

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND CRIME CONTROL IN EKITI STATE METROPOLIS

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### ABSTRACT

*Ekiti State is situated in southwestern Nigeria in West Africa. Even though it formally came into effect on October 1, 1996. It is found in an area with rocks that have become metamorphosed rock. It had 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs). Anything that requires societal criticism and retribution is alluded to as a crime. The punishment is either fine or incarceration. Covid 19 pandemic is a contagious epidemic that is transmitted throughout the continent. The Covid-19 disease is currently recognized throughout the world, but the virus came into existence in 2019 from China, with curing medication that has been established yet. It affected too many different facets of our society, culture, and way of life, school, transit, health and economic activities were all stalled with significant disruptions and problems at different stages. Using our data from Ekiti state, we found that the cases of crime increased at a significant rate when compared to what was recorded during the epidemic of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019. Anything that requires societal criticism and retribution is alluded to as a crime. This is definitely the case and would contribute to a rise in crime in our society. The theory of State was used in the study, the paper concluded that the effect of covid-19 made the level of crime to increase in Ekiti state because people had to stay at home without doing any job. Unengaged youths also gave rise to major protest witnessed in Nigeria which resulted to looting and destructions of properties, and recommend that the government can also fund and strengthen the Ekiti State Security Network, codenamed Amotekun Corps, by providing them with required weapons like sophisticated arms, vehicles, and other defense infrastructure so that they can defend themselves from numerous unexpected attacks and so that they can carry out their duties effectively.*

**Keywords: Ekiti State, Covid-19 pandemic, Crime, Crime control.**

### INTRODUCTION

The old Ondo faction state called Ekiti state was situated in southwestern Nigeria in west Africa. Even though it formally came into existence on October 1, 1996, it was announced by the then-late General Sani Abacha of Nigeria on October 1, 1996. 5or more states were in existence in the area back then, which consisted of that of Nigeria and the new states called Ekiti state before it was created. The state of Ekiti was formed from the old 12 local government areas (LGAs), which was the old Ondo State, which used to be part of the old 12 LGAs that make up the 24 local government areas of old Ondo State. Before being declared an Independent Province, it had 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs), seeing that it's four more carved from the previous ones. (Rotimi Ojomoyela, 2020). With Ekiti state being one of the 36 states of Nigeria, it does indeed give much needed shape to Nigeria as a country, and in component. The governor of Ekiti State is his Excellency John Kayode Fayemi and the

Deputy Governor is Otunba Bisi Egbeyemi. "Ekiti" doesn't just mean "place where Ife people came from, but it is a word with strong oral history attached to it. The state is made up of several regions, some huge, tiny, and in between, and in some areas being quite large and deep into the vacuum, touching the boundary of others and beyond in some instances. The state is primarily a mountainous areas region, with a peak of almost 250 meters above sea level. It is found in an area with rocks that have become metamorphosed rock. Often, the rocks in the intermediate region are the ones that were metamorphosed. It is a larger and much more fragmented component of the nation Nigeria, with a more recognizable landscape that comprises of old plains that are broken up with the series of outcrops, each outcrop is distinct from the next. Rock subsurface structures (metamorphic rocks) are most definitely present at these locations: Aramoko, Efon-Alaiye, Ikere-Ekiti, Igbara-odo-Ekiti, and Okemesi-Ekiti. Within the district, the landscape is packed with rugged hills and outcroppings. The notable hills include the Ikere-Ekiti Hills in the south, Efon-Alaiye Hills on the western boundary, Ado-Ekiti Hills in the north, and the Ogin-Iseyin Range in the eastern portion of the State. Ekiti State is made up of sixteen places of local government. The lists of the local governments are Ado-Ekiti, Ikere, Oye, Aiyekire (gbonyin), Efon, Ekiti East, Ekiti South-West, Ekiti West, Emure, Ido-Osi, Ijero, Ikole, Ilejemeje, Irepodun/Ifelodun, Ise/Orun, Moba. Horrifyingly, covid-19 pandemic are an exceedingly occurring virus that is transferred via the conveyance of human-to-human contaminants, the pandemic is one of the most devastating, and the entire planet is at grave danger by it (Crosby, 1967). The Covid-19 disease is currently recognized throughout the world, but the virus came into existence in 2019 from China, with curing medication that has not been established yet. This latest virus was extremely dangerous. As a result of its deadly effect, the world took steps to handle this sensitive virus. It affected too many different facets of our society, culture, and way of life, school, transit, health and economic activities were all stalled with significant disruptions and problems at different stages. By wearing of face mask, washing of hands regularly, social distancing, and using latex gloves in the knowledge and skills checking of patients was assumed to reduce the amount of contact that may be perceived between the health staff and the patients, and people generally. Following the 2019 coronavirus pandemic, worldwide stagnation has been experienced by our society, with extraordinary impacts on social and community interactions and a high effect on travel towards developed destinations. The fear of COVID-19 has put cities on lockdown and left streets deserted in many countries (Bae & Chang, 2020). In less than some months, the world's economy was shut down, the environment was broken, other facets of the society have been affected; Covid-19 is a deadly virus. Also, the covid-19 pandemic has been intense enough to threaten the hospitality sector with an unparalleled threat and has placed a relentless strain on patients and health workers wellbeing and psychology (Gursoy & Chi, 2020).

Using our data from Ekiti state, we found that the cases of crime increased at a significant rate when compared to what was recorded during the epidemic of the 2019 Covid-19 pandemic in Ekiti State. Anything that requires societal criticism and retribution is alluded to as a crime. The punishment is either fine or incarceration. However, a civil wrong is not linked to the particular justice framework. (*What Is a Crime?, n.d*). It is not an activity against one citizen to make it work in the legal system. Why Ekiti State's crime rate continue to increase is because of the inadequacies of police force and other security agencies and also, all over the country, the number of crimes rate that happen each day is increasing (Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). Criminal

offences are normally prosecuted by the State or the federal government or any organization backed by act to carry out prosecution and punishment of criminal offenses, whereas it is usually up to an individual to take a civil action to court. It is also possible for an individual to begin criminal proceedings, but this is very rare. (*What Is a Crime?*, n.d.). There is no society that is totally free of crime and criminality but the degree of its presence or occurrence varies from one society to the other and this also depends on the mechanisms put in place to checkmate the trend and incidence (Owumi& Ajayi, 2013). There is a concern within the south western region at large that drivers of commercial vehicles are becoming unruly, disorderly, and threatening to people in their communities. The abusive acts committed by these suspected members have manifested themselves in the incessant destruction of lives, of their homes, and the public's property, as well as making the peace and tranquility of Ekiti state disrupted. Whether these clashes take place among themselves or with other segments of the society, the mayhem they unleash always leaves a sour taste, with devastating consequences for the socio-political and economic life of the state (ABE & BELLO, 2017). Some matters, such as assault, can be both crimes and civil wrongs at the same time. The police can hold the accused liable for an assault, and the victims can take action against the accused of compensation in some other kind of determination, such as money or damages (Owumi& Ajayi, 2013).

### **COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Covid-19 pandemic virus, is a contagious epidemic that is transmitted throughout the continent in the world, is a topic that is usually addressed by the whole population. It is more like a massive moving fireball and it is a disease that quickly spreads to population of people, which has contributed to an increase in the number of infected persons and cause unpleasant feelings and cognitive reactions in the population. In addition to the detrimental effects on physical wellbeing, politics, schooling, defense and economics, the condition of this pandemic is not generally evident. It has the ability to induce persistent neurological symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, panic disorder, and psychosomatic incidents. It has a huge effect on the degree of crime in our nation (Choudhari, 2020). Covid-19, a worldwide virus, is a major problem in all nations, and there are large rates of fatalities related to the disorder. As a countermeasure to contain the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, human and government authorities have responded immediately, restricting outdoor recreation and putting into effect a travel/work ban and social prohibition. This is also to temporarily turn off all commercial activity (Mattioli et al., 2020). With the development of the covid virus, efforts to control the virus have impacted almost all and have caused both adults and children to stay at home and not active (London et al., 2020). This is definitely the case and would contribute to a rise in crime in our society, because citizens often have time on their hands and are not only bored but yet ignorant of their surroundings. In fact, the advent of the recent Covid-19 pandemic has made it possible for the recent Nigerian end-sars protest to take place in major cities. The government was not able to curb the various destruction that was associated to it. Meanwhile, report have shown that violent acts are more likely to trigger death. The riots, the arson, the demonstrations and the killings were the final result of the End-Sars protest.

When the COVID-19 virus has been recorded everywhere around the world, its course has shown that it is a significant and strong risk factor that can lead to those who have been infected with the virus to have reduced or altered immunity. One of the sudden and reported

decreases in vaccinations administered occurs, and this may mean that those who did not receive vaccinations are facing a higher risk in being susceptible for outbreaks of the disease(Santoli, 2020).

### **Relationship of Covid-19 and Crime Control in Ekiti State Metropolis**

The recurrent cases of criminal activity of armed robbery in Ekiti State (including Nigeria) have continued to bring difficulty down the spine of men and women every minute of the day. Likewise, when the societal setting is growing, the criminal incidence is increasing at the same instance thereby creating a danger and vulnerability to life and property. Thus, the association between industrialization and crime is seen as a cause-and-effect relationship, although there is a common perception that the relationship between social support and crime persists as an effect of the causes of the crime (Ugwu, 2019). An offence is an act that breaks the rules and may result in a sentence by the authorities (crime 2021). The word "crime" somehow doesn't agree under contemporary criminal law, have a clear and generally agreed meaning. The state can classify the degree and seriousness of criminal offences according to certain requirements. The more common opinion people held was criminal act is category committed by statute. The law often describes a crime (many times metaphorically or figuratively) as anything poor or illegal. In some instances, having an assertion of wrongdoing is punished as a crime. Each of the concepts on the grounds of crimes is an act that is not just detrimental to people but also harmful to civilization as a whole because it threatens the social structure, deprives it of the capacity to work as a whole, or damages the economy ("a public wrong"). This is against the law and will be prosecuted, as it was meant.("crime,2021") In the beginning, the early research on rural and urban crime patterns show that the urban crime landscape (including in low living place without social amenities) has become a breeding ground for crime and criminality over the years. According to Shelley (1981), the trend of urban development and the subsequent industrialization has had a considerable effect on crime committing in urban centres. Late reports show that the metropolitan areas appear to be more criminogenic than the rural areas largely because of the expanded opportunities for violence in urban areas predominantly perpetrated by armed robbers (Ugwu, 2019). The idea that actions such as murder, robbery, and stealing should be forbidden has persisted. "The particular offence that is lawfully willing" of being perpetrated is specified by each country's criminal law. In some common law countries, several crimes have been bundled into a single code, but in others, only crimes that relate directly to the rights of individuals are codified. The law has the right to penalise anyone with a crime committed. This crime will be very serious. Some processes must be practised in a democratic world, such as inquiries and courts. If proven guilty, a criminal will be subjected to a type of punishment such as being forced into community service or, based on the severity of their offence, being put on incarceration or, in certain cases, eternal death. Crimes under the rule may either be deemed a breach of the law, or they can be something like an infraction

### **Crime Control in Ekiti Province**

In Dr. John Kayode Fayemi's second term as the governor of Ekiti state, there has been a greater security presence. These include: tightened security in public places, making arrest and prosecution easier for public officials and compensation for various victims. While it is a well-recognized reality that the state experienced high reported cases of crime during the second year of his excellency, it is not well-recognized that it started with the shooting and

killing of youths at Lekki toll-gate at the state, followed by the protest of youths against the reformation of the police force, and that it peaked during the End-Sars protest. This problem has surfaced and a lot of violence has been exhibited. This issue is becoming more and more worrying in the cities of Nigeria particularly in Ekiti state. Youth in particular are mostly involved and carried out acts of violence against the state government and some well-known personalities. As we know, other serious crimes such as armed robbery, rape, burglary, electronic fraud, battery, amongst others, are commonly known to have occurred in Ekiti state. The Ekiti State government has actively deployed the Amotekun security operatives to combat crime in the state. Although they might not be a large force, there are a lot of other security forces that were used in efforts to combat crime in Ekiti State, including the Civil Defense Corps (paramilitary troops), the Nigerian Police (military police), the Nigeria Army (army), Peace Corps, and even the kings and rulers of each of the communities. Extending its wings around the state, the Ekiti Security Network has agreed to pivot to the compliance role, much in the same way that the Ekiti State Network in its infancy was reacting to request for back-up when the ekiti people, is under attack. (Victor Ogunje, 2020). Amotekun starts operation on October 26, after it obtained the approval of the governor of the state. The inception ceremony was held. To improve our security situation in the state, the governor declared the use of Amotekun in all sixteen local government areas. By doing so, they hope to tackle the incidence of banditry, agricultural and indigenous conflicts as well as the occurrence of robberies. They also hope to tackle killer herdsman. Ever after, the so-called End-Sars protests that were hijacked by hoodlums which caused many police officers and many police stations (were burnt down). This created a lot of outrage within the police force, and urged for precautionary measures against the violence. The creation of the Amotekun Corps is intended to complement and support the Ekiti police and to ensure the security of Ekiti is comprehensive (Victor Ogunje, 2020).

In Ekiti, the police officers are often used to control organized crime. In the parade, 18 criminals are arrested. Each one of the criminals was associated with a different crime recently committed in the state. There were a lot of suspects in all, out of these, 3 were convicted of taking part in armed robbery, 5 were accused of engaging in a cult activities, and another 3 were accused of theft (Rotimi Ojomoyela, 2020). The other types of crime that may be reported include theft and fraud, cyber-crime, rape, kidnapping.

For instance; The police representative said that they paraded four armed men wearing masks, who had weapons, who believed to have robbed their victims at gunpoint on the Aisegba/Ilumoba Express Route. they captured and blocked the Express Lane, and they ransacked the money they collected from collecting fees from motorists, along with looting a laptop worth N80,000.00. There are many individuals who were arrested in relation to this case. Also, the case of the fake kidnapping of Mobayo Idris, her parents, got to know Mobayo Idris is not kidnap because upon investigation they confirmed that it was a fake kidnapping, (Rotimi Ojomoyela,2020). The command also arrested one Eyinafe Femi, in the Ajilosun area in Ado-Ekiti, for abducting and having carnal knowledge of a sixteen (16) year old girl for three days. After the perpetrator of the crime admitted that the victim had been drugged, the victim was forced to ingest a large, icy soft drink with that contained hard drugs. As the ingestion of the mixture persisted for a few days, the victim gradually lost her consciousness and raped (Rotimi Ojomoyela, 2020). On the eighth of September in 2020 a gang member was

arrested and was admitted to having been an active member of the black axe secret society at Ikere-Ekiti, during initiation rites. During the search, the police found several things; money, a cutlass, as well as other objects (Rotimi Ojomoyela, 2020).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Theory of State**

The theoretical basis of this thesis shall be drawn from the theory of State. Post-classical interpretations of the Philosophy of State (TOS) suggest that the state should be constitutionally permitted to practice the control of lawful lethal force. In the Weberian definition, the State is regarded as the community of human beings that possess the monopoly of the use of force within its boundaries. Max Weber regarded the State as that body with the supremacy on the lawful use of power, that is, the enforcement of laws and boundaries, meaning that protection is the distinguishing aspect of the State and its arrangement at the center of the State (Mbadlanyana, 2011). The massive influence of crime is something that cannot be done easily, it requires relentless effort and determination to achieve it. For motives embedded in past discriminatory convictions, states have been hesitant to undertake the maximum-security position. Because many decisions are being taken in the judicial system, the states will have to take on the role of being the police in the future. They will have to blend the appropriate mix of criminal law and policing: the power to make procedural decisions, local knowledge, financial resources, and geographic spread while also having political leadership (Eliot H. Lumbard, 1968). Even so, in Ekiti Constitution, the State represents the ultimate will of the citizens who have set aside their natural propensity to self-defense for the state (Igbekoyi & Dada, 2020). In certain situations, the state government consults very often on the structure and overlaps their laws with state rules to describe criminal activity or delineator behaviour procedures. In contemporary societies, theorists of the State usually do not depart from the classical State conceptions in which the State derives their essence from securing its citizens. To achieve this new feat, the State creates new institutional and structural means to achieve the feat. The predominant justification for making the federal government and the states involved is for the federal government and the states to have their legal authority, as is specified in the constitution, which is the key pillar of our Federal system of government. Local councils are responsible for the privileges and liberties of people in their jurisdictions within the community, and therefore it serves as the foundation for the rules that rule the nation as a whole (Eliot H. Lumbard, 1968). Even though one could suspect that there are different criminal laws between different states, the data are not sufficient. The agencies' health and social policy is designed to close the gap between the state and its people and to promote a multi-stakeholder solution that is driven by an assessment of each person's needs. Community protection is an important entrance point into the process of improving community cohesion. Nevertheless, community security (the securing) is a wider technique, meaning it is not the same as community policing. (Djurdjevic-Lukic, 2014). (Igbekoyi & Dada, 2020)

### **Discussion of Findings**

The inquiry into the criminal cases that were recorded starting from the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in Ekiti state was disturbing, and this demand for immediate measures to be taken. Similar to many other crimes that were perpetrated in the State of Ekiti, an extensive amount of crimes had taken place during the process of investigation. Several criminal

offences were recorded amongst the destruction, including vandalism. Not only robbing, murdering and assaulting security personnel was reported by the administration of Ekiti State; there are also other crimes too. Examples of public thuggery are often noted. The government works rapidly to discourage violence through the deployment of its armed services. It was claimed that the state government still had its security operatives mobilized to curb criminal activities that were taking place in the state. For example, the army, police were employed to curtail the end-sars protest which happened in Ekiti State and across the nation major cities where destructions were performed on a large scale. After a major fire had been started in several police stations and other government owned buildings, the army was sent to all parts of the country to deter hoodlums from doing this again. The attackers also intended to invade government property. The law enforcement agencies support the police with their activities to control crime. The Ekiti State of Nigeria has recently initiated a programme to track and combat crimes in the state with the support of other security agencies like the Nigeria Police Force, the Nigeria Army, the Department of State Service, Peace Corps, and several other local security agencies. Also, the Ekiti state Amotekun operatives are recently inaugurated to monitor and fight crimes in the state with the help of other security agencies including the Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Army, Department of State Service, Peace Corps, and several other local security agencies. In some cases, joint activity is often utilized to catch and curtail offences such as kidnapping, kidnap, and cybercrimes.

### **Conclusion**

The rate of crime particularly rape, armed robbery, cyber-crime, extortion, and homicide, kidnapping, banditry have continued to be at its frequent rate in our community. This escalated tremendously due to urbanization, industrialization, and the lack of work opportunities for many poverty-stricken and in desperate economic conditions. The lack of jobs led many to become impoverished and continues to threaten them. As the governor of Ekiti state, the government can move up and deploy more security solutions to tackle the degree of crime in the state. It was noted that the effect of covid-19 made the level of crime to increase in Ekiti state because people had to stay at home without doing any job. Unengaged youths also gave rise to major protest witnessed in Nigeria which resulted to looting and destructions of properties.

### **Recommendation**

- The government can also fund and strengthen the Ekiti State Security Network, codenamed Amotekun Corps, by providing them with required weapons like sophisticated arms, vehicles, and other defense infrastructure so that they can defend themselves from numerous unexpected attacks and so that they can carry out their duties effectively.
- The Nigeria police department should also be given the needed tool to attend to emergency cases such as subduing armed robbery, kidnapping, and other crimes in the state.
- Policies and regulations must be put in place to dig deep to the root causes of these crime perpetrated so as to reduce the level of criminal activities in the state.
- There should be a noticeable monitoring activity which will serve as a barrier to illegal behaviour by growing the offender's awareness of the possibility of getting captured. A proactive policing strategy that could instill fear into potential criminals in a crime-prone area where the police and citizens watch each other's backs can be beneficial.

- Enhanced police identification, helped by the community by giving details that could contribute to the incapacitation of criminals as actions identified by a citizen may help the police make convictions and achieve prosecution.
- There should be a mass security camera install in various strategic places of the community to monitor and record events. This will help the security units to monitor, track and catch criminals in the state.

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