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THE IMPACT OF SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION ON SECURITY DYNAMICS IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The proliferation of small arms is an identified security issue that needs to be responded to, by various levels of authority given the fact that, small arms are the most useful instruments for internal violence and criminal activities. The phenomenon has far-reaching effects on both individuals and the state. Consequently, this paper focuses on the menace of small arms; it particularly examines the security effects of the proliferation of small arms in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The paper is more of qualitative inquiry which relies significantly on secondary sources of data where the information came from the books, journal articles, printed materials and online sources. In terms of analysis, the paper used interpretive approach based on thematic method. Fragile state approach is used as theoretical basis to strength the argument of scholars. Thus, the research findings indicate that the proliferation of small arms has contributed in the upsurge of crime and criminality where it led to an increase in crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping and banditry in the state with high rate of banditry and kidnapping across the state especially in areas such as Birni Gwari, Giwa, Katari among others. The menace threatens governance thereby frustrating the effort to deal with the situation of conflict and criminal activities. The study recommends for serious commitment from the government and community leaders towards addressing security issues. Collaboration with other stakeholders in order to address the issue of proliferation of small arms for a lasting security situation and peaceful political undertakings in the state and beyond is also important.

Keywords: Conflict, Insecurity, Kaduna State, Small Arms, Armed Crimes

Introduction

There are many challenges to security while small arms proliferation appears to be one of these challenges by virtue of their spread to the hands of criminals and other non-state actors. This is affirmed by Okeke and Oji (2019), who buttressed the argument and explained that the proliferation of SALW is often one of the major security challenges currently facing Nigeria, Africa and indeed the world in general. It is further revealed that porosity of the border has made Nigeria to become a transit and destination of illegal SALW whereas most of the arms are weapons from the war tone areas of Africa particularly Libya, Central Africa, among others (Okeke & Oji, 2019). The situation of SALW proliferation in Nigeria is alarming where it shows that out of about 10 Million SALW in West Africa, at least 70% of the arms are in Nigeria (Otuya, 2019; Gun Policy News, 2020). The estimate may be acceptable given the high rate of crimes that have been perpetuated by the use of SALW in Nigeria. It is also reported that in 2018 and 2019, 12, 000 people have been arrested in relation to trafficking of small arms and light weapons (Murtala & Murtala, 2019). Furthermore, another report published by daily

trust on investigation conducted, in 2022 alone over 4, 338 persons were arrested by the security agencies over illegal trafficking of small arms. Some 2,555 guns, 2,204 ammunitions, and 1417 cartridge were recovered (Daily Trust, 26th Feb, 2022). In a similar revelation, the Nigeria Police stated that 2, 887 weapons were recovered between January and December 2022 (Gramin, 2022). Moreover, an intelligence report exposed by Swachh Barat Mission (SBM) notes that about 6, 154, 000, SALW have been illegally circulating in Nigeria.

Consequently, the proliferation does not only perceive as threat to communities but, also a threat to the state (Malam, 2014; Ngomba & Moses, 2017; Okeke & Oji, 2014). In corroboration, the work of Grip (2015), Esther (2014), Bashir, (2015) Ginifer (2015, Waziri (2023) among others, described small arms proliferation as a trigger of conflict, insecurity and violent crimes. Hence, small arms by their very nature are the most common instruments for violent crimes and conflict. Furthermore, there is no opinion which contests or disputes the view that small arms have their own part in the persistence of conflict, criminal activities and violence in many developing nations of the world including Nigeria. In most of the literature especially the work of Chelule (2014), Mulinzi and Kurantin (2016), Waziri (2017) and Friday (2019) shows that these types of arms are weapons that are essentially designed to be carried and used by one person. They can be used to kill and injure civilian persons. Beyond that, the instruments (SALW) have the potential of destroying social and economic dimensions in the state. Most of these arms are smuggled into Nigeria by some unpatriotic citizens through land and sea borders mostly from middle-east, Asia and other countries in Africa especially those with experience of conflict and civil unrest (Malam, 2014).

Furthermore, the arms are upon arrived into the country find their ways into the hands of criminals across various sections and states in Nigeria (Ifeanyichukwu, Epilefa, Epem, & Collins, 2018). Kaduna state is among other states in the northern region of Nigeria that is experiencing security challenge especially the issue of bandit activities, kidnapping, farmer-herders clashes as well as communal disputes. This paper therefore, attempts to examine the impact of small arms proliferation on security dynamics with a particular reference to Kaduna State because in the last decades, the state experienced incidences of ethnic and religious conflict but, in recent times, it experiences another dimension of insecurity that includes the issue of kidnapping, banditry and clashing between farmers and herdsmen this is contained in Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (2023). According to Data Project, there are roughly 1, 500 persons abducted for ransom and hundreds of communities destroyed causing the displacement of more than 50, 000 people. Hence, small arms proliferation as expressed by many scholars it has devastating effects on security, intensifies conflict and trigger insecurity situation (Caleb & Gereld, 2015).

In line of the above information, attempt to look into the case of small arms proliferation of Kaduna State is pertinent because the effort would pertinently expose us to realize the threat poses by the phenomenon particularly on security and socio-economic aspects. Also, it could help the general public and other relevant stakeholders to recognize the effect of small arms proliferation on fundamental dimensions of the state and societies such as the security and the economic development. Beyond that, the paper would contribute to the body of knowledge thereby exposing the level of casualty and insecurity caused by the used of small arms. The paper is structured into six segments that include the introduction, overview on the effects of the proliferation of small arms on security in Nigeria, methodology, the effects of the proliferation on security in Kaduna state, government effort towards addressing the issue of small arms proliferation and the conclusion. The broken of the work into seven sections is pertinent because it helps in discussing issues in their appropriate themes and sub-themes.

Overview of the Effects of Small Arms Proliferation on Security in Nigeria

Within the Nigerian context, the proliferation of small arms has since its emergence in 1967, been affecting numerous dimensions including security situation in the country (Anyim, 2005). It is in this light that Malami, Abdullah and Yusoff (2017) attribute the Nigerian security challenges to the proliferation of small arms; explains that the proliferation of small arms creates security problems such as criminality that includes cattle rustling, armed robbery, assassination, kidnapping and militancy. The level of insecurity has increased, criminal activities have become high, many lives are being lost and the citizens are battling with fear of attack by criminal gangs and the incidence of conflict. The phenomenon serves as a major source of destruction to lives and property (Malami et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Nigeria is one of the developing nation states of the world where proliferation of small arms manifested in conflicting proportion and its society has become fully unsecured and enmeshed in the culture of violence. At present time, one of the major security threats often facing Nigeria is the proliferation of small arms (Ngomba & Moses, 2017). It is in line with this background that Olayiwola (2017) states that since the return to civilian rule, Nigeria has been facing serious security challenges that are connected to widespread of small arms. These challenges include religious conflicts, communal conflicts and insurgency among others. This is related to the view that the wide availability of small arms fuels communal conflict increases the rate of violent crimes and poses threat to general aspect of security (Okeke & Oji, 2014).

The different forms of security challenges plaguing Nigeria as a country are multiple; from those of armed robbery to kidnapping from ethnic and religious motivated violent conflicts to outright insurgencies against the authority of the state. This reality resulted in Nigeria churning out more than 3.3 million internally displaced persons since around the year 2010, making Nigeria the highest producer of internally displaced persons in Africa. This situation is connected to the massive proliferation of small arms (Caleb & Gerald, 2015: 15).

Ginifer and Ismail (2005) stressed that small arms are becoming endemic in Nigeria and the face of possession and lethality of weapons are increasing. It is also noted that a gun culture and violence have increasingly developed in Nigeria since 1999. Much of the civilian persons are living in fear especially given the possession of small arms by virtually all segment of society. However, Nte (2011) argues that the proliferation of small arms is contributing to alarming levels of armed crime, and militancy. Okeke and Oji (2014) on the other hand, explains that, since 1999, when Nigeria returned to civilian rule, conflict in several regions of the country has claimed thousands of lives. Bashir (2014) noted that the often circulation and spread of small arms in various regions in Nigeria has largely deteriorated the security situation. Small arms proliferation significantly affects Nigeria's security in both human and in economic terms. Bashir (2014:262) the unabated proliferation of small arms, escalation of violence, loss of lives and properties turned the country into total hopelessness.

Nigeria is exposed to the culture of violence where the security situation has been threatened by the numerous incidences of violent crimes and conflict, while the root cause of the culture of violence in Nigeria is the wide spread of small arms and the fact of their possession by non-state actors. The prevalence of armed violence in Nigeria has created an endemic and pervading sense of insecurity as it led people to negative confidence on the government for their safety and security. The government at all levels in Nigeria have in respect to control of the proliferation of small arms and the attendant armed violence, indicates little effort or even failed in their responsibility (Anyim, 2012). It has been pointed out that:

> States would also be held accountable for patterns of abuses committed by armed individuals or groups. If a state fails to act with due diligence to prevent the abuses, examples of failure to act with due diligence include the state's refusal to establish reasonable regulations regarding the private possession of small arms that are likely to be used in homicides, suicides and accidents; its failure to protect individuals from pattern of domestic violence caused with small arms; and its failure to protect individuals from organised crimes including kidnapping and killing for ransom (Frey, 2004:42).

The fact that small arms are the most useful instruments for violence, in Nigeria, they also contributing in the rising level of insecurity because most of the violent crimes and activities such as Boko Haram insurgence, armed banditry armed robbery, kidnapping among others are perpetuate by the use of small arms (Anyim, 2012; Bashir; 2014, Malami, 2018; Waziri; 2018). It is observed that the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms has heightened the level of insecurity in Nigeria. This gave the rise to the rampant misuse of small arms by non-state actors. The easy access to small arms by abusive non-state actors in Nigeria greatly contributed to armed violence coupled with further atrocities and also makes peace difficult to achieve. The increased proliferation of small arms has aggravated the rates of crime throughout the Nigerian state, and the crimes especially the armed robbery and kidnapping have become the major concern of citizens in the country.

Basically, the issue of small arms was prior to Nigeria's return to democratic dispensation not so devastating in Kaduna State like in other parts of the country such as the Niger Delta and north-eastern part of the country. From 1999, when the country returned to democratic governance, conflicts and criminal activities have increased due to political and economic interest (Onuoha, 2011; Fayeye, 2012; Okere & Oji, 2014). Given the increased number of small arms in circulation in the country, conflict, on ethnic and religious lines has become widespread across the country (Okere & Oji, 2014; Nte, 2011). In this context, Kaduna State in particular, has a long experience of ethno-religious conflicts. Although the problem of small arms is not so new in the state, but its increasing availability in recent years matters a lot because it helps to stoke a wave of ethno-religious conflicts, kidnapping, armed robbery, farmer versus herdsmen clashes and other violent crimes (Saidu, 2018; Izge, 2023). Many lives were lost, and many other people sustained injuries due to the presence of small arms in conflict and violent crimes. A report from the Nigeria Police Force confirmed that from 2019 to 2022 over 200 people lost their lives in conflict and banditry attack (NPF, 2023). Emmanuel and Charles (2013) note that the availability and use of small arms are believed to have been fuelling ethnic and religious conflicts with untold consequences on human lives in Southern Kaduna and Kajuru area of Kaduna Central. This is so because the frequent ethnic and religious conflicts in the state have witnessed the use of these weapons.

As there is a common set of explanations in the literature on the effects of the proliferation of small arms, it is widely agreed that there are diversity of threats that are interlinked with the proliferation of small arms Okere 2017; Adetiba, 2019; waziri, 2023; Hassan, 2019. These threats originate from different levels and due to certain incidences. In Kaduna State therefore, the threats emanated from ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, criminality, and social and economic deprivation. For many opinions, because of the fear and mistrust among inhabitants in the state, each group armed themselves ready for conflict and self-defence (Izge, 2023; Abdullahi, 2020; Bowo, 2023)

Within the context of human security therefore, the proliferation of small arms has significant effects on the survival and development of the individuals and the communities. Onuoha (2011) argue that the easy access to small arms has destructive effects on human security as the phenomenon led to an increasing insecurity situation. The misuse of small arms encourages a culture of violence and undermines societies by creating enabling environment for criminal activities (Fayaye, 2012). Its menace, undermines governance, jeopardizes fundamental human rights and hinders economic development and threatens international humanitarian law (Okere & Oji 2012; Adetiba, 2012; Onuoha, 2011; Hassan, 2016).

Thus, the proliferation of small arms is largely recognized as particular factor that is threatening the security of the individuals. To this context, Gikonyo (2015) argue that the proliferation and access to small arms often results in massive population displacement, uprooting millions of children and their families from their homes and making children more susceptible to disease, violence, military recruitment, and sexual assault.

The proliferation of small arms affects the basic rights that every individual is entitled. Citizens' lives usually are the first and most affected element; it significantly affects security of the individual citizens especially in those areas where there is the prevalent of small arms. This is primarily by escalating and prolonging conflicts, strengthening crimes and criminal gangs as well as increasing crimes against humanity. Today, among the most pressing security threat is the proliferation and misuse of small arms. Hundred thousand of people are being killed and injured every year in conflicts and in violent crime committing which are basically perpetrates by the use of small arms.

Hence, in any society, violent conflicts and crimes have their own basis many issues are behind the heightening level of these sets of menace. Meanwhile, from 2000, Kaduna State has witnessed changes in the nature of conflict and criminal activities earlier known by the people. Thus, such changes can be attributed to the presence of small arms. However, during the conflicts, many people were killed, injured and several others were displaced. Emmanuel and Charles (2013) note that the frequent and extent of the conflicts has imposed general threats to the security situation which are not only affecting the state, but also the human lives and economic activities given the manifestation of small arms. Onuoha (2012) conceives that the availability of small arms helped to prolong conflicts, induce huge internal population displacement, undermines social peace and devastated the economic livelihood of individuals and communities.

Methodology

This study is anchored within a qualitative approach of inquiry and it engages the use of secondary sources of data for the information. Secondary data in general, connote information that is already documented both published and unpublished. In this respect, the information for the paper is generated from the books, journal articles, Newspapers, magazines and other related documents. It is a case study inquiry because it concerns the issue of small arms and insecurity in Kaduna. In terms of analysis, the paper employed interpretive approach and presented issues on themes and sub-themes. Conversely, fragile state approach is used to contextualizing the work within the context of state and security.

The Effects of Small Arms Proliferation on Security Situation in Kaduna State

As scholars the study assessed the general perspective of scholars on effects of small arms, proliferation this sub-section therefore, would discuss the effects of the proliferation of small arms on security situation in Kaduna State, Nigeria. In an attempt to analyze how the menace

affects security in Kaduna state, some empirical evidences would presented to strengthen the debate. Thus, the effects of the proliferation of small arms on security situation as par as most of the views, have taken such forms as pervasive insecurity; with increasing criminal activities and criminal gangs, undermined peace, threat to security forces. This is noted by Halidu (2023), who worked on the "Implications of Cross-border Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) for National Security: A Study of Kaduna State". Halidu expressed that the "impact of small arms proliferation on Kaduna State can be felt in the upsurge of crime and criminality, identifies crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, assassination, political and religious violence as some of the direct impacts of illicit possession, availability and proliferation of SALW in Kaduna State. He further explained that the impact of small arms proliferation is that it led to an increase of crime. In this context, there is extensive consideration of small arms proliferation as trigger and contributor to the insecurity situation in Kaduna State given the fact that the state experiences conflict and criminal activities. It has been argued that the security situation in Kaduna State is as bad as the situation of insurgency explaining that the killing in the state occurs on daily basis while kidnapping of citizens has increased, urging the federal government to take the situation in the state as serious as in the other places where there are insurgent attacks (Saidu, 2019; Halidu, 2023). The situation said to be similar with the security situation in the North-east (The Guardian, 2018). Moreover, it has been stated that the people of Kaduna State no longer sleep well as insecurity has become a very worrying issue (Daily Trust, 2017).

Besides these aforesaid views, however, the literature has also corroborated. In this line therefore, Alusala (2016) portrays that the proliferation of small arms has led to the recent insecurity and armed conflict in various parts of the world. He further notes that the insecurity situation and armed violence in most countries especially in Africa, is due to the ineffective measures to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the continent. Other scholars who have corroborated with the view include (Isa, Luka & Philip, 2024; Paul & Achoba, 2023; Halidu, 2023; Theoplilus, 2020; Awotoyo, Akinrinde & Oyobade, 2022; Alaku, 2022; Idehen & Subair, 2021; and Igbini, 2020) among others. These scholars are of the opinion that, the proliferation of small arms creates and intensifies insecurity in various societies worldwide. In another perspective on proliferation of small arms and security challenges, Olayiwola (2017) buttressed the argument, pointed that the proliferation of small arms has contributed immensely to the rising insecurity situation in Nigeria. This view is also in line with the assertion that the proliferation of small arms has become a threat to Nigeria's international security, contributed to the current insurgency and banditry in northern part of the country (Francis et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, to prove that insecurity is an existing situation in Kaduna State, there is need to draw conclusion from the argument that the state has been into conflict for many years and in recent times, the existence of criminal activities. This condition is practically being experienced since the return to democratic dispensation in 1999. In recent times, with the influx and support of small arms, the insecurity situation has deteriorated. Some of the major security challenges that are aided by the proliferation of small arms are unresolved farmer and herdsmen conflict in southern part of the state, armed banditry and kidnapping that happen virtually on daily basis (Izge, 2023; Saidu, 2019). However, in aligning the argument with fragile state assertion, insecurity is one prominent attribute of states under fragile condition. Hence, to affirm the argument, the view of Rose (2019), is a particular one which sees fragile states as those nation-states which are facing various challenges such as conflict, insecurity, extreme poverty among others. Ware and Ware (2014) have also argued alone this line, stressing that in fragile states, the insecurity level is high. The situation in Kaduna State has clearly presents the features of

state fragility since the state has the experience of conflict, banditry, armed robbery, kidnapping and herdsmen-farmers clashes (Saidu, 2018; Bowo, 2023; Chukwunonyo, 2023; Abdullahi, 2020).

Upsurge of Crime and Criminality

There is serious connection between small arms proliferation and the increase of crime and criminality. For most views, possession, proliferation and easy access to small arms contribute to the increase number of crime and criminal gangs. Mirle (2012) is in this line of the view that the proliferation of small arms promotes criminal activities such as armed robbery and kidnapping. In another perspective, it has been observed that small arms proliferation intensifies, fuels, and exaggerate criminal activities. It also causes the emergence of violent crimes and organized criminal activities (Stott, 2016; Bashir, 2014; Alusala, 2016; Abdullahi, 2015; and Banko 2016). To narrow down the discussion to Kaduna State, the threats to security are crimes such as armed robbery and kidnapping that are at the increase while the number of criminal gangs is also increased and all is believe to be connected to the availability and easy access to small arms. A report from the Nigeria Police force has also reflected the link between small arms proliferation and current insecurity situation especially the increase of crimes. The Police, reported recovery of more 2, 500 illicit arms and weapons between 2019- 2021 (NPF, 2022). In the same document, it has showed that there were over 1000 armed robbery related cases and over 500 people kidnapped in the state. It has been projected by Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency that the number of persons who were displaced by bandit and conflict incidences across Kaduna State is about 50, 000 persons (KSEMA, 2022).

Furthermore, historically, the major security challenge in Kaduna state was the issue of ethnic and religious conflict but, in recent years and with aid of availability of small arms, insecurity in the state has gone beyond conflict to the emergence and intensity of criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping and banditry (Izge, 2023; Waziri, 2023; Saidu; 2019; Charles, 2023). These are security challenges that in the previous decades were not the experience of the state but, recent become common (Abdullahi, 2020). This is corroborated by Emanuel and Ndimbwa (2013), Alaku (2022) and Subair and Idehen, (2021), who argue that the crime of armed robbery and kidnapping are largely perpetuate by the use of small arms. It is apparent therefore, that the small arms proliferation is connected and contributed to the increased of criminal activities because the argument of scholars is in line with the Police revelation on the situation The Police reported that over 400 people have been arrested for committing violent crimes such as armed robbery and Kidnapping (NPF, 2020). People have been attacked not only along the roads as it began, but also, are being attacked at their residences. This is happening in the cities and also in the rural areas. It mostly happens in areas such as B/Gwari, Kaduna Abuja road and Kaduna metropolis (The Guardian, 2020; NPF, 2021).

In general, from the title critical assessment and testimony the linkage between small arms proliferation and the increase of armed crimes is established to a level because it is generally believed that armed robbery, kidnapping, banditry, farmer herdsmen conflict and cattle rustling are currently the major sources of insecurity in Kaduna State and the northern part of country at large. It is generally agreed that these sources of insecurity or more precisely armed crimes, are being perpetrate with small arms both conventional and locally made light arms.

Threat to Security Forces

The security forces are facing the challenge of the proliferation of small arms where they finds it difficult to do their operations in some areas because the people in such areas have possessed

sophisticated arms that are more destructive than that of the security forces. It prevents the security forces from performing their constitutional responsibility of protecting lives and properties. They are vulnerable to groups' attack because the arms owned by the groups are even more sophisticated than that of the police. Therefore, they cannot control violence and deal with other criminal activities. This assertion was revealed by the participants in both focus group and personal interviews. In line of this view, Okoli (2014) argues that in Nigeria criminal activities such as armed robbery and kidnapping only got worst over time due to inability of the police to have a firm grip on crime given the availability of small arms. It is part of the challenge faced by the security forces that in B/Gwari forest a team of Operation Yaki had encounter with armed bandit in which three security officers died in the incidence (NPF, 2018).

Besides, it is also argued that the proliferation of small arms poses threat to security forces thereby preventing them (security forces) from exercising their constitutional responsibility. Scholars such as Uwa and Anthony (2015), Banko (2016), Chelule (2014) Gerald and Caleb (2015) are in line with this view. They explained that the readily availability and easy access to small arms conditions the inability of the state security forces to discharge their constitutional responsibility of defending the territorial integrity and the people within the state. Meanwhile, in Kaduna State, it is evident that the security forces have found it difficult to fight and deal with some of the groups of armed bandits, kidnappers and cattle rustlers and this might link to lack of equipments and professionalism and due to the ability of the groups to possessed more sophisticated arms. Report has shown that criminal activities armed robbery, cattle rustling and kidnapping have been perpetrated in places such as Birnin Gwari, Gwanin Gora in Chukun local government, Rijana in Kagarko local government among others (NPF, 2018). While, dealing with perpetrators of these sorts of criminal activities in the state is said to be difficult particularly by the government security forces. Consequently, in an attempt to draw conclusion from theoretical conception, institutional weakness is a peculiar attribute or characteristic of fragile and failed states. In this case and in line with the notion of threat to security forces by the menace of small arms proliferation in Kaduna State as believe and interpreted by the participants, is an indication or manifestation of a condition of fragile state. Proponents such as Brock et al. (2012), Vallings and Moreno-torres (2005) and CIFP (2006) among others, have pointed out weakness of the institutions and no limitation to which institutions within the state if weak, the state is fragile and as such, security forces as an institution in any state can be linked to the perspective of fragile state. Similarly, this has covered the notion of the effect of the proliferation of small arms which posed threat to the security forces in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Government Effort towards Small Arms Proliferation

Addressing any security challenge to state and the individual citizens is a responsibility of the government of a state. Thus, Nigerian government had in its attempt to control the proliferation and illegal possession of arms joined various international and regional protocols such as the United Nations convention and protocol against firearms manufacturing and trafficking. It is also a signatory to the ECOWAS Convention on SALW, their ammunition, and other related materials (Giaba, 2013). As pointed out by Romeo (2013), Nigeria was first among African countries that ratified on 13th August 2013, the treaty adopted by the United Nations on the illegal trafficking of arms. Furthermore, at the national level therefore, Nigeria established the national firearms act as the legal instrument governing small arms possession, manufacture and the use in the country (Okere & Oji, 2014). In its effort to curb the proliferation and circulation of small arms, the Nigerian government has in compliance with and for implementation of ECOWAS moratorium, established a National Commission for the control of the proliferation

and circulation of small arms (Uwa & Anthony, 2015). As noted by Abdullahi (2015) the main institutions responsible for the enforcement and implementation of the provisions and legislations related to SALW are the national commission on the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, the police and the court. The commission is responsible for the importation and exportation of SALW, detection and destruction of illegal small arms and light weapons (Abdullahi, 2015). Moreover, the establishment of National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2021 is another effort of the Nigerian government in addressing the issue of SALW proliferation and its effect. The main responsibility of the centre is to implement strategic plans and policies for eradication of small arms and light weapon proliferation and related issues in Nigeria (National Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey, 2021).

However, on the part of Kaduna State, it is realized that the government has no particular initiative towards small arms proliferation but rather placed the issue of illegal possession and use of small arms under Operation Yaki, a joint Security Task Force established to deal with armed crime related issues such as armed robbery, kidnapping and illegal transfer and use of arms. The state government in collaboration with the Federal Government created Operation Yaki, a joint group of personnel of the Nigeria Police Force Kaduna Command, The Military, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, State Security Service (SSS) and the Neighborhood Watch Group formed in 2008 with the mandate to curb crime and criminality in the whole of Kaduna State (Bello & Maikudi, 2020). It is clear that Kaduna State Government relies heavily on Operation Yaki on crime control. Therefore, the creation of this security outfit has demonstrated government's effort on curbing crime and the proliferation of small arms since that SALW proliferation is also a challenge and is aiding the increase of crime.

Conclusion & Recommendation

In conclusion, the paper has examined the issue of the effects of the proliferation of small arms particularly the major security effects in Kaduna State, Nigeria. It is situated within the context of fragile state approach. The paper utilized secondary data for the information. The paper, as explained is qualitative research relied significantly on document study for its data. Furthermore, the overall aim of the paper was to widen the academic perspective and develop further knowledge based on the existing area of research on the proliferation of small arms that is in need of theoretical exposition and empirical investigation. Consequently, the proliferation of small arms was found negative to the security aspects in Kaduna state, Nigeria. Beyond that, it also affected socio-economic activities in the state. The paper observed that small arms have become devastating in the societies having being the main instruments for violence and criminal activities worldwide especially in the developing world.

However, the paper recommended the need for serious commitment and effective policy and security frameworks that can deal with the proliferation, illegal possession and use of small arms and other related weapons, and as such, the government must be strong; capable of discharging its constitutional responsibility of a sovereign state. It should provide the needed basic services including security to citizens and job opportunities to control possession of arms for crime and violence. It is also important for the government at national and state levels to partner with other stakeholders that include the community leaders, civil society organizations in order to create awareness about the effect of small arms proliferation and to get information about criminals especially on where they are living around the communities.

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