The remaining twenty one held either TC 2 or SSCE.

**Grade:** four vigilante group leader and twenty ordinary members were interviewed.

### **Issues on vigilantism and crime control**

#### **Assessment of crime rate before and after the formation of vigilante groups in its current form**

The interviewees were of the opinion that crime rate was on the increase before the current vigilantism. They however said that crime started to decrease after the formation of current vigilantism. In any case, one would expect such response from them since the impression they were creating was that they were doing a nice job.

#### **Whether increasing crime wave constitutes a social problem**

On this issue, there was a consensus among the interviewees that crime constitutes a serious social problems. They mentioned loss of lives and property, disruption of business activities, sleepless night as some of the problems caused by increasing crime wave.

#### **Cause of vigilantism in its current form**

There was also consensus among the interviewees that vigilantism in its current form started as a result of increasing crime wave in Gezawa L.G.A and inability of the Nigerian Police to checkmate it. In their opinion the police men in Gezawa L.G.A were collaborating with the criminals to perpetuate crime.

#### **Types of weapon used**

They mentioned automatic double barrels, matches , koboko, torch light, rope and whistle as the weapons they use. On further enquiry, they stated that certain crime requires giving the culprits some latches of koboko or tying him or her with rope. This findings suggest that severe punishment is part and parcel of their crime control strategy.

#### **Time for reporting to and closing from office**

The vigilante group members that were interviewed said that they reported to their duty post between 9–9.30 pm and closed between 5.30–6 am except two of them who were members of Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group who claimed that they work round the clock (24 ) hours daily. The finding suggests that vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A work mainly at night.

#### **Financing of vigilante group members**

With the exception of two interviewees who were members of Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group, the others said that they were financed by their communities. According to them, each village was grouped according to families and men kept vigil in turn. However, they said that men above 45 years and some other persons who were engaged in essential duties paid some amount of money for the upkeep of the guards in terms of provision of torch lights, battery, cutlasses, double barrels, whistle etc. They however said that they were not paid anything since each male member of the community contributed to vigilantism in one way or the other. This finding affirms the opinion of majority of community members who held that the members of the community formed and financed vigilante groups.

The two members from Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group interviewed said that they were financed by the local government authority in addition to the money they collected from business men and women as part of the payment they make for security.

#### **Their relationship with police**

Most of the vigilante group members interviewed agreed that they had cordial relationship with police. They held that the Nigeria police force inaugurated them and when arrests were made, the offenders were handed over to the police for prosecution.

This finding agrees with the opinion of most community members who held that the relationship between the police and vigilante groups was cordial.

### **Whom they are working for**

Most of the vigilante group members interviewed said that they were working for the community. The other two members from Gezawa L.G.A vigilante group said that they were working for the Local, Communities. This finding suggests that vigilante group members worked for the interest of members of the community

### **Major problems in the performance of their functions**

Vigilante group members interviewed pointed out that lack of fire arms, poor funding, lack of patrol vehicle were among the major problems confronting them. The above finding suggests that vigilante group members were confronted with some major problems which affected their operation in a negative way.

### **How best can the problem of crime in Nigeria be solved**

While some members of vigilante groups were of the opinion that the problem of crime in Nigeria could be solved by providing employment opportunities to our youth, others believed that the vigilante groups should be funded properly and also giving incentives to enable them combat crime adequately and effectively. This finding suggests that the problem of crime could be solved through provision of employment to our youth and proper funding and incentives to the vigilante groups.

### **Summary**

The aim of this study was to examine the contributions of vigilante groups in crime control in Gezawa L.G.A. of KANO STATE. This is as a result of the proliferation of vigilante groups in contemporary Nigeria and the controversy surrounding its existence.

Three hypotheses were adopted for the study. The target population was people who were aged between 18 and above, resident in Gezawa L.G.A. A sample size of 720 respondents was constituted through multi-stage, cluster and simple random sampling methods.

Questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedules were the other instruments of data collection used in this study. The questionnaire was used to collect data from members of the community while interview schedules were used to collect qualitative data from traditional rulers, chairman of GEZAWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT vigilante group, chairman of vigilante monitoring group and some vigilante group members. Data presentation was done through the use of tables and percentages while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses.

### **The followings are some of the major findings**

- i. Vigilante groups exist in various communities in Gezawa L.G.A
- ii. The rate of crime was high before the formation of vigilante groups in its formation
- iii. The rate of crime was low after the formation of vigilante groups.
- iv. Armed robbery and burglary were crimes committed frequently
- v. Increasing crime rate led to loss of life and property as well as disruption of business activities and sleepless night.
- vi. Police in Gezawa L.G.A had performed poorly.
- vii. Increasing crime wave and police ineffectiveness led to the formation of vigilante groups in its current form.
- viii. Vigilante groups were perceived to be effective in controlling crime.

- ix. Community members believed that vigilante groups should be given the responsibility to control crime.
- x. The formation of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A is significantly related to people's perception of the role of police in crime control in the area.
- xi. There is no significant relationship between people's level of education and their reliance on vigilante services in Gezawa L.G.A.
- xii. There is a significant relationship between people's occupation and their perceived effectiveness of vigilante groups in Gezawa L.G.A.

Difficult terrain, illiteracy on the part of some respondents were some of the problems encountered by the researcher in the course of this study.

### **Conclusion**

The main objective of this study was to examine the impact of vigilante groups on crime control in Gezawa L.G.A of KANO STATE. The proliferation of vigilante groups in contemporary Nigeria and the controversy surrounding its existence necessitated this study. The data collected indicated that vigilante groups exist in Gezawa L.G.A. It also showed that the rate of crime was high before the formation of vigilante groups in its current form. However crime rate was low after the formation of vigilante groups. It was also discovered that high rate of crime and police ineffectiveness led to the formation of vigilante groups in its current form. More so, vigilante groups were perceived to be effective in crime control. So, community members believed that vigilante groups should be given the responsibility to control crime and so on.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made

- 1) Vigilante activities should be carried out by well trained, able bodied persons recruited from the community with support of conventional security formations.
- 2) State government should encourage vigilante activities. Incentives and adequate logistics should be made available to vigilante groups. This is to ensure effectiveness in their operation.
- 3) To enhance the relationship between the police and vigilante groups, there should be adequate legislative frame work for the operation of vigilante groups.
- 4) Vigilante group members should be trained in aspects of crime detection and knowledge of the law. This is to enable them to operate within the provision of the law.
- 5) Security committees should be set up at the Local Government level and should also be headed by the Divisional Police Officer (D.P.O.). The committees should organize periodic meetings to discuss security issues.
- 6) Finally, the researcher recommends that further research be carried out on vigilante group, joint Police/Army Patrol and Law Enforcement in Nigeria.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### **References**

1. Adler, F. Muller, G.O.W. and Laufer, W.S. 1998. Criminology. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Bosten: Mcgraw Hill.
2. Bruce, D. and Komane, J. 1999. Taxis, cops and vigilantes: police attitudes towards street justice. Crime and Conflict, 17: 39-44.

3. Dambazau, A.B. 2007. Criminology and criminal justice. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Ibadan, Nigeria. Spectrum Books Ltd.
4. Eke, P.P. 2002. A review of HRW's and CLEEN's report: the legitimization of murder and torture on state sponsored vigilante groups in Nigeria. Retrieved Nov, 21, 2007 from <http://www.africaresource.com/content/view/35/68>
5. Encyclopedia Americana, vol. 24, International edition, first published in 1829.
6. Encyclopedia Americana, vol. 28, international edition, first published in 1829.
7. Ethnic militia groups of Nigerian societies. Retrieved Sept. 15, 2007 from <http://www.nigeriafirst.org/printer-406.shtml>.
8. Global security. Retrieved Jan. 21, 2008 from: <http://www.gobalsecurity.org/inte//world/nigeria/npf.htm>.
9. Harris, B. 2001. As for Violent Crime that's our Daily Bread": Vigilante violence during South Africa's period of transition. Violence and Transition Series, Volume 1, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.
10. Haysom, N. 1986. Mabagala: The rise of right wing vigilantes in south African. Occasional paper 10, university of witwater sand, center for applied legal studies.
11. Igbo, E.U.M. 2001. In Issues in Urban Administration in Nigeria. Jamoe Enterprises Nigeria.
12. Igbo, E.U.M. 2007. Introduction to Criminology. Nsukka, Afro-Orbis Publication Ltd.
13. International Encyclopedia of the social sciences vol. 13 & 14 David, L.S (Ed.) Simon and Schuster Macmillan, New York.
14. Johnston, L. 1996. What is vigilantism?. The British Journal of Criminology, 36(2), 220-236.
15. Kirkpatrick, E.M. and Schwarz, C.M. (Eds.). 1983. Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary. Edinburgh: Chambers.
16. Klockars, C.B. 1985. The Idea of Police (Law and criminal justice series; V. 3).
17. Lea, J. 1987. Left realism: A defence. Contemporary Crises, 11(4): 357-370.
18. Marshal, G. 1998. Oxford Dictionary of sociology. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Oxford University press.
19. Minnar, A. 1999. The new vigilantism in post-April, 1994 South Africa: Crime prevention or an expression of lawlessness?: A paper Presented at CRIMSA international conference, crime prevention in the new millennium, Arendsnes, Cintga East London, 25-28 pp.
20. National Population Commission, census 2006, KANO STATE, Abuja: N.P.C.
21. Nigeria "Rest in pieces": IV, Background: attitudes towards policing: History of policing in pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria. Retrieved Feb. 14, 2008 from <http://www.org/reports/2005/nigeria705/4.htm>.
22. Nigeria Amnesty international urges ban on vigilantes. Retrieved Sept. 15, 2007 from <http://www.irinnews.org>.
23. Obikeze, D.S. 1990. Methods of data analysis in the social and behavioural sciences. Enugu: Auto-Century Publishing Company Limited.



24. Post Express, Saturday, Sept. 29, 2001.
25. Reid, S.T. 1988. Crime and Criminology, Holt, Rinehart and Winton. Inc, New York, 100.
26. Response to information requests (RIPs). Retrieved Jan. 21, 2008 from <http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/rir/?action=record>.
27. Roberg, R.R. and Kuykendall, J. 1993. Police and society, wadsworth publishing company, Belmont califonia.
28. The Star, Sunday, Jan. 17, 1999.
29. The Legitimization of Murder and Torture. Retrieved Jan. 21, 2008 from <http://www.org/report/2002/nigeria2/nigeria0502-02.htm>.

**Citation:** Jibrin Ubale Yahaya and Musa Mohammed Bello. 2019. The Impact of Vigilantism and Crime Control in Contemporary Nigeria: A Case Study of Gezawa Local Government Area, Kano State, Nigeria (2010-2015). International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research, 3(1): 115-138.

**Copyright:** ©2019 Jibrin Ubale Yahaya and Musa Mohammed Bello. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.