Contributions of Private Security Companies to Security Oversight at Local and National Levels: the Case of Bole Sub-city, Addis Ababa Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

Private security companies play vital role in local and national security by enhancing public safety and security in communities. The objective of the study was to assess the contributions of private security companies to security oversight at the local and national levels. To address the objectives of the study, exploratory research design was used. The study is qualitative by research design and participants of the study were selected using purposive sampling technique. Both primary and secondary methods were used in the data collection. The researcher selected participants from private security companies, Addis Ababa Peace and Security Office and Police Officials. The data collected from participants through interview and document review were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study show that the contributions of private security companies have been so enormous which among others include support law enforcement, reporting on incidents and calls, and enhance public safety by creating conducive environment. Indeed, these were achieved all through commendably guided coordination between police and private security companies on the area of crime prevention, training, sharing criminal pertinent data with the police. However, findings of the study also unveil that the cooperation were challenged by lack of continuous information sharing, lack of standardized training, lack of clearly stated rules and regulations, lack of insurance and social benefits for guards which are identified as major problems. The study recommends that enhancing security oversight effectiveness by establishing rules, enhancing training, developing trust, and sharing information, improving payment systems and updating social benefits for private security personnel.

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INTRODUCTION

Security has been vital to humanity since the ancient times and its importance cannot be overlooked. Security for live and property is one of the fundamental aspects of social contract between the state and its citizens (Monguno, 2016). Security has traditionally been provided by states to citizens. In many developed and developing countries, however, state security provision has largely been inadequate, focusing mainly on maintaining the state against external aggression and internal disorder via the military and police forces, respectively (Anayenle, 2009).

However, the provision of security in industrialized countries has been changed significantly over the past two decades due to neo-liberal thinking in policy-making. This has led to two components of opportunities for the private security industry: at one level, there has been a privatization of state security functions by the private sector. At another level, the state is unable to provide the appropriate level of security demanded (Sharp and Wilson, 2000; Button, 2007).

Private Security Companies (PSCs) have experienced significant growth worldwide in general and in Africa and in Ethiopia in particular. According to recent numbers, there are 2.5 million employees of PSCs registered in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2 million in Europe and 5 million in Africa. It is difficult to determine the full size of the private security market due to a large number of providers working within grey and black markets. Due to a real or perceived increase in insecurity, security functions that were traditionally considered a state dominant are increasingly undertaken by a range of private actors, especially where the demand cannot be met by public forces (DCAF and DIHR, 2019). Increased demand for security services, government outsourcing of security functions, globalization and economic growth, and weaknesses in public security systems are catalysts for private security growth (Nemeth, 2004). During the 1960s and 1970s, rising crime and social disorder drastically increased the need for private security around the globe (Dempsey, 2010). As a result of the general lack of security, privatization programs that expand the private sector, the growth of mass private property and the growing risk of terrorism, a majority of citizens in many developed and developing states have resorted to self-

help in security provision by using the private, non-state sector to address their security needs (Ndanu, 2014).

The growth of PSCs provides a variety of security services focusing on the prevention of crime and enhancement of public security around the globe. For instance, in Australia, PSCs provide services to prevent the level of crime and disorder in society, access superior technology and expertise, and provide all-day support (Quelin & Duhamel, 2013). In Sweden, PSCs provide protection and investigation services, patrolling public and semi-public places such as shopping malls, airports, and sports arenas (Abrahamsen and Leander, 2016). In Iraq and Afghanistan, PSCs provide services to protect local politicians and business people, foreign diplomatic staff, and embassies (Avant, 2005).

In Africa, for example, in South Africa, there is no adequate public security to provide for private businesses effectively, and therefore, these businesses, like commercial banks, turn to PSCs for security services (Gilley & Rashid, 2010). In the DRC, PSCs provide guarding services to government bodies, international companies, private property, international humanitarian agencies, and private individuals (Schouten, 2014). Besides, in Kenya, PSCs provide security services to protect corporate office buildings, industrial and manufacturing plants, warehouses, retail shopping centers, hospitals, and private individuals (Kinywa, 2021). Furthermore, in Nigeria, PSCs provide security services to VIP protection, maritime security, security guards and guard dogs, the sale of armored vehicles, special investigations, and security training (Fan, 2013).

Ethiopia has witnessed the rapid growth of the private security industry. Likewise, studies show that, following the growth of business, urbanization, government outsourcing of security functions, and residences in the country, PSCs have grown in the past two decades (Solomon, 2010). Furthermore, criminal activities like organized crime, petty crime, robbery, and burglary crimes that target private residences, international institutions, banks, and foreign residents are

another reason for the demand of PSCs. Therefore, the growth of PSCs in Ethiopia is a response to the changing security landscape and the growing demand for security services.

The rise of PSCs, however, has brought challenges to security oversight at the local and national levels. PSCs operate outside the official state security apparatus and are not subject to the same regulations and oversight as state security forces. This can lead to a lack of accountability and transparency in security operations, potentially undermining the effectiveness of security governance. Besides, according to Bole sub-city peace and security office (2023), PSCs have, to a large extent, remained unexamined, unregulated, and basically uncontrolled by the government. There was no national document or instrument that specifically addresses the activities of PSCs. Similarly, this sector is continuing to be the largest available, unused, and unstructured resource at local and national levels, and the objectives they have established and the contributions they make in the context of local and national security are not largely studied.

The private security industry (PSI) will continue to play a critical role in crime prevention and community safety at local and national level. Business and industries need protected. In addition, more and more corporation is concerned about the security of their employees both on and off the job (Mkilindi, 2014). However, different works of literature show that the contributions of PSCs to local and national security governance are hindered due to different factors. Richards and Smith (2007) noted that in the absence of adequate legislation and regulation or in circumstances where regulations are poorly enforced, there may be no control over the type or quality of services provided by PSCs. In their argument, the main problem so far has been an inadequate response and a lack of law that would regulate their service. In the same way, in Ethiopia, there is lack of adequate regulation and attention from the government for the private security sector to work together (Solomon, 2010; Kenna, 2016; Yifru, 2017; Abera, 2021). Due to this weak regulation, control, and cooperation, according to Bole sub-city peace and security office and police reports, private security providers have been involved in criminal activities like bank robberies and burglaries. Police reports have revealed that most of the robberies are

committed with the help of security guards. If things continue like this, the reliability of the private security guards is questionable.

According to police reports, due to the criminal act occurred by security guards, different financial institutions such as banks and other institutions have been reporting the problems and are calling to police regularly. From this context, a crucial need for a study into this problem is in order to identify the contributions of PSCs for security oversight and to show the gaps. The findings of this study possibly provide insights into the contributions of PSCs in security oversight and contribute to the development of policies and regulations to ensure effective security oversight in Bole Sub-city.

The exact number of PSCs in Ethiopia is unknown because some companies are registered and some are not. In Ethiopia, there are about 130–160 PSCs out of which, 120 are found in Addis Ababa (Munira, 2016). According to the Federal Police Commission report (2022), currently the estimated number of PSCs in Addis Ababa ranges from 241 to 250; out of these, 35 are found in Bole Sub-City and are licensed. This indicates that the number of personnel employed in the companies and the PSCs have been growing. So, the growth of PSCs has contributed directly and indirectly to law enforcement's practice of preserving safety and security.

PSCs have become a common sight in Bole Sub-City, providing security services to businesses, residential areas, and other institutions. However, the contributions of PSCs to security oversight in Bole Sub-City are not well understood, and there is lack of research on the interactions between PSCS and public security for security oversight. The aims of the study was to assess the contribution of PSCs to security oversight at local and national level, and to identify the challenges associated with regulating PSCs to ensure effective security oversight.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study relied on qualitative research approaches to discover the meanings that participants attach to their actions, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on particular issues (Creswell, 2007). Because of close involvement in doing research, the researcher gains an insider's view of the field. This allows the researcher to find issues that are often missed by scientific, more positivistic inquiries.

The study adopted an exploratory research design and purposive sampling techniques. Exploratory research design is particularly useful in this context because this allows researcher to gather rich and detailed data that can help uncover new insights and perspectives (Kothari, 2009). Exploratory research design used when not enough is known about a phenomenon or a problem that has not been clearly defined (Saunders et al., 2007). Therefore, in Ethiopia, there is limited empirical research on the actual contributions of PSCs to security oversight and where the PSCs are rapidly growing. Furthermore, in the Ethiopian context, there is lack of adequate data available on the contributions of PSCs to security oversight at the local and national levels. Based on this reason, this research tried to explore the PSCs by investigating their contributions to security oversight at the local and national levels in Bole sub-city.

In order to conduct this research, the researcher employed purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, people, or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be obtained from other sources (Kothari, 2009). Under this sampling, the researcher selected Bole sub-city due to the fact that most of the international institutions, national institutions, and commercial institutions are located there, and most of the private security is found in the sub-city. Based on this, the researcher selected three PSCs such as Commercial Nominees Megenagna branch, Lion Security, and Nabro PLC Security through purposive sampling technique, considering their greater experience, the large number of their employees, and the large number of businesses they protect. Study participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The selection criteria of the research informants or participants depend upon their experience regarding security, responsibility

positions, and educational level in the study area. The researcher used both male and female participants for the study. Overall, purposive sampling was more efficient than non-purposive sampling because it provides greater depth of information than non-purposive sampling. Thus, the researcher purposefully selected participants who were relevant for the study.

The sample size of any study is the number of participants who participated in the study. According to Patton (2002), there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what will be useful, what will give credibility, and what can be done within the available time and resources. Based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, understand, and gain insights, he selected a sample from which he can get the most out of it.

The study also used both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered through interviews while secondary data were gathered through document analysis like research documents, books, journals, daily media reports, and other documents. Hence, the data collected from participants through interview and document review were analyzed using thematic analysis by transcribing the information and determining the common themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Involvements of PSCs for Security Oversight at the Local and National Levels

In Ethiopia, following the expansion of private sector, privatization of large number of public securities and economic growth were increasing the demand of security services. These economic growths such as government service facilities, infrastructural area, private property and foreign investments are the main areas that need security protection. These conditions were undeniable contribution for their establishment of PSCs throughout the country.

Regarding security services provided by PSCs, the findings implied that PSCs provide security services for residential security, international organizations, embassies, factories, hotels, NGOs,

banks, offices, governmental organizations, security escorts, building protection, guard services, and other security-related services. These institutions and critical infrastructures were protected through patrols, guards with firearms for cash in transit and guards with firearms for protecting property. These services are used in a wide range of markets from commercial to residential. PSCs can also enhance situational awareness by providing real-time information about security threats or incidents. This can help improve the response of public security forces and ensure that resources are deployed effectively. In line with this finding, existing literature by Strom et al. (2010) noted that private security organizations provide a variety of services including guard services, critical infrastructure protection, residential security, commercial security, institutional security, governmental protection, and others.

Regarding the contributions of PSCs for security provision, the findings implied that private security industry has played an important role in the provision of security by protecting and safeguarding of property and persons in Bole sub-city. PSCs help to reduce the security deficit in the face of police incapacities by performing roles that would either not have been performed by the police such as guarding residential, unauthorized entry or activity and damage on private property, protect people and property of his employer or contracted clients. So, the most important duty of security employees is prevention before an incident or crime occurs. Thus, presence of PSCs activity in security provision in study area was helpful to support the law enforcement agencies. It is important to note that PSCs are not a substitute for public security forces, and that their contributions to security oversight must be carefully managed and regulated. When properly managed, PSCs can play a valuable role in enhancing overall security and contributing to security oversight.

In line with this study, the existing literature by Klopfer and Amstel (2016) note that the private security industry has played an important role in the provision of security, especially in times when crime rates were high and law enforcement was not sufficient to protect local communities. The private security industry (PSI) will continue to play a critical role in crime prevention and community safety at the local and national levels. Businesses and industries need to be protected.

In addition, more and more corporations are concerned about the security of their employees both on and off the job (Mkilindi, 2014).

According to one participant from security manager responded to the question on the security service provided by PSCs at the local and national levels:

> *Our company is an integrated security solutions company, providing reliable service for government agencies, private corporations, and non-governmental organizations across Ethiopia. Our protective, support, and training services help customers create and sustain secure and safe business environments. We are highly committed to meeting the expectations of our customers. Of course, our existing customers have a high level of trust in the company's ability to protect their people, infrastructure, and other valuable assets. Thus, our company ensures the safety of our customers (March 8, 2023).*

Besides, UNODC (2014) has indicated that PSCs are contracted to safeguard property, assets, and personnel against various forms of crime. In other words, the role is largely preventive and most often accomplished through a highly visible presence, both a static presence and mobile (most often foot and/or vehicle) patrols. In the same way, Abrahamson and Williams (2009) emphasized that many of the roles conventionally assumed by the public police are nowadays undertaken by private security companies such as protection of businesses and institutions, patrolling of infrastructural areas like industry zones, providing bodyguards and close protection, witness protection, and VIP protection.

PSCs have also played important contributions in promoting peace and security both at the local and national levels. At the local level, PSCs provide security services to individuals, businesses, and governments. These services can include physical security, residential security, and risk assessments. At national level, PSCs support law enforcement operations by providing logistical support, and security services to international organizations and governments. For instance,

during the conflict between Ethiopian government and TPLF, PSCs support law enforcement operations by providing logistical support for the government of Ethiopia (Respondent 04 from Bole sub-city peace and security, March 6, 2023). These show that, PSCs important contributions in promoting peace and security at the local and national levels.

The PSCs is not only protecting people and property but also giving enough and effective security for the country in order to develop social and economic developments in states and societies, and hence most individuals and societies engage in several activities aimed at the achievement of security. In addition to security provision, PSCs contribute to the economic development of the country by contributing money for the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and creating job opportunities for unemployment. PSCs are thus an important part of the economy because they provide much-needed employment to a significant number of people at the lower levels of society (Respondent 01 from FPC March 2, 2023). Some informants from the sector considered the paying of taxes by PSCs as also contributing to the strengthening of the country's economy.

Similarly, according to respondent 05 from private security manager responded to the question on the contribution of PSCs at the local and national levels:

> *In Ethiopia, there is a problem of working opportunities and an increasing number of unemployed people in the whole country. Though, instead of providing security, our company has contributed to reducing unemployment by creating jobs for a large number of job seekers among citizens. The creation of job opportunities has not been limited to young people but has extended even to older people. Besides, our company paying of taxes contributes to the strengthening of the economy of the country. Therefore, in addition to security provision, our company has a vast contribution to the economic development of the country (March 7, 2023).*

In line with these, the drastic rise of PSCs in Ethiopia is a response to a clear market demand for private security services. The main positive aspect of the private security industry that was widely acknowledged was its benefits to the Ethiopian economy and employment opportunities (Solomon, 2010). This reveals that PSCs have a vital role in private economic establishments and enterprises in Ethiopia that are protected by private security companies and contribute to the economic development of the country by creating job opportunities for job seekers in Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ababa's Bole sub-city. This can help improve the overall security situation by providing economic opportunities and reducing the likelihood of criminal activity.

However, the findings of the study revealed, on the contrary, that the private security guards themselves have been involved in criminal activities like bank robberies and stealing weapons from the protection site. The possible explanation for such a difference might be because of the lack of supervision by the police for PSCs, the lack of supervision by the PSCs for their guards, and the weak selection process for security guards. Supporting the finding of the current study, Molomo and Maundeni (2014) indicated that in different countries, PSCs have been accused of engaging in criminal activities as well as remunerating their employees poorly, and most companies are not registered and hence operate illegally. Furthermore, according to Solomon (2010), in Ethiopia, there is an absence of adequate legislation and regulation, which can lead to lack of control over the type or quality of services provided by PSCs. This implies that lack of rules and regulations poses big challenges for security provision at the local and national levels.

Therefore, the government oversight private security by ensures that the companies operate in a manner that upholds legal, ethical, and responsible behavior. These measures contribute to the maintenance of public safety, protection of individual rights, and the establishment of a framework for the effective and accountable provision of private security services at the local and national levels.

The Coordination between Police and PSCs for Security Oversight at the Local and National Level

Security is a fundamental need for the community that cannot be achieved by one entity. To achieve public order and safety, it requires a combined effort through synergy and cooperation. Coordination between PSCs and police is necessary and essential activity to maintain the peace and security of the population.

In Bole sub-city, police coordinate with different stakeholders to bring sustainable peace and security to the community. A police force that operates as an isolated unit in a community cannot expect to achieve its objective of community safety by preventing and detecting crime effectively. To develop a completely successful police force, it is essential to have public involvement, public confidence, and public co-operation (Respondent 02 from AAP Bole sub-city Community Policing head office March 14, 2023). A similar argument was provided by another participant: the police force alone cannot expect to achieve its goal effectively by preventing and identifying crime. Public participation, public trust, and public cooperation are essential to building a fully successful police force.

The findings of the study reveal that private security and public law enforcement were working together, and their missions were not in conflict but were in fact complementary and often closely related. As such, a range of benefits can come from enhanced cooperation. The coordination between police and PSCs was more focused on information sharing, training, crime prevention, community safety, and the peace and security of the local communities. The cooperation between public and private security aimed to protect persons and property, reduce the level of crime, boost the peace and security of the local community, encourage the exchange of information between the public police and private security, and eliminate issues of credibility and misperception among them.

In consistency with the findings of the study, the Nodal Governance Theory puts into perspective the interconnectedness of private and public security actors in safeguarding human life and

property. According to Burris, Drahos, and Shearing (2005), nodal governance places emphasis on the way in which security service provision is steered by both private and public actors. Likewise, the finding of the current study shows that rapid and consistent communication between private security and the police, for example, can help minimize response time for crimes in progress and also reduce the number of calls for service for situations such as false alarms in non-emergency situations (Morabito & Greenberg, 2005). Similarly, Strom et al. (2010) note that PSCs can also play an important role in emergency response by developing response plans and advanced strategies for coordinating evacuations and responses to various types of natural and man-made emergencies. Additionally, private security can help protect the country 's extensive range of critical infrastructure and share intelligence with law enforcement, which may include providing timely and regular reports on suspicious activity and other behaviors that could represent early warning signs for possible emerging threats (Morabito & Greenberg, 2005).

The findings of this study also revealed that the purpose of the public police was to protect and serve the public while private security providers protect their clients and are profit-oriented, so they have different forms of communication at the intersection of protecting their clients and property. So, the coordination between the public police and private security companies is both aimed at the peace and security of society. PSCs also had close cooperation with the police in our working area. For instance, one private security guard participant responded that

> *We get full support from the police officers. When criminal incidents like theft and burglaries happen, we report them to the police officers, and they respond very quickly. They are very positive about the service that we offer to society". Therefore, PSCs have a greater contribution to make to maintaining security in society, work very closely with the police, and have restored citizen's confidence (March 23, 2023).*

In relation to this, Zacharia et al. (2021) noted the partnership between private and public security, especially in places of common protection of the public, information exchange,

security, and transport of money, and private security handing over suspected offenders to the police, and how the challenges facing both private and public security providers can be curbed to enhance security. Public-private collaboration in the provision of security is imperative for the effective offering of these services, the protection of the nation's essential infrastructure, and handling other security issues that disturb neighborhoods, residents, and companies. In this perspective, participant in interview stated the following in regard to the collaboration between PSCs and police organs:

> *Our collaboration with police organs is good; the police organ supervises our activities; sometimes we report to the police and receive guidance from them. In fact, we appreciate the partnership between us and the police, but also the collaboration between PSCs operating in Bole sub-city, which is very effective due to the fact that we operate in the same area and we share almost the same challenges (March 7, 2023).*

In addition to these, according to Solomon (2010), in Ethiopia, there is positive cooperation between public and private security companies on protecting persons and property, information sharing, crime prevention, and community safety. This cooperation between private security providers and the public police is important for the effective delivery of security.

In addition to this, by sharing information, creating relationship with the police officers, daily contact with police, patrolling our working area, we have huge role in local and national security. According to Bole sub-city police report (2023), there are different types of crimes happened in our working area such as robbery/bank), car theft, fraud, housebreaks, and other illegal activities. These types of crimes were occurred by using different modus of operand like car (ride), motor cycle, Bajaj and on foot. So, to reduce such kinds of crimes, we are working with police for protection and safeguarding of property or persons for 24 hours.

In contrast to positive cooperation between PSCs and police, the study reveals that there is also little formal cooperation between police and PSCs in Addis Ababa's Bole sub-city. This

challenge is greatly affecting the contributions of PSCs to local and national security in the study area. This finding is consistent with previous studies. Abrahamsen and William (2005) stated that there is a little formalized cooperation between the public and private security sectors. A high degree of suspicion also exists between them due to the absence of clear and consistent policy framework structuring public-private security relationships. According to Klopfer and Amstel (2016), there are no formal agreements between public security and private security companies. This little formal cooperation has directly or indirectly negative impact on public safety and security at the local and national levels.

Solomon (2010) notes that, the relationship between private security providers and the public police are important for the effective delivery of security. However, in Ethiopia, this relationship is influenced by the lack of clear regulatory frameworks. For these reasons, there is currently little formal cooperation between the public and private security sectors. Moreover, the majority of participants said that private security and public law enforcement were working together and were often closely related. The cooperation between public police and private security aimed to protect persons and property, reduce the level of crime, boost the peace and security of the local community, encourage the exchange of information between the public police and private security, and eliminate issues of credibility and misperception among them. Thus, the synchronicities between private security companies and security oversight in Bole sub-city are characterized by the interdependence and the need for effective coordination and collaboration between private security companies and government authorities to ensure the safety and security of the community.

The Challenges of PSCs for Security Oversight at the Local and National Level

In Bole sub-city, police are coordinating with PSCs to bring peace and security to the community. These PSC personnel had a key responsibility and duty to reduce crime and bring sustainable peace and security by protecting clients, employees of the organization, and the environment surrounding the contract area. Nevertheless, according to Bole sub-city peace and

security annual report (2023) implies that, PSCs themselves are becoming a source of insecurity. Sometimes, PSCs found in Bole sub-city did not implement their duties and responsibilities properly under the contracted area. Rather, some PSCs recruited and organized the guards for crimes, and employees of PSCs participated in the criminal activities individually or by organizing themselves such as bank robberies, thefts that clients coordinated with other criminals, exposed employees of the organization to security risks, and security guards vanished by carrying out the weapons of the companies.

In line with these, according to key informant, the FPC has banned 14 private security agencies for being involved in criminal activities, including theft and fraud. For instance, one respondent from the Federal police department of private security provision responded that:

> *In 2020 the federal police commission was banned 14 PSCs because they are participated in criminal activities like bank robbery and misusing the weapons they were given for illegal activities. Besides, PSCs make collaboration with TPLF by recruiting individuals and give them weapon for illegal activities. The ban on these PSCs is part of the government's efforts to regulate the private security industry in Ethiopia and ensure that PSCs operate within the law. So, the activities of an uncontrolled or poorly regulated private security industry have present unique governance problems and challenges for peace and security at the local and national levels. It is important that PSCs in Ethiopia operate within a legal and ethical framework and that they are held accountable for any misconduct (March 2, 2023).*

Besides the above-mentioned challenges, according to Bole sub-city peace and security office annual report (2023), PSCs face different challenges for security oversight at the local and national level. Most of the security guards were recruited from rural areas. In this regard, there is lack of communication among different security organs and lack of skill and competency among security guards. A private security manager is recruiting security personnel from rural areas through forged ID, and most of the security guards lack verbal communication and are new to

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the environment. As a result, PSC personnel lack coordination among different security providers and do not properly prevent crimes or simple deceit by criminals in their line of duty.

PSCs are registered as business enterprise no law defines their relationship with the existing security apparatus such as private security agencies and the police institutions. No law exists to govern pre-employment screening, training, standards, and regulation of private security officers. Specifically, not clearly define the right and obligations of private security employees and employers, only mentioned in labor proclamation No. 377/2003 the worker employer relations are governed by the basic principles of rights and obligations with a view to enabling workers and employers to maintain industrial peace and work in the spirit of harmony and cooperation towards the all-round development of our country, but not specifically rule and regulation mentioned for private security companies. Besides, in Ethiopia there is no law exists to oversight PSCs, but the only mentioned in federal police commission establishment proclamation No. 720/2011 define that federal police give certificates of competence to private institutions wishing to engage in providing security service.

In support of this, Kamenju et al. (2004) point out that considerable regulatory challenges exist in the private security industry. Besides, according to Richards and Smith (2007), in the absence of adequate legislation and regulation or in circumstances where regulations are poorly enforced, there may be no control over the type or quality of services provided by PSCs. Therefore, the government will create formal rules and regulations that govern private security companies. Furthermore, according to Solomon (2010), in Ethiopia there is an absence of adequate legislation and regulation, which can lead to a lack of control over the type or quality of services provided by PSCs. This implies that a lack of rules and regulations poses big challenges for security provision at the local and national levels.

In Bole sub-city, sometimes private security personnel do not coordinate with public security providers to conduct security operations. Due to their lack of education, skills, and incompetence, private security guards are not coordinated with law enforcement for local and

national security. Sometimes they cannot report criminal activities to the police officers because of a lack of information sharing among law enforcement and private security guards. Consequently, according to the findings of this study, lack of coordination among law enforcement and private security personnel limited their activities to community safety and security.

This finding is in line with the previous studies. UNODC (2014) noted that it is clear that there are challenges in cooperative ventures between the public police and private security, including regarding legal authority, lines of communication, levels of trust and respect, restrictions on information sharing, responsibilities and liabilities, and public perception. Similarly, Klopfer and Amstel (2016) noted that there have been a number of problems with the quality of services provided by PSCs. For example, PSCs have not been as effectively coordinated as could be, to increase efficiency. Even though informal exchanges have developed, PSCs' management regards each other more as competitors than as partners. This has prevented them from maximizing their contribution to the security of the area.

In Ethiopia one of the big challenges of private security industry was lacks professionalism. Most of the private security guards in Ethiopia have a very low educational background and incompetent security guards. In support of this Abera (2021) noted that one of the big challenges of PSCs in Ethiopia is lack of professionalism related with security provision. He added that there is a common practice of recruiting incompetent individuals who perform specialized tasks that require special skills and training. This implies that lack of security professionalism has prevented them from maximizing their contribution to the security.

In Ethiopia, one of the major challenges facing private security guards is a lack of adequate training. In principle, before deploying security guards, they should first learn and know about the concept, objectives, and priorities of PSCs. However, in practice, this contrasts with these facts. The findings of the current study also revealed that most PSCs have the habit of recruiting people as guards with little or no training. Furthermore, there is no standardized document that contains the appropriate criteria for training and recruiting guards of PSCs in Addis Ababa and at

the national level**.** These findings are consistent with the previous studies. Solomon (2010) noted that in Ethiopia the selection and training criteria for private security officers vary from company to company. They range from comprehensive training requirements to little or no training at all.

The development of national minimum criteria for the selection and training of all private security guards is essential for enabling the private security industry to meet the need of providing effective security to its clients. Effective security requires workers who are familiar with all aspects of a facility's security system for assessing and containing potential threats. Security personnel are required to be well knowledgeable in emergency procedures and able to work with an organization to ensure that emergency procedures can be implemented successfully. There is also no clear policy regarding the training of security guards. Some of the security companies request member of the police to train their staff on certain issues but such training is not accredited.

Finally, with regards to the minimum wage, one of the challenges of PSCs was the low wage paid to the security guards. As a result of these problems, there is a high rate of turnover among security guards in the company. In support of this, Abrahamsen and Williams (2005), Diphoorn (2016), Shearing (2016), Berg (2017), and Howell (2017) note that the failure of countries to regulate their private security sector can lead to all sorts of new challenges such as poor labor conditions for employees. For example, security guards work long hours for low wages, and governments have no measures to tackle these bad circumstances and provide for better wages. Besides this, according to Solomon (2010), the problem in relation to the minimum wage is that most of the guards tend to be less responsible and motivated. There is no doubt that the quality of the service they render is questionable. This, according to them, makes them demotivated to do the job efficiently. They blame the PSCs for exploiting them, as the latter make big money out of contracts with clients and pay them only one third of it while it is the guards who do the entire job of guarding.

Generally, lack of coordination, rule and regulation, training, and poor wages for PSCs can have negative effects on security oversight at the local and national levels. Therefore, it is important to promote coordination among security providers, regulate and oversee the private security industry to ensure that PSCs operate within the law and uphold high standards of conduct and to ensure that PSCs pay fair wages to their security personnel. As a result that, they can attract and retain qualified personnel and provide effective security services.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to explore the contributions of PSCs to security oversight at the local and national levels in Bole sub-city. Security is an important issue for society. Providing peace, security and justice requires the contribution of all stakeholders. The contributions of private security providers to peace, security, and justice is fundamental to constructive governance, sustainable development and the safety of local and national communities. Nonetheless, for the role of non-state actors to be effective, there is a need for better collaboration and partnership with state institutions. PSCs provided undeniably security services at the local and national level by protecting governmental and non-governmental organizations, taking and giving information, reducing criminal incidents that happen in organizations, preventing external threats to the clients and protecting the property of the organizations. Thus, PSCs have active involvement on local and national levels and make an important contribution to establishing a safe environment for citizens.

Largely, PSCs made important contributions to security oversight in Bole sub-city by providing additional security services, supporting law enforcement, enhancing accountability and promoting public security. The contributions of PSCs in security governance also include the development of policies and regulations to ensure effective security oversight in Bole sub-city. By providing a wide range of security services and helping to enhance public safety and improve security in communities.

However, the contributions of PSCs were hindered by several challenges. These challenges were lack of a consistent policy framework to enhance the private security-public police relationship and the absence of clear regulatory framework for the private security has undermined the cooperation between the private security and the public police. The study also revealed that lack of standardized training and regular supervision, poor wage and lack of professionalism are among the challenges that hinder effective security service at local and national levels. PSCs guards by themselves participate in some criminal activities with other criminals. So, if the coordination between police and PSCs is not well monitored by strong and clear regulation, the presence of PSCs may be counted as a disadvantage rather than benefits. Furthermore, the contribution of PSCs related with security oversee at local and national level is recognized; however, conditions for effective cooperation are not yet well developed and needed changes are still in progress. Also, some crimes committed by employees of PSCs need to be addressed. It is important to ensure that PSCs operate within a legal and ethical framework that protects the rights and interests of all stakeholders.

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