TOWARDS THE PEACEFUL UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES IN NIGERIA: URGENT CALL FOR STRATEGICALLY-TRAINED AND PROFESSIONAL SECURITY OFFICERS

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ABSTRACT: *Maintenance of campus security situations in Nigerian universities today has remained a major challenge to higher education administrators for decades. Security threats to our various university campuses are either from internal or external forces as the incessant occurrence of the menace has conspicuously exposed the incompetence of existing security officers in our various universities. However, poor management, cult killings, students' riots, gang-raping, student-staff impasse, terrorism, kidnapping for ransom, religious crises, student's invasion from other schools, assassinations, holding lecturers/university staff hostage, stealing and armed robbery among others constitute the challenging insecurity in Nigerian universities. The study examines the various security threats bedeviling the peaceful learning process and smooth administration of universities; assesses the concerted efforts of the university managements and security operatives in combating the menace. The study concludes that, lack of adequate intelligence gathering, incompetence on the part of university security officers, corruption, senility and negligence of duty and lack of strategic security training among others remain the factors hindering the total arrest of the menace in the various university campuses. It also requests the need for security tips from members of staff; continual strategic and tactical training to be conducted, adequate security intelligence gathering by the university security officers, to halt the menace.*

KEYWORDS: Security, Security Intelligence, University Administration, Tactical Training, Peaceful Campus, University Campus, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

For over two decades to date, it is observed that there is persistent insecurity in our university institutions in Nigeria, hence the need to combat it by making the campus security personnel to be more tactical, pro-active and professional in campus security management. It is no more an exaggeration that insecurity has taken several dimensions in several institutions of higher learning in Nigeria while the strategies of tackling it remains one of the major qualifications through which a new university management is inaugurated (Ahamefula, 2013). The onerous

focus of this paper is to develop some workable strategies to degrade, decimate and ultimately root out all forms of insecurity from the university campuses in Nigeria.

A University is a highly developed community. The University of Lagos Strategic Planning Committee 2002, described University as "a community of scholars all of whom are in continuous learning process". The University has an inalienable right, indeed a responsibility, to protect itself, the numerous students entrusted in its care, staff and other internal and external customers who visit the universities from all forms of dangers that assail the institutions daily as a matter of course (Ajayi, 2014). This is where security comes into play. University campus as we all know is a small city with students as its own citizens. However, unlike the deployment and use of police force and security personnel in a state, the university management limits its own security officers and a very few policemen who most of the time do not wield arms and weapons, to its premises. This is due to the fact that students in Nigerian university campuses are left vulnerable to the threat of criminal-minded individuals (Ayodele, 2012:34).

Safety, however, remains the goal of every man on earth. In everything human beings pursue, they do so in order to enjoy safety at present or in the future (Abiodun, Adeyekun, Onafowora and Nwannenaya, 2018). The greatest fear of every man is that his immediate environment is no longer safe or secured for him; he is always at risk. If this remains the phobia of Nigerian students on school campuses, then there is a serious problem for us to solve. There are numerous security threats in our university campuses today ranging from; cult activities, gang-raping of female students, kidnapping for ransom, students' riots, religious mayhem, stealing, assassinations, and money rituals among others (Abiodun etal, 2018). All these problems have seriously proved a major concern for every security officer on university campus. For instance, cultists possess, in many cases more deadly arms and weapons than university security personnel to the extent that many of those cult groups engage supernatural powers in their nefarious activities. They also use hard drugs and could behave in irrational manners while under the influence (Abiodun and Nwannenaya, 2017).

Besides, female students develop the fear of moving around when it is dark on campus to avoid being gange- raped, robbed of their items or being caught up by cult boys. The various cases of theft in hostel rooms and armed robbery have also revealed that the campuses are not secure any longer. Stealing and poaching of items in various hostel rooms have remained a rising tradition despite efforts of the Student Union Security Committees and that of University Security (Ahamefula, 2013). It is established that majority of students in Nigerian universities are youth falling within the ages of 15 and 30 years. During this stage of life, they develop a thirst for youth adventure; indulging in cult activities, prostitution, smoking, come under the influence of drugs and form bad gangs. At the same time, it is observed that there is annual teeming population of students admitted into our universities nowadays, thereby increasing the existing students' population (Ayodele, 2012). As a result of this, there is need for adequate security beef-up on campuses to checkmate all criminal acts and behaviours of students. The security situation in the nation spills over into our various institutions of higher learning.

Therefore, when the Nigerians are not safe in their own domains, the university campuses would never be safe as well and this calls for urgent attention and training of university security personnel to be more pro-active, tactical and professional in handling the security on campus (Oni, 2016). Now, the major question to ask is "who is to be held responsible for the

insecurity on our campuses; is it the student, university management, university security officers or the Nigerian government? The paper examines the sources and consequences of insecurity in the University of Ibadan campus and other Nigerian universities at large while insecurity and dysfunctional tertiary education system are presumed to be consequences of the menace.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is predicated within the confines of Structural Functionalism.

Structural functionalism is one of the classical or traditional theories propounded by August Comte, a Sociologist in 1868 while it was promoted in the works of Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parson, Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton respectively. The central paradigm of the theory is that within human society, the following structures exist: politics, economy, religion, education, industry, technology, social order and working together in an interrelated and interdependent manner to promote security, solidarity and societal safety and stability (Ngwama, 2014). Historically, Functionalists compare society with a living organism and drew analogy between them. Just the way a living organism, whose parts work together for its survival, the society in the same manner has various parts which enable it to meet its needs towards security and survival (Ibid). These parts are regarded as social institutions which are strongly related to the structures mentioned above and they perform specific functions towards maintaining the whole. The roles manifest and they have continued to hold and secure the society together (Merton, 1938).

Applying the tenet of the theory to the theme of discourse, security is regarded as a sub-unit of the social control institution and human society and that affords a section of the society "functional prerequisites" for the survival of its members and protecting them from extinction (Ngwama, 2014). The role discrepancy and obligations of the security agencies created to checkmate insecurity could be looked at in two forms. One, violent conflicts that lead to insecurity could be theft on university campus, assassinations, cultism, rape, kidnapping, religious tensions, terrorism among others provide illegitimate opportunities for those who indulge in them (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Secondly, it creates means of career development for security personnel and their agencies in the society. The University security officers are employed to maintain law and order and as well provide adequate security for all students and members staff with protection of property but they fail in their duties due to lack of dedication and cohesion (Anderson and Taylor, 2006). Therefore, the manifest roles of these university security officers are conspicuously neglected due to certain factors among them while the insecurity that emanated from this act has prompted all sorts of criminal behaviours on our university campuses (Haralambos and Oputeh, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

The method adopted in the study is content analysis, using mainly secondary data. The secondary data employed include existing literature on the topic such as internet, books, journals, newspapers, magazines, conference papers and annual research reports in the libraries of selected federal, state and private universities in Nigeria.

What do we mean by Security?

The political, economic and social systems of a country create the conditions for security and insecurity. Security remains a necessary pre-condition for the development of human beings and society. Therefore, security is the most basic need of human beings and societies (Abiodun, 2016). Recognizing the significance of security as the pre-condition for survival of the Nigerian people and nation, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided in section 14 (1) (b) that *"the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government"*. The duty conferred on the government by this provision has not been substantially and substantively discharged as the prevailing high level of human insecurity in the country demonstrates. Security is, generally taken to mean the condition or situation of enjoying safety, protection and preservation of core values and absence of threats to such values (Pogoson, 2013). It also means freedom from danger of from threats to nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests (Imobighe, 1990). Security is very crucial to the survival of any nation-state and without adequate security of lives and property, our society will remain a Hobbesian state of nature manifesting chaos, lawlessness and total annihilation. This is the reason security is affirmed to be a changing or dynamic situation which involves the capability of a state to counter threats posed to its sustenance (Abiodun, 2016:45).

Security is a major human need; it is paramount so much that absence of it will render people ineffective in spheres of life. Abraham Maslow in his classical work on human needs ranked safety/security as second (next to physiological needs) in the hierarchy of human needs. Traditionally, security of lives and property is the exclusive preserve of the state but the dynamics of the world today has clearly revealed that security is the responsibility of all (Abolurin, 2014). The term security is used in different ways in different contexts. Security may be conceived as protection from danger, violence, fear, and want that impair, or capable of impairing the full development and existential wellbeing of citizens. Security implies the absence of fear and want. Until recently, security was conceived in both academic literature and government policies in narrow and state-centric terms as the protection of a nation from foreign aggression and internal insurrection (Barney, 2009:134). As a result, the armed forces, police and intelligence agencies were seen as the primary tools for preserving national sovereignty against foreign aggression and defending domestic regime and government. This narrow and state-centric conception of security has become anachronistic (Barney, 2009).

Since the 1980s, the conceptions of security and contingent laws, policies and decisions have been widened. There are objective and subjective dimensions of security. The objective dimension is the extent of security or insecurity of individuals, families, communities, classes, societies, nations and humanity. Subjective dimension of security pertains to feeling of security or insecurity by individuals, groups and nations (Barney, ibid). Both dimensions are interrelated.

Dimensions of insecurity

Insecurity can also be classified into several dimensions. The most significant dimensions are:

a. Physical insecurity – violent personal and property crimes,

b. Public insecurity - violent conflicts, insurgency and terrorism

c. Economic insecurity – poverty, unemployment,

d. Social insecurity - illiteracy, ignorance, diseases or illnesses, malnutrition; water borne diseases, discrimination and exclusion,

e. Human rights violations - denial of fundamental rights by state and non-state actors in different stated,

f. Political insecurity – denial of good and social democratic governance

These dimensions of security are interwoven and cannot be treated in strict isolation.

Anan (1998: 13) argued that: Today we know that "security" means far more than the absence of conflict. We know that lasting peace requires a broader vision encompassing areas such as education, health, democracy and human rights, protection against environmental degradation and the proliferation of deadly weapons. We know that we cannot be secure amidst starvation, that we cannot build peace without alleviating poverty, and that we cannot build freedom on the foundations of injustice. These pillars of what we now understand as the people-centered concept of human security are interrelated and mutually reinforcing (Anan, 1998).

In the same veins, McNamara (1998:127) submitted that security is not just military hard ware though it may involve it; security is also not traditional military activity, though it may include it. That is why he acceded to the fact that security is development and without development, there can be no security in a state. This remains the modern thought on national security architecture that has been embraced by a retinue of scholars: Imobighe (1998); Nnoli (2006); Alli (2010) and Ngwana (2014) respectively. The concept of national security has changed and now people and development-oriented. In addition, national security is human security which serves as the bedrock of security; which is the safety of men and women in society (Ngwana, 2014). Security is both a means and the end, with intrinsic value. Like every goal, the attainment of national security involves several institutional and organizational processes and activities as well as individual efforts that are governed by norms and compliance.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF SECURITY SITUATIONS IN SOME NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES AND EFFORTS MADE BY THE MANAGEMENTS TO COMBAT THE MENACE

As earlier submitted, maintenance of on-campus security has been a major challenge and it has received inappreciable attention from university managements. Security threats to campuses are either from internal sources or external sources. It could now be acclaimed that no educational institution is free from security attacks in the present day while the security threats have taken different dimensions (Ahamefula, 2018). Checks on some universities in Nigeria revealed that some of the institutions' main gates are more beautifully adorned with painting works and flowers than "the gates of heaven" but not security-protected as expected. The main gates are easily accessible by any person with no checking or control. In most university campuses, armed robbers or assassins easily walk or drive in through the gates unnoticed or unchecked and they unleash mayhem on unsuspecting students and members of

staff on campus. This is very dangerous to the lives of students and workers in the institution as the place could be soft targets for attacks (Daniel and Mbiraeye, 2016).

In the month of 26 May, 2017, the students of Cross Rivers State University of Technology, Calabar, embarked on a protest over security challenges that have consistently been a threat to them on campus. The students had always been harassed by miscreants and armed robbers; there had been times without number their hostel rooms would be attacked and raided while several items would be carted away in the midnight (CRUTECH Annual Report, 2017). Within the month of May, 2017 only, armed robbers raided the lecture halls used by students for night study seven times, and the lecture halls were populated during the period as they were preparing for examinations. Several items; laptop computers, recording tapes, rechargeable lamps and very smart phones were snatched and carted away with gun threat by the invaders. The students reported the situation to the university management but due to poor handling of the situation by the university authority, a massive protest erupted in the campus the third day and it led to destruction of the school's properties (Ogbeme, Vanguard 13 June, 2017). Students in the university also lamented the porosity of the security network owing to the fact that the school is used as an access point, as it provides route to the neighbouring environs in the city; the university is also located in a volatile region, which occasionally falls under the threat of miscreants; several points of entry into the school premises are not well checked by the security officers; and some members of staff used to complain that some of the school lands are being sold off to individuals with no relationship to an academic environment by unknown individuals (Ogbeme, Vanguard 13 June, 2017).

The study has revealed that management authorities of some universities across the country have not been taking pro-active measures in arresting the menace of insecurity in their various institutions when the need arises. Adabale (2016) gave a vivid report of a case of kidnapping that took place in the University of Calabar on 3 May, 2016. It was reported that four undergraduate students and two members of academic staff were kidnapped for a very huge ransom; the victims spent one week in captivity of the kidnappers before being released. This insecurity on campus was protested by the Academic Staff Union of University, University of Calabar Chapter by withdrawing its service for one week before police vans were later stationed at the main gate at nights and others strategic locations in the higher institution (Adabale, Spetrum Post, 14 August, 2016).

According to Daniel and Mbiraeye (2016), the rate at which students and university workers are being killed in Zamfara State University is horrible. It was submitted that armed bandits would easily besiege the university premises during the day and nights; students and workers are killed without showing mercy. The university premises are safe at all, workers and students are left to operate under God's grace, and anything could happen at any time (Daniel and Mbiraeye, 2016). This is due to the fact that security surveillance in the campus is absolutely poor with no intelligence gathering and most times, cases of insecurity are not adequately reported to appropriate authorities for actions. Most tertiary institutions lack a proper perimeter fence and this increases vulnerability to attacks (Daniel and Mbiraeye, Ibid). However, the security situation at the Niger Delta University, Delta State is worrisome as some members of staff and students recently bemoaned the situation, stating that there is unstable security presence while the university available security officers on campus are highly corrupt. They take bribes from miscreants while they allow them poach on the underground wires and cables supplying electricity to the university (Ogbeme, 2017).

There were series of protest that rocked academic activities in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State in the year 2017. The protest erupted after the Student Union President in the institution gathered his colleagues lamenting the issues affecting them on campus such as unstable electricity, poor water supply, non-issuance of student identity cards among others. The Union also wanted a fact-finding committee to be set up to look into the issue of the use of hot plates in halls of residence. In addition, the Aderemi-led Union insisted that examination would not be allowed to take place unless the management issued identity cards. They also resolved to disrupt the scheduled programme of Oyo State Government at the International Conference Centre to be chaired by Governor Abiola Ajimobi (Saanu, www.sunnewsonlince.com/the-ui-student-protest, 2017). They decided to occupy the Ojoo/Agbowo/UI Sango Federal Highway as well as all Faculties, lecture rooms, and lock up Centre for General Studies. Sadly, all efforts to pacify the students by the Management including several meetings, interventions from different stakeholders, pleadings with the students not to disrupt the planned first semester examination that had already dragged on endlessly failed. Apart from wanting the examination to be postponed, there was a suspicion that the students were being manipulated by some subterranean forces on campus in order to settle scores with the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka. At last, the rampaging students got the effect they wanted: the examination was postponed (Saanu, www.sunnewsonlince.com/the-ui-student-protest, 2017).

Also, at the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, (Nkpolu campus) is occasionally terrorized by various cults groups besieging the campus from the nearby area, who make their way into school robbing, maiming, raping students to death. A 200-level student, Miss Iyowuna Chapp-Jumbo in the Department of Mechanical Engineering survived a rape attack in September, 2018 as a result of the aid received from night guards stationed in a mansion closed to her hostel room. It is known fact that the security situation has deteriorated drastically in the school premises. The university lacks professional security personnel; the university authorities and state government have been called upon to ensure adequate security (Rilwan, http;//opinionnigeria.com, 2018).

However, the story is not the same in some private universities within the country as adequate and better security arrangement is made; the university managements in the private sector hire combat-ready and trained security officers to handle the security situation in their schools. Adetoye Agbona, a Deputy Chief Security Officer in one of the private universities, Crescent University, Ogun State said "Security crisis emanate from students while adequate logistics and early warning system are regularly put in place to forestall such incidents with stiff punitive measures" (Crescent University Annual Report, 2018). Also, an overview of security situations in Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Baze University, Abuja and Koladaisi University, Ibadan revealed that security within the school premises is seriously tight, there is effective surveillance and there is regular training and re-training of the university security personnel. Although there is restriction of access in and out of the premises, students can only leave for cogent reasons or sometimes parents must come to the school premises first." It was also noticed that visitors are normally kept at the gate, and there are both male and female security officers on the campuses to handle both sexes (Okolo, http;//opinionnigeria.com, retrieved 6 March, 2018).

In September 2011, Dr. Tunji Akinlabi a lecturer in the Dept. of Meteorology of the Federal University of Technology, Akure was kidnapped. N15 million ransom was demanded. Also, on 16th march 2013, Dr. Ime Udotons a female lecturer in the Dept. of Biochemistry was

kidnapped by gunmen. She was later released but records did not show if ransom was paid while Prof. James Bolarinwa Olowo of Nuclear Physics Dept. OAU, Ile Ife lodged into Hotel Farlem in Eket, Akwa-Ibom State on 17th October 2013, and three days after, he was kidnapped (Adejoju, 2016). Ironically, he was kidnapped ten years earlier and later released. His surname "Olowo" in Yoruba Language means "Rich Man" In the same vein on 3rd of March 2015, Mrs. Awala George a lecturer in the University of Port Harcourt was kidnapped but later freed by police operation eight days after the abduction. However, on 3rd of April 2015 Mrs. Hamdallah Ettu, wife of a lecturer in the Dept. of Biology Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu Ode was not lucky as she was kidnapped. She regained her freedom after a N20 million ransom was paid (Adejoju, 2016).

Unfortunately on Saturday 9th of May 2015, Dr. Femi Omisore, a lecturer in the Department of Environmental Design of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife was kidnapped at Oye Ekiti in a violent circumstance that left his driver dead and his car bullet-riddled while Dr. Omisore was lucky as he was later rescued by Local Vigilantes at Esure, Ekiti State along with nine other held captives. Also, on 16th June 2015, Dr. Paul Erie an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and extension of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma Edo State was kidnapped (Aleshiloye, EKSU News, 2017). The sum of N50 million ransom was demanded by the abductors but was later reduced to N12 million; the money was paid but Dr. Erie never made it back home alive, his decomposing body was later exhumed by the police detectives from a shallow grave in a forest at Orhionwon area of Edo State after about 105 days that he was abducted. In addition, on 18th May 2016, five lecturers of Ekiti State University were rounded up and abducted at gun point by kidnappers. They demanded for N210 million ransom while two of the lecturers were later released to go and source for funds (Aleshiloye, EKSU News, 2017).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are recommended strategies for lasting security and peaceful co-existence in Nigerian university campuses:

- Managements of institutions of higher learning should enforce the use of identity cards by all members of the university community (i.e members of staff, students, business vendors, visitors and service providers) before gaining entrance into the campus so as to identify every person on campus at any point in time.

- A comprehensive database of members of the university community should be swiftly created and maintained. Relevant information and bio-data should be captured in the university's possession and be accessible by both internal security and security agencies when the need arises. This would help to monitor and locate every member of the university community.

- Also, it should be made imperative that our institutions have perimeter fences round their premises to prevent unwanted encroachment by land grabbers, miscreants and criminals.

- The university security unit should be well staffed, trained and equipped. This is as security challenges of today demands more accountability from security staff; security

intelligence and networking should remain paramount; and ex-service men should be incorporated into the institutions security system.

- The points of entry should be well manned and there should be use of body scanners as better measures for checks/screening of persons, luggage and vehicles coming in and leaving campus.

- Adequate orientation and public enlightenment should be employed while students should be made abreast of all safety precautions both within and outside campus, periodic security drills for all security officers should also be adopted.

- There should be swift response from the university security unit. Emergency numbers to call or report suspicious or criminal activity should be displayed at strategic locations of campus.

- There is need for mounting of street lights and installation of Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras around hostels, classrooms and other strategic locations on campus to monitor all student activities.

- At the same time, the areas that are prone to criminal activities on campus, such as Student Union Building, Game points and social clubs' points and others should be place under security surveillance. Also, there should be regular patrols within all areas of campus and environs by the university security officers.

- There could be incorporation of security awareness courses into the curricula of general studies of the university and regular publication of security-related issues via various media on campus

- The police and other security agencies should ensure regular and effective policing of the environs of our tertiary institutions to complement the efforts of existing university security officers.

- It is, however, mandatory that every university should develop its own Security Policy to which all members of staff and students should be committed to, as far as security issue on campus is concerned.

- The governments (Federal & State), other owners of universities should show more economic concern in matters of campus security as the universities alone, cannot possibly fund all the emerging security demands in this regard.

- As part of the requirements for establishing new universities in Nigeria, promoters should show acceptable evidence of how they intend to protect their universities right from the onset before being granted approval by Federal Government. Of course, Security Policy should be one of the prime documents. It is easier to establish Security Order right from the beginning than to cope with security challenges in the future.

- Identifying the saboteurs among the security officers: the various saboteurs in the university security personnel should be closed identified and prosecuted.

- Soliciting the support of students, university workers and other citizens within the university community to report any suspected criminal tendencies and occurrence to the security personnel.

- There is need for notable improvement of employment and working conditions for all the university security officers in order to increase their professionalism and motivation and to reduce corruption practices.

- There is need for crucial security training for the security officers to improve their security intelligence, professionalism, tactics and strategic capacity to all sorts of criminal attacks on our campuses.

- Fighting against corruption among the ranks and files of the university security officers. There should be a University Security Committee set up and saddled with the responsibility of overhaul the security apparatus and improve the people's perception of trust in the university system.

- Lastly, recruitment of security officers in universities should be placed on merit and professionalism in all ramifications. In most cases, criminal elements have disguised as security officers and successfully carried out serious crimes without being noticed. This unfortunate trend, which has led to a lack of confidence in these agencies, has largely undermined the capacity of these agencies to function effectively as regards crime control and internal security management.

CONCLUSIONS

Security challenges facing the university administration in Nigeria have risen to a certain peak of discomfort to attainment of educational goals and objectives; it is high time it was nipped in the bud. However, the negative impacts of the menace have drawn more curses than blessings to our educational goals while it is optimally affirmed that all the security challenges would be largely minimized, if not totally decimated. There is need for urgent training for all the security personnel on campuses to ensure their services are in tandem with the current strategic, modern security and meeting international standards. The universities should endeavour to equip them with modern security weapons within the University Acts and Laws. The training/orietation exercise could be taken up by the Centres/Departments/Institutes for Peace and Security Studies existing in the various institutions. It is a major challenge demanding quick response and immediate action. The government, university management, student unions, community leaders and all stakeholders, should come together to ensure the lingering menace is decimated and enable attainment of Nigerian higher educational goals and objectives.

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