

## Roles of Community Participation in Security Management in Nigeria: A Study of Lafia L.G.A of Nasarawa State

Stephen Sunday Ojo<sup>1</sup>, Nuyong Anuhu<sup>2</sup>, Paul Orude<sup>3</sup> and Rimbwarat Nancwat Binkur<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Sociology, Federal University, Gashua, Yobe State Nigeria. <sup>4</sup>National Open University of Nigeria, Jos Study Centre.

Corresponding author: [drstephenjo@fugashua.edu.ng](mailto:drstephenjo@fugashua.edu.ng)

### Abstract

The ongoing state of insecurity in Nigeria threatened the very structure of national integration, and created an ecosystem of fear and anxiety that impacted negatively the socio-economic development of the country. Meanwhile, the Nigerian government has taken various steps and created various devices to address domestic security challenges through the conventional security agencies with some degree of failures. Against this background, this study focuses on examining the roles of community participation in security management of the Lafia municipality in Nasarawa State. The survey design is used for the study. Multi-level probabilistic / non-probability sampling was used in selecting a sample size of 222. The questionnaire method of data collection was used. In analyzing the data collected from the field, statistical analysis of both descriptive and inferential was adopted. The study found that community members' role may range from fund contribution, reporting of threats and incidents of insecurity to security agencies. It shows that there was a significant positive relationship between community participation and security management ( $r = 0.275$ ,  $N = 217$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The study concludes that the extent of participatory roles of community members in security management as seen in the study is usually limited to reporting of threats to security agencies; participation in decision making and implementation is usually poor as the common masses are alienated from sensitive areas of security management. It therefore recommends among others that security management needs to be redefined in order to emphasize the role of community participation in producing effective and efficient results.

**Keywords:** Roles, community, participation, security, insecurity, management.

### Introduction

Man is a social being that lives collectively in communities. Every human community has fundamental challenges that are usually tackled collectively. One of these challenges is the need to protect the lives and property of the community. Security is multifaceted and comprehensive and can be viewed from an individual, the group, national or global perspective. No one can experience perfect security because individuals or states are not perfectly secure or completely insecure, but experience varying degrees of security or insecurity at various times. At the community level, security has a lot to do with the perception that community members have about their environment and the actual state of security or insecurity in the community.

Kaufman and Dilla (2017) have indicated in recent times, community participation strategy has become a commonplace for the effective utilization of citizen to address varying social problems. The concept of community participation and community development dates back in 1950s, when both intertwined with each other and perceived to be having the same meaning after it has taken a complete shape with the situations that occurred in the era (The World Bank, 2016). Participation is a rich concept that varies with its application and the manner in which it is defined (The World Bank, 2016). For instance, some see participation as a matter of principle, a practice, and yet, for others, it is an end in itself (The World Bank, 2016). Mastrofski (2016) noted there is merit in all the interpretations of participation. Mastrofski (2016) suggested the police have to work effectively with the public and communities to prevent and control crime through community-oriented policing, and other similar security approaches that encourage collaboration between the police and citizens. In this regard, participation program simply implies the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions that enhances their well-being in the area of income, security, or self-esteem (The World Bank, 2016).

Meanwhile, the Nigerian government has taken various steps and created various devices to address domestic security challenges. At the vanguard of the techniques to deal with the instability is the deployment of the Nigerian Police (NPF) and the occasional deployment of the military in the event of a police failure. Security management in Nigeria was the realm of national security agencies. Community members will be involved in national security as traditional security agencies fail to address the issue of Nigeria's anxiety and there is a growing sense of alienation among the public in managing the security of their lives and property. This has led to a proliferation of these various community-based security groups like the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), 'neighborhood watch', 'vigilante', Hisbah, and of recent Amotekun, Eastern Security Network (ESN) etc. However, the success or otherwise of such community security management apparatus remains unclear. Against this background, this study will focus on the territory of the Lafia municipality in Nasarawa state and consider the role of community participation in safety management.

### **Statement of Problem**

The security situation in Nigeria as evidenced in political violence, armed robbery, kidnapping, inter-denominational activity, bandits, herder clashes, cow buzz, arson, looting, riots, and even terrorism has become a big challenge. The ongoing state of anxiety threatened the very structure of national integration and not only created an ecosystem of fear and anxiety, but also had a fatal impact on the development of national education, industry and socio-economics (Imhonopi & Urim, 2012). As a result, most people, especially the poor masses, have to sleep with their eyes wide open and live in constant fear of the unknown. Nigeria has consistently been ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2012), indicating that Nigeria's insecurity is exacerbated.

Especially in central and northern Nigeria, a series of kidnappings, prominent armed robbery, assassinations, bandits and peasant conflicts pose a major threat to people's lives and welfare (Gambo & Inuwa, 2020). Criminal organizations often thwart social and economic activity by attacking homes, markets, banks, churches, and social events. The inability of conventional national security organizations to address national security challenges creates gaps that require community involvement.

## **Research Objective**

The overall purpose of this study is to understand the role of community participation in the security management of Lafia L.G.A. of Nasarawa. The specific purposes include to determine the extent to which community members are involved in security management, and to examine the role of community members in security management in the Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Concept of Community**

The sustenance of human race since creation has been made possible through the relationship which exists between one another. This is why people try to live together for a very long time while joining hands to meet their social, emotional, political and educational needs. Hornsby (2000) defined community as a "group of people who share the same religion, race, job, or interest... the feeling of sharing things and belonging to a group in the place where you live".

It is also important to note that with the emergence of new town and cities in Africa, a modified form of this residential community has appeared where a group of people live in the same place and share some common interest, but do not necessarily have strong historical links or local ties.

### **Concept of Community Participation**

Some views on community involvement have been expressed by various scholars. In addition to participating in the political process, which is a better known aspect of participation, two areas of participation are frequently mentioned and used in explanations. These are participation in the global planning process and in providing basic needs (Farrant, 1980). Participation in the community may, in operation, mean a joint effort by stakeholders. Inspired by unique considerations in the following framework: A free and independent organization, a pool of voluntary power. Share risks and responsibilities, as well as resources and benefits, to achieve the goals that people have set for themselves; and having a say in decisions which affects them.

Available evidence strongly suggests that policy makers and bureaucrats often tend to regard participation in the implementation process as the most important element. This partly explains why the top down approaches to planning for both basic needs and other

socio-economic activities at the local level is often emphasized. Bureaucrats are generally contemptuous of not only local knowledge but also organizational abilities of local people. For any policy on community participation to be successful, it must accept the fact that local communities possess the basic knowledge to contribute meaningfully not only to decision making on matters affecting their socio-economic well-being, but also the basic organization structure and abilities to participate in the implementation of this decision as well as in evaluating their efficacy. In instituting a programme of community participation, certain, organizational and institutional issues ought to be addressed. In this regard, Cohen et al (2007) recommended a check list where he incorporated the major issues and questions which have to be properly addressed. These are:

- i. At whose initiative does participation occur?
- ii. What are incentives involved?
- iii. What are the channels of participation?
- iv. What is the duration of participation?
- v. What is the scope of participation?
- vi. How empowered is participation?

Answers to some of these questions will be found in the reason for community participation.

### **Concept of Insecurity**

Insecurity is a fundamental feature of human existence. Yet conceptualizing the term 'insecurity' is problematic as most studies prefer to simply see insecurity as the opposite or absence of security. In their study, Ajodo et al (2014) found that anxiety was exposed to danger or threat, a situation of fear, or something that caused or could cause fear or harm to an individual. It suggests that it is in a state. According to the author, such topics can be of political strategic, socio-economic, or ecological nature. Similarly, Ewetan and Urhie (2014) conceptualize insecurity as an obstruction to security, whether historical, religious, ethnic, civil, social, economic or political. They argue that the concept of anxiety has many implications, including lack of safety, danger, risk, uncertainty, lack of protection, and lack of safety.

In further development, Achumba et al (2013) defines uncertainty from two perspectives. First, as a dangerous or imminent risk, or exposed condition, a danger is a condition that is vulnerable to harm or injury. Second, as a state of being exposed to risk and fear, fear is a vague and unpleasant emotion experienced in anticipation of misery. Scholars further say, to name a few, lack of security, danger, risk, uncertainty, the lack of trust, suspicion, inadequate protection or protection, the lack of stability, problems, lack of protection, and safety.

Security is not an independent term as it is always associated with an individual or social value system. It is the ability to pursue important political and social ambitions and make life choices.

**The Causes of Insecurity in Nigeria**

Scholars have additionally investigated the reasons for lack of confidence in Nigeria. For instance, Ewetan and Urhie (2014) become aware of the reasons for lack of confidence in Nigeria as (a) ethno-non secular conflicts, (b) politically primarily based totally violence, (c) systemic and political corruption, (d) financial primarily based totally violence, (e) unemployment/poverty, (f) prepared violent groups, (g) susceptible protection system, (h) porous borders, and (i) terrorism. Andrew and Kennedy (2013) submits that the sources of insecurity may be labeled into far flung and instantaneously elements. The far-flung elements include: loss of institutional ability arising from authorities' failure; pervasive fabric inequalities and unfairness; ethno-non secular conflicts; the struggle of perceptions among the general public and authorities; susceptible protection system; lack of socio-cultural and communal price system. The instantaneously elements include: porous borders, rural/city drift, social irresponsibility of companies, unemployment/poverty, terrorism, etc.

Ebohon and Ifeadi (2012) contend that Nigeria has been enmeshed in a firebox for lack of confidence main to ratings of deaths of harmless citizens. This lack of confidence consistent with them has assumed bold dimensions or even threatens countrywide integration within the country. The widespread reasons for lack of trust are the lack of institutional capacity leading to the failure of government agencies, the gap between inequality and the lack of fairness and justice, the ethnic and religious conflicts, and the separation of people and government agencies. , Vulnerable and low-funded military facilities, government conflicts, non-indictment of violent perpetrators in Nigeria, and lack of sociocultural and community policing systems.

**Role of Community Participation in Security Management**

Community participation in management of security can also be referred to as community policing. In line with this, Igbuzor (2011) opined that community policing entails, community partnership in creating a safe and secure environment for all in which people take active part in their own affairs. He added that community participation in security management is a paradigm shift away from traditional policing or traditional model of policing which focus on collaboration of efforts between the police and the residence in combating crime and fear of crime. For Alemika and Chukwuma (2011), community participation in security management arises from the perceived failure of the state to provide security and protection against the rising incidence of crime. Thus, community participation results in the establishment of informal policing structures rooted in the communities and enjoy some level of legitimacy. Such informal structures work in collaboration with the formal police and can take four different forms: religious, ethnic, state-sponsored and community/neighbourhood watch.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the theory of community participation. Proponents of community participation theory say that people's involvement in solving their problems first allows for the redistribution of power, thereby deliberately excluding it from the political and economic processes that involve the masses. It claims to bring many lasting benefits to people to enable them to be. Again, community involvement brings people together to form the environment and make decisions about them. Community member participation is when people develop the skills to assess, prioritize, and manage their environment and create personal empowerment. The theory is that community members' involvement is a way of incorporating local values and attitudes into any program and a general perspective into community programming. Bracht and Tsouros (1990) added that community members can also provide access to local leaders, resources, and technical skills not otherwise available. In general, community involvement leads to a sense of ownership and continued ownership of each program, also known as the principle of ownership (Aguba, 2011). In this way, community participation theory allows members of the community to explain the need and benefits of participating in safety management.

### **Empirical Review**

Skogan (2006) investigated community participation in policing in Chicago and found that merely making opportunities available for community participation in policing could be divisive rather than integrative because awareness and contact with community members at the bottom of the ladder may be less common and the people may be unaffected by the community policing.

Okeke (2013) argued that community participation in security management is not new to Africa because the Igbo traditional society had this model of community policing before colonialism. He argued that colonialism alienated the people from security management leading to a situation of distrust between the people and the police. The poor participation of the people in community policing resulting in inability of the conventional security management apparatus to combat crime and tackle various security challenges in the country thereby by leading to proliferation of vigilante security apparatus which only exacerbated the security challenges in the country. The study concluded that the prospects of community policing in Nigeria look gloomy in view of lack of cooperation between the police and the community in the management of security in the communities.

In another study, Adejoh (2013) assessed the performance informal security structures in community crime control in Lagos Metropolis. Based on in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussion (FGDs) with community members, the study found that community participation in security management results in emergence, proliferation and persistence of informal policing structures. Again, the study community participation in security management arise from factors like rise in criminality, inadequacy of the formal police services, poor community perception about the ability of the police to respond to the needs

of the victims of crime and lack of integrity of the police. Furthermore, the study observed that informal security groups play remarkable role in neighbourhood crime control and enjoy support of the people.

### **Gaps in Literature**

The emergence and engagement of community security apparatus in various parts of the country have drawn attention of writers. Most of these studies focus on examining the relationship between the state security apparatus and members of the community. Other studies like Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) concentrate on the challenges faced by the emergent security apparatus. Thus, the links between community participation and security management have not been systematically articulated in extant literature. This study therefore attempts to contribute by investigating community participation in management of security in Lafia L.G.A of Nasarawa State.

Extant literature shows that most studies tend to view security mainly as the security of the state both internally and externally (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). On the issue of community participation in security management, most studies focus on community policing by examining the relationship between the state security apparatus and members of the community. Based on the foregoing, most of these studies did not examine the extent of participation of community members in the management of security in the community. Again, empirical investigation into the role of community members in addressing security remains scanty. Thus, the link between community participation and security management has not been systematically articulated in extant literature, this forms the lacuna this study attempts to fill.

### **Methods**

The survey design is used for the study. According to the National Population Commission (NPC), the total population of Lafia L.G.A in 2018 using the geometric growth model is estimated to be 430,474, based on the 2006 census (329,922). The subjects of the survey are all members of various communities in the municipal area of Lafia, Nasarawa. Multi-level probabilistic / non-probability sampling was used when selecting survey samples. The study area clustering is based on randomly selected members of the municipality. The districts from the local government of Raffia are: Agyaragu Tofa, Assakio, Chiroma, Gayam, KeffiWambai, Shabu/Kwandere. From the selected communities, 37 respondents representing households in each community were targeted. Therefore, a sample size of 222 was selected.

The survey method for this study was a questionnaire. This was a structured questionnaire designed to answer survey questions in the survey through responses from key informants in the community. The questionnaire consisted of four sections A through D. Section A collected demographic information from respondents. Section B focused on the security status of the Lafia LGA. Section C focused on Lafia LGA's security management

mechanism, and Section D provided information on community members' involvement in Lafia LGA's security management. Survey question answering options were placed on a 4-point Likert scale: very agree (SA, 4 points), agree (A, 3 points), disagree (D, 2 points), and very agree. No (SD, 1 point). 222 copies of the structured questionnaire were distributed. The researchers used the services of three research assistants who helped manage the survey. In analyzing the data collected from the field, statistical analysis of both descriptive (frequencies and percentages), and inferential (Pearson Product Moment correlation) was adopted.

### Results and Findings

222 respondents were enrolled in this survey, but only 217 were acquired and properly completed. This shows a response recovery rate of 97.7%. Therefore, 217 proved to be useful for analysis of studies.

**Table1: Demographic Data of the Respondents**

| <b>Sex</b>                       | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Male                             | 157      | 72.4     |
| Female                           | 60       | 27.6     |
| Total                            | 217      | 100      |
| <b>Age</b>                       | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
| 18 – 26                          | 28       | 12.9     |
| 27 – 35                          | 56       | 25.8     |
| 36 – 44                          | 79       | 36.4     |
| 45 – 53                          | 37       | 17.1     |
| 54 – 62                          | 12       | 7.8      |
| Total                            | 217      | 100      |
| <b>Occupation</b>                | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
| Private sector employee          | 30       | 13.8     |
| Teaching                         | 40       | 18.4     |
| Farming                          | 65       | 30       |
| Civil Servant                    | 41       | 18.9     |
| Trading and Others (pls specify) | 41       | 18.9     |
| Total                            | 217      | 100      |
| <b>Educational Qualification</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
| No formal Schooling              | 20       | 9.2      |
| Primary                          | 28       | 12.9     |
| WAEC/TC                          | 88       | 37.8     |
| OND/NCE                          | 57       | 26.3     |

|              |            |            |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| HND/B.Sc     | 20         | 9.2        |
| M.SC/PH.D    | 10         | 4.6        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>217</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Field survey, 2021

### Incidence of Insecurity in Lafia LGA

This section presents data on the responses of respondents as regards the incidence of insecurity in Lafia LGA using frequencies and simple percentages.

**Table 2: Responses on the Incidence of Insecurity in Lafia LGA**

| Item | Question                                                                                       | SA(%)    | A(%)     | D(%)     | SD(%)    | Total(%)  |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1    | There is a high incidence of armed robbery, car snatching and house breaking in this community | 98(45.2) | 50(23.0) | 37(17.1) | 32(14.7) | 217(100%) |
| 2    | Kidnapping, rape and hostage taking of individuals are rampant in this community               | 50(23.0) | 67(30.9) | 40(18.4) | 60(27.7) | 217(100%) |
| 3    | Community conflicts, ethnic conflicts and arson are common in the region                       | 64(29.5) | 78(35.9) | 43(19.8) | 32(14.7) | 217(100%) |
| 4    | Mob actions occur frequently in this area                                                      | 40(18.4) | 58(26.7) | 55(25.3) | 64(29.5) | 217(100%) |
| 5    | Demonstrations are rampant in this area                                                        | 40(18.4) | 49(22.6) | 78(35.9) | 50(23.0) | 217(100%) |

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 2 shows the high uncertainty of Lafia LGA. Approximately 68.2% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that armed robbery, car theft, and burglary were common in the community. In addition, 23% and 30.9% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed to the occurrence of this form of anxiety regarding the abduction, rape and hostage taking of people in the community, respectively. This indicates that kidnapping and hostage taking were widespread forms of anxiety in the community. In addition, the majority of respondents argued that community clashes, ethnic conflicts and arson were common in Lafia LGA, with 29.5% fully agreeing and 35.9% agreeing. Again, 25.3% and 29.5%, respectively, disagreed with the statement that mob behavior was common in the region, in other words, mob behavior was less common in the region. Regarding community

demonstrations, 18.4% fully agreed, 22.6% agreed, and 35.9% and 23% disagreed, respectively. This means that there are occasional demonstrations and other forms of public unrest in the area.

### Security Management Mechanism in Lafia LGA

**Table 3: Responses on Security management mechanism in Lafia LGA**

| Item | Question                                                                                                                                                | SA(%)    | A(%)     | D(%)     | SD(%)    | Total(%)  |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1    | There exist recognized agencies that manage security in Lafia Local Government Area                                                                     | 98(48.2) | 69(31.8) | 25(11.5) | 25(11.5) | 217(100%) |
| 2    | Only state security management agencies like the armed forces, police and civil defence are used for security management in Lafia Local Government Area | 60(27.6) | 78(35.9) | 40(18.4) | 39(18.1) | 217(100%) |
| 3    | Only community based agencies like the Vigilante Group and Neighborhood Watch are used for security management in Lafia Local Government Area           | 30(13.8) | 20(9.2)  | 69(31.8) | 98(45.2) | 217(100%) |
| 4    | Both state security agencies and community based security agencies are used for security management in Lafia Local Government Area                      | 70(32.3) | 80(36.9) | 34(15.7) | 33(15.2) | 217(100%) |
| 5    | People of the community participate in security management of the area                                                                                  | 30(13.8) | 39(18)   | 98(45.2) | 50(23.1) | 217(100%) |

**Source: Field survey, 2021**

Table 3 shows that 49.5% and 25.3% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed with the existence of an authorized authority to control the security of the city of Lafia, respectively, while 12.6% and 12.6% disagreed or did not agree at all. On the other hand, only national

security agencies such as police and civil defense are responsible for the security management of the city of Lafia, with 15.2% strongly agreed, 10.1% agreeing, 25.3% disagreeing and 49.5% completely disagreed, respectively. In addition, 25.3% strongly agreed, 49.5% agreed, 15.2% and 10.1% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the only community based agencies like the Vigilante Group and Neighborhood Watch are used for security management in Lafia Local Government Area. Concerning use of both state security agencies and community based security agencies for security management in Lafia Local Government Area, 30.3% strongly agreed, 44.4% agreed, 12.6% disagreed while 12.6% strongly disagreed. Finally, the majority of respondents constituting 49.5% of the respondents disagreed that security management is mostly outsourced to private security firms, 23.5% strongly disagreed while 15.2% and 10.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively.

#### **Community members' participation in management of security in Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State**

**Table 4: Community members' participation in management of security**

| Item | Question                                                                                                                                         | SA(%)    | A(%)     | D(%)      | SD(%)     | Total(%)  |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1    | Community members of the community are involved in decision making concerning security management in Lafia Local Government Area                 | 35(16.1) | 19(8.8)  | 63(29)    | 100(46.1) | 217(100%) |
| 2    | Community members participate actively in implementing decisions and the agreement concerning security management in Lafia Local Government Area | 20(9.2)  | 34(15.7) | 100(46.1) | 63(29)    | 217(100%) |
| 3    | Members of the community participate in regular security management meeting of Lafia Local Government Area                                       | 40(18.4) | 48(22.1) | 80(36.9)  | 49(22.6)  | 217(100%) |
| 4    | Community members take ownership in the                                                                                                          | 25(11.5) | 35(16.1) | 69(31.8)  | 88(40.6)  | 217(100%) |

|  |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
|  | management of security |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 4 reveals that the majority of the respondents constituting 50.5% disagreed that members of the community are involved in decision making concerning security management in the Lafia Local Government Area. Furthermore, concerning active participation of community members in implementing decisions and agreement concerning security management in Lafia Local Government Area, 5.1% and 12.6% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively. Conversely, 50.5% and 31.8% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on the issue of active participation of community members in implementing decisions and agreement concerning security management in Lafia LGA. Meanwhile, 25.3% and 49.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively concerning participation of community members in regular security management meeting of the Lafia Local Government Area. On the other hand, 15.2% and 10.1% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. On the issue of community members taking ownership in the management of security in Lafia Local Government Area, the majority of respondents amounting to 30.3% disagreed while 44.4% strongly disagreed. Again, 12.6% of the respondents strongly agreed while 12.6% agreed.

### Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis states that there would be a significant relationship between community participation and security management. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson's r-correlation analysis. The results are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Pearson's product-moment correlation showing the relationship between community participation and security management**

| <i>Variables</i>        |  | <i>Mean</i> | <i>S.D</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>r-cal</i> | <i>P</i> | <i>Decision</i> |
|-------------------------|--|-------------|------------|----------|--------------|----------|-----------------|
| Community Participation |  | 2.5484      | .88124     | 217      | .275         |          | Sig.            |
|                         |  |             |            |          |              | p<0.05   |                 |
| Security Management     |  | 56.8111     | 5.29555    | 217      |              |          |                 |

Source: Field survey 2021

Table 5 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between community participation and security management ( $r = 0.275$ ,  $N = 217$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that a significant increase in community participation will improve security management. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

## Discussion of Findings

There is generally a high incidence of insecurity in Lafia LGA. Various forms of insecurity are prevalent in various communities within the Local Government Area.

The extent of participation by members of the community was low as measured by involvement in decision making, implementation of decisions and agreements concerning security management in the communities, participation in the regular security management meetings and taking ownership of security management. The traditional and political office holders were more involved in security management in the community. When it comes to decision making on issues of security in the community, the traditional and political office holders were more involved because they are more influential in the communities. Other members of the community may seldom attend community meetings, but have little or no contribution to make in terms of decision making. Thus, the extent of community members' participation in security management in the area is low.

The study found that community members' role may range from fund contribution, reporting of threats and incidents of insecurity to security organizations arrest, detention and prosecution of suspected insecurity elements and recovery of looted items. Community members' role was more in the area of reporting of threats and incidents of insecurity to security agencies, this was also very low.

Decisions on security issues are typically taken or even applied by elites within the communities. The major role of security management is being played by conventional security agencies at the same time as roles expected of community members are hijacked by the elites in the communities. Hence, contrary to the notion that vigilante groups and neighborhood watch are mechanisms through which community members participate in security management in the communities. Findings of our study suggest that community members do not significantly participate in security management. Again, they do not play a significant role in addressing security in Lafia LGA of Nasarawa State despite the proliferation of community based security management agencies.

## Conclusion

The emergence of the community based security agencies like vigilante groups and the neighbourhood watch has improved participation of community members in security management in the communities. However, the proliferation of community based security agencies has not improved the participation of community members in management of security because the elites in the community hijack the community based security management agencies. Consequently, poor participation of community members in the community policing arrangements further exacerbates the security crisis in the society. Generally, the extent of participatory roles of community members in security management as seen in the study is usually limited to reporting of threats to security and incidence of insecurity to security agencies. Participation in decision making and implementation is usually poor as the common masses are alienated from sensitive areas of security management.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Security management needs to be redefined in order to emphasize the role of community participation in producing effective and efficient results.
2. Members of the community should be sensitized on the need to take ownership of the management of security in the community. Similarly, the elites in the community should mobilize the people and build the capacity of security needs of the common man on the security agenda. In this way, people take over security management and participate more actively.
3. Continued training and retraining of traditional security equipment officers and men, as well as members of community-based security agencies, is required, especially when building relationships with the general public in the community. This builds a culture of trust and collaboration and encourages community members to participate in safety management.

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