

## Social Impact of Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in North-Central Nigeria

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### Abstract

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons have threatened the peace and harmonious co-existence of states across the globe considering the fact that such increases crimes and heightened insecurity. This study is conducted to examine the social and legal implications of the proliferation of small arms and the light weapons in North-central Nigeria. The study adopts descriptive research survey design. The population of the study is 34,618 from selected internal displaced persons (IDP) camps in Benue, Plateau States and Federal Capital Territory (FCT). However, the study obtained a sample size of 3491, using the godden sample size statistical technique. More so, the study used a structured questionnaire as its research instrument. Out of the total of 3491 questionnaire distributed, only 2814 were duly completed and returned given 80% retrieval rate. The study analyzed data using frequencies and percentages for demographic information of respondents, while research questions were analyzed using a five point's likert scale with mean criteria of 3.00 as the minimum value for acceptance. In addition, the hypotheses were tested using linear regression. The study revealed that a significant positive relationship exist between proliferation of small arms, light weapons and social, legal effects on the victims in North central Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that social institutions be strengthened to encourage and sustain social integration. Finally regulatory framework bordering on arms proliferation be strengthened to enable culprits be sanctioned appropriately.

**Keywords:** Small arms, light weapons, proliferation.

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### Introduction

People are vulnerable to small arms and light weapons-related violence in many contexts (Robert, 2014). The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in various parts of the globe continues to cause a systemic and unbearable threat to the sustainable social and economic advancement of many nations, particularly in small developing states. Therefore, no country, region, or sub-region is free from the adverse effects caused by the illegal trade in and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Small arms and light weapons are indiscriminate and their effects are devastating, regardless of age, gender, religion, or ethnicity (United Nations, 2018). The global security problems can be significantly attributed to the continuing small arms proliferation. Arms control specialists argue that small arms are among the major causes of death, insecurity, violence and armed conflict leading to major social problems globally. In fact, concerns on large quantity of small arms have been raised as an important subject in countries not at war, with good examples being the United States, Australia, Canada and South Africa and recently Nigeria (Cukier, 2000).

Small arms and light weapons commonly abbreviated as SALWs continue to be commonly used in many of the violent civil and ethnic conflicts of the post-Cold War era. For example, according to the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), thirty four major armed conflicts that left more than 1000 casualties were documented in the year 1993. All these conflicts were conducted mainly with light weapons and small arms (UNRISD, 1995). In Africa, much of research work point out that small arms and light weapons proliferation affects many African countries and their citizens in three main broad ways; first, they affect human rights and international humanitarian law, secondly social/economic development and thirdly governance (Bourne, 2006 & Frankonero, 2008). Currently, proliferation of small arms and light weapons is one of the biggest security challenges facing Nigeria. The ready availability of small arms through legal and illegal channels only serves to aggravate the major social problems in the country (AEFJN, 2013). These weapons fuel instability, conflict and pose a threat to the socio-economic life and sustainable development besides security of the nation (Small Arms Survey, 2012). The widespread proliferation of small arms is contributing to the alarming levels of armed crime, in marginalized rural and urban areas. It has also exacerbated the ever existent armed cattle rustling, farmers Header and tribal conflicts experience by States in Nigeria (Mbugua, 2007). Armed conflicts greatly affect the

social and conditions of civilians, including men, women, boys, girls, the elderly, and the disabled. Civilians are often the deliberate targets of armed attacks during armed conflict in Nigeria.

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons has been a menace in Nigeria, and by implication the North Central is not exempted from this menace. Waziri (2017) in his study reveals that this societal menace (armed conflict) engenders social/economic problems especially in the north east Nigeria were thousand of men and women lost their life's, some become widow and widowers, many of them were faced with detention, intimidation, torture and rape leading to unwanted pregnancies, which has been one of the reasons for the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region. More so, Children also become orphans and street beggars, so many were left homeless and lose their source of lively hood like farmland, and livestock's to the conflict. Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria has been blamed largely on inadequate regulatory and institutional frameworks to control and prevent unhindered transportation of arms and ammunition. Though Nigeria as a nation is signatory to a several numbers of frameworks on against proliferation, most of these frameworks have not been domesticated into Nigeria's legal system.

Studies has reveals that, There have been so many works on the Social impact of Proliferations of small arms and light weapon in Nigeria, but there are not enough literatures on the social impact it has on the victim, specifically in North-Central Nigeria. Moreso, existing literature also reveals significance variation in the associated social problems and it legal implications depending on the region under consideration. This research will be conducted to fill these apparent gaps. Furthermore, the research will assist government in policy makers and implementation targeted at amelioration the impact of proliferation of small arm and light weapons in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following objective guide this study

- (i) To investigate Social problems associated with proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the North-Central.
- (ii) To investigate the legal implications associated with proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the North-Central.

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

The research tests the following two hypothetical statements

#### **Hypotheses One**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Proliferation of small arms and light weapons does not significantly affect the social life of the victims in North Central Nigeria.

#### **Hypotheses Two**

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Proliferation of small arms and light weapons does not significantly have legal implications in North Central Nigeria.

### **Conceptual Review**

Under this concept, available literature relevant to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons are reviewed to provide detailed understanding of the problems under study.

### **The Concept of Small Arms and Light Weapons**

The primary instrument used for violence are Small Arms and Light Weapons, this have prolonged or aggravated conflicts, produced massive flows of refugees, weakened rule of law and broadened the chances of crises and impunity (Edward, nd).

Small arms and light weapons have been defined in different international and regional instruments, and also in national statutes. A common observation emerging from the different definitions is that the term small arms and light weapons encompass a wide variety of weapons, their ammunitions as well as their spare parts.

The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other Related Materials of 2006, which is the West African sub-regional benchmark for regulating Small Arms and Light Weapon, defines small arms, as arms destined for personal use and which include: firearms and other destructive arms or devices such as an exploding bomb, the incendiary bomb, the grenade, the rocket launcher, the missile, a missile system or a mine. The convention further stated that, portable (light) arms are designed to be used by several people working together in a team, which include heavy machine guns, portable grenade launchers, mobile or mounted, portable anti-aircraft cannons, portable antitank cannons, non-recoil guns, portable anti-tank missile launchers or rocket launchers, portable anti-aircraft missile launchers, mortars with a caliber of less than 100 millimeters which are cartridges munitions for small caliber weapons, projectiles and missiles for small arms, mobile containers with missiles or projectiles for anti-aircraft or anti-tank simple action systems;.

United Nation (2001) Small arms are defined as smaller infantry weapons, such as fire arms that an individual soldier can carry.

Mich & Mich (2011) asserted that, small arms and light weapons range from clubs, knives and machetes to weapons just below the UN Register of Conventional Arms; 13 but the specific weapons broadly categorized as small arms and light weapons under the official definitions contained in international instruments have special attributes which, on the whole, make them highly favored for irregular warfare and criminality (ECOWAS, 2006).

Light weapons are the following portable arms designed to be used by several people working together in a team like heavy machine guns, portable grenade launchers, mobile or mounted, portable anti-aircraft cannons, portable antitank cannons, non-recoil guns, portable anti-tank missile launchers or rocket launchers, portable anti-aircraft missile launchers, mortars with a caliber of less than 100 millimeters (Chuma-Okoro, 2011).

Michael (1999) explained that Small Arms and Light weapons are characterized by their durability, cost effectiveness, accessibility and utility. In terms of military and non-military demand, such criteria perfectly match the needs of those that need weapons during the political, ethnic and criminal disputes of the post-Cold War era and those who desire weapons for personal protection. Currently, the supply of weapons is broad and the demand high. The social effects of these trends in supply and demand can best be illustrated in terms of military and non-military developments in weapons proliferation.

### **Empirical Review**

There have been several researches and studies on proliferation small arms and light weapons by scholars in the area. This review examines this study in an attempt to show the gaps in extant literature and create space for the present research.

### **Social Problems and Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons**

Burton (2013) observed that, the problems of armed violence and proliferation of small arms and light weapons on social life of the Nigerians are worsened by the inability of the police to reduce violent crime, ensure law and order and provide adequate security to the populace. The military has ruled for the majority of the period following independence from Britain in 1960. During the Biafran Civil War (1967–1970), large numbers of Small Arms and Light Weapon passed into general circulation. Civil–military relations have worsened since the transition to civilian rule in 1999, and most of the population see the armed forces and police as coercive and corrupt (John, Mohammed, Pinto, & Nkanta, 2007).

Mucyo (2014) observed that, armed conflict and criminality can be seen as a cause and effect of poverty and inequality. The effects of insecurity on development opportunities are twofold. First, funding and commitment to long-term development efforts are being inexorably reduced in favour of short-term relief-oriented projects. The intervention focus is narrowing to encompass a range of activities on a ‘relief–development’ continuum, due to the shift of priorities away from traditional development and towards conflict prevention and response. A second effect relates to the impact of changing priorities on the relative quality of development work. As development operations are frequently suspended or delayed on account of insecurity, the field context has shifted to reflect ‘uncontrolled living spaces where not even relief operators will dare to work’ (Meddings, 1999). The paradox is that, even as aid workers call for more coordination in regions prone to violence, peace-building, development and transitional activities are not taking place in regions where they are most urgently required.

Small arms and light weapons enable and facilitate armed conflict, terrorism, and crime. At present, small arms and light weapons remain one of the most economical and most the common accessible tools applied during in violence. Despite our understanding of the threat posed by Small arms and light weapons to peace and security, advancement and human dignity, wide discrepancies remain on the manner to stem negative consequences particularly, the movement of arms from the licit realm to the illicit. Even the domestic passage of Small arms and light weapons to the illicit realm can, ultimately, have transnational effects, fueling conflict, crime, and terrorism, inflicting an untold socio-economic hardship on the populace (International Peace Institute 2009). Sivard (1999) observed that, the nature of modern warfare and the weaponry used have had an increasingly detrimental effect on civilians, the easy availability of modern weapons and the changed nature of the use of violence have polarized ethnic, religious, economic and political differences in regions. Conflict is no longer the struggle between states or ideologies; it has become the struggle between peoples and cultural identities. With some weaknesses in most societies, the degree to which human security has been eroded has become linked to the propensity for violence. This has meant that relations between different social groups have, to varying degrees, become a series of ‘zero-sum’ interactions (Human Development Report 1993). Similarly, Ogudikpe (2014) observed that, the direct social consequences of this arms proliferation are the human rights violations committed in regions of extreme structural violence, particularly where state forces are waging counter-insurgency campaigns. The spread of small arms and light weapons not only makes governance more difficult, but also polarizes communal groups and leads to the erosion of respect for human life.

Christopher (2004) argued that, the trauma experienced by societies in which violence is rife is a consequence of the deep fears that become entrenched in the communal psyche as a result of civic militarization and the unchecked use of weapons. The undermining of traditional communal values in Latin America, Asia and Africa

has partly been a result of the empowerment of individuals and groups through weapons diffusion, as well as the dynamics of local conflict. It is obvious to note that the increased social trauma is, thus, effect of weapons proliferation in an unstable environment. Several destructive effects of this emotional instability is the communal conflict that results, particularly in agrarian societies whose viability depends on unity. Fear and attempts at self-preservation have split many such communities around the world (Roger 2012).

Robertson (2004) Protracted social conflict and violent crime, resulting from failed or failing social structures, erode personal security by posing a constant threat to the integrity of life. The increased trauma associated with violence becomes pervasive, affecting communal psyches and altering their behaviours. In addition, to a very large extent, there is restriction of movement in several communities which experience consistent violence. The increased threat of violence broadens the perceptual ideologies and agitations between the rich and the poor thus, the rich using their wealth to build defenses against perceived growing levels of anarchy. Therefore, such culture of violence affects respect for dignity of human person. Militarization and brutalization destroy levels of tolerance and normative perceptions of human dignity, inviting increasingly widespread acts of rape, torture and other forms of repression.

Christopher (1995) stated that, the cultural effects of the proliferations of small arms and light weapon is that, it weakened family ties, the stresses caused by war and famine, together with the social consequences of injuries sustained, it have contributed to the erosion of family life. The danger posed is that families are unable to return to their homes after conflict, leading to severe stress and depression for those affected. In addition, where adults are killed, their children are often left destitute. The spouses may be amputated as the result of the conflict, and may eventually abandon their husbands or wives to seek more productive, able-bodied partners. Unable to care for their amputee relatives, peasant families have been known to commit the cultural sacrilege of abandonment.

Carneiro, (2000) explained that the effects and indicators of the illegal used of small arms and light weapons on communities include breeding of child soldiers, membership of armed groups, persistent criminal act, as well as surge in the incidence of local violence, and the destruction of customary authority. The presence and threat of small arms can also affect people's involvement in political activities, especially elections and political rallies.

Matt, & Rachel (2020) suggested that, preventing illicit arms transfers requires the adoption of strict adherence to lay down rules and regulations.

### **The Legislative aspect of Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons**

The effectiveness of legislation is marked by both content and implementation. Good laws poorly enforced can significantly undermine confidence and compliance. Developing laws that are understood by a range of groups and agencies, and that have provisions commensurate with the human and material capacity available to implement them is well within reach – with planning, clear information and political will (United Nation Development Program, 2008).

It is estimated that civilians hold nearly 75 percent (650 million) of the world's small arms and light weapons (of a total of 875 million).<sup>16</sup> Many of these are misused, stolen or otherwise leaked into the illicit trade, and governments increasingly respond by strengthening national legislation to clearly regulate access, ownership and standards of use (United Nation Development Program, 2008).

Currently, there is no instrument in Nigeria specifically defining the term "fire arms and light weapons". However, the Firearms Act defines the term "firearms" in a manner that covers the genre of weapons contemplated by the definition of SALW under the Convention; Therefore, SALW are regulated as firearms under Nigerian laws. Firearms is a matter under the Exclusive Legislative List in the 1999 Constitution, implying that only the Federal Government can make laws regarding its regulation. The Firearms Act is the foremost national legislation regulating SALW. Others are the Robbery and Firearms (Special Provisions) Act, the Defense Industries Corporation of Nigeria Act, the Criminal Code Act and the Penal Code. The main institutions enforcing or implementing these provisions are NATCOM, Courts and the Police (NATCOM, 2001).

The Robbery and Firearms (Special Provisions) Act<sup>176</sup> also deals with firearms possession and provides sanctions for gun-related offences. Under the Act, illegal possession of firearms attracts a fine of N20, 000 or a minimum of ten years imprisonment, or both. The Act also specifies death by hanging or firing squad as punishment for robberies with firearms, and life imprisonment for attempted robbery involving the use of firearms.

The institutional framework for regulating SALW comprises mainly of the NATCOM, the police as the main body responsible for law enforcement, and the courts. Inaugurated in 2001, the NATCOM is responsible for the following registration and control of SALW; regulating the importation and exportation of SALW; detection and destruction of illicit SALW; provision of permits for exclusions under the ECOWAS Moratorium.

The Bamako Declaration (2000) is a politically binding instrument adopting a common African approach to combating illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of SALW. Paragraph 3A of the Declaration enjoins Member Countries to establish specific legal regimes with specific structures and procedures to deal with the problem of SALW at both the national and regional levels.

## Research Methodology

This section describe the area of the study, Research design , population of the study, sampling size, sampling techniques; methods of data collection and method of data analysis.

### Area of Study

The study covers three States from the entire North Central Region of Nigeria. These states are Benue, Plateau and The Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The predominant occupations of people from this region are Civil service and Farming, especially Livestock, fishing, waving and blacksmithing.

### Research Design

Survey design will be adopted for this study. The method ensures representativeness from a large population hence it is a method use for collecting or obtaining data and information from a large population that can ordinarily not be able to be study in its entirety given the largeness of the population. Data to be use for this study were obtained by administering questionnaires and interviewing, the sampled elements that were drawn from the larger population which were adequately representative of the entire population under study.

### Population of the Study

The population of the study shall comprise of the victims of arms proliferation living in the Internally Displaced Persons Camps, Officials of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and Security personnel in the camps while, others include Community Leaders and Traditional rulers from the affected communities in the selected states. Two camps were selected from each of the three states, Benue, Plateau and The Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The camps to be selected are Abagana and RCM school camp in Benue, Qun'pan and Riyon comp in Plateau, Lugbe and Area 1 camp in Abuja.

### Population and Sample size

**Table I**

S/No.	State	IDP Camps	Population	Sample size
1	Benue	Abagana: (1,700) RCM School: (8,000)	97,000	978
2	Plateau	Qun'pan: (3,000) Riyon: (9,200)	12,2000	1,230
3	Abuja	Lugbe: (8,400) Area 1: (4,318)	12,718	1,282
	<b>Total</b>		<b>34,618</b>	<b>3,491</b>

Sources: NEMA (2016)

### Sampling Size and Sample Technique

Applying Godden (2004) statistical formula for determining sample size to the study population is based on a 95% confidence level, and a margin of error of 0.05, and a variability degree of 50% due to the unique and heterogeneous nature of the population,

Using Godden Statistical techniques to determine the sample size in this study, considering the fact that reaching the entire respondents covering the whole states in this geo-political zone will be practically difficult if not impossible. Therefore, the Sample size was determined using the following formular.

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 (P) (1=P)}{C^2} \text{ equ (1)}$$

$$\text{New SS} = \frac{SS}{1+SS-I} \text{ equ (2)}$$

Population

SS = sample Size

Z = Confidence level 95%

P = Percentage of population (50%)

C = Confidence interval = 5%

$$SS = \frac{1.96^2 (0.5) (1-0.5)}{0.05^2} \text{ equ (1)}$$

$$SS = \frac{3.8416(0.5)(1-0.5)}{0.0025}$$

$$SS = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$SS = 384$$

$$\text{Population} = 34618$$

$$\text{New SS} = \frac{\frac{384}{1+(384-1)}}{34618}$$

$$SS = \frac{384}{0.11}$$

$$= 3491$$

Hence, the sample size is 3491.

However, out of the total of 3491 questionnaire distributed, only 2814 were duly completed and returned given 80% retrieval rate.

### **Sampling Technique**

The stratified sampling procedure was adopted for this study; the population was stratified into various Age groups for the victims in the camps while the officials of the National Emergency Management and Security personnel in the camps were stratified into senior and junior officers. Thereafter, respondents were chosen from each of the Community Leaders and Traditional rulers of the affected area.

### **Sources of Data Collection**

The study used both primary and secondary sources of data; the primary sources of data include questionnaire and personal interview while the secondary sources include textbooks, journals magazines, periodicals and internet materials.

### **Instruments of Data Collection**

Questionnaire and Interview were the primary instrument for data collection in this study, the researcher designed a set of 2 (two) item questionnaires and this was supplemented by oral interview from the respondents. The questionnaire administration was carried out by the researchers and seven (7) field assistants trained prior to data collection, and the interview was undertaken by the researchers themselves.

### **Method of Data presentation and Analysis**

Data generated in the course of this study were first be collated, coded and analyzed using both the descriptive and the inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was presented in tables showing frequencies and percentages for the demographic information of respondents, the five points likert scale of strongly agreed (SA) agree (A) undecided (U), disagreed (D) and strongly disagreed (SD) weighted from 5-1 respectively with mean, value of 3.00 as accepted and mean Value < 3.00 rejected. Moreso, the inferential statistics used is the regression to measure the relationship between the variables for this study. All these were achieved with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

**Table 2. Demographic Information of Respondents**

S/NO	DEMOGRAPHY	OPTIONS	FREQUENCIES	PERCENTAGEES %
1.	Age (in years)	18 – 25	664	23.6
		26 – 35	607	21.6
		36 – 45	902	32.1
		46 and above	641	22.7
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>
2.	Highest academic qualifications	No. education	1326	47.1
		0/level	700	24.9
		ND/NCE/	222	7.9
		HND/BSC/	261	9.3
		MASTER/PHD/	4	0.1
		Others	301	10.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>		
3.	Religion	Christian	805	28.6
		Islam	1963	69.8
		Others	46	1.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>
4.	Gender	Male	781	27.8
		Female	2033	72.2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>
5.	Marital Status	Single	492	17.5
		Married	914	32.5
		Divorced	606	21.5
		Windowed	418	14.9
		Separated	384	13.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>
6.	Period in Camp (in years)	1 – 5	1846	65.6
		6 – 10	859	30.5
		10 years and above	109	3.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2814</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Research survey 2020**

Table 1 shows the demographic information of respondents. The age distribution shows that 664 respondents (23.6%) fall between the ages 18 – 25 years, 607 (21.6 %) between the ages 26 – 35 years, 902 respondents (32.1 %) 36 – 45 years and above. Hence, most of the respondents fall between the ages 36 – 45 years. More so, the table shows that 1326 respondents (47.1%) do not have any form of academic qualifications, 700 (24.9) have O/level, 222 (7.9%) have ND/NCE respectively, 261 (9.3%) have HND/BSC respectively, 4 respondents (0.1%) have Masters/PHD while 301 (10.7) have other kinds of academic qualifications.

The religious distribution shows that 805 respondents (28.6%) are Christians, 1963 (69.8%) are of the Islamic religion while 46 (1.6%) are of other kinds of religions. Hence, most of the respondents are Muslims. More so, the table shows that 78, respondents (27.8%) are male while 2033 (72.2%) are female. Therefore, most of the respondents are female. The Marital status of the respondents shows that 492 (17.5%) are single, 914 (32.5%) are married, 606 (21.5%) are divorced, 418 (14.9%) are windowed while 384 (13.6%) are separated. Thus, most of the respondents are married.

Finally, the period in while respondents have seen in the camp revealed that 1846 respondents (65.6%) have spent between 1-5 years, 859 (30.5%) have spent between 6-10 years while 109 (3.9%) have spent the period above 10 years. Therefore, most of the respondents have spent the period between 1-5 years.

**Table 3; (Independent Variable) Proliferation of small Arms and Light weapons**

S/NO	VARIABLES	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Decision
1.	Proliferation of SALW is Prevalent in my area	1320 (47%)	500 (18%)	242 (9%)	406 (14%)	346 (12%)	3.73	Accepted
2.	Peer influence is the major cause of proliferation of SALW	12.11 (43%)	607 (22%)	423 (15%)	273 (9%)	300 (11%)	3.77	Accepted
3.	Proliferation of small arms and light weapon has been induced by weak institutional framework	988 (35%)	800 (28%)	642 (23%)	185 (7%)	199 (7%)	3.78	Accepted
4.	Poor parenting influences the proliferation of SALW	791 (28%)	1414 (50%)	506 (18%)	64 (2%)	39 (1%)	4.01	Accepted
5.	The community norms and values encourages the proliferation of SALW	48 (2%)	63 (2%)	185 (7%)	900 (32%)	1618 (57%)	1.59	Rejected

**Source: Research survey, 2020.**

Table 3 shows the social affect of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The question on whether proliferation of small arms and light weapon is prevalent in the area of study, 1320 (47%) strongly agreed, 500 (18%) agreed, 342 were undecided, 406 (14%) disagreed while 346 (12%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.73 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00. The question on whether peer influence is the major cause of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, 1211 respondents (43%) strongly agreed, 607 (22%) agreed, 423 (15%) were undecided, 273 (9%) disagreed while 300 (11%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.77 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00. The question on whether proliferation of small arms and light weapons has been induced by weak institutional frame, 988 respondents (35%) strongly agreed 800 (28%) agreed, 642 (28%) were undecided, 185 (7%) disagreed. The mean value is 3.78 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00. For the question on whether poor parenting influences the proliferation of small arms and light weapon, 791 respondent (28%) strongly agreed, 1414 (50%) agreed, 506 (18%) undecided, 64 disagreed and 39 (1%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 4.01 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00.

Finally, for the question on whether the community norms and values encourages the proliferation of SALW, 48 respondents (2%) strongly agreed, 63 (2%) agreed, 185 (7%) undecided, 900 (32%) disagreed while 1618 strongly disagreed. The mean value is 1.59 hence it is rejected since mean < 3.00.

**Table 4: Legal aspect of proliferation of small arms and light weapon**

S/NO	VARIABLES	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Decision
1.	There are laws in respect of handling SALW	904 (32%)	1416 (50%)	392 (14%)	53 (2%)	49 (2%)	4.09	Accepted
2.	The law enforcement agencies help in executing this laws	988 (35%)	800 (28%)	642 (23%)	185 (7%)	199 (7%)	3.78	Accepted
3.	There are appropriate sanctions for any culprit in illegal ammunitions	889 (32%)	1363 (48%)	424 (15%)	37 (1%)	101 (4%)	4.03	Accepted
4.	The judiciary is fully involved in regulations of arms and weapons	1003 (36%)	822 (29%)	280 (10%)	350 (12%)	359 (13%)	3.63	Accepted
5.	The national orientation agency sensitizes the citizens on the legal implications of SALW	914 (32%)	1406 (50%)	302 (11%)	142 (5%)	50 (2%)	4.06	Accepted

**Source: Research survey, 2020**

Table 4.Shows the legal aspect of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, for the question on whether there are laws in respect of handling SALW, 904 respondents (32%) strongly agreed, 146 (50%) agreed, 392 (14%) undecided, 53 (2%) disagreed while 49 (2%) strongly disagreed. Hence, the mean value is 4.09 and it is accepted since mean < 3.00. For the question on whether the law enforcement agencies helps in implementing the law, 988 respondents (35%) strongly agreed, 800 (28%) agreed, 642 (23%) undecided, 185 (70%) disagreed and 199 strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.78 thus it is accepted since mean > 3.00. For the question on whether there are appropriate sanctions for any culprit in illegal ammunitions, 889 respondents (32%) strongly agreed, 1363 (48%) agreed, 424 (15%) undecided, 37 (1%) disagreed while 101 (4%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 4.03 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00. For the question on whether the judiciary is fully involved in promoting regulations of arms and light weapons, 1003 respondents (36%) strongly agreed, 822 (29%) agreed, 280 (10%) undecided, 350 (12%) disagreed, 359 (13%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.63 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00.



Finally, for the question on whether the national orientation agency sensitizes the citizens on the legal implications of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, 914 respondents (32%) strongly agreed, 1406 (50%) agreed, 302 (11%) undecided, 142 (5%) disagreed while 50 (2%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 4.06 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00.

**Table 5. (Dependent Variable) Effects of Proliferation of Small and Light Weapon**

S/NO	Variables	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Decision
1.	Proliferation of SALW affects my social life	1416 (50%)	790 (28%)	505 (18%)	60 (2%)	43 (2%)	4.24	Accepted
2.	Proliferation of SALW affect my fundamental human right	902 (32%)	818 (29%)	609 (22%)	235 (8%)	250 (9%)	3.67	Accepted
3.	I am constantly threatened due to the proliferation of SALW	1119 (40%)	622 (22%)	311 (11%)	400 (14%)	362 (13%)	3.62	Accepted
4.	I am afraid to visit friends and relations	153 (5%)	203 (7%)	191 (7%)	1430 (51%)	839 (30%)	2.08	Rejected
5.	Judiciary is overstressed due to cases of SALW	400 (14%)	508 (18%)	619 (22%)	703 (25%)	584 (21%)	2.80	Rejected

Source: Research survey, 2020.

Table 5 shows the dependent variable bordering on the effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on the victims. From the table, the question on whether proliferation of SALW affect the social life of victims, 1416 (50%) strongly agreed, 790 (28%) agreed, 505 (18%) undecided, 60 (2%) disagreed and 43 (2%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 4.24 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.00. For the question on whether the proliferation of small arms and light weapons affect fundamental human right of victims, 902 respondents (32%) strongly agreed, 818 (29%) agreed 609 (22%) undecided 235 (8%) disagreed while 250 (9%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.67 hence it is accepted since mean > 3.67. For the question on whether the proliferation of arms threatened the victims, 1119 (40%) strongly agreed, 662 (22%) agreed, 311 (11%) undecided, 400 (14%) disagreed while 362 (13%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.62; hence it is accepted since mean > 3.62. On whether the respondents are afraid to visit friends and relations, 153 respondents (5%) strongly agreed, 203 (7%) agreed, 191 (7%) undecided, 1430 disagreed, and 839 (30%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 2.08 hence it is rejected since mean < 3.00. This is probably because victims also need emotional and economic support from friends and relations hence they had no choice than to undertake such a visit.

Finally, for the question on whether the judiciary is over stressed due to cases of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, 400 respondents (14%) strongly agreed, 508 (18%) agreed, 619 (22%) undecided, 703 (25%) disagreed while 584 (21%) strongly disagreed. The mean value is 2. Hence, it is rejected since mean < 3.00.

## Test of Hypothesis

### Hypothesis I

**Hi:** Proliferation of small arms and light weapon do not significantly affect the social life of the victims in North Central Nigeria.

**Table 6 Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	STD. error of the Estimate	Durbin watson
1	0.812	0.713	0.711	0.43112	0.019

Source: Research survey 2020

- Predictors : (Constant) PSALW
- Dependent Variable : Social effect

The model summary table shows the strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The result of R stood at 0.812 indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable social effect and the explanatory variable proliferation of small arms and light weapon.

The Coefficient of multiple determination .R<sup>2</sup> measures the percentage of the total change of the dependent variable that can be explained by the explanatory variable, the resent indicates a R Square of 0.713 showing that 71% of the variances on the social effect is explained by the proliferation of small arms and light weapon while the remaining 29% (100 - 71) of the variations could be explained by other variables not considered here. Again, the table that R - Square compensates for the model complexity to provide a fairer comparison of model showing a figure of 0.711.

The result is supported by the value of the adjusted R which is 71% showing that if the entire population is used, the result will deviate by 9.9% (i.e 81.2 – 71.3). The error of the estimate is low at 0.43112 while the Durbin Watson test is 0.019 showing that there is no correlation.

**Table 7. ANOVA <sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	321.114	1	321.114	1031.118	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
1 Residual	212.102	2812	.326		
<b>Total</b>	<b>533.216</b>	<b>2813</b>			

**Source: Research survey 2020**

- a. Dependent variable: Social effect.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), PSALW.

The ANOVA table confirms the result of the model summary, the analysis showed that  $F = 1031.118$  which is significant at  $(0.000) < (0.05)$ . Hence, since the  $P - \text{value} < 0.05$  (critical value), the null hypothesis that proliferation of small arms and light weapon do not significantly affect the social life of the victims in the North Central Nigeria is rejected.

### Hypothesis 2

**H2:** Proliferation of small arms and light weapons do not significantly have legal effect on victims in North Central Nigeria.

**Table 8 Model Summary <sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	STD error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	0.826	0.739	0.734	0.36124	0.033

**Source: Research survey 2020**

- a. Predictors: (Constant) PSALW.
- b. Dependent variable: Legal effect.

The model summary shows strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the result of R stood at 0.826 indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable legal effect and the explanatory variable proliferation of small arms and light weapon.

The coefficient of multiple determinations  $R^2$  measures the percentage of the total change of the dependent variable that can be explained by the explanatory variable, the result indicates a R square of 0.739 showing that 74% of the variances on the legal effect is explained by the proliferation of small arms and light weapon while the remaining 26% (100 - 74) of the variations could be explained by other variables not considered in this model.

The adjusted R-square compensates to provide a fairer comparison of model showing a figure of 0.734.

The value of the adjusted R which is 73% showing that if the entire population is used, the result will deviate by 8.7% (i.e. 82.6 – 73.9).

The error of the estimate is considered low at 0.36124 while the Durbin Watson test is 0.033 showing that these are no auto-correlation.

**Table 9. ANOVA <sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	223.601	1	223.601	1167.203	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1 Residual	114.342	2812	.231		
<b>Total</b>	<b>337.942</b>	<b>2813</b>			

**Source: Research survey 2020**

- a. Dependent variable: Legal effect.
- b. Predictors: (Constant) PSALW.

The ANOVA table confirms the result of the model summary, the analysis shows that  $F = 1167.203$  which is significance at  $(0.000) < (0.05)$ . Hence, since the  $P - \text{value} < 0.05$  (critical value), the null hypothesis that small arms and light weapons do not significantly have legal effect on victims in the north central Nigeria is rejected.

### Conclusions

Based on the empirical results of the study, the research concludes that proliferation of small arms and light weapons is prevalent in the North-Central Nigeria. More so, anchored on the findings to the study showed a high, positive statically relationship between the proliferation of small arms and light weapon and the social life of the victims in the North Central Nigeria. In addition, the study concludes that proliferation of small arms and light weapons has legal implications on the victims in the North Central Nigeria. Thus, the victims affected by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in these area are adversely affected.

### Recommendations

From the evidences gathered through scientific investigations the study makes the following recommendations.

1. Based on the finding that there is a significant positive relationship between the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and social life of the victims in North Central Nigeria, the study recommends that social institutions should be strengthened to encourage and sustain social integration as well as

improved value re-orientation on the need to avoid arms proliferation and its multiplier effects on crimes. This should be executed by the government through the ministry of youths and sport development and this campaign should be decentralized at the states and local governments. More so, the National orientation agency (NDR) should be involved in aggressive campaign against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Finally, Community efforts should be encouraged while families, schools, and religious bodies be encouraged to carry out a complementary roles against proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

2. Based on the finding that there is a significant positive relationship between proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the legal effects on victims in North Central Nigeria, the study recommends that the regulatory framework bordering on arms proliferation be strengthened so as to enable culprits be appropriately sanctioned. The paper also recommends that law enforcement agencies be more involved in intelligent gathering with the view to ensuring that arms proliferation as well as crimes are prevented rather than focusing on investigations to identified and punish offenders after such crimes are committed. Finally, considering the fact that judiciary is critical stakeholders in execution of culprits of arms proliferations, the judiciary should ensure it carry out an accelerated judgments when ever crimes are committed as this will go a long way to avoid delay in such judgment.

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