



Badoo cult violence in Ikorodu, Lagos state from 2015-2018: Costs and Response Assessment

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Abstract

This study assessed the social and economic costs of the activities of the “Badoo Cult” which constantly tormented parts of Ikorodu local government area of Lagos state, between 2015 and 2018, and appraised the responses of the Police and community members to the group. The study was guided by the broken window and frustration aggression theories. It utilized both quantitative and qualitative data respectively collected from 250 and 10 residents aged 18 years and above from five sampled communities. The study found that residents lived in fear and suffered social and economic loses because of the activities of the Badoo cult group. The paper underscores the importance of timely stakeholder intervention and collaboration in responding to future security challenges in the state and country.

Keywords: Badoo cult, violence, insecurity, Lagos state, Nigeria

Introduction: Background of the study

The world is currently experiencing an increasing wave of insecurity. Even countries with higher advantages of advanced security technologies and that were hitherto relatively more secure, are being plagued by various degrees of crime. In Nigeria, the level of crime and insecurity has also continued to task the government, with the consensus being that so much still needs to be done to secure the country (Uhunmwangho and Aluforo, 2011). One of the pointer’s to the country’s security challenges is the rising wave of cultism of the violent hue. Though not entirely new, concerns with the new wave of cultism derives from the corruption and total transformation of the erstwhile noble character of cults as we had in the traditional setting

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into violent bloodletting and misery producing vampires that they have grown to become presently. Nyiayaana (2011) reckons for instance, that cultism was a major feature of pre-colonial Africa and that there are documented accounts of the activities of cult groups such as *Poro* and *Sande*, Human leopards, and Human crocodiles, which operated in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and in Central Africa respectively. Also, in Nigeria, we had ethnically-based cult groups like the Reformed *Ogboni* Fraternity among the Yoruba, the *Ekpe* secret cult among the Efiks, the *Amanikpo* secret cult among the Ogoni, and the *Igbe* secret cult among the Isoko people. Others include the *Ekine* cults in the Delta region and the *Owegbe* cult among the Edos among others. The activities of these various cult groups were not violent in nature; in fact, membership of a cult group represented elevated status in traditional African society and this largely accounted for the restriction of membership to elders and adults (Adewale, 2005; Nyianyaana, 2011). Cults also served as checks and balances to the monarch and represented the will of the people. In Nyianyaana's (2011) words:

As sociocultural organisations that developed locally, cults traditionally provided mechanisms and structures that defined the role and relationships of each cult's members. Cults not only served the spiritual and social needs of their members but importantly, also acted as institutions for social control through the execution of traditional customs, settlement of disputes, and the dispensation of justice.

Perhaps it was these noble ideals of the cults in traditional Africa that motivated their emergence in tertiary institutions. Drawing from the powerful status of cults in the politics of the traditional society and their very noble ideals, pioneer leaders of the new campus cults had planned to use these groups to promote the African identity and check the excesses of the white colonizers. Echoing this point, Nyianyaana (2011) wrote thus concerning the earlier sets of campus cults:

The Pyrate confraternity, a pioneer campus cult formed in 1953 at the University of Ibadan by Wole Soyinka, now a Nobel Laureate, was concerned with fighting colonialism, ethnicity, bad university policies, and sexual exploitation of female students by lecturers. Given this mission, members of the Pyrate confraternity consisted mainly of the brightest, most politically aware students who adopted non-violent strategies to mobilise and reawaken African and black consciousness against the social injustice imposed by imperialism. Subsequent cult groups that emerged before the late 1970s, such as the Panama and the pan African Black Axe confraternities, followed the legacy and traditions set by the Pyrate confraternity. Therefore cult activism spread to almost all the universities in Nigeria and became a positive force in the struggles toward social and political modernisation.

Needless to note here that the Pan African and revolutionary ideals of the pioneer campus cults have been long lost as we watched them descend into bloodletting vampires, unleashing terror and mayhem on our campuses (Adejoh, 2004). According to Adejoro (1995) little did Wole Soyinka and his friends know that the establishment of the confraternity will lay the foundation for what transformed eventually into violent groups. Campus cultism in the past three decades had unleashed irreparable damage, anguish and pain on youth, families, and the society at large.

While violent cultism in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria has not abated and continues to draw the attention of scholars and government alike, it has also continued to expand beyond the borders of higher institutions of learning into communities, urban and rural (Owonikoko & Uche, 2016). Human Rights Watch (2007) reports for instance, that there were about 103 armed cult groups operating in Rivers state alone as at 2004, many of them university, street, urban

and rural based. The number of secret cult groups in Lagos may not be known, but there are speculations that they are legion and operate under the auspices of land speculators (*omo onile*), *okada* riders, street uchins (*street touts*) and gang groups to unleash mayhem on community members. They include the *Eiye* and *Aiye* confraternities, *Awawa* cult group and several others of diverse nomenclatures, spread all across the streets of Lagos, making life in our neighbourhoods a nightmare. IFRA (2019) conjectures that the rise in the number of secret cult groups may be a direct derivative of their elevation from being a form of cultural practice to one of a weapon for economic banditry and political witch-hunting of opponents, while Ogunbameru (2004) reckons that the menace moved from the campuses of higher learning to the streets where they operate without restraints, largely because they have powerful backers within the society.

It was in this context of pervasive street violence that a murderous cult group called *Badoo* emerged in parts of Ikorodu in 2015. Jeremi Luendi (2017) observed that while numerous other gangs and criminal groups hound those living in Lagos and beyond, the *Badoo* boys stood out because of their ritualistic murders. This paper reports the outcome of a study that was conducted to assess the social and economic costs of the deleterious activities of the “*Badoo Cult*” group on residents of Ikorodu local government area of Lagos state, Nigeria, where it operated for over three years. The paper also appraised the response of the Police and community members to the weird activities of the group. The paper is divided into six sections including this introduction as section one. Section two articulates the *problematic* of the study. Section three reviews previous works on the subject matter while section four examines the theoretical underpinnings of the article. Section four discusses the research methods used while section five presents the results of the study. The final section concludes this paper and makes workable recommendations.

Statement of the problem

In traditional African societies, secret cult groups were not only socio-cultural and political organisations which provided socio-economic support to their members. They also occupied a pivotal place in community development and social transformations, served as indigenous peacemaking and healing bodies in local communities and provided checks on the excesses of the monarch (Nyanyaana, 2011). The pioneer cult groups in our universities were also non-violent bodies established to fight colonialism, ethnicity, bad university policies, and sexual exploitation of female students by lecturers; they also helped to mobilise and reawaken African and black consciousness against the social injustice imposed by imperialism (Thomas, 2002). Unfortunately, as extant literature amply indicate, these civil society-oriented social movements degenerated into criminal and violent organisations tragically challenging the constituent elements of the criminal law and the prosecutorial powers of the police and the judiciary, with membership cutting across ethnic, religious, social, educational, economic and political classes. IFRA (2019) reports that the membership of these groups also spread across communities, streets and creeks as well as institutions of modern society such as universities, colleges and schools; courts/judiciary, law enforcement and other parastatals of government and private establishments.

Fatunde, (2011) also alludes to the international shape, scope and dimension of secret cults many of which are known to aid, abet and even actively engage in human trafficking, sexual exploitation and slavery, and associated human rights abuses. Many of them are also known to be involved in criminality (armed robberies and thefts), political thuggery, politically-motivated assassination, electoral fraud, as well as other forms of delinquency and social nuisance (IFRA, 2019). Today, on school campuses, streets, neighborhoods, cult and cultist groups hold everyone to ransom and engage opponents, governments and law-abiding citizens alike, in wars of attrition over the control and domination of social, economic and political resources and spaces that benefit them.

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By virtue of its metropolitan and mega city outlook, Lagos state parades an unknown but quite high number of cult groups, both school-based and street-based. Writing in the Vanguard of June 15, 2019, Evelyn Usman enumerated a few of the cult groups in Lagos state. Among them are the One Million boys' gangster which operates in the densely populated Ajegunle area of the state, the Fadeyi boys which holds sway in Fadeyi, the *Akala* boys which operates in Mushin area, the Nokia boys which is in control of Surulere, and the *Shitta* Boys that controls Bariga, Oworoshoki, Shomolu and Palm Groove areas. Others are the *Awawa* boys which operates in Dopemu, Agege, Ogba, Iyana Ipaja and parts of Ago area, the *Aiye* and *Eiye* groups which are fighting for supremacy in Badagry, Lekki, Okokomaiko and Ajah areas and the *Koko* cult group, which reigns at Ipaja and Ayobo areas of the state. She adds that cultism has been transported into markets, as some traders in almost all the popular markets in Lagos belong to a cult group, popular among which is the *Arobago* Cult Group.

While all these cult groups constitute evident threat to peace and order in the state, one cult group which activities heightened the feeling of fear and threatened the peace and order of Lagos state was the notorious Badoo boys that held sway in parts of Ikorodu Local Government area of the state, arguably because of their weird and ritualistic murderous inclinations. Although the activities of the group has largely been brought under control, the pains and devastations the group inflicted on residents of Ikorodu still linger, hence the motivation for this study. Among other things, the study assessed the social and economic costs of the activities of the "Badoo Cult" group on residents of Ikorodu local government area of Lagos state, Nigeria, and as well appraised the response of the Police and community members to the weird activities of the group. An understanding of these issues will hopefully equip relevant agencies with requisite knowledge and guide them on how to proactively forestall the emergence and growth of such elements into formidable groups that could threaten and undermine the peace of the state.

Previous studies

The Badoo cult group came to limelight after their June 5, 2016 attack on Oke Ota community in Ibeshe, Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos state, raping and killing a 27-year-old lady (Afeez Hanafi, 2017). But there are speculations that its existence predates the 2016 attack. Alvin Cheng-Hin Lim (2017) notes that the word “Badoo” which was written on a wall at the crime scene gave the group which became notorious for the serial raping and killing of many people in the Ikorodu axis of Lagos state between 2016 and 2018, its name. Ikorodu itself is a city in the north-east end of Lagos state with a projected population of 727 people in 2016. It is located along the Lagos Lagoon and shares a boundary with Ogun State (Olowolagba, 2018). According to SBM Intelligence (2017), the unique geography of the town with its scattered communities, mangrove swamps and creeks, and relative distance from metropolitan Lagos means that a lot can happen in the area from which most of Lagos is insulated. This perhaps explains the notoriety of the area with crime and violence lately, including the Badoo cult violence.

The Badoo boys were a faceless gang which operated mainly at night and attacked families and religious houses in relatively isolated buildings. It is believed by some people that members of the group sneaked into residents’ houses in the middle of the night with the aid of “juju” (charms) which they used to hypnotize their victims before raping and/or killing them (Akinrefon, 2017). Their activities included raping of women, and ultimately killing of their victims (women and men alike) by smashing their heads against the wall or with stones, mortars or pestles without taking away anything but the blood of their victims in white handkerchiefs; an indication that it was a ritualistic group. In a most vivid representation of the heinous activities of the group, Obiejesi (2017) said:

The cult group carries no guns or machetes. Their weapon is primarily a stone. In addition, they use clubs, preferably household grinding stones and mortar and pestle. Their modus operandi is to sneak into targets’ homes in the dead of the night and

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smash their heads with grinding stones or mortars.There is more to it than meet the eyes. They come into a house with no weapon except a stone or mortar, which they use to smash their victims' head. They are not spirits but they come at the dead of the night, 2am, and they use the grinding stone and mortar to smash the heads of an entire family. After they are done, they clean the blood with white clothes and they escape. This is bizarre and it is fetish and a ritual. One handkerchief used to clean the blood of a female victim is bought for N500, 000 from the Badoo guys.

In a features article of July 12, 2017, The Guardian wrote thus of the group:

The gang is said to drain the blood of their victims into a calabash or gourd, then soak it onto a white handkerchief. The rumour is that Badoo sells the blood-stained handkerchief to ritualists who use it for money and power charms.... Each handkerchief costs 500,000 naira (\$1,600, 1,400 euros). This explains why Badoo usually wipes out an entire family in order to make more money."

Gani Adams, the national coordinator of the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) believes that the group was a ritual group sponsored by highly placed personalities in the society and that these godfathers are the recipients of the valuable parts of victims' bodies and the blood-soaked white handkerchiefs from victims' bodies and/or private parts (Akinrefon, 2017). Daniel Smith (2001) argues that rumors which connect occult violence with the quest for wealth are a long-standing trope in the Nigerian popular imagination, and recounts how a man had allegedly sacrificed his nephew with the assistance of a witchdoctor in his bid to get rich, a situation that sparked off the popular 1996 Owerri riots when community members discovered their heinous deeds.

The cruelty of the Badoo boys made some authorities Ojo (2018) to describe them as a terrorist group whose brutality is a step ahead of that of the Fulani herdsmen and the Boko Haram sect. This he says, is because the Badoo group would rip open the wombs of pregnant women and remove their foetuses. He likens this crude brutality of the group to those of Jack the Ripper who terrorised the largely impoverished areas of the Whitechapel District of London in 1888. In the case of Jack the Ripper, he made prostitutes living and working in slums of the east end of London his target, cutting their throats and mutilating their abdomens.

Akinrefon (2017) provides an insight into the mode of recruitment of the Badoo boys, saying that the recruitment of members was a covert operation. He notes specifically that members were hired by putting up vacancy notices and then asking applicants to come for interview from which they were given money and lured into joining the cult group. This is corroborated by Young in the July 7, 2017 of *Information Nigeria*, an on-line news medium thus:

Badoo members now recruit new members by pasting vacancies for various positions with lucrative and attractive salaries for the public. These vacancies are usually printed on papers and posted at strategic locations in the state, with instruction to call the phone number on it. Once you call the number, they will tell you to meet them at a particular location for the interview. Once you get there, you would be forced to be initiated into the cult with instruction to go out and kill. Uncooperative job seeker are usually killed on the spot.

After a successful joint operation between OPC and policemen in which scores of the Badoo boys were arrested, Gani Adams was quoted to have alleged that the Badoo boys are being recruited by the rich in society. In his words:

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From our findings, secret cults have shifted their base from the universities to our homes. Artisans, like vulcanisers, mechanics and others are now members of dreaded secret cults. Young boys in their teens are being initiated into cults. All these cultists are being recruited by prominent people in the society, especially politicians and leaders, who use them to perpetrate evil in the society (Vanguard, 9/9/2017)

He adds further that:

They also have a channel through which they give money to people as empowerment to recruit. They give as much as N250, 000 to lure people to the cult. So, it goes beyond what you see in the public, it is a well-coordinated group. For now, over a hundred people have been arrested and by the time the police carry out their interrogation, more revelations will come out (Vanguard, 9/9/2017).

For well over three years, the Badoo boys terrorized Ikorodu and inflicted adverse social and economic difficulties on residents. This forms the main thrust of this paper, which is to establish the social and economic costs of the three years of terror by the Badoo boys on residents of Ikorodu. The paper also appraises the response of both the police and community members with a view to providing insight into how the group managed to hold sway for that long before being reigned in, how this was ultimately accomplished and the lessons therein

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study was anchored on the broken window theory and frustration aggression theory. These have been discussed as follows:

Broken Window Theory

This theory was developed by Wilson and George Kelling (1982). Its central argument is that if a single window broken by a vandal in a neighbourhood is left unrepaired, more vandals will be emboldened to break many more windows, and it is only a matter of time before the entire neighbourhood would become dilapidated. The word window is used both literally and figuratively in the theory, to mean anti-social behaviours such as incivility, rowdiness, truancy and the like. Wilson and Kelling (1989) in Haralambos (2013) argue that unchecked social vices in any community will over time, metamorphose into more serious crimes such that would threaten the community. This is because more people would take to such vices and overtime, law abiding citizens will become afraid to even go out. Being free from close observation or corrections, those inclined to criminality will commit more and more crimes.

Contrariwise, if residents see that attempts are being made to maintain law and order by correcting or challenging any act that violates community norms and values at first sight, they will be more likely to challenge or report crime and any act of incivility. Hence criminal act will not get out of hand. The assumption is that community members will report cases of anti-social behaviour if they are aware that security agents will act as is expected. As the people become more confident that security agencies will back them up when they challenge troublemakers, the more likely they will do so and the better it is for the society. The theory posits that the police are duty bound to stop an area from deteriorating by clamping down on first signs of criminal behaviour before things get worse and uncontrollable. Their role is to maintain public law and order in areas where it has yet to break down.

This theory aptly explains why the problem of Badoo activities crystalized and grew to the magnitude that it sufficiently rattled not just Ikorodu, but the entirety of the state government. By the arguments of this theory, the activities of the Badoo boys would not have grown to the proportion it did if the police and the community people had risen firmly after the first known attack. The failure of the

police to act even when the activities of the Badoo boys were reported to them by some community members discouraged the latter and made them look away until the situation became unbearable to the point that they began to activate local vigilante structures and to resort to jungle justice. The resort to jungle justice ultimately led to the unlawful killing of suspected members of the group by members of the public.

The drawback of this theory is that it laid too much emphasis on the police as the only agency to maintain law and order. In some cases, locals and community members can play more prominent role in maintaining order than the police. Community members would perhaps, have been able to nip the scourge in the bud if they all rose in unison to confront the group before it became too entrenched to be tamed.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

The frustration- aggression theory is associated with John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer, and Robert Sears (1939). The theory posits that “the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression”. In this wise, individuals or groups feel aggressive when frustrated in the attainment of their goals. Later day modifications of this theory suggest that frustration may not necessarily lead to aggression, but notes that aggression is one possible response to frustration (Miller, 1971). Davies (2016) reinforces this in his argument that violent behaviour is often the result of extremely frustrating, ego-demanding and anxiety producing conditions arising from inability of people to reach their goals in life. Abiodun et.al (2019) add that the pressure of unfulfilled aspiration or unsatisfied urges, not timely addressed, leads to frustration that manifests in aggressive behaviour. For Ibrahim (2017), violent or destructive behaviour is not in-born or natural, rather, it arises out of frustration, interference with activities leading towards achieving a goal or unresolved emotional conflicts. In this instance, the perpetuation of violence is a bid to relieve frustration. The hypothesis as espoused by Sigmund (1977) argues that man, has

an inherent desire for self-destruction, but Abiodun et.al (2019) observe that for frustrated people, this instinct is turned towards others in a process of displaced aggression.

This theory is considered appropriate for explaining the violent and murderous dispositions of the Badoo cult group which terrorized parts of Ikorodu between 2015 and 2018. This is because the gruesome signature of the homicides attributed to the Badoo Gang who sneaked into people's homes at the dead of the night, brutally murdered and sometimes wiped out entire families without taking away any money or property from their victims' homes, can only speak of a gang that is utterly bitter with society out of share frustration. In other words, a gang of frustrated boys merely capitalized on the poor response of the police and community members to entrench themselves and vent their anger on a society which they adjudged to have failed them.

Research Methods

This study adopted the survey method of research design, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data from residents of five purposively selected communities in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State. The sampled communities are Ibeshe, Odogunyan, Erunwen, Ogijo and Ikorodu town, and were purposively sampled because these were among the most affected in the Badoo boys' attacks. Copies of a semi structured questionnaire were administered on a total of 280 respondents who were sampled through the multi stage sampling procedure. In-depth interviews were also administered on another 10 respondents made up of traditional rulers, community leaders, youth leaders, women leaders, local vigilantes and the police took part in in-depth interview discussions, who were sampled purposively. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used for the analysis of quantitative data while the qualitative data were content analysed.

Results

The results of the study are presented and discussed in this section.

Table 1: The Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Age		Number	%
	Below 20 years	13	5.2
	20-29 years	40	16.0
	30-39 years	107	42.8
	40-49 years	55	22.0
	50 years and above	35	14.0
	Total	250	100.0
Sex	Male	154	61.6
	Female	96	38.4
	Total	250	100.0
Education	Primary	74	29.6
	Secondary	110	44.0
	Tertiary	61	24.4
	Others	5	2.0
	Total	250	100.0
Ethnic group	Yoruba	184	73.6
	Igbo	39	15.6
	Others	27	10.8
	Total	250	100.0
Religion	Christianity	129	51.6
	Islam	97	38.8
	Traditional	22	8.8
	Other	2	0.8
	Total	250	100.0
Marital Status	Single	42	16.8
	Married	152	60.8
	Separated	40	16.0
	Divorced	16	6.4
	Total	250	100.0
Communities	Ogijo	50	20.0

studied	Eruwen	53	21.2
	Ibeshe	56	22.4
	Ikorodu town	41	16.4
	Odogunyan	50	20.0
	Total	250	100.0
Length of stay in the community	Below 5 years	27	10.8
	6-10 years	122	48.8
	11 years and above	101	40.4
	Total	250	100.0

From table 1, about 5% of the respondents were below 20 years, 16.0% were between 20-29 years, about 43% were between 30-39 years, 22.0% were between 40-49 while 14% were 50 years and above. The table also indicates that about 62% of the respondents were males while the remaining 38% were females. Regarding education, it is seen that about 30% of the respondents had primary education, 44.0% had secondary education, 24% had tertiary education and only 2.0% had other unmentioned forms of educational attainment. Also, about 74% of the respondents were Yoruba, about 16% were Igbo while about 10.8% of them came from other unspecified ethnic backgrounds. The high preponderance of Yoruba in the study is explained by the location of the study which is in South-west Nigeria, a predominantly Yoruba enclave. Table 1 also reveals that about 52% of the respondents were Christians, about 39% were Muslims, and about 9% were traditional worshippers, while just 0.8% belonged to other unspecified religions. In terms of marital status, it is seen that about 17% of the respondents were single, about 61% were married, 16.0% were separated from their spouses, and 6% were divorced. Furthermore, 20.0% of the respondents were sampled in Ogiyo, 21% in Eruwen, 22% in Ibeshe, 16.4% in Ikorodu town and 20.0% in Odogunyan. The variation in this percentage is due to factors such as un-retrieved and incomplete questionnaires. Lastly, the table also shows that about 11% of the respondents had lived in their respective communities for less than 5 years, about 49% had been living in their communities for between 6-10 years, while about 40% of them had been living in their communities for 11 years and above.

Emergence and Operations of Badoo cult

Opinions about the emergence of the Badoo cult and its motivations were divided. While some (7%) of the respondents reported that the group dates back to 2015, many others (17%) reported that they got to know about the group after its first know attack on the 27 year old Ghanaian lady on June 5, 2016 at Oke Ota community in Ibeshe, Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos. However, majority (76%) of the respondents reported that the group came to public consciousness at the peak of its activities in 2017. Respondents were also not sure about the motivations of the group and the brutality that was associated with it. While most people believed that the group were the foot soldiers of highly placed individuals who specialized in using human parts and blood for money rituals, others saw the viciousness of the group most of who were involved in crude oil bunkering, as a vendetta against community members who were suspected informants against them. Recall that Ikorodu became notorious for oil bunkering activities marked by violence at about that time and that following the perceived complicity of the police and other relevant law enforcement operatives, the Federal government had drafted the military to deal with the situation. The military successfully dislodged the criminals with privileged information from residents. Some respondents believed that the attacks on residents were part of a campaign of retribution by some of the bunkering kingpins.

In the words of one of the IDI respondent:

The group emerged sometimes last year [2017], but from what we noticed they have been attacking some communities before this time but I can speak of when we personally witnessed some of their attacks. It started around April-May last year (2017). I cannot say they are armed robbers because they often don't take away money or property from their victims after operation; they only collect their victims' blood with white handkerchiefs. This is why

many people say they are just ritualists (A 22 year old male respondent in Ikorodu town).

We have been hearing about the activities of the Badoo cult group for about two and a half years now (2015), but in other communities. We never knew it will get to our place...I don't know their actual mission, but you cannot rule out the desperation for money (A 43 years old Male respondent in Ogijo town).

I am not sure of the reasons for the wickedness displayed by the Badoo boys, but some people are saying that the Badoo boys are people involved in oil bunkering who are paying back community members whom they suspect to be informants to law enforcement officers on their activities; they are bitter that community members provide intelligence to law enforcement operatives about them.

Respondents' views on the modes of operation of the group

The study sought to know the modus operandi of the Badoo cult group from respondents. Table 2 below captures their knowledge of the group's modus operandi.

Table 2: Respondents views on the modes of operation of the group

Responses	Frequency	
	N	Percentage (%)
They target mainly isolated place (homes and worship places)	32	23.1
	3	
They operate only at night	21	15.5
They kill for ritual purposes	6	
They make use of pestles, stones and clubs to kill their victims	21	15.3
They are a cult group	4	
	21	15.2
	3	
	17	12.7

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They collect the blood of their victims with white handkerchiefs	8	
	15	11.2
They rape female victims before they kill them	6	
	82	5.9
They operate at any time of the day	8	0.6
	7	0.5
They disposes and rob victims of their money and property		
Total	1,397	100.0

As seen on table 2 above, respondents reported that the group targeted mainly isolated settlements' (23%) and operated only at night (16%), killed for ritual purposes (15%) and made use of pestles, stones and clubs to kill their victims (15%). The respondents also believed that the group is a cult (13%) and collected the blood of their victims with white handkerchiefs after operation (11%). About 6% of the respondents reported that the group had the habit of raping their female victims before killing them, while only 0.6% and 0.5% of the respondents respectively reported that the group sometimes operated during the day and also dispossessed victims of their money and property after operation. Data from the survey were corroborated by the interview results with some of the respondents. Below are a few of the exact words of some interview respondents:

They [Badoo boys] attack the helpless. In some areas around these communities where you see buildings without fence, some buildings without windows, you know some communities that are just developing as the case may be. (22 years old from Ikorodu Town.)

“They kill the innocent people and use their handkerchiefs to take the blood of their victims

because that is what they told them to do (40 year old man from Ibeshe).

“You don’t find them stealing, when you get to places they attack, the phones of victims are still there, the major thing is that they kill their victims and take specific part of their victims body” (22 year old from Ikorodu town).

Earlier, Chika (2017) and Akinriade (2017) had characterized the group as a cult group which kills for ritual purpose while, Michael (2017) revealed that the Badoo group uses pestles and stones to kill their victims. In an interview with the **Vanguard (9/9/2017) Gani Adams**, Coordinator of the OPC reiterates this thus:

Most of the people involved in the Badoo cult group are ritualists. They use stones and big sticks to kill their victims. After that, they remove some parts of the body. They also use white handkerchiefs to take the victims’ blood. Those white handkerchiefs are taken to their godfathers.

Costs of the activities of the Badoo cult group on social life of Residents of Ikorodu

Expectedly, the serial killings and related activities of the Badoo boys stalled social life in Ikorodu. Of the 250 respondents who took part in this study, 236 or 94.4% reported that their social lives were adversely affected by the Badoo activities, while 14 (5.6%) respondents did not feel the impact of the activities of Badoo group on their social lives. A clear picture of how the activities of the cult group affected social life of respondents is seen on table 3 below.

Table 3: Effects of the activities of the Badoo cult group on social life of Residents of Ikorodu

Responses	Responses	
	N	Percentage (%)
It curtailed free movement in and out of the community	185	24.2
	272	35.5
It created fear and uncertainty in the community	158	20.6
	73	9.5
It reduced social activities at night	41	5.4
It created greater hostility and suspicion towards strangers	37	4.8
It reduced the level of social interaction among community members		
It created greater difficulties in getting public transport to and from the community		
Total	766	100.0

As seen, the Badoo cult activities curtailed free movement in and out of the affected communities (24%), created fear and uncertainty in the community (36%), reduced social activities at night (21%), made residents hostile and suspicious of strangers (10%), reduced the level of social interaction among community members (5%) and created difficulties in getting public transportation to and from the affected communities. Data from the quantitative survey were corroborated by reports from the interviews. A few responses from some respondents are shown below:

Social life has practically died in my area (Odogunyan). People no longer keep late nights; many don't go out at night at all; families are shattered. Ikorodu has become a dreaded area. Even though normalcy has returned, many people would rather not come to this place. When you tell people you stay in Ikorodu, they immediately say

“oh! That Badoo area?” (35 year old man from Odogunyan).

The Badoo crisis instigates fear, because you don’t know if you will see your neighbour the following day; there was also lack of trust because we could not trust anyone, it was very traumatizing losing someone close to you (20year old from Ikorodu town).

Honestly, even though we have all moved on, we still remember the ugly incidence, most people that moved out of Ikorodu during that period have relocated to somewhere else, Ikorodu has been seen as an area of atrocities, deviance and social instability and lives and property were lost during the Badoo crisis” (35 year old man from Odogunyan).

Effects of the Badoo cult on Economic activities of Residents of Ikorodu

Of the 250 respondents who took part in this study, 241 or 96.4% reported that the activities of the Badoo cultists had adverse effect on their economic lives while only 9 (3.6%) of them reported otherwise. The specific economic effects of the cult activities are seen on table 4 below.

Table 4: Effects of the Badoo cult group on economic activities of Residents of Ikorodu

Responses	Responses	
	N	Percentage
It forced business outfits to close early	215	25.4
It forced some business operatives to relocate out of the community	188	22.2
	178	21.0
It increased the number of unoccupied residential and business buildings	130	15.4
	82	9.7

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It reduced daily sales of businesses	28	3.3
It reduced night/evening business transactions	14	1.7
It made transportation in/out of the community difficult	11	1.3
Schools lost their pupils/students		
Fall in house rent		
Total	846	100.0

As seen on table 4 above, Badoo cult activities forced businesses to close earlier than necessary (25%), forced some business owners to relocate (22%), increased the number of unoccupied residential and business buildings (21%), reduced daily sales (15%), reduced day and night business activities (10%), made transportation in/out of the places difficult (3%) made some schools to lose some of their pupils/students (2%) and forced house rents down (1%). Responses from interview respondents reinforced these findings and are presented below:

Shops and some of the places people sell now close from 5pm in the evening. They don't open until 12noon in the afternoon. And then, some manufacturing industries also closed down(22 year old man from Ikorodu town).

Economically and socially, people were affected, because at that time people were moving out of Ibeshe. And when that thing started, many people moved out of Ibeshe and this reduced the economic activities of that area

It got to a point people started moving out of Ikorodu; shop owners can't stay out late. It affected Ikorodu's educational, health, political, security and community systems.
(27 year old from Eruwen).

Community and Police Response to the attacks by the Badoo cult group

Community members reacted differently to attacks by the Badoo cult group. As seen in table 5 below, about 46.4% of respondents said that they reported such attacks to the police, 36% reported that they set up local vigilante groups to police their neighbourhoods, about 11% reported that they strengthened existing vigilante groups, about 4% took the mob action option, that is they personally beat up or even killed any member of the cult group who was caught. The rest 3% of the respondents reported that they consulted oracles, perhaps to seek spiritual protection.

Table 5: Community Response to Badoo cult attacks

Response of the community to Badoo attacks	Responses	
	Responses	
	N	Percentage (%)
Report to the police	288	46.4
Set up vigilante group	221	35.6
Strengthened the vigilante group	70	11.3
Mob actions	24	3.9
Consulted oracles	18	2.9
Total	621	100.0

Responses from the qualitative interview agreed with the above findings. The exact words of some of the respondents are presented below:

No, they [the police] didn't do well, this Badoo people operate under spiritual influences so the police men can only do little with their knowledge. But when Badoo attack, they dash into peoples' houses at the middle of the night but the police are not always there at that time (20 year old lady from Ikorodu town).

"When at first there was no help from the police and government, the community and community leaders

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came together to help. All the heads of communities now organize vigilante which consist of members of the communities including the community leaders. Community members will stay awake in the night to watch over others while they sleep. This we do turn by turn every day. Most people do not sleep at night (38 year old trader from Ibeshe).

The community started to organize themselves into vigilante groups; if you look around this community you can see some tires where they keep vigils from point of view of security trying to secure the places (22 year old man from Ogijo).

At the initial stage, there were mob actions by members of the youth in the community when the response of the police was not effective(22 year old man from Ikorodu town).

The resolve to engage in vigilantism and lynching or jungle justice were thus the last options following failed efforts by community members to get the police to act. As seen on table 6 below, majority (46%) of the respondents reported that police response to the Badoo attacks was slow, 42% adjudged police response to be prompt while about 13% were indifferent about police response to the attacks. Also, while 19% and 26% respectively were very satisfied and satisfied, 36% and 19% respectively were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied with the response of the police to the attacks by the Badoo boys. Interestingly, a higher proportion (61%) of the respondents believed that the police were sincere in the handling of the Badoo problem. The table further reveals that while 44.4% and 42.8% considered the vigilante bodies set up by their communities to be very effective and effective respectively; majority (66%) of them preferred a collaboration between the police and the vigilante groups to promptly stop the Badoo cult group from their evil operations. Interestingly, it was collaboration between Lagos Police Command and Oodua People's Congress, OPC that led to the arrest of over 100 suspected Badoo cult

members at the first instance and the forceful eviction of remnants of the group to Ogun state and later to Oyo state. This underscores calls in literature for community policing or an active collaboration between formal and informal policing structures for effective policing of the country (Adejoh, 2014). That more respondents (25%) preferred the response of local vigilantes to the formal police (9%) is profound and should be cause for concern, and points to a lack of confidence or trust in the police by the public.

Table 6: Respondents views on the response of the police and community vigilante groups to the Badoo attacks

Respondents views on Police Response to the menace of Badoo group		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Slow	114	45.6
Prompt	104	41.6
Indifferent	32	12.8
Total	250	100.0
Whether the Respondents were satisfied with the responses of the police to Badoo activities.		
Very satisfied	47	18.8
Satisfied	65	26.0
Very dissatisfied	48	19.2
Dissatisfied	90	36.0
Total	250	100.0
Whether the respondents believed that the police were sincere in handling Badoo crisis.		
Yes	153	61.2
No	97	38.8
Total	250	100.0
How effective community vigilante groups were in responding to Badoo cult attacks		
Very effective	111	44.4
Effective	107	42.8
Not very effective	24	9.6
Not effective	8	3.2
Total	250	100.0

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Respondents' preferred response to the handling of Badoo cult attacks		
Both the Police and Vigilantes working together	165	66.0
The vigilante working alone	63	25.2
The police working alone	22	8.8
Total	250	100.0

Conclusion

The Badoo cult group terrorized a section of Ikorodu and its residents, and successfully too, for over three years because both residents and the law enforcement authorities, the police especially, did not act proactively to tame the scourge before it grew out of hand. The group's emergence and growth into a blood sucking vampire was thus, symptomatic of a breakdown of community life and a lethargic police culture that is more reactive than proactive. These scenarios combined to provide a foothold for a gang of young people who had become frustrated by the country's disempowering social, economic and political environment, and who readily became willing tools in the hands of godfathers whose rise to affluence is through sorcery and ritual killing. The social, economic and even psychological pains inflicted by the group on residents of Ikorodu, in addition to losses in human lives, and the circumstances that birthed and nurtured the group into the vampire it became, have become lessons for government and society to draw from for the future.

Recommendations

Sequel to the above findings, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- There is the need for more proactive actions by the police, the government and the people in dealing with any semblance of crime before it becomes overwhelming.

- The successes of routing the Badoo cult group from Ikorodu by the combined team of the Police and members of the OPC underscores the need for coordinated collaboration and synergy between the police and the community, and especially between community based security structures for effective policing of our neighbourhoods.
- The government should mobilize and work with Community Development Associations on effective security education and awareness campaigns with specific emphasis on proactive community involvement in policing their neighbourhoods.
- Observable and measurable programmes should be worked on by both the government and the Police to win back public trust and confidence in the Police. The lack of trust in the Police is a major threat to public involvement and collaboration with the police on issues of security.
- There is the need for the government to address the frustrations of young people in the country by working hard to improve the economy and to create opportunities for all.
- The government should ensure that people who contravene the law are duly punished, regardless of their status in society. This will perhaps, deter the elites and money-bags in society especially, from their crass impunity and desperation for ignoble acts including ritual killing

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