

An Appraisal of the Role of Hisbah in Crime Prevention: A Study Fagge Local Government Area of Kano State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The introduction of sharia legal system and public distrust of the police for its enforcement were the two major events that surfaced for the emergence of Hisbah policing organizations in Nigeria. As complementary policing groups, Hisbah has contributed greatly in the sphere of adherence and maintenance of peace and social order in Kano State. Therefore, the study focusses on Hisbah methods of operation, successes achieved, relationship with the Nigeria Police Force and the challenges faced in the course of discharging their duties. Routine activity, and broken windows were used as theoretical framework. The paper adopted triangulation methods of data collection within quantitative and qualitative methods of social science research. A sample of 110 respondents was selected, purposive sampling method was primarily used to select 10 participants for the qualitative data. While, availability sampling method was primarily used to select 100 participants for the quantitative data. The study found that Hisbah remains a force to reckon with as far as crime prevention in the study area are concerned. Giving the findings, it is recommended that the various Hisbah organizations in the should be strengthened by providing them with: proper funding, operation equipment, a reviewed training curriculum, and

more training opportunities, the study recommends that such NPF with Hisbah relationship and other security agencies should strengthen, the operation should equally be translated to non-Muslim in the state.

Keywords: Crime, Crime prevention, Security

Introduction

Hisbah is driven from Arabic, it denotes a body responsibility for the enforcement of rules and regulations in an Islamic community. Kano State Hisbah Corps was established by the state government in 2003 after the implementation of Shari'ah, the legal system in the state. Initially, Hisbah was run by private persons as part of the security Service to the community. Hisbah is primarily intended to advocates and assist in the application and implementation of Sharia and to enjoin members of the community to do what is right and abstain from doing what is wrong. Kano State Government Established Hisbah Corps under the superintendent and direction of the Hisbah Board which comprises government officials, police officers and religious community leaders. The task of Sharia implementation for which the Corp was formed is decentralized into division and units, that were established at local government areas, each under the supervision of a committee that compromised of officials of the Corps and other citizens who voluntarily take part in the day-to-day running of the Corps to promote peace and order in the society (Fodiyo 2011).

Hisbah Corps implies that the members of the community, especially Muslims shall promote the course of Islamic rules and regulation and its principles as well as encourage the development of a descent society, through such activities, as preaching, persuasions, and participation in order to maintain law and order. It stops the sales of alcohol consumption, stabilizes price of commodities, encourage conformity and ensure that goods displayed for sale meet the required standard etc

Hence, Hisbah is typically meant to serve as a control mechanism, Islam provides for mankind to maintain order and regulate social life so that every member will go about his/her legitimate businesses of life without any form of hindrance (Gwarzo, 2003; Abdullah, 2010 and Adamu, 2015). It is an institution for enacting codes of conduct established by the Islamic law to promote what is good (halal) and ensure the avoidance of forbidden things (haram). Muhammad-Noor (2014) argues that, the Hisbah is ideally supposed to operate technically as a state institution with specific focus on promoting appropriate conducts and ensuring the avoidance of all types of misdeeds or offences.

Accordingly, the Hisbah Corps is organized to enforce law and prevent society from any harm like alcohol consumption, it is among the essential activity of the Hisbah Corps to stop the sell and consumption of alcohol, prostitution, adultery,

child begging, child abuse, marital abuse, among others. This research focuses on the role of Hisbah in crime prevention, particularly in Fagge Local Government Area. The study examines the duties, strategy, of Hisbah in tackling the issue of alcohol consumption, prostitution, adultery, child begging, child abuse, marital abuse, among others in the society.

Problem statement

Hisbah board was established under the provision Section 38, subsection 1 of the 1999 Constitution which empowers Kano State to promulgate a law establishing the Hisbah Board. The Kano State Hisbah board is responsible for the general policy making and coordination of the activities between state, zonal and local government Hisbah committee.

Hisbah Corps are using many strategies of crime prevention in order to control the issue of alcohol consumption prostitution, adultery, child begging, child abuse, and marital abuse, among others, which ranges from surveillance, investigation, arresting and handling of the case to the police for prosecution in the Sharia court. In another hand, for the operation against alcohol consumption there is a team of hisbah Corps known as anti-alcohol squad that are conducting daily patrol on highways so as to arrest any vehicle suspected to have carried alcohol. They are always vigilant during the day hours where most of alcohol imported find it way. Any vehicle suspected to be carrying alcohol is been stopped by Hisbah Corps in a polite manner they check the vehicle, whenever a vehicle is found loaded with alcohol, the Hisbah Corps would ask a driver to take the vehicle to Hisbah board (Aydemir, 2012: 2).

Hisbah often apply both proactive and reactive control measures in eradicating social problems in the society. This was as a result of power given to them by the Kano State house of assembly. According to section 404 of the penal code (amendment) law 2004 of Kano State edit, “whoever is convicted for an offence of the manufacturing, distribution, distillation, disposal, consumption, and possession of all brand of intoxication liquids, erode spirits and any intoxicant or substance is here by prohibited”(the Kano State *Hisbah* Board Establishment Law, 2003). The need for education and professionalism is apparent in the Hisbah operations, Staff training, career and promotion are subject of priority to the Hisbah Board in Kano State Therefore, the study investigates the role of hisbah in crime prevention

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The research is aimed at gathering information will helped in assessing the role of hisbah in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government area of Kano State.

- i. To examine strategies used by *Hisbah* in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government Area, Kano State.
- ii. To assess the relationship between *Hisbah* and other security agencies in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government Area, Kano State.

iii. To find out the challenges faced by the *Hisbah* in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government Area, Kano State.

IV. To suggest possible measures for improving the activities of *Hisbah* in Fagge Local Government Area, Kano State.

Conceptual clarification

Crime

bazau (2007), define Crime as an act or omission against public interest and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal. He also argued that Crime is also seen as a violation of the rules agreed to be respected by all members of the society, and upon which the rest members of the society meet sanction upon those guilty of the violation.

Crime Prevention

Crime prevention has to do with the attempt made by the government, the individuals and the society to reduce and deter crimes and criminal activities. It encompasses the effort to reduce crime, enforce laws and maintaining of social order in the society. Crime control on the other hand refers to the measures taken to reduce crime in the society. This implies that it has to do with both formal and informal strategies that are used to reduce the impact of crime in the society. Crime prevention is an intervention in the causes of crimes and disorderly event to reduce, prevent and control the risk of their resource and the potential seriousness of their consequences (Steven, 2010).

The Role of *Hisbah* in Community Policing

In medieval society, policing was a collective responsibility where all adult members of the community, especially male adults, were obliged to contribute towards the prevention and control of crime and disorder under the 'watch system' that preceded the emergence of modern police force as a state institution (Reid, 1997). Note that, even long ago before the British invasion of Nigeria, there existed some forms of traditional policing among the various states, kingdoms and empires that constitute the present Nigeria (Tamuno, 1993 cited in Ojukwu, 2011). Thus, it could be argued that, the idea of policing in Nigeria was never a new phenomenon (Obilade, 1979; Asein, 1998; and Beredugo, 2009). There are native laws, customs and sanctions mostly drawn from traditional religions that played a central role in the prevention and control of crimes (ibid). The fear of vengeance of the gods, oracles and ancestral spirit kept everyone in checked. These were said to have discouraged vices and mischief and by extension provided an effective policing system (Tamuno, 1993; and Ojukwu, 2011).

Policing typically involves measures and actions taken by a variety of social institutions and groups (both formal and informal) to regulate social

relationships and practices in order to secure the safety of the members of community as well as enforcing conformity to the shared norms and values of the society (Reid, 1997; and Siegel, 2009). It, therefore, involve the creation of systems of surveillance and threat of sanction for the discovered deviation. There is a greater agreement among scholars and researchers that the core mission of any policing organization is to enforce laws, keep social order and protect life and property of the citizenry (Goldstein, 1977; Larson, 1978; Dambazau, 2007; and Siegel, 2009). These core responsibilities of the police are the reflection of government's primary purpose of existence, as inferred by the social contract theory. Thus, the police who carried these functions were elevated to the status of national symbol and an integral part of the human cultural framework.

Contributions of *Hisbah* to Crime Prevention

The purpose of the *Hisbah* is to protect members of the society from deviance, preserve their faith, guarantee the welfare and security of the people and enforce *Sharia* law (Baker, 2004). Hence, *Hisbah* was typically meant to serve as a control mechanism Islam provides for mankind to maintain order and regulate social life so that every member will go about his/her legitimate businesses of life without any form of hindrance (Gwarzo, 2003; Adamu, 2008; and Abdullah, 2010). It is an institution for enacting codes of conduct established by the Islamic law to promote what is good (*halal*) and ensure the avoidance of forbidden things (*haram*). Muhammad-Noor (2014), argues that, the *Hisbah* is ideally supposed to operate technically as the state institution with specific focus on promoting the proper conducts and ensuring the avoidance of all types of misdeeds or offences.

Thus, it can be said that, the function of *Hisbah* is to maintain the public law and order, and supervise the behavior of the citizens, in all spheres of life, with a view to promote good conduct and ensure that no malpractice is allowed to take place in an Islamic state (Muhammad-Noor, 2014). The Supreme Council for *Sharia* in Nigeria cited in Baker (2008) viewed the role of *Hisbah* as:

The *Hisbah* groups are indispensable vehicle for the proper implementation of *Sharia* as its indomitable vanguard. The *Hisbah* groups already established are meant to complement the police in their statutory duties and are not rivals. But this can only be achieved if the mentality and orientation of the Police Force is refocused to one of service away from extortion and tyranny... (Baker, 2008,p.175).

Strategies of Operation of *Hisbah* for Crime Prevention

The *Hisbah*'s method of operation primarily was more of preventive. This is because, the activities of *Hisbah* are essentially organized around ensuring that the limits of beyond Islamic Provision have not been violated, protecting the honor of the people, and ensuring public safety and social order.

The above goes a long way in assisting the people to fulfill their religious duties. Hence, some researchers have celebrated the methods of operation used by the *Hisbah* in the conduct of their functions as being friendly, proactive, pro-people, timely, reformatory, reconciliatory and transparent (Adamu, 2008; Suberu, 2009; Galadima and Mahadi, 2013). This approach has resulted to a positive relationship with both the public and the police to such an extent that even some police stations in Kano State refer cases to *Hisbah* because of their quick and satisfactory mediation approach (ibid).

Relationship between Hisbah and other Security Agencies

Hisbah have established a joint intelligence sharing, collaboration and teamwork effort in converting crime and criminality by law enforcement agencies and other voluntary security operatives in detecting and preventing crime, problem-oriented strategies for eliminating the root causes of crime and disorder and community/police partnerships (Khan, Akram 2011).

Hisbah and the Police Relations

The relationship between *Hisbah* and police is complementary. *Hisbah* in the three states can arrest and hand over to the police. Section 7(4) (i) of the Kano State *Hisbah* Board Law 2003, provides that, the *Hisbah* shall render necessary assistance to the police and other security agencies especially in the areas of prevention, detection and reporting of offences.

An important issue to address here is the issue of prosecution. That is whether or not under the laws establishing the Islamic Institution of *Hisbah* in Nigeria, the *Hisbah* as a corporate body or the Sharia Commission can prosecute persons who violated Sharia laws, just like the police do in the case of those who violated Nigerian laws? It is not in doubt that, the power of the police to prosecute in Nigeria is statutorily provided. In this regard therefore, it is my contention in this paper that the Islamic Institution of *Hisbah*, can validly prosecute persons who can be shown to have violated Sharia laws as defined under these states (Ahmed 2005).

Theoretical Framework

Broken Windows Theory

Broken windows theory was introduced in 1982 in an article by two social scientists; James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling. Since then, it has been subjected to great debate both within the social sciences and the public sphere. The theory asserts that in communities contending with high levels of disruption, maintaining order not only improves the quality of life for the residents, but also reduces opportunities for more serious crimes. The broken windows metaphor is one of deterioration; a building where a broken window goes unrepaired will soon be subject to far more extensive vandalism – because it sends a signal that the building owners are not in control. In other words, if a window is broken and left unrepaired, people walking by will conclude that no

one cares and no one is in charge. This will create tendency for vandals to break into the building, and if it is unoccupied, perhaps become squatters or light fires inside. This is explained in the original words of Wilson and Kelling (1982):

This implies that when police officers keep streets orderly and punish even the smallest signs of misbehavior with a warning or an arrest, people will behave in a more orderly way. So, a successful strategy for preventing crime, according to this theory, is to fix problems when they are small. Because it's believed that more serious crimes evolved from minor infractions. In other words, if rude remarks by loitering youth were left unchallenged, such youth will be under the impression that no one cares and his/her behavior will likely escalate to a more serious crime. Thus, take minor problems and nip them in the bud before things get worse. Repair the broken window within a short time and the tendency is that vandals are much less likely to break more windows or do further damages.

The above position is supported by Newman (1972), who argues that communities ravaged by crime prevalence must establish effective informal policing mechanisms, such as the *Hisbah*, that can be used to reduce unruly behavior as well as the spate of crime in the community. It was further viewed the role played by informal social control institutions, exercised through everyday relationships, as more effective than legal sanctions in dealing effectively with crime.

The theory also facilitates an understanding of the subject matter of this research. This is because *Hisbah* as religious/moral police seeks to enforce *sharia* laws. Thus, bulk of its works revolves around the reinforcement of moral values addressing issues such as prostitution, sexual misconducts, drug abuse by youths—discovered to be rampant among the youth and other delinquent and criminal behaviours (Dukku, 2017; Madaki and Dukku, 2017). This is very important because such misconducts if left unchecked will escalate into a more serious and destructive crimes. Again, *Hisbah* has been faced with a number of internal and external problems. Thus, identifying and tackling them early (as suggested by the broken windows theory) will also strengthen the complementary policing activities of the *Hisbah*.

Methodology

Research design

The study adopted a survey research design which involves the administration of structured questionnaires and an in-depth interview with some selected people from Kano State Hisbah Command Headquarter, and Hisbah Fagge Office which is in the study area. The research is aimed at gathering information will helped in assessing the role of hisbah in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government area of Kano State.

Study area

Kano is predominantly an Islamic centre; it was conquered by the British in 1903. Since then, the city has experienced diverse social, economic and political

changes. Economically, Kano's pre-colonial influence, as the entreport of the trans-Saharan trade from North Africa waned with the arrival of the British. In colonial times, imported goods, mostly from Britain and Europe, came through the southern Nigerian seaports of Lagos, Port-Harcourt, and Calabar.¹ The trade in imported and foreign goods led to significant south-north migrations in Nigeria, with many southern Nigerian immigrants settling in Kano.

It occupied an area of 25sq km as size and has a population of 1.4 Million (2022 by the National [Bureau](#) of Statistics), it also share boundary with Nasarawa local government to the east, Kano municipal local government to the north.

Sample Size

The sample size of One Hundred and Ten (110) respondents was selected for the sake of this study because of the inability to examine the entire population of Fagge Local Government area. The sampling size can be depicted in the following table;

Table 1.1: Category of Respondents

S/N	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	General public	60	54.5
2	Hisbah Board officials	20	18.1
3	Security agency	10	9.1
4	Market leaders	10	9.1
5	Thugs (<i>Yandabas</i>)	10	9.1
	Total	110	100

Source field: (2024)

The table above shows that 54.5% respondents are of the general public, 18.1% are from the Hisbah Board officials from Fagge Command, 9.1% from law enforcement agencies, also, market leaders' respondents 9.1% and finally, thugs 9.1% are selected, which questionnaire and in-depth interview will be given to the above respondents in the analysis of the research findings.

Data Analysis

This section is concerned with the responses of the respondents based on the questionnaires administered.

Section A: Socio Demographic Data of Respondents

Table1: Socio Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	75	78.9
Female	20	21.1
Total	95	100%
Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-27 years	48	50.5
27-37 years	41	43.2

38-47years	3	3.15
48-57 years	1	1.05
58 years above	2	2.10
Total	95	100%
Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	85	89.5
Married	9	9.5
Widowed	1	1.0
Total	95	100%
Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Secondary	19	20
Tertiary	73	76.8
Informal	3	3.2
Total	95	100%
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Traders	21	22.1
Students	34	35.8
Civil servants	39	41.1
Others	1	1.0
Total	95	100%

Sources: Survey (2024)

Table 1 show that 78.9% of the respondents are males while 21.1% are females. This indicate that majority of the respondents are males. This perhaps is due to the nature of the environment that makes males to be more visible compare to their female counterparts. While with regards to the age categories of the respondents, those from 18-27years constitute 50.5%, while those within 27-37years constitute 43.2% also, those from 38-47 also constitute 3.15% and those from 48-57 constitute 1.05% and those from 58-above constitute 2.10. This shows that most of the respondents are within the age categories of 18-27years.

Further mores, the marital status indicates that those who are single constitute 89.5%, while those that are married constitute 9.5%, and those that fall under the widow category constitute 1.0. This shows that most of the respondents are single. The occupation of the respondents shows that 41.1% are civil servants, while 35.8% are students, also 22.1 are traders and also 1.0 constitute others. Finally with the socio-demographic of the respondents shows that 76.8 % attained tertiary institution, 20% attained secondary school and also 3.2% of the respondents attain informal education.

Section B: Strategies used by Hisbah in Crime Prevention

This section deals with various strategy used by Hisbah in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government Area.

Table 2.0 The Effective Strategy used by Hisbah in Crime Prevention in Fagge Local Government.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Foot Patrol	20	21.1
Surveillance	15	15.8
Vehicle Patrol	40	42.1
Informant	10	10.3
Access Control	5	5.3
Electronic Surveillance	5	5.3
Total	95	100%

Sources: Survey (2024)

Table 2.0 indicates that various effective strategy used by Hisbah in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government. Among which 21.1% of the respondents say and believe that street patrol is the most effective strategy and 15.8% of the respondent believed that surveillance is the most effective strategy. While, the majority 42.1 % of the respondents assert that vehicle patrol is common and as well the most effective strategy used by Hisbah in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government area. This shows that Vehicle Patrol is the main strategy used by Hisbah in crime prevention and control in Fagge Local Government area of Kano State.

Inviewoftheabove,anofficial of the crimes department, Kano State *Hisbah* board Fagge command had this to say:

Hisbah have been so far successful in dealing with issues of crime and criminality with various strategy, this has made it possible for Hisbah to identify vehicle patrol in which we used patrol cars and motorcycle to duty call especially in the crime hotspot area. For them to get reports oncriminality first hand, even before the police (Official Crimes Department, KSHB Kano, 2023).

Table 2.1-How Hisbah collaborate and relate with the Nigeria Police Force in Crime Prevention in Fagge Local Government.

NatureofPolice-<i>Hisbah</i>Relationship	Frequen cy	Percentage
Good/Cordial	93	97.9
Poor/Non-cordial	2	2.1
Total	95	100.0

Sources: Survey (2024)

Table 2.1 presents data on the nature of the Police-*Hisbah* relationship. It can be seen that nearly all the respondent (97.9%) believes that, there is a good (cordial) relationship between the Nigeria Police Force and the *Hisbah* in the study area. However, few respondents 2.1%of the respondents described the

Police-*Hisbah* relationship as bad (non-cordial). This implies that, from the residents' point of view, there is an apparent good working relationship between the NPF and the various *Hisbah* organizations in Fagge Local Government area. In the same cordial relationship is revealed by a Police officer of Fagge divisional police who is interviewed. He noted that:

...actually, there is a cordial relationship between the NPF and the the ...characterized by mutual respect and knowledge of our boundaries...*Hisbah* is very instrumental in the fight against crimes such as statutory rape and other serious felonies which they often transfer to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the NPF State Command.... In addition, whenever the *Hisbah* is going for operation, they invite us for reinforcement. The Police is also often invited to participate in their workshops where we exchange ideas. Again, all criminal cases initiated by the *Hisbah* are transferred to the police 100 percent (Official, NPF Kano State Command, Kano, 2024).

It is observed in the above IDI that, from the Police viewpoint, *Hisbah* and the Police have been working together in their efforts to prevent and control crime in the study area. Their relationship has been characterized by mutual respect, mutual understanding of statutory boundaries and interagency referrals, which facilitate the cordiality of their relationship.

Interviewed on the nature of *Hisbah* – police relationship, an official of the Crimes Department, Kano State Hisba (Fagge Command) added that:

...there is a cordial and good working relationship with the NPF. Like I said in the beginning, in every nook and cranny of this state there is a presence of *Hisbah*. Therefore, most of the criminal cases, especially those from remote villages, were reported to the *Hisbah* first before their eventual referrals to the police. Again, the CP is a member of the *Hisbah* Governing Board. Even in this office the police have representation; (Official of Crime Department, KSHB Kano, 2024).

Table 2.2 Does the cordial Relationship between the Hisbah Corps and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency in Crime Prevention in Fagge Local Government

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	90	94.7
No	5	5.3
Total	95	100

Sources: Survey (2024)

Table 3: Shows respondents' perceived *Hisbah*'s successes in its crime prevention activities. It can be observed that an overwhelming majority (94.7%) of the respondents believed that the *Hisbah* in the study area were successful

and have cordial relationship with National Drug Law Enforcement Agency in crime prevention in Fagge Local Government, while only (5.3%) of the respondent have the opposing view.

Table 2.3 The Challenges Faced by Hisbah in Crime Prevention in Fagge Local Government Area, Kano State?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Poor funding	55	57.9
Lack of facilities	15	15.8
Political interference and instability	10	10.5
Poor Training	10	10.5
All of the above	5	5.3
Total	95	100

Sources: Survey (2024)

Table 2.3 shows that 57.9 % of the respondents believe that, poor funding (inadequate funding) is the main problem of Hisbah, while 15.8 % of the respondents believed that lack of facilities is also affect and hinder the activities of Hisbah in crime prevention in the study area, also 10.5 % of the respondents argued that political interference and instability as well as poor training is the main problem confronting Hisbah board in the study area.

An official of the Crimes Department, Kano State *Hisbah* Board (Fagge) that was interviewed, reveals that:

....If truth must be told, then I must admit that poor funding is a serious challenge to the *Hisbah* today... of course the government is doing its best, but there is still the need to do more. Part of our problem today is fuelling and servicing of our operation vehicles. Sometimes we have to contribute money from our meager allowances to fuel the vehicles to be used for effecting arrest or for repatriating beggars or women arrested for prostitution and reunite them with their respective families (Official, Crimes Department, KSHB Kano, 2023).

Table 2.4 Measures for Improving the Activities of Hisbah in Crime Prevention in Fagge Local Government Kano State.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Adequate Funding	55	57.9
Full Community Support	20	21.1
Proper Training of Personnel	10	10.5
Good Working Facilities	10	10.5
Total	95	100

Sources: Survey (2024)

From Table 2.4 respondents are asked about the most important problem that need urgent attention for improving their activities in which 57.9 % of the respondents believe that, adequate funding need to be provided to *Hisbah*, while 21.1 % of the respondents are of the view that full community support need urgent attention by *Hisbah* in crime prevention in the study area. 10.5% of the respondents both believe that, proper training of personnel and good working facilities are the factors that can improve the activities of *Hisbah* in crime prevention and control.

An in-depth interview conducted to official of the Crimes Department, Kano State *Hisbah* Board (Fagge) interviewed revealed that:

.... Honestly, the Government had never interfered in our activities... the State Government is trying its best to fund the *Hisbah*, and we need funds adequately. So, we try to manage what we get from the Government in the most transparent and prudent way. It's through enough and adequate fund that we can carry out operation successfully in crime prevention and control (Official, Crimes Department, KSHB Kano, 2023).

Discussion of the major Findings

This study finds out a number of findings which are discussed in this section guided by the research question. The research sought to find out an appraisal of the role of *Hisbah* in crime prevention in Kano State with focus on Fagge Local Government Area of the State.

The study found out that the residents of the study areas were aware of the activities of the various *Hisbah* groups and agreed that *Hisbah*'s personnel have significantly impacted on crime prevention, security as well as safety. Equally, a majority of them indicated that fight against immoral behaviors was the major crime prevention and control activity engaged by *Hisbah*, and that the crime prevention and control activities of the various *Hisbah* groups in the entire state (Kano) were desirable. Hence, they subscribed to the view that *Hisbah*'s contributions to crime prevention and control have been positive and complementary to the activities of the Nigeria Police Force (Chukwuma, 2000a; Human Rights Watch, 2004; Alubo, 2011; and Nwauche, 2014).

The above supports the findings of Gwarzo (2003), Olaniyi (2005), and Adamu (2008) who described the various *Hisbah* groups in Nigeria as complementary policing organizations to the activities of the Nigeria Police Force, since most of the suspects arrested by *Hisbah* are handed over to the police for prosecution in the courts of law. In addition, the above findings reaffirmed the position of the routine activities theory which posits that when motivated offenders and suitable targets meet in the absence of capable guardians, crime is likely to happen (Cohen and Felson, 1979). The study also found out that public order crimes (such as gambling, sexual offences, prostitution, substance abuse, etc.) were the major crimes prevented and controlled by the various *Hisbah* groups.

Similarly, the operation of *Hisbah* has been associated with a number of internal and external problems such as inadequate funding, poor method of staff recruitment, low quality staff with the majority of the staff being young men with little formal education, lack of background in law, and insufficient training in law enforcement tradition for arrest, little knowledge and skills on investigation and intelligence gathering and preservation of evidence. They are also confronted with inadequate basic operational equipment's, harassment and extortion by the police (in few places), unprofessional conducts leading to human rights breaches and lack of recognition which in all indicate the existence of serious problems which a majority of the respondents believed to have had negative consequences on crime prevention and control in the study area.

This supports the findings of (Gwarzo, 2003; Nuhu, 2004; Adamu, 2008; Radda, Dambazau and Ibrahim, 2011; Oronsaye and Igbafe, 2012; and Nwauche, 2014), problems often encountered by various *Hisbah* groups in the discharge of their duties include; lack of adequate funds, equipment and vehicles, logistic problems, inadequate funding, over dependence on handouts from wealthy citizens, lack of gender representation and political interventions.

Conclusion

The study also infers that *Hisbah's* methods of operation are largely proactive in nature focusing mainly on promoting what is good and discouraging what is evil and criminal. The above conclusion was drawn from the views of residents irrespective of differences in religion, state of residence and/or social class. Hence, it can be inferred that the various *Hisbah* groups in the region were largely successful and the secret of such successes was largely because of the general acceptance they enjoy from the members of the public irrespective of religion or state of residence.

Recommendations

Hisbah should maintain its proactive method of operation and that other security agencies, such as the police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, the Department of State Service and so on, are encouraged to adopt this method looking at the positive impacts it has on the ability of the policing organizations to secure public trust and prevent crimes that might have had serious consequences on life and property of the citizens.

The working relationship between the *Hisbah* and the NPF should be strengthened looking at the role it plays in assisting the *Hisbah* to contribute to crime prevention and control. In other words, the *Hisbah* and the NPF must be made to work together in order to address operational overlaps that may lead to physical clashes between the two.

Hisbah organizations should adopt a model, which will provide a consultation between the *Hisbah* and members of non-Muslim communities. This will assist in making the non-Muslim community aware of the *Hisbah's* activities, which

may go a long way in clearing all doubts on the purposes for which the *Hisbah* was established.

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