Workplace Safety and Security Management[*]

By

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Introduction

I am delighted and humbled to have been nominated and invited as a resource person to this hybrid National Workshop with the Theme: Promoting Transparency, Productivity and Efficiency in the Judiciary'' and to have the singular opportunity to present this paper on the topic "Workplace Safety and Security Management". I thank His Lordship the Administrator of the Institute, Hon. Justice Salisu Garba Abdullahi, for approving my nomination. Again, permit me to commend and congratulate His Lordship, the Administrator for his creative and innovative programmes that he has brought to the Institute particularly in the Academic growth and development of the Institute since his assumption of office.

The exponential growth in the rate of insecurity in Nigeria today has continued to make imperative the need to discuss and examine issues of Workplace Safety and Security management as the requisite infrastructures necessary for the smooth administration leading to promoting Transparency, Productivity and Efficiency in the Judiciary. This subject matter is a major threat in the workplace, and it is a persistent problem of both national and global dimension. It occurs on a much larger scale as we must have acknowledged and any workplace may be a target, therefore, this topic is not only timely but very germane in our contemporary Nigeria.

A workplace, according to the Black's law Dictionary[1], is a 'person's place of employment or work setting in general'. The workplace is simply the place where we work; and work related places and events which include work trips, work parties, business meetings etc. The 21st

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[1] A book of legal definitions. The Black's law dictionary, is the most widely cited law book in the world.

century workplace can be physical, non-physical, remote platforms and, social media platforms. In the evolving 21st century realities, workplace covers the physical, and cyberspace as the new building to personnel.

This paper examined workplace safety and security management in Nigeria, in the context of physical and non-physical threats to lives and properties, especially the activities of Terrorists, Bandits, kidnappers and insurgents etc around the facilities of justice administration. It also examined various sources of safety and security threats to productivity and efficiency in the Nigerian Judiciary. It also revealed the impact of these threats amongst other considerations to smooth realization of organizational objectives in our court systems and established a relationship between safety, security management and productivity efficiency in the Judiciary of Nigeria. It is therefore, the position of this paper that Workplace Safety and Security Management is everybody's business which involves every worker (Management and Staff) of court and indeed Nigerian Judiciary and recommend amongst others good employment screening, regular training of security personnel, regular safety and security meetings with strategic stakeholders in security formations would help in managing safety and security in Nigerian Judiciary and as well as making security issues an integral part of Judiciary's strategic plan while the management of our court system be more committed to safety and security management of both materials and personnel of the court.

2. Understanding Workplace Safety and Security.

What we mean by Safety and Security management in workplace is basically the process to protect an employee from work related illness and injury and to making the workplace secure from intruders or external aggressors.

According to Bertini(2000), good, safe and secure workplace bring a lot of improvements to organization in term of healthy and sustained operations and activities that result in improved productivity, organizational and operational efficiency, employee satisfaction with appertained effect of improved customer- client satisfaction, all of which ultimately lead to organizational growth and development[2]. To support this view, Kiruja, Eirik and Sicko (2011) said good security management is about good program management; proactively managing safety and risks and also well-positioned to deal with crises enables us to work safely and securely[3].

The claim here is that safety and security of Personnel in an organization is a factor that can engender productivity and growth. It therefore, follows that any organization that craves for high productivity, growth and development should in addition to managing other resources also strive to ensure that employees work in a safe and secured environment[4]. An employer has more responsibility than mere hiring people to do their job. They must ensure that those hired, work in a conducive, safe and secured environment otherwise the organization will not perform optimally and effectively.

This is true as in Sheik's (2000) opinion, that as soon as employees feel that their superiors are disinterested in their work environment, they also lose passion for their work and when this happens the entire work force

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[2] Bertini, C, 2000, at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Security of UN Humanitarian and Associated personnel. Available at www.wfp.org

[3] Kiruja, M, Eric, K and Sicko, P 2011 ACT Staff safety and Security guidelines. A handbook for ACT Staff, Switzer land.

[4] Ibid

will collapse[5]. Therefore, safety and security in every workplace must be taken seriously.

It is a truism that unless management shows interest in the safety and security of employees, the latter group also ceases to paying attention to important details that may become crucial to the success of the organization. Furthermore, it is important for us to know that safety and security does not start with the type of staff member you recruit or hire, it starts with the type of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) you recruit; Brabant, 2001). This is because the CEO, is the custodian of the organisation's Vision, Mission and Culture[6].

3. SAFETY AND SECURITY: *Conceptual differences and issues.*
Safety and Security Management involves programmes that use procedures and actions to prevent or reduce the chances of experiencing harm or loss. The concepts of safety and security at workplace have received attentions from both the academics and industrialists. Although, the concepts have been misconstrued to be synonymous rather than inextricably related that must be clearly distinguished and compared for proper understanding.

According to Milan-Perez (2003), Workplace Safety is the condition of a "Steady State" of an organization or place of doing what is supposed to do. "what is supposed to do" is defined in terms of public codes and standards, associated architectural and engineering designs, corporate visions and mission statement, and operational plans and personnel

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[5] Sheilk, M, 2000. Deaths among Humanitarian workers 19985- 1998. Baltimore, Johns, Hopkins School of hygiene and Public Health.

[6] Akpan, S. S, Ayandele, I .A. 2015. Remodeling Strategic Safety and Security Risks Management in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions. Experts Journal of Business and Management, pp.150- 165.

policies[7]. For any organization, place, or function, large or small, Safety is a normative concept and it complies with situation-specific with definitions that are expected and acceptable. However, given that in the world of everyday affairs, not all goes as planned, some entity's steady-state is challenged, hence such steady-state need to be secured[8].

Security is the process or means, physical or human, of delaying, preventing or protecting against external or internal defects, dangers, loss, criminals and other individual or actions that threaten, hinder or destroy an organization's "Steady-State" and deprive it of its intended purpose for being''[9]. Therefore, using this generic definition of safety, it is possible to specify the elements of a security program by looking at safety and security issues in organizations.

The Centre piece of safety issues in an organization is workplace illness, accident, diseases, trauma, emotional instability and stresses etc. In Human Resources Management literatures scholars like Van Brabant (2008), Davidson and Neal (1998) and Machair (1995) have lighted Security issues in an organization as encompassing areas such as security of property itself, assets, employees and clients, personal belonging and valuables, life security, personal security, and job security including income amongst others. Similarly, safety issues in organization relate to the structure itself, installations and fixtures (electrical, plumbing, air-conditioning etc, safety of furniture, equipment, appliances, vehicles, good quality of air and other sanitary conditions[10].

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[7] Milan- Perez, L A, 2003. HR How – To: Workplace Safety, Everything you need to know to ensure a safety and Healthy workplace.

[8] Ibid

[9] Ibid

[10] Davidson, S., and Neal, J., 1998. Under cover? Insurance for aid workers. London. Available in online at www. Peoplein.co.uk

Inferentially, the safety issues are more of internal and external risk exposures while that of security is workplace violence which is more of external than internal risk exposures. Implicitly, there would not be a case of security without the mentioning of safety in an organizational setting. This is because the two concepts are so interwoven such that distinguishing and treating them separately become difficult within an organization's framework. Hence, the most important point to note in our discussion of safety and security issues is that both concepts fall within the framework of risk management and apprehension[11].

The external risk exposures as appertained to security as an issue in organization is linked to Brabant's (2001) corporate security. This entails security concept of site protection, protection of confidential corporate information management, VIP protection of executives (For example against kidnapping, attack, assaults blackmail), reputation management, protecting the organization from liability through insurance and legal clauses etc[12]. it is the view of this paper that a conceptual distinction can be made between 'Safety' and 'Security'; whereby the former is (internal) and refers to accident and diseases, while the latter refers to act of violence.

Both safety and security are considered together as inextricable concepts that must be addressed together in order to tackle and manage risk exposures at workplace[13].

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[11] Ibid

[12] Brabant, K.V. 2001. Mainstreaming the organizational management of safety and security: A review of aid agency practices and guide for management O.D.I, Europe.

[13] Ibid

4.   Relevant Theory to Safety and Security Management.

Probst and Brubaker (2001)[14] carried out study on safety and security management and supported their work with Abraham Maslow's needs theory. Maslow proposed that within every person is a hierarchy of five needs, as in physiological, safety, love, esteem and actualization. This theory which is found within the domain of motivation, is a function of need not met. Therefore, if motivation is driven by existence of unsatisfied need, then it is worthwhile for a good manager to understand which needs are the most important for individual employees. In this regard, Abraham Maslow model established that basic, low-level needs such physiological requirements and safety must be satisfied before higher-level needs such as self-fulfillment is pursued. Thus, when a need is mostly satisfied, it no longer motivates and the next higher need takes its place. In this study, what concerns the researchers is safety and security, and the bottom-line is that human beings must feel safe in their environments and free from external threats, they need to live in a secure environment.

Probst and Brubaker has examined the relationship between insecurity and safety, and they found that when insecurity increased, employee(s) safety knowledge and motivation to comply with safety policies and procedures decreased and organizational performance reduced proportionately[15]. Not surprisingly, employees with insecure and unsafe work place suffered injuries, decline in performance compared with relatively more secured and safe workplace and to a large extent their

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[14] Probst, T.M. and Brubakar, T.L., 2001. The effects of job insecurity on employee safety outcomes: Cross-Sectional and longitudinal explorations, in journal of occupational Health psychology. In this study the authors supported their work with Abraham Maslows needs Theory.

[15] Ibid

study also revealed that employees threatened with layoffs(sack) violated more safety policies and produced lower output than their secure counterparts. This means that some sources of safety and security threats are also internal or within an organization. Also job insecurity also contributes negatively to organizational safety and security[16].
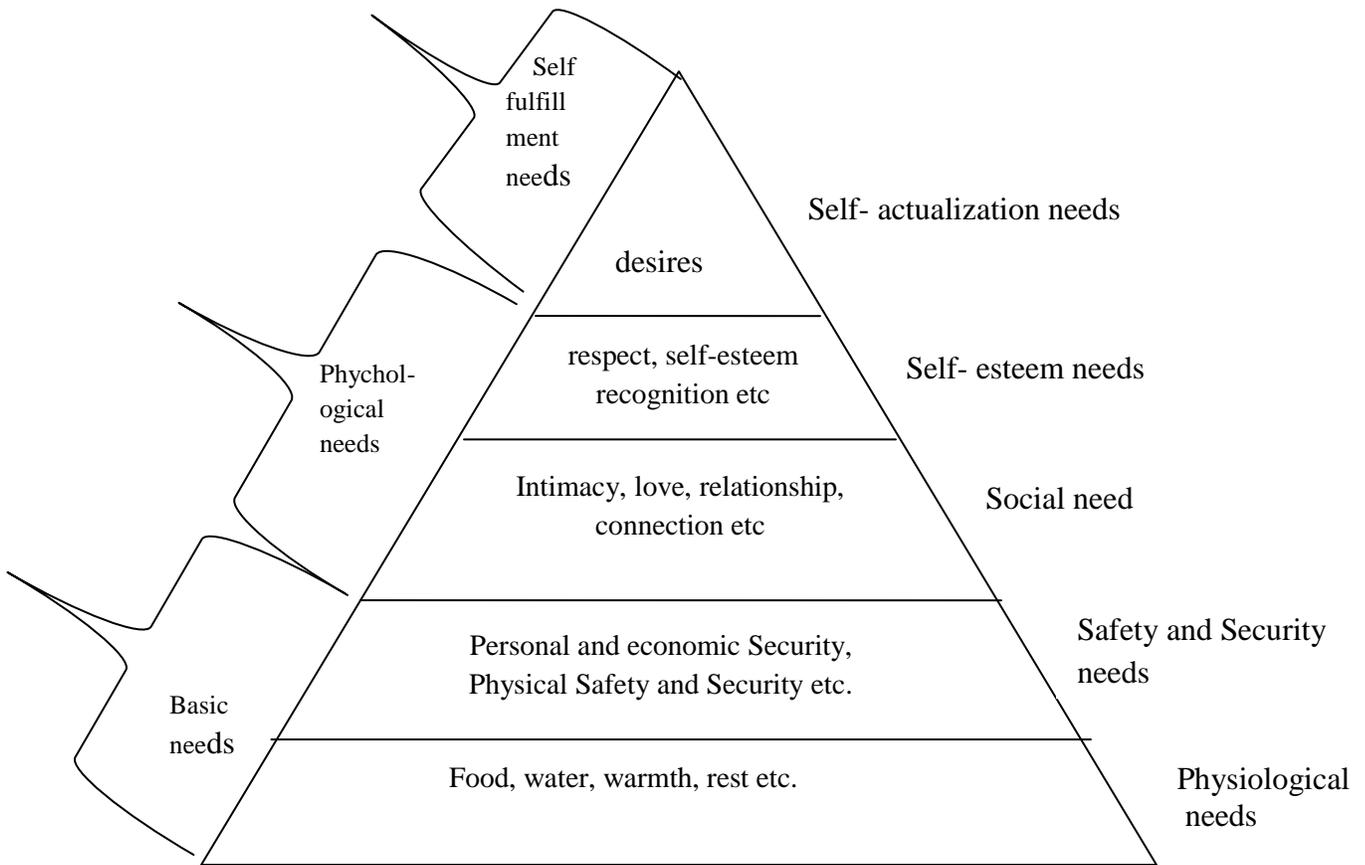

Fig. 1 Maslow Hierarchy of Need Theory of Motivation. Adopted from Nana Bature (2019), Advanced Human Resource Management

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[16] Ibid

# 5.	Sources of Safety and Security threats in organizations.

Evidences of incidents worldwide and particularly in Nigeria suggests that the primary safety and security threats arise from a number of sources. To ensure that staff safety and security is ensued in an organization, the various causes or sources of these threats must be identified. Andersen (2010)[17] has developed an extensive database to help identify risks, assess probability of threats and assist in mitigating the potential for disasters.

i. Bombings:

Today in Nigeria incidents of bombings are most prevalent in all places. Research has shown that bombings since 2011 till date has proven to be potential threats to safety and security of lives and properties. Bombings and use of Land mines has caused extensive loss of lives and properties, high incident of injury and lengthy disruptions of operations in and around adjoining areas. With the persistent activities of Boko Haram sects and other insurgents, bombing has come to constitute potential and risk sources of safety and security in Nigeria.

ii. Kidnapping and Banditry:

This threat has emerged as a problem nationwide reaching critical level in the last four (4) years in Nigeria. Kidnappings and Banditry are conducted by terrorists and criminal (highly mobile) for political and economic reasons. These threats have become almost a legalized business in Nigeria especially in the North and North Central States. It must be noted that the activities of the kidnappers and bandits have even

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[17] Andersen, A. 2010 Emergency Management, safety and Security. Available online. (Accessed May, 19, 2022).

hampered free movements, and have caused serious safety and security issues in many organizations in Nigeria including the Judiciary.

iii. Assaults:

Another great source of threat to workplace safety and security of lives and properties. Assaults take the form of shooting, murder and physical assaults on a person. Across various organizations in Nigeria, incident of assaults and gender-based violence are also increasing especially on females at workplace. Most common among all assaults is sexual harassment and rape. Now, there are cases of forced marriage. etc., and this has made the female folks endangered species in our workplace.

iv. Crime:

The threat from organized crime element has reached global proportions and Nigeria is not exempted, organized crime and criminal business cartels that are well developed have infiltrated private and public organizations, especially those that has connections internationally and engaged in business deals, extortions, murder, drug trafficking and bribery of government officials.

v.   Bullying and Harassments.

There are noticeable bullies and harassment from superior officers to their juniors on daily bases, and these regular threats has made personnel unsafe and insecure in their places of work. Frequent issuances of queries (written or verbal) and threats of sack in the office has contributed to making our workplace unfriendly, unsafe and insecure to allow for transparency and productivity.

vi. Corruption:

Corruption and its impact on our political and economic spheres has constituted a great threats to lives and in most organizations including our Judiciary. Establishments are new endangered species, especially when it's comes to issues of needs and survival. We can see how stomach infrastructure has threatened the survival of many organizations and their personnel. In most cases when any organization tamper with motivational needs of their personnel, the safety and security of that organization in threaten as well.

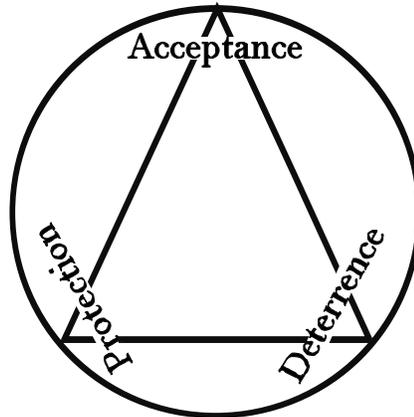## 6.   Safety and Security Management Framework and Strategies

The Management of Safety and Security of personnel at workplace revolve around many factors as adapted by Brabant (2001)[18], in a framework Brabant called 'Safety Security Triangle', which represent three ideal types of safety and security strategies. They are: acceptance, protection and deterrent; here an **acceptance strategy** tries to reduce or remove the threats by increasing the acceptance for an organization's presence and work in a particular environment; this is done by winning the hearts and minds' of the people. A **protection strategy** does not affect the threats but tries to reduce organization is vulnerability, through protective devices e.g. (high wall, barbed wire, blast wall). A **deterrent strategy** essentially tries to contain a threat by posing a counter-threat e.g. (making arrest, imposing sanctions, armed protection through return to fire). Brabant (2001)[19], further explained that different safety and security management strategies require different staff skills and time allocation. For instance, a protection strategy requires mostly technical knowledge diplomatic and negotiation skills. However, many safety and security experts says that, the art of safety and security management is

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[18] See Brabank, K,V., 2001

[19] Ibid

choosing the right mix of strategies in accordance with your threat and vulnerability analysis in a given context. Thus, an acceptance strategies is not going to prove very effective against brutal organized crime.

Security and Security Strategies

Figure 2. Safety and Security Management Framework.
Source: Adapted from Brabant (2001).

From the above framework (figure1), it is evidenced that management of an organizations can manage safety and security of personnel in many ways such as good management structure, regular meetings, safety and security review, safety and security policy, proper funding, threat Assessment, physical security survey, pre-employment screening and training, safety and security planning (UNHCR,)1997; Davidson and Neal, 1998[20].

Good Management Structures: This is a situation whereby management cadre officers play major role in the safety and security of an organization. There are three types of managerial set-up for strengthening security system.

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[20] See Davidson, S., and Neel, J., 1998

❖ **Management Line Model: T**his is where Safety and Security is located with other management responsibilities especially between headquarters (Head office) and branches, but in most cases the line managers lack sufficient time and competence to deal with subject-matter promptly.

❖ **The Specialist Security Officer Model:** This is where security positions are created at the headquarters (Head office) and at the branches, and such positions are subordinate to the line managers. The problem associated with this model is lack of interest by officer(s) so appointed and insufficient competence among the line managers, who may ignore or override the 'advice' of a security officer.

❖ **The Security Advisor Model:** This is a model where management appoints Security Advisers, who are responsible only to the management.

i. **Creation of Security Focal Point: T**his is where an organization employs a security focal print , who is a specialist in the field of security, he may be positioned as a line manager and ensures that security remains a top level priority of the management and help to influence direct organizational efforts to improve, safety and security and management.

ii. **Chain-of-Command Principle:** This is where safety and security matter is decentralized through staff from top to bottom. In this regard, authority and responsibility are vested in line-managers through clear lines of communication, and decision-making process**.**

iii. **Good Safety and Security Renew:** This is where staff or consultants are called upon to review and make recommendation(s) on safety and security matters. But it is better where (if) top management follows up on its recommendations. An important precondition for improved security management is clarifying what security concept is most appropriate, especially a multi-dimensional security concept, that brings into focus the values, principles of the organization, culture and mission etc.

iv. **Formation of Safety and Security and Security Policy:** Many organizations including judicial establishments have no safety and security policy. The essence of such policy is to make safety and security management a *corporate responsibility* rather than an *operational issue.* Therefore, having safety and security policy obliges management to act, and legitimizes the allocation of staff, fund, time and other resources.

v. **Threat Assessment and Physical Security Survey:** There is need for risk and threat assessments to be carried out which should include the identification of particular criminal problems and crime statistics and evaluation of local law and security enforcement agencies. Again physical environment, identification of vulnerabilities and operational components most be carried out.

vi. **Building Design and Security:** Construction of Office complex should include a Safety–Crime-Prevention design audit. To be considered should include factors as parking areas, perimeter views, security system and devices etc.

vii. **Pre-employment Screening and Training:** it is expected that all employees in an organization should have a thorough background check conducted on them before resumption on duty and on regular basis. It is not uncommon in many instances where organizations have employed individuals with criminal records in illegal drugs,

sales and theft. This process is very important especially when appointing or selecting security personnel. In addition, personnel of organization should not only be trained on organizational functions but also security awareness tip especially how to handle, report and manage safety and security information.

Conclusion:

As I conclude this paper, it is necessary for me to again stress that safety and security are very important issues in organizational management and it must be taken seriously across our judicial establishments.

Today, the geometrical growths in our population without corresponding growth in job opportunities has created eminent threats to our survival as a nation. The negative economic indicators, explosion in technology, emergent of sophisticated equipment for industrial and migration of insurgents from middle-east to Sahara and West Africa have brought to the rational focus the issue of safety and security management particularly in the workplace and it must be addresses promptly. It is therefore the position of this paper that the leadership of Nigerian judiciary must show more commitment to safety and security.

Consequently, safety and security of lives and properties in the judiciaries across the country if well managed would enhance organizational stability and encourage productivity efficiency. May I, humbly suggest the need for urgent safety and security policy for Nigerian Judiciary supported with adequate funding, through budget allocation to safety and security operations, the need for pre-employment screening and training for personnel and to take safety and security management as complementary risk management strategy across Judicial establishments. It is my believe that when workplace is safe and secured, personnel will work with greater efficiency; vigor and

intimidation-free environment and this will lead to more employee commitment which is a recipe for organizational growth and development.

Thank you all for your kind attention.