



# Nigerian Police Force and Administration of the School in the Period of Security Challenges in Nigeria

Worlu I. Wali<sup>i</sup>

Department of Educational Management

Faculty of Education

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt

[worluwali@yoo.com](mailto:worluwali@yoo.com)

---

## Abstract

It is not in doubt that Nigeria society is facing security challenges of kidnapping, violence, militancy, armed robbery, Boko Haram insurgency and other vices. Schools are an arm of the Nigeria society whose responsibilities, among other things, is to impact knowledge for future work force. Undoubtedly, schools have been infested with the outcome of these challenges. The school personnel are lamenting, afraid and can only sleep with one eye close. It is on this backdrop that this paper examined the role of Nigeria police force vis-à-vis, the administration of schools in a period of security challenges. The paper concluded that schools are destroyed, school personnel kidnapped, maimed, killed and displaced as a result of insecurity. The paper therefore recommended that, there should be effective police-school partnership; there should be police post in rural communities and check points nearer to schools. Also, police should divorce themselves from bribery and civilian politics. There should be adequate budgeting allocation to police to enable them provide adequate security in schools and Nigeria in general.

**Keywords:** Administration, Police, School Administration, Security, Security Challenges.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Wali, W. I. (2018). Nigerian Police Force and Administration of the School in the Period of Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 11(1), 117-126. Retrieved [DATE] from <http://www.ij sre.com>.

## INTRODUCTION

Education, world-over stands at all times as an important instrument par excellence for achieving growth, progress and national development. That is why the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) recognizes education as means of empowering the people for the attainment of the nation's developmental plans and targets (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014).

School is the most important agency of attaining education. It is a place where knowledge is imparted. Okorosaye-Orubite (2005) viewed school as a specific agency established by the society to take responsibility for the formal education of the young ones, who are incoming members of the society. In like manner, Agabi (2005) described school as an institution primarily established and used for the education of children and young ones. Okujagu in Uriah (2005) defined school as an artificial social organization set up for the purpose of the deliberate management of the process of cultural transmission and social integration.

The above definitions implies that school occupies a specific location clearly separated from the general environment or community by name which reflects the level and type of education it provides, buildings furnished in accordance with the age group it serves and the conditions for its existence as recommended by the law of the community it serves. Hence, we have kindergarten and nursery school, primary school, secondary school, technical school and tertiary institution.

For the schools to attain its objectives, it needs to be properly administered. School administration is the process of coordinating human, material and time resources towards the attainment of pre-determined objectives of school. In order words, school administration is the process whereby the school head such as Vice Chancellor, Provost, Rector, Principal or Head Teacher, as the chief, executive of the school coordinates the effort and activities of staff towards the achievement of the goals of the school. Okeke (1985) defined school administration as the provision and maintenance of necessary manpower for those who teach with a view to bring the desired change in the learners' behavior. Agi and Adiele (2009) sees school administration as the field operation charged with the use of available resources (material and human) to prosecute policies and programmes in education.

The above definitions explained that school is a conglomeration of administrator, teaching and non-teaching staff, and students/pupils whose efforts are geared towards the attainment of teaching, learning, research and manpower training. These objectives can be achieved, among other things, in a friendly environment. Environment free from threat, harm or danger. In another sense, the achievement of school's objectives lies on the ability to have atmosphere of peace and tranquility. Meaningful development can only take place in a secured environment.

Okai and Wali (2014) recognized that the challenges facing Nigerian society are youth restiveness, inter and intra-communal clashes, kidnappings, hostage taking, cultism, armed robbery, Boko Haram insurgents, assassinations, prostitutions, pipeline vandalizations, etc. These challenges are critical, virulent, persistent and agonizing to the Nigerian society, which the school is part and parcel of. These challenges are herculean. It cannot be left in the hands of school administration and of course, school administration cannot effectively provide the solution because it is capital intensive. This is the reason why the state is involved in providing security. One of the instruments that the state uses to control security is the police. The police are saddled with the responsibility of maintaining peace and security. It is on this premise that this

paper looked at the role of Nigeria Police Force in administration of schools in a period of security challenges in Nigeria.

## **OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

To have a clear understanding of the contending issues, a brief operationalization of the following concepts as applied in this paper shall be attempted. The concepts are: Police, administration, security and security challenge.

### **Concept of Administration**

The term “administration” is a concept that has so many benefits of meanings as there are people who care to define it. Mackae and Hill in Ezeani (2005) conceptualized administration as the coordination of men and materials within organization for the accomplishment of identifiable purposes. Earlier, Ezeocha (1990) defined administration as the process of directing and controlling of life in a social organization. Ogbonna (1995) is of the opinion that it is a process which entails the utilization of human, financial and material resources in maximizing the realization of goals or objectives.

The above definitions imply that administration involves working with people for the accomplishment of goals. It also involves the use of men, material and funds to achieve objectives. To Peretomode (2003) administration is concerned with the performance of executive duties, the carrying out of policies and decisions to fulfill a purpose and the controlling of day – to-day running of an organization. This definition shows that administration involves not just implementation of policies and programmes of an organization but also its day-to-day functioning.

### **Concept of Security and Security Challenges**

The relevance of the growth and development of man and his environment has led the term “security” to attract a wide range of attention from academic, religious, military, political and social circle. In order words, different people see security from different perspectives depending on their area of specialization and interest. Whatever views they hold, the term does not lead itself to precise definition. It is an essential contested concept. However, Meziobi (2012) said the concept when mentioned in Nigeria, stir thought that are focused predominantly on one or a combination of the following:

- The defence and protection of national integrity or Nigeria’s sovereignty, territorial and political jurisdiction from external and internal interference or intervention;
- Personal safety of members of political class who are in control of the helm of affairs of governance, in addition to safeguarding or protecting their offices, hence the incredible allocation of funds for security;
- Forestalling or deterring possible internal attacks or crisis and subjugating insurgency;
- Keeping security agents on active security alert and readiness at all points in time.
- Checkmating impending or actual internal threats to state or national security or anti-social behaviours of those who are deliberately undermining or sabotaging government efforts;

- Checkmating social problems such as Boko Haram saga and youth militancy, kidnapping, abduction that may pose threat to state and national security and political cadre in control of the state affairs from active commitment to their function;
- Making the environment insecurity free in order to attract international investments.

In its simplistic form security is the feeling of being safe, protected and the feeling of freedom from danger, fear, anxiety and unwanted violence. Francis in Wali (2015) sees security to denote the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defence or protection and preservation of core values and absence of threats to acquire values. In like manner, Amujiri and Agu (2012) conceptualized security as freedom from risk or danger or fear, safety, confidence and ability of a nation to protect and defend itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interest and enhance the well-being of its people.

In another development, Eko-Alobi in Okogba (2014) defined security as activities and actions taken to guarantee the protection of law and order and the promotion and protection of the human rights of the citizens. Paleri in Iwegbu and Ossai defined (2014) security as the prevention of and protection against assault, damage, fire, fraud, invasion of privacy, theft, unlawful entry and such occurrences caused by deliberate action.

Security challenge is a violation of security. That is insecurity, in other words, is the presence or apprehension of threat, danger to life and property, and presents atmosphere that is not conducive for people to pursue their legitimate interests within the society. Nwankwoala (2014) stated that security challenges are those difficult situations, unpleasant and chaotic security situations that obstruct peaceful living of people in a society. Nwankwoala went further to identify those security challenges to Nigeria as Boko Haram insurgents, militancy, armed robberies, kidnappings, abductions, intertribal wars and fights whereas, Imobighe in Thomas (2008) sees security challenge as anything that can undermine the security of the nation or the peaceful coexistence of the people. Imobighe in Thomas further identified those security challenges in Nigeria to include religious/political intolerance, mismanagement of resources, subversion and sabotage espionage, smuggling, alien influx, armed robberies, mutiny/coup d'etat, civil unrest, revolutionary insurgency, etc. The above assertions imply that security challenges are threat to individual security, institution security, state security and environmental security.

## **Concept of Police**

Etymologically, the word police is derived from the Greek word "Polis" meaning that part of ecclesiastical administration having to do within the safety, health and order of the state. Therefore, police is an organized civil force whose main duty is to maintain order, preventing and detecting crime and enforcing the laws. Mohammed (2007) defined police as official men and women whose duty is to maintain law and order, make people obey the law and prevent and solve the problem of crime. Hornby (2001) sees police as an official organization whose jobs is to make people obey the law and to prevent and to solve other crime. While Wikipedia (2009) conceptualized police as the constituted body of person empowered by the state to enforce the law, protect property and limit civil disorder.

The Federal constitution of Nigeria (1999) states that police are those establishment whose duties are the preservation of law and order, the apprehension of offenders, the protection of life and property; the due enforcement of law and regulations with which they are directly

charged with the performance of such military duty within and outside Nigeria as may be required of them by or under the authority of any Act (Mohammed, 2007).

Implicit in the above definitions therefore, is that the police force is saddled with the responsibilities of security in the nation. That is, making sure that a country is free from any form of threat or fear to its peace, stability and progress.

## **PURPOSE OF NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE**

The beginning of Police Force in Nigeria could be traced to the British colonial administration security outfit called “Northern constabulary”, which later metamorphose to the present day Nigeria Police Force. The colonial administration used this outfit to subdue, oppress and exploit Nigeria. Alemika (2007) observed that the various forces established, organized and maintained by colonial and postcolonial governments were largely for the protection of the interest of political and economic power holders.

The police were established and employed as instrument of violence and oppression against the indigent Nigerians. They were the instrument used to sustain the alien domination. They were only accountable to the colonial administration and their excesses against indigent Nigerians were not controlled. That is why Alemika (2007) said that policing in Nigeria has been characterized by culture of impunity, corruption, incivility, brutality, lack of transparency and accountability.

The primary functions of the police are detection and prevention of crime as well as preservation of law and order. The police has constitutional powers of ensuring the prevalence of law and order and the preservation of public peace. Section 214(2)(b) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria with Amendments in 2011, confer on the police force powers and duties for effective oversight and accountability.

Similarly, section 4 of the police Act (2004) charged the force with the general duties of:

- The protection of life and property;
- Detection and prevention of crime;
- Apprehension of offenders;
- Preservation of law and order;
- The due enforcement of law regulations with which they are directly charged;
- Performance of such other military duties within and outside Nigeria as maybe required of them by or under the authority of any other Act (Brownson, 2012).

In the exercised of the above primary powers, the police also act in other spheres which are necessarily incidental to the exercise of the primary duty of the police under section 4 of the Police Act. The Act gives the police the power of public prosecution. By these powers, the police can charge and prosecute any person suspected to have committed a crime before any court of law in Nigeria. The Act also empowered the police to detain any person reasonably suspected to be in possession or carrying stolen property, or property that is reasonably believed to be unlawfully obtained.

## **The Rational for involving Police Force in Administration of Schools**

Critics of involving police force in administration of schools in Nigeria have argued that the police will stripe school administrators of their rightful power to discipline their staff and students and interferes with their service to the community. Of a truth, in the past and until recently issues and problems arising from the school hardly found their ways into the police. The reason is that school matters were regarded as highly domesticated or localized, and the school authorities were often ready to arbitrate the matters even when they involve policy issues. However, with the increasing awareness of the constitutional rights and obligations of individuals, cases and conflicts arising from the school are gradually being referred to the police for investigation and prosecution.

Also, observation and experience has shown that police does not interfere in the administration of schools out of compulsion rather they are invited to maintain law and order. The invitation of police in school administration became obvious because of the recent upsurge in violent crimes in schools which created enormous uncertainty in the security of lives and property of school personal and school administration in general. The incidence of crime such as armed robbery, arson, drug abuse, rape, murder, cultism are examples of violent crime which have been on the increase in the recent past in schools.

In the same vein, the existing patterns in criminal activities in school shows that criminals are getting more organized, sophisticated and brutal in the manner they carry out their dastardly acts by physically attacking individuals with dangerous weapons. Equally worrisome is the new dimension in organized behavior in Nigeria involving acts of terrorism, such as Boko Haram in the North and Militancy in the South. These criminals have maimed, killed, kidnapped, abducted and displaced school personnel and burnt down school buildings and other school valuables. Therefore, police invitation in administration of schools became inevitable because the traditional Mai-guards (security men) in schools are not trained, neither, are they equipped on the defense in the act of these crimes.

## **AREAS OF POLICE FORCE INVOLVEMENT IN ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOLS**

The place of police force involvement in administration of schools cannot be divorced from the Act establishing it, which have been emphasized somewhere in this paper. However, for the purpose of police role in terms of administration of schools the following are discussed: prevention and detection of crimes, protection of lives and property, preservation of law and order.

### **Prevention and Detection of Crime**

Crimes in the school are those antisocial behavior or act which are detrimental to the school community and to the public welfare. This in effect comes in form of student restiveness, unrest, riot, protest and crisis (Wali, 2007). Others are secret cult activities, examination malpractice, sexual harassment, terrorism, etc. Statutorily speaking, most of the teaching and law enforcement in the school tend to give priority to prevention of crime. This is because of the dire importance attached to the adage which says “nipping a crime in the bud” rather expending tireless efforts (usually in futility) investigating the crime afterwards. Yet these vices are on the increase. The

police who are specialist in strategies and technical know-how (if invited) to prevent and suppress the intentions before they are outwardly manifested could arrest ugly situations.

### **Protection of Lives and Property**

Section 153 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with amendments, 2004 in Brownson (2012) enshrined that the police are charged with the responsibility of protecting the lives and property of all the citizens within their respective precincts and jurisdiction. They discharge this responsibility by posting men on guard duties to schools on request during examinations, sporting activities or any important events in the school. In time past, police gave special escort to carry school money, parting orderlies to vice chancellors and other important personalities of the school. Also, police helps the school to retrieve stolen school property and secure same for the school.

### **Preservation of Law and Order**

Section 10 of Police Act vets the duty of the police under the directive of the President to ensure public safety and public order. The police execute this role in the school by enforcing laws and regulations governing unlawful assemblies of staff, students and secret cults. Police ensures that order is maintained in union meetings and procession during matriculations and convocations ceremonies.

The police also ensure that pedestrian students, especially in the cities are saved from traffic problems by crossing them to other side of road to their school. However, in ensuring that order is maintained, police should apprehend and prosecute offenders in law court.

### **CONCLUSION**

It has “abinitio” stressed that police involvement in administration of schools is on invitation. This invitation becomes inevitably because of security challenges which crippled into the school system in Nigeria. This security challenges emanated as a result of cultism, youth restiveness, killings kidnappings, Boko Haram insurgency and other crime. These vices constituted security threats to lives and property of the school and frustrates school effort to train the required work force for Nigeria.

Security is the spring board of achieving school objectives. In this period of security challenges, if school objectives must be achieved, it means that all security apparatus and institutions (Police Force inclusive) must be positioned to function maximally.

Police officers who are trained in tactics and strategies have the constitutional responsibilities to maintain law and other, enforce laws, promotion of public safety, prevention, detection and preservation of offenders. Police are involve in administration of schools in order to dissuade or defend attacks of the cultists, kidnappers, armed robbers, assassins, militancy, terrorists and other unscrupulous elements of the society who threaten the existence of school life.

## Recommendations

It is a truism that schools in Nigeria are faced with security challenges and the need to tackle this menace is urgent and important hence the following recommendations are made:

- There should be effective police- school relationship. Through the relationship police will have knowledge of security challenges in the school;
- There should be police post in rural villages because most of the victims of kidnappings are sent to bushes in rural areas;
- Checking points should be mounted closely to where schools are located to enable the police to have quick information about the criminal activities happening in the school;
- Police in Nigeria should divorce themselves from toll fees at checking points to enable them have a thorough search of every motorcycles, motor-vehicle and passer-by;
- Police in Nigeria should remove themselves from civilian politics to enable them maintain their approach to issues on security;
- There should be adequate budgetary allocation to police force to enable them provide adequate security in schools and Nigeria in general;
- Police should be provided with sophisticated weapons to match that of terrorists and militants; and
- Borders and sea way should be checkmated in order to prevent the importation of guns and other weapons, by the militants and terrorist.

## REFERENCES

- Agabi, C. O. (2005). School as a social system. In O. G. Agabi, A. K. Okorosaye–Orubite & J. Ezekiel Hart (Eds.), *School and Society*, Port Harcourt: Davidstones Publishers.
- Agi, U. K., & Adiele, E. E. (2009). *Educational administration*. Port Harcourt: Rodi Rusting and Publishing.
- Alemika, E. O. (2007). Police and police making: mandate, crisis and challenges, in the Nigeria police and the crisis of law and order. *A book of readings*.
- Amujiri, B. A., & Agu, S. U. (2012). Threats to internal security in Nigeria: An examination of security challenges in Nigeria and the implications. *International Journal of Research in arts and Social Sciences*, 4, 304-318.
- Brownson, B. O. (2012). The role of Nigeria police force in the administration of justice: issues and challenges. *A thesis submitted to the school of post Graduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*.
- Elekwa, J. E., & Okanezi, B. (2013). *Sociology of Education: Simplified Analysis*. Port Harcourt: Harey Publications.
- Ezeani, E. O. (2005). *Fundamentals of Public Administration*. Enugu: Zik-Chuks Publishers.
- Ezeocha, P. A. (1990). *Educational Administration and Planning*. Nsukka: Optimal Computer Solutions.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2014). *National Policy on Education*, Lagos: NERDC publishers.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *Official Gazette 2011 constitution as amended with the National Industrial Court*. Abuja: Government Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Constitution of federal republic of Nigeria. *Lagos: Federal government Press*.

- Hornby, A. S. (2001). *Oxford advanced learners dictionary of English (6th edition)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Iwegbu, C. J., & Ossai, J. N. (2014). The Nigerian customs service and national security. In W. P. Apochafo & D. I. Mexiobi (Eds.), *Social Studies and National Security in Nigeria*. Enugu: Oshiloconsults.
- Meziobi, K. A (2012). *New frontier areas in social studies in Nigeria*, Owerri: Acadapeak Publishers.
- Muhammed, A. O. (2007). The police and the challenges of nation security in Nigeria: problems and prospects. *Nigerian journal of social studies*, 11(2).
- Nwankwoala, H. N. L. (2014). The role of educational managers in the provision of peace education in primary and secondary schools for sustainable living in a period of security challenges. *Journal of Education and Society*, 2-5(2), 82-91.
- Ochai, G. (2012). *The scope of educational administration*. Makurdi: Success world publications.
- Ogbonna, F. C. (1995). *A handbook on Educational Administration*. Jos: Techsource Publishing.
- Okai, N. O., & Wali, W. I. (2014). Entrepreneurship education in a period of security challenges: *A panacea to unemployment reduction in Nigeria*. *Journal of Education and Society*, 2-5(2), 209-221.
- Okeke, B.S. (1985). Leadership in education. In B. S. Okeke, N. A. Ozurumba, & S. O. Igwe (Eds.). *A handbook on Educational Administration*. Owerri: New African Publishing.
- Okogbaa, V. E. (2014). Facilitating active learning in tertiary institutional classrooms. A strategy for capacity building to combat insecurity. *Journal of Education and Society*, 2-5(2), 60-71.
- Okorosaye-Orubite, A. K. (2005). Education and development. In O. G. Agabi, A. K. Okorosaye-Orubite & J. Ezekiel Hart (Eds.), *School and Society*, Port Harcourt: Davidstones Publishers.
- Peretomode, V. F. (2003). *Educational Administration: applied Concepts and theoretical Perspectives*. Lagos: Joja Educational and Publishers.
- Thomas, A. N. (2008). State failure and insecurity in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. *International conference on the Nigerian state, oil industry and the Niger Delta*. Port Harcourt: Harey publications.
- Uriah, O. A. (2005). The school as a social organization. In E. G. ELechi & L. Ogbondah (Eds.), *Sociological Foundation of Education*. Port Harcourt: High calling outreach publishers.
- Wali, W. I. (2007). *A handbook of contemporary issues on education in Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: Pearl Publishers.
- Wali, W. I. (2015). Corruption and national security in Nigeria. In W. P. Akpochofo & D. I. Meziobi (Eds.), *Social Studies and National Security in Nigeria*. Enugu: Oshiloconsults.
- Wikipedia (2009). Police force. Retrieved from [www.thefreedictionary-com/police](http://www.thefreedictionary-com/police).

---

<sup>i</sup> Dr. Wali, Worlu I. hails from Rumuokparali-Akpor, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. He holds Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Planning from University of Nigeria, Nsukka; M.Ed. in Education administration and B.Ed. in Educational Management and Business Education from University of Port Harcourt and NCE from Federal College of Education (FCE) Yola (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Affiliate). He has wealth of experience in teaching and lectures at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt in the Department of Educational Management. He has series of Publication in reputable Local and International Journals. He has also made scholarly contributions in a good number of textbooks and has authored some textbooks. His

---

research area of interest is in human resources management and development in education, educational administration and planning implementation.