Nigerian Police Operations: An Analytical Review of Strategies, Effectiveness and Challenges

By

Abobo Benson Oderohwo
Department Of Sociology and Criminology
University Of Delta, Agbor
Email: oderohwo.benson@unidel.edu.ng
+2348038161350

Nwachukwu Blessing Oluchukwu
Department Of Sociology and Criminology
University Of Delta, Agbor
Email: blessing.nwachukwu@unidel.edu.ng
+234703703898

Nwadike Ngozi
Department Of Sociology and Criminology
University Of Delta, Agbor
Email: iwedike.ngozi@unidel.edu.ng
+2348034666924
&
Dr. Ikpen Akpojero Jomo
Department of Oversea Assistance
Ministry of Economic Planning
Delta State.
Email: jomoikpen@gmail.com
+2348035777415

Abstract

This article is a study of the policing operations of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in Nigeria, examining the nature of its approaches, the actual practice of these approaches, the effectiveness of policing in Nigeria and the major problems confronting the NPF. After outlining the historical and legal bases of policing in Nigeria, the paper discusses key identifiable

strategies (e.g. community policing, data/technology-driven policing, proactive crime prevention). It evaluates, in turn, the success of NPF in such areas of crime prevention, maintenance of public order, community trust, and responsiveness. It highlights significant challenges such as gaps in financing and logistics, human resource deficiencies, corruption and accountability deficits, public trust and legitimacy issues, structural and legal constraints and analyzes the impact they have on performance. The article ends with some concluding thoughts and policy suggestions for improving the place of the NPF in Nigeria's security architecture.

Keywords: Nigeria, policing, Nigeria Police Force, community policing, policing strategy, police effectiveness, police reform.

1.0 Introduction:

Policing is a primary facet of internal defense and the uphold of the rule of law. In Nigeria, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) serves as the linchpin in domestic policing within the country's federal system. With Nigeria's complex socio-political dynamics, its alarming crime rates (notably armed robbery, kidnapping, communal violence, and cybercrime), and the variation of contexts among states, NPF performance is critical to Nigeria's governance, development, and social stability. As the main parastatal for law enforcement, the NPF is under obligation to curb crimes, investigate them, save lives and properties and keep public peace in the expanse of the federation. But whether the Force has been effective in the discharge of these responsibilities is a different matter and one heavily debated in academic and policy circles (Okeshola & Mudiare, 2020).

Policing in Nigeria structure deeply entrenched structural and historical issues characterize the Nigerian police environment. Founded in 1930, the NPF derived much of its organizational ethos and paramilitary character from the colonial policing into systems that privileged coercion over community partnership (Oko, 2021). The Force remains riddled with systemic dysfunction, corruption, under-resourcing and alienated police-community relations – despite the constitutional provisions defining its role. The federal nature of the country further complicates policing, as Nigeria operates a unitary police system where all officers' report to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) based in Abuja, and states and local governments have no control over security operations within their domains

(Alemika & Chukwuma, 2021). This centralization can result in delayed reaction, insufficient accountability, and inappropriate contextualization to the specific security needs at the local level.

In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed heightened attention to policing both because of rising insecurity and increased public scrutiny of police behavior. The #EndSARS protests of 2020 marked a historic turning point in public engagement with policing issues. The protests, initially sparked by reports of extrajudicial killings and abuse by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), quickly evolved into a broader demand for police reform and accountability (Ojebode & Olorunyomi, 2021). The demonstrations highlighted widespread frustration over police brutality, corruption, and impunity, which had eroded public trust in the NPF. According to Akinlabi (2021), the #EndSARS movement reflected deep-seated grievances and provided a platform for citizens to challenge systemic failures in governance and security provision.

At the same time, the Nigerian government has initiated steps to restructure its policing institution. The Police Act 2020 represents a significant attempt at bringing the NPF's legal framework into the 21st Century. It promotes community policing, protection of human rights and the use of accountability structures, which are considered as part of good practice in the world in the conduct of democracy policing (Agbiboa, 2022). It also requires the formation of State and Divisional Community Policing Committees to encourage local involvement in the management of security. Moreover, changes in the NPF have sought to improve training, professionalism, and the adoption of technology, including the use of digital record systems, forensic units, and surveillance infrastructure (Oluwasanmi, 2022). But despite such measures the gap between policy and practice is wide. There is a wide gap between provisions for reform on paper and their implementation on the ground because of bureaucratic lethargy, lack of funds, and weak monitoring.

In light of this, a few salient questions arise: Are the policing practices that are being pursued consistent with the best practice and the Nigerian context? How successfully has the NPF executed its mandate? What barriers get in the way of the agency doing a better job? Answers to these questions lie at the heart of

evaluating Nigeria's internal security apparatus. For example, studies reveal that perception of police effectiveness is still very low despite reforms. The result of the Afro barometer survey (2022) tells us that only about 30% of Nigerians say that they trust the police, while a staggering 60% say they trust religious and/or traditional leaders. This lack of trust inhibits cooperation between citizens and their law enforcement, which is critical for successful community policing (Abdullahi, 2023).

In terms of how it works, the NPF are engaged in crime fighting with the use of several approaches which include intelligence led policing, community policing, patrol operations and emergency response teams are also employed. Intelligence-led policing concentrates on the collection and analysis of crime information to inform decision-making about deployment and interventions, community policing involves the establishment of partnerships with members of the community for proactive crime prevention (Nwankwo, 2021). But these approaches are often problematic by lack of resources, unskilled personnel, and wavering support from leadership. The police to population ratio in Nigeria is roughly 1:600, lower than the UN recommended standard of 1:450, reflecting a force that is overworked and under-equipped, (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2023).

It is also true that for effective operation, police need to be situated within an enabling institutional environment. The police are often frustrated by Nigeria's crumbling criminal justice system, rife with delays, corruption and poor collaboration among agencies. Too many arrests go nowhere, fueling a culture of impunity that saps morale for police officers and inspires criminals (Adebayo, 2022). Also poor remuneration of the officers, insufficient welfare and lack of funding led to bribery and misbehavior in the Force (Okafor, 2020). These structural challenges are said to have been instrumental in the increase in extrajudicial killings and abuses exemplifying a further loss of public confidence in the NPF (Agbiboa, 2023).

The politicization of the Force remains a significant hindrance to effective policing in Nigeria. Government has been accused of turning the police into an instrument of political oppression at the expense of professionalism and nonpartisanship

(Oluwaniyi, 2021). Politically motivated frequent turnover of the head disrupts reform process and strategic planning periodically. In addition, the lack of an autonomous police monitoring agency with actual sanctioning power undermines accountability. Recruitment and discipline are the responsibility of the Police Service Commission (PSC), but authority-related disputes between the PSC and the Office of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) frequently delay oversight (Ibrahim, 2022).

The rise of non-state security actor's vigilante groups, local hunters and private security firms is also indicative of public disillusionment with the NPF's effectiveness. In a number of states, these groups have evolved into the main security providers especially in rural and conflict-prone areas (Umar, 2021). Though they sometimes substitute for policing capacity, these entities raise a host of legal and human rights issues and their proliferation is a sign of a weakening monopoly over legitimate force on the part of the state. In addition, the growing emergence of ethnic and regional security organizations such as Amotekun in the Southwest and Ebube Agu in the Southeast, among others, is a clear indication of concerted efforts to devolve the police to the local or regional level as a means of better tackling regional security peculiarities and issues of concern (Eze, 2023).

Some of these problems are now being addressed through the process of modernization. The use of digital crime databases, body-worn cameras, and forensic technology also creates avenues for increasing transparency and productivity (Nwaorgu & Alade, 2021). In the same vein, internationally supported through, among others, the UNODC and the British Council training initiatives seek to improve police professionalism, gender sensitivity, and human rights compliance. Yet because political will, financial resources, and public confidence are continuously required to bring these to fruition, their impact can wane.

At the end of the day, reforming and improving the police system in Nigeria is a question of priorities. Scholars have contended that community-oriented policing (COP), which brings citizens into the decision- making process and emphasizes transparency and legitimacy (Akinlabi & Murphy, 2022). Future trajectories of police reform in Nigeria will be determined not only by legalistic parameters, but

also by a cultural transformation that will orientate the police towards serving rather than coercing. A people-centered policing model is built on partnership, accountability and professionalism which are the approach to fulfilling the intricate security challenges facing the country.

In this regard, an analytical review of these matters is what this article aims to offer. The rest of the discussion is as follows: Section 2 outlines the context and legal/structural framework of policing in Nigeria (the constitutional provisions, the Police Act 2020 and the organizational structures of the police). In Section 3 the paper analyses various critical operational techniques developed by the NPF, such as community policing (CP) and intelligence led approaches. Section 4 reviews how empirical findings and citizen reviews of the Force' success. Section 5 discusses key problems that inhibit the NPF's success such as corruption, underfunding, political interference, and feeble accountability. Section 6 contains discussions and policy considerations on reform approaches, and Section 7 offers concluding messages for sustainable policing and national security reform.

2. Context and Framework of Policing in Nigeria

2.1 Historical and Institutional Context

The security management in Nigeria moved through different historical era-colonialism, post -independence, military era and the present democratic dispensation. The present day Nigeria Police Force (NPF) evolved from the Hausa Constabulary which was formed in 1879 and was later incorporated into the NPF in 1930 (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2021). The colonial style of policing was primarily geared towards the protection of the British administrative interests and not those of the citizens. It had more to do with policing control and coercion and quelling dissent than protecting citizens (Oko, 2021). This heritage of authoritarian policing had a profound imprint on Nigeria's security agencies, and continues to define the NPF's penchant for forceful enforcement of the law, as opposed to community-oriented policing.

After the country gained independence in 1960, the NPF evolved as the principal policing agency of the federal government. Yet the organization's structure and culture were still very much colonial and rooted in hierarchies of command and military discipline. The long years of- military rule (1966–1999) added to the

centralization and reduction in accountability. In this era, policing was regularly employed as a political means to suppress dissent and secure the regime rather than protecting civil rights (Oluwaniyi, 2021). As a result, the police had its legitimacy among the people eroded, as the people no longer saw them as their servant but instead as the servants of an oppressive state (Akinlabi, 2021).

The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended) under which the NPF operate is the current legal instrument for the NPF under Section 214(1), which provides that "there shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force." The Constitution grants the federal government through the President and the Inspector-General Police (IGP) the sole power to the Force. This highly centralized system has been the topic of sustained debate and criticism. Scholars and policy analysts have doubted whether the one single federally administered police system can work to meet the myriad and localized security challenges in each of Nigeria's 36 states (Abdullahi, 2023; Eze, 2023).

Proponents of decentrali-zation claim that the existing centralized model does not fit a nation as huge and diverse as Nigeria. They highlight that police at the local and state level would be more in tune with para subsist security challenges, be more accountable, and have better community interaction (Ibrahim, 2022). As Nwankwo (2021) rightly observed 'a "the centralized system of policing in Nigeria cannot guarantee the safety of Nigerians" because it neglects the particular social, economic and cultural milieu of each zone to (emphasis in original). On the other hand, opponents of state policing argue that it may result in abuse of power by the state governors and their cronies, ethnic-centrism and a balkanization of national security (Agbiboa, 2022). The debate continues to be the dominant discourse in Nigeria's security, thus a symbol of greater federal versus local autonomy tensions.

Organizationally, the NPF is under the Ministry of Police Affairs and the IGP is the chief executive and reports to the President. The Force is structured hierarchically, with its Force Headquarters located in Abuja, 12 zonal commands, 37 state commands (including the Federal Capital Territory), and divisional and station levels. Yet this large-scale structure exists alongside operational breakdowns and poor coordination. It is in good part the result of chronic

underfunding, outdated arms and equipment and manpower shortages in relation to the population (UNODC, 2023). This institutional fragility means it is less able to effectively perform core functions like crime prevention, investigation and prosecution.

2.2 Legal Foundation: The Police Act 2020

A significant achievement in the reform of Nigeria's policing is the passage of the Police Act 2020, which repealed the archaic Police Act of 1943 (as amended). The 2020 Act is a significant piece of legislation aimed at bringing policing in line with democratic values, accountability, and protection of human rights and the rule of law. It establishes clearer and more detailed legal provisions regarding the structure, management and operation of the NPF. Its provisions include definitive definitions of police responsibilities, enhanced accountability measures and new sources of funding through the creation of the Nigeria Police Trust Fund (Agbiboa, 2022; Oluwasanmi, 2022).

One of the major reforms brought about by the Act is its focus on community-based policing. Section 113 of the Act provides for the establishment at the state and divisional levels of community policing between the police committees for the purpose of fostering cooperation and communities. This is a departure from reactive and forceful policing towards a model of prevention and community involvement (Akinlabi & accountability mechanisms Murphy, 2022). The Act also introduces including internal disciplinary procedures, human rights compliance, and the utilization of performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of Act requires the IGP to the police (Adebayo, 2022). In addition, the render annual reports to the National Assembly which further increases legislative oversight and accountability.

In respect of financing the Police Act 2020 and the Police Trust Fund Act 2019 are focused on providing sustainable and predictable financing support for police activities. The Police Trust Fund addresses the perennial constraint of inadequate resources and supplies a stream of financial resources for training, acquisition of materials, and other needs of the Force (Okafor, 2020). According to Nwaorgu and Alade, (2021), the Act "provides for a reasonable funding structure for the Police

Force as is obtainable in other key Federal Government Parastatals" a move deemed critical towards the stability of the institution.

Implementation challenges continue to undermine the progress of these reforms, although they are fewer and less severe than before. Commentators highlight a slow and uneven pace community policing has taken off due to lack of coordination, as well as, poor public education and appreciation and reluctance on the part of politicians (Oluwasanmi, 2022). In addition, entrenched corruption, lack of accountability, and contradictory responsibilities between the Police Service Commission (PSC) and the IGP continue to impede reform initiatives (Ibrahim, 2022). Yet the Police Act 2020 is a major legal reform, pointing to the government's desire to professionalize and transform Nigeria's police force.

2.3 Socio-Security Environment

Nigeria's socio-security landscape arguably constitutes a bewildering policing matrix on the continent of Africa. The country is confronted with a series of interrelated security threats, among which kidnapping, armed banditry; insurgency, communal violence, cybercrime and violent extremism are prominent. These challenges place enormous pressures on the NPF in different ways, and with each new challenge, the operational NPF reach is further extended. Nigeria continues to be ranked among the top ten most affected countries by terrorism; the situation is largely attributed to Boko Haram insurgency and the activities of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) according to the Global Terrorism Index (2023). Also, the North-West and North-Central are now the hub for banditry and mass kidnapping, while the South-East is battling secessionist-fuelled violence (Eze, 2023).

Researchers have highlighted that internal insecurity is among the greatest challenge toward the Nigeria's national development as well as efficient functioning of the NPF (Abdullahi, 2023). For example, Oko (2021) concludes that "the Nigeria Police Force and the challenge of combating internal insecurity" reveals that while policing is crucial, the dream of achieving peace has never been realized as a result of systemic limitations like poor logistics, intelligence gathering, staff shortage and so on. Equally, Umar (2021) points to the growing dependence on non-state security actors, such as vigilante groups and local

hunters, as evidence of diminishing trust in the capacity of the police to deliver security.

Crime rate statistics reinforce this bleak reality. Reports of the National Bureau of Statistics (2022) suggest an enduring high rate of armed robbery, kidnapping, and sexual violence in a number of states with little probe and prosecution. Police are non-existent or poorly resourced in many rural and semi-urban communities, which are then exposed to criminal elements. This lack of effective security creates a vacuum that is sometimes occupied by informal and community-oriented protection mechanisms, which can function in a way that is unauthorized by the law (Umar, 2021).

In cities, there are more complicated policing problems with the emergences of cybercrime, financial fraud and organised criminal group. Established under the Criminal Justice (Cybercrime, Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act of 2015, the NPF's Cybercrime Unit has achieved some success, but the fast pace at which digital crimes evolve consistently gets ahead of institutional responses (Nwankwo, 2021). Moreover, the Force's widespread corruption, embodied in bribery, extortion and misuse of power, hampers willingness to collaborate with the public and undermines legitimacy (Agbiboa 2023).

Thus, the Nigeria police situation is extremely problematic. This calls for strong approaches that integrate intelligence-led policing, community participation and institutional strengthening. Policing in that setting, of course, needed to be enforced with empathy, deterrence with dialogue, and authority with accountability. As Akinlabi and Murphy (2022) note, sustainable peace and security in Nigeria will be contingent on "constructing police institutions that are legitimate, trusted, and locally grounded." Enhancing institutional capacity, increasing transparency, and building productive police-citizen relations are therefore crucial to stabilizing the country's enduring security turmoil.

3. Operational Strategies of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF)

This section covers the key strategies of policing introduced by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) over recent years such as reactive law enforcement, proactive and strategic policing, community policing and partnership, technology and

intelligence-led operations and legal and oversight reforms. In sum, they are an expression of the Force's developing operational philosophy against the backdrop of Nigeria's transforming security environment.

3.1 Reactive Law Enforcement and Public Order Maintenance

Operationally, the NPF has been largely reactive, with more emphasis on chasing after crimes than focusing on crime prevention strategies. This also involves answering distress calls, performing crime investigations, acquiring the peace in conducting various functions manifestations, controlling traffic flow, and regulating massive crowds. Reactive policing model can be comparable with traditional policing oriented model, where centrality of police work is tied to reaction to crime rather than prevention of crimes (Oluwaniyi, 2021).

Nonetheless, critical authors have stated that the prevalence of reactive police practice in Nigeria has resulted in enduring public insecurity and distrust. For example, Akinlabi (2021) argues that the Nigerian police's operational focus is "misguided and hyper reactionary" leading to slow responses, minimal crime prevention and an increasing trust gap with the public. In like manner, Oko (2021) observes that reactive policing weakens long-term success as it obscures the structural and social causes of criminality such as unemployment and youth disaffection.

Reactive policing in Nigeria is also hampered by inadequate logistical support, late response to emergencies and corruption along the line. A recent report (UNODC 2023) confirms that there is under-reporting/un-investigation of crimes with less than 30% of crimes reported or investigated successfully due to weak response mechanisms, lack of trust in police services, and fear of extortion. However, the reactive enforcement of law and order continues to dominate as a core strategy of the NPF, especially in controlling riots, responding to armed robberies, and managing emergency crises. The task of transforming from a wholly reactive approach to one that also incorporates prevention, intelligence and public co-operation is unfinished.

3.2 Proactive and Strategic Policing

Lately, strategic or proactive policing is being promoted as the new approach to policing – one that involves anticipation, prevention and interdiction of crime rather than responding after the fact within the NPF. The strategy includes data mining, intelligence-led decision-making and prevention techniques (Agbiboa, 2022). Predictive-patrol policing also directs patrol officers to focus on areas where crime is likely to occur by identifying crime hot spots, using targeted patrols and conducting surveillance that discourages criminal activity.

An investigation by Abdullahi (2023), The Challenges of Implementing Strategic Policing in Nigeria, revealed that the NPF does identify with the notion of proactive strategies, its approach to prosecution is underwhelming. The research highlighted obstacles including corruption, insufficient staff, and absence of technological tools, substandard training, and fragile data infrastructure. Adebayo (2022) equally posits that the continued political interference, mistrust between the police and the society, would also hinder the effectiveness of proactive schemes.

Forthcoming debates on "smart policing" in Nigeria advocate the integration of digital tools, such as mobile apps for citizens to report crimes, digital crime pattern mapping, and more dynamic cybercrime surveillance mechanisms (Oluwasanmi, 2022). Such innovations, properly executed, can bring about a shift from reacting to preventing via real-time intelligence and inter-agency collaboration. The major challenges are the establishment of the NPF's Cybercrime Unit and partnership with INTERPOL and the Economic and Financial crimes Commission (EFCC) as examples of proactive policing (Nwankwo, 2021).

Yet the transformation of proactive policing in Nigeria will require breaking bureaucratic apathy, improving officer education, and embedding data analytics within operational decision-making. Keen strategic policing is one of the key elements of successful and safe mega sport events as (Akinlabi and Murphy 2022) "intelligence-led politics enmeshed technology, community cooperation and institutional accountability".

3.3 Community Policing and Partnership with Local Communities

Community policing has been the centerpiece of the NPF's contemporary approach, which seeks to encourage cooperation between police and community members. The premise is based on the understanding that long-term security is attainable through the active engagement of communities in the identification, anticipation, and mitigation of security matters. The community policing was entrenched by the Police Act 2020 alongside the establishment of State and Divisional Community Policing Committees (Adebayo, 2022).

In reality, community policing arrangements have been institutionalized in a number of states to different levels. Eze (2023) in the study Community Policing and Security Challenges in the South-East revealed that community policing at the local level with traditional rulers, youth leaders, and CBOs enhanced intelligence gathering and response to local crimes. And, Nwankwo (2021) praises community policing as promoting mutual trust, increasing flow of information and sustaining police legitimacy.

Yet challenges still exist in its application. Akinlabi and Murphy (2022) point to the fact that officers become burnt out and frustrated with lack of training and incentives which impacts the sustainability of community policing initiatives. The findings of Community Policing Practice in the Nigerian Police: Implications of Employee Burnout (Ibrahim, 2022) substantiates that excessive workloads, poor welfare and inadequate operational support discourage officers from forming community relations.

In spite of the foregoing impediments, community policing remains the core of Nigeria's internal security reform strategy. It is a transition from authoritarian Rule to democratic governance consistent with the best practices in the world with respect to policing and democracy for (Agbiboa, 2022). Ultimately, the intent is to develop a citizen-centered policing system based on trust, shared responsibility, and openness.

3.4 Technology, Intelligence, and Modernization

In line with global best practices, the NPF has adopted technology-led and intelligence based policing. The NPF's modernization programme includes

digital transformation, capacity development and better data systems to ensure operational efficiency. The combination of various techniques such as closed-circuit television (CCTV), automatic fingerprint identification, mobile reporting applications, forensic laboratories and digital communication systems has now become very common (Oluwasanmi, 2022).

The research Transforming Law Enforcement: Leveraging Smart Policing for Value Creation in the Nigeria Police Force reminded that Smart policing concepts include, among others, mobile crime-reporting platforms, real-time surveillance, and monitoring of cybercrime through digital forensic units (Nwaorgu & Alade, 2021). These novel concepts seek to improve the gathering of intelligence, situational awareness and speed of response to threats.

Furthermore, the NPF National Command and Control Centre situated in Abuja serves as a digital coordination platform that allows for real-time tracking of security incidents across the country (UNODC, 2023). Technology has also facilitated better internal communication within the Force, enhanced the mode of delivery for training, and enabled more sophisticated analysis of data for long-term planning.

Still, implementation challenges are present as there are gaps in funding, digital literacy among officers is low, and cyber security protocols are insufficient. As Agbiboa (2023) has pointed out, the efficacy of technology-driven policing requires a reformed police institution, ethical practice, and strong data governance. Without these, the possibility for abuse and privacy intrusion may erode public trust in smart policing initiatives.

3.5 Legal and Oversight Reforms

In addition to reforms in operational strategies, the NPF's policing governance model also underpins the policing of modern-day strains. The Police and Crime Act 2020 and associated arrangements provide a series of substantial accountability; transparency and efficiency focused legal and institutional reforms. The Act requires the creation of internal disciplinary processes, performance reviews and public complaints processes.

The PSC and the NHRC now also have more oversight of police behavior and human rights violations than they had in the past, although the police remain largely unrestrained viz a viz these institutions. Like the Police Complaints Response Unit (PCRU) is a public-interface for reporting misconduct and facilitating administrative sanctions (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2021).

Adebayo (2022) notes that enhancing these mechanisms of oversight is crucial for the reinstatement of the public confidence in the NPF especially after the 2020 #EndSARS protests. In addition, the establishment of the Nigeria Police Trust Fund introduces a mechanism for sustainable funding, enabling the Force to continue critical operations and pursue modernization.

The legal reforms also highlight the importance of police accountability to the law and to the public, further reinforcing a transition away from coercive enforcement and towards service-oriented policing. Although issues of corruption and political interference continue to exist, the reform process signifies that Nigeria acknowledges policing practices need to be made more consistent with democratic governance and international human rights standards (Agbiboa, 2023; Ibrahim, 2022).

4. Assessing Effectiveness

With the outlines of the methods for this survey defined, we now turn to the issue of what crime prevention, order maintenance, public trust, responsiveness and accountability in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) have looked like in practice. The result appears to be mixed-some institutional reform and technology assimilation, but enduring weakness in capability, professionalism, and community trust. The institutional structure and the strategic framework of the NPF are being developed, albeit the results of performance are inconsistent at the states and regional levels largely because of environmental differences in crime dynamics, political interference and poor funding (Adeosun and Oladele; 2022).

4.1 Crime Prevention and Control

Success in crime prevention is itself a measure of policing performance. The performance of the NPF is still far from being satisfactory several studies state. For example, Okafor (2023) notes that NPF continues to rely on reactive

approaches to crimes as opposed to preventive intelligence-led policing which constrains its capacity to reduce rising insecurity. Similarly, Adebayo and Eze (2024) revealed in Examining Constraints of the Effective Crime Control and Management by the Nigerian Police Force that inadequate collaboration between the police and the general public and poor training as well as low morale amongst the police personnel has contributed to continued poor performance in crime control. These results indicate that, on paper, the strategies are there, but in terms of executing them and turning them into tangible outcomes, there is a deficiency. To some extent, the crime environment is still unstable: kidnapping, banditry, communal violence, and cybercrime are on the rise. For instance, a 2024 Reuters report recounted how gunmen raided a police division in Zurmi, Zamfara State, highlighting the perils and intricacies of policing in Nigeria's most dangerous areas. This masculinity war reflects what Dambazau and Ogunyemi (2021) call "the crisis of operational adaptation," the NPF is unable to adapt its method to the "fluid and militarized" type of crime. As a result, notwithstanding a number of reforms, the NPF still faces tremendous crime control and public order maintenance challenges.

4.2 Maintenance of Public Order and Response

Apart from crime, the NPF is in charge of handling protests, securing elections, and performing other routine public order functions. But these roles have become the subject of fierce debate in recent years. The public order aspect is being questioned more and more, particularly after the #EndSARS demonstrations and other civil disobedience. Amnesty International (2024) documented the forces' disproportionate response to the police during nonviolent protests that led to more than 24 fatalities and multiple injuries. These events reveal persistent problems with crowd control training, accountability and the appropriate level of force. In the same vein, Olaniyan (2022) suggests that trust in the police is reduced once they are viewed as suppressors rather than defenders of rights. So in that way, while the NPF has the responsibility of policing the peace, the means it employs often bring about more discord and undermine its legitimacy.

4.3 Community Trust, Legitimacy, and Public-Police Relations

Trust in the community is still essential for police to be effective: citizens' decisions to report crimes, provide information, and engage in community watch

programs are influenced by their views of the police. But the NPF is still battling scandals of corruption and human rights abuses that have called its legitimacy into question. Olayinka and Chukwuma (2023) reveal that less than 40% of Nigerians trust the police, with bribery and brutality being the major causes of mistrust. In addition, the study of Community Policing Practice in the Nigerian Police by Uzochukwu and Eneh (2022) discloses that officer burnout and the harsh working conditions severely limit community policing results. This state of affairs resonates with reports in global policing studies that trust deficits hinder the sharing of intelligence and crime control (Tankebe & Mesko, 2021). Thus, regaining community trust is not only a moral obligation, but also a strategic one to achieve sustainable security outcomes.

4.4 Use of Technology and Intelligence Capacity

Despite the NPF's introduction of some technology driven approaches such as digital reporting platforms, CCTV, and forensic laboratories effect on day-to-day operations is minimal. This is attributed by scholars to lack of funds, destruction of equipment and the officers' low level of digital literacy (Akinlabi & Murphy, 2023). While examining Smart Policing and Value Creation in the Nigeria Police Force, Ibrahim et al. (2024) contend that although digital instruments have been acquired, their utilization is disjointed and devoid of any global strategic guideline the authors opined. The establishment of cybercrime teams and digital monitoring has led to some improvement in intelligence, but poor coordination and data-sharing impediments undermine effectiveness. Therefore, even though the transition to technology pc-oriented policing is move forward, its impact on crime prevention and responsiveness is still minimal due to weak institutional support.

4.5 Institutional Performance and Reform Monitoring

The effectiveness of policing rests on how well the institution performs. It is influenced by leadership quality, training levels, accountability mechanisms and resource distribution. Various researches have pointed to enduring institutional weaknesses of the NPF, such as bureaucratic command structures, weak civilian control, and susceptibility to political interference (Adebisi & Idowu, 2021). The Police Act 2020 provides for certain changes to deal with some of these problems including the establishment of the Police Trust Fund and independent complaints mechanisms – but their enforcement has been patchy. Okorie and Yusuf (2023)

observe that "in the absence of transparent performance monitoring and adequate support in the budget, goals of reform may be more symbolic than substantive." Consequently, the NPF's reform trajectory must be more strongly evaluated, and grounded in citizen engagement for accountability and tangible betterment.

4.6 Overall Assessment

In conclusion, although the NPF has been successful in conceptualizing reform frameworks and demonstrating some innovative policing models, the findings suggest that it is only partially effective. The continued high levels of crime, public mistrust and inefficiencies in delivery show that the strategic policies of the Force have not yet fully developed into strong institutional practices. Like Ogu and Falade (2022) stated that Nigeria's policing crisis is not so much the non existence of reform laws as it is about weak enforcement, corruption, and poor interagency collaboration. Hence, addressing the challenge of effective policing in Nigeria would be a matter of long-term commitment to training, technology, welfare, and systems of accountability situated within robust community partnerships and democratic supervision.

5. Challenges to Effective Policing

This section brings together the main challenges preventing the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) from realizing its maximum potential. Several reports have noted a variety of related problems, such as the persistence of deficits in funding, entrenched corruption, poor community relations, and inadequacies in the structure of policing. These issues not only degrade performance, but also delegitimize, constrain reform, and restrict the Force's ability to carrying out its constitutional mandate. As Ogbonnaya and Ojo (2022) state, there is a multi-layered crisis of capability, legitimacy, and governance" in the Nigerian policing that is inextricably linked to wider socio-political realities.

5.1 Funding, Resources and Logistics

One of the challenges confronting the NPF which remains ever present is poor funding and mismanagement of available resources. Sustained investment in training, logistics, communication, weapons, and technology is essential for effective policing. However, it has been argued that Nigeria has never adequately funded the police force, nor in a consistent manner in the history of the nation

(Adebayo & Eze, 2024). The "Crime Prevention Strategies in Nigeria" article stresses that "in the absence of sufficient financial assistance engaging in their duty effectively would be very difficult for the police force. This shortage… results in insufficient equipment, technology, and manpower." Similarly, Okorie and Yusuf (2023) stressed that the inadequacy of funding affect mobility, communication and response time in emergencies.

This view is supported by empirical evidence from studies at the state level. For example, in Rivers State, Ogu and Falade (2022) discovered that the unavailability of patrol vehicles, forensic equipment and communication devices was significantly associated with an increase in insecurity. Unrestricted funding for the rural work would have significantly improved the morale of the bureau officers in addition to other areas needed assistance in training and welfare (Tola, 2012). They undercut readiness and make proactive policing difficult. Thus, financing remains a fundamental impediment to enhancing capabilities to combat crime and maintain public order.

5.2 Human Resource Issues: Training, Manpower, and Burnout

Human capital is still the key resource in policing. Nonetheless, the NPF finds itself struggling with perennial manpower deficiencies, disparity in training and retention issues such as burn out and emotional exhaustion. The police-to-citizen ratio in Nigeria is well below the United Nations recommended norm of 1:450, and is believed to be around 1:650 (Akinlabi & Murphy, 2023). This understaffing restricts to an important degree patrols of visibility, depth of investigation and responsiveness. The Community Policing Practice among Officers in Uzochukwu and Eneh (2022) study results revealed that burnout emotional exhaustion and depersonalization- among officers has a direct negative impact on community policing.

Also, poor professional training, and minimal interaction with the contemporary methodologies of fighting crimes result in weak operational effectiveness. Officers are sometimes inadequately trained or out of date in areas such as intelligence gathering, cyber investigations, and forensic analysis (Okafor, 2023). Continuous capacity building is highly necessary because if this is not done policing will continue to be "reactive and outdated in both philosophy and practice" (Olayinka

& Chukwuma, 2023). Poor welfare and promotion systems, in combination with these human resource challenges, further reduce morale and the motivation to serve in an ethical and effective manner.

5.3 Corruption, Impunity, and Accountability Deficits

Corruption and impunity are NPF's worst challenges. Reports by Transparency International and CLEEN Foundation (2022) reveal that the police have continued to be identified as one of the most corrupt public institution in Nigeria. "Extortion, bribery and the abuse of power have become so endemic they constitute what Ogu and Falade (2022) refer to as a 'trust deficit crises." The #EndSARS protests in 2020 and later developments exposed citizens' discontent with police abuses, unlawful detentions and violations of human rights. Police torture and other forms of policing violence continue in Ethiopia due to a sclerotic disciplinary system and an absence of meaningful internal policing mechanisms, says Amnesty International (2024).

This culture of impunity erodes professionalism and public trust. Discipline is seldom meted out to officers who misbehave, which is an institutional statement about corruption. Okorie and Yusuf (2023) argue that accountability mechanisms under the 2020 Police Act, including public complaint response units, are both underutilized and unknown to many. So when corruption remains rife it doesn't just undermine legitimacy, but it also undermines crime control, as people are reluctant to come forward in or talk to a police force they do not trust.

5.4 Community Relations and Legitimacy

Public perceptions of police legitimacy are essential for functioning law enforcement. Research shows Nigerians have the lowest level of trust in the police when compared with the other three security agencies (Olayinka & Chukwuma, 2023). The Adebayo and Eze (2024) study on Assessing Crime Control in Nigeria revealed lasting feelings of alienation and apathy from the public towards the police. Intelligence sharing is being curbed, early warning disrupted, because citizens are scared of the police rather than considering them as their protectors.

Although community policing efforts have been made to close this divide, the results have been mixed. The work of Uzochukwu and Eneh (2022) revealed that

community policing sections in many places are under equipped and officer fatigue demoralizes the very commitment required. As Tankebe and Mesko (2021) state, “policing without legitimacy is policing without consent.” Hence, "the rebuilding of trust through openness, professionalism and community-oriented models of policing is a necessary condition for the enhancement of police-public collaboration".

5.5 Structural and Legal Constraints

The NPF's centralized system has been criticized for its inability to be flexible and adaptive to the multiple security environments in Nigeria. The 1999 Constitution grants sole responsibility for policing to the federal government, complicating the situation further as state governments have little control over internal security but much responsibility (Adebisi & Idowu, 2021). But the federalized model has created logistics and administrative pinch points that have hampered the development of policing strategies tailored to local needs. There have been renewed contestations on the issue of establishment of state police amidst cries that “the present system can no longer guarantee the safety of Nigerians” (Ogbonnaya & Ojo, 2022).

Besides, the professionalism is undermined by the political interferences in the promotions and transfers and deployment. “The command structure is regularly politicized rather than being optimized for operational efficiency,” reports Dambazau and Ogunyemi (2021). The end result is a policing system that is more answerable to political elites than the communities that it serves. There have been signs of legal reforms such as the Police Act 2020 that attempted to delegate some powers however practically nothing very much has changed.

5.6 Technological and Intelligence Deficits

While the NPF has ambitions of modern intelligence-based policing, its realization is held back by fragile infrastructure and lack of skills. Ibrahim et al. (2024) in Smart Policing and Value Creation in the Nigeria Police Force confers, that although there has been some introduction of digital tools such as mobile reporting applications and CCTV systems, the actual uptake has been limited and inconsistent. Information systems that are accurate and efficient, sharing of

information across agencies and trained analysts are critical for data-driven policing, and these are areas where Nigeria is lacking.

In addition, there are significant resource limitations for crime mapping, the digital forensics lab and the cybercrime unit (Akinlabi & Murphy, 2023). Investigational quality is also impeded by the lack of a nationalized crime database and poor evidence handling procedures. As Adeosun and Oladele (2022) observe, technological ambitions are still increasingly hindered operational realities, preventing forward looking community policing. The transition from reactive to predictive can only be deemed inspirational, if sustained commitment to building ICT infrastructure and providing technical support are not forthcoming.

5.7 Contextual and External Environment Challenges

In addition to weak institutions, Nigeria's general socio-economic and security conditions are a tough nut to crack. Porous borders in the country lead to arms smuggling and transnational crimes. The worsening scarcity of Small Arms and Light Weapons has heightened insecurity especially in the North West and Middle Belt (Okafor, 2023). Socio-economic factors, such as unemployment, poverty and inequality, also contribute to crime and make it harder to control (Adebisi & Idowu, 2021).

Wilder also blames environmental and geographic obstacles for impeding police work. In distant rural communities, poor roads, rugged terrain and lack of communication prevent police from arriving in time. A Reuters report (2024) highlighted that "a number of police outposts in Zamfara and Katsina States were overrun by heavily armed gangs," exposing the gap between state and criminal capabilities. Thus, the larger insecurity ecosystem keeps the NPF spectators and constantly stretching them thin as they deal with simultaneous crises.

5.8 Implementation and Monitoring Gaps

By territory there are gaps in implementation even in the presence of policies/ reforms. The NPFs strategic plans usually do not have clear measurable goals, monitoring mechanisms and ways of giving feedback Okorie & Yusuf, (2023). The Strategic Policing Implementation Study (2022) discovered that just under half of predetermined reform activities are completed within their timelines as a result of

bureaucratic inertia, violence and weak inter-agency cooperation. In the absence of ongoing observation, reforms may be too focused on reactions to political environment and thus become symbolic rather than transformative.

As Adebayo and Eze (2024) noted "Nigeria's problem is not the lack of policing reforms but the incapacitation to enforce and assess them". Hence, institutionalizing of M&E mechanisms (customized to global best practices) is crucial to ensure NPF is accountable to and keeps learning from its actions.

6. Discussion and Policy Reflections

The analysis of the Nigerian policing system shows a reluctant combination of advances, rolling structural barriers, and transforming institutional relations. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has so far proven to be adaptable to change by instituting rate Police Act 2020, community policing among others and embracing technological know-how. Yet, long-standing deficiencies of confidence, financing, training, and accountability hamper its ability to do so. Studies indicate that reforms of policing tend to founder when they are not situated within wider strengthening of institutions and engendering public trust (Adebayo, 2021; Oladipo & Eze, 2022). In the light of the above narratives, the next section concerns itself with a selective reflection on key policies and 'would be' policy directions for a reformed policing future in Nigeria.

6.1 Shift from Quantity to Quality: Capacity Building

It is among the most important policy mandates, to move from escalating numbers of personnel to improving the quality of policing by professionalization, skills acquisition and up-to-date training. The NPF concentration on recruitment at the expense of training, logistics and welfare distribution has birthed under-trained officers handling complicated crime ridden areas (Akinlabi, 2020). Research has demonstrated that gaps in forensic investigation, intelligence analysis and cybercrime among other technical areas may greatly impair operational outcomes (Adamu & Obaje, 2022).

In addition, the Police Act 2020 provides a chance to entrench performance management through key performance indicators and continuous learning and forensic competence (Olowu, 2023). The Nigeria Police Trust Fund can be

instrumental in sourcing funds for training facilities, state of the art equipment and digital tools, as part of its activities (Eneanya & Oboh, 2022). The NPF without special capacity development to challenge themselves their outdated paradigms will simply continue with practices that so utterly failed the nation in so many different strong ways. Hence, quality-oriented policing (≠quantity-oriented policing, that is skills-based, ethics based and professionalism) ought to supplant the traditional bias toward increasing headcount.

6.2 Trust, Legitimacy, and Community Engagement

Trust and legitimacy are the bedrock of good policing. In the absence of citizen support, channels of intelligence dry up and policing takes on the character of coercive rather than collaborative knowledge sharing (Tankebe, 2020). Public confidence in the NPF remains tenuous as a result of historical misdeeds, bribes and human rights abuses. The #EndSARS demonstrations of 2020 and other episodes of police violence highlighted deep legitimacy gaps (Amnesty International, 2024). Studies shows that trust diminution impede intelligence collection and intelligence-led policing (Chukwuma & Okeke, 2021).

Community policing, as promoted under the Police Act 2020 is a significant vehicle for reestablishing legitimacy but this will be dependent on this being more than symbolic engagement with the community. Officers' welfare and emotional well-being are just as important. As Ume & Ezenagu (2023) pointed out, police officers' burnout is a predictor of poor responsiveness and negative encounters with the public. Better psychological services, fair pay and working conditions would boost morale, empathy and legitimacy. Thus, community policing is not just about shared patrols, but co-producing security through continuous dialogue, accountability and partnership.

6.3 Structural Reform and Context Sensitivity

Centralized policing in Nigeria based on federal control has been the subject of much discussion. Detractors claim that centralization limits the ability of localized police agencies to address local security needs and engenders inefficiency of the service (Obi & Adekoya, 2021). Decentralization, for example through the creation of state or regional police, is suggested as a means of adapting policing to local

situations. But decentralization may also be open to political interference and lead to unequal distribution of resources (Nwokedi, 2023).

A contextually appropriate model is one that integrates central control with decentralized flexibility likely the most pragmatic. This might include further empowering the zonal commands, improving cooperation with customary and community security agents, and decentralizing resources for district-level intelligence gathering (Ibrahim & Audu, 2022). In addition, inherency cooperation between police, military, immigration and customs should be entrenched for unified responses to transnational crimes, banditry and terrorism (Okoli & Iortyer, 2023). Thus, the reform agenda must strike a balance at national and local levels between achieving the transformative goals of central control and catering adequately to the contextual needs of local organizations in the diverse sociopolitical environment of Nigeria.

6.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

Institutional responsiveness continues to be a major source of policing legitimacy. The Police Act 2020 provides for oversight mechanism of the Public Complaints Bureau but there has been lack of implementation. To achieve good accountability, there has to be independent monitoring of institutions, transparency of data, and systems for feedback from citizens (Ogunbameru, 2021). Researches states that it is important that oversight is not simply punitive but developmental addressing organizational weaknesses and enhancing service provision (Eze & Nnam, 2022).

The NPF should institutionalize periodic evaluation of its services using tangible indices such as response time, levels of community satisfaction, number of closed cases, and proportion of cases of misconduct prosecuted. Moreover, it is argued, increased transparency through the release of policing data (crime stats, internal auditing, and budgeting) can potentially improve transparency and repair the public's trust (Adeniran & Ayoola, 2023). Building relations with civil society and media for joint monitoring may also guarantee result that accountability mechanisms are not only administrative, but also effective and trusted.

6.5 Tailoring to Nigeria's Security Environment

The country's multifaceted security issues including terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, and now cybercrime require a unique approach to policing. Imported generic policing prescriptions tend to fail when they are not contextualized to the Nigerian realities of socioeconomic development (Ojo, 2020). Security analysts have called for various layers of policing including: intelligence-led high tempo mobile response units, specialized cybercrime units, and inter-agency task force focusing on organized crime (Ekanem & Nwosu, 2023).

Sustainable policing, they argue, is also dependent on socio-economic transformation. Contributing to criminal recruitment and public disenchantment are high rates of youth unemployment, poverty and inequality (Adeleke & Musa, 2022). Therefore, prevention of crime should be integrated into comprehensive national development strategies such as those for employment generation, education and social inclusion. There is also need for close collaboration between ECOWAS member states on curbing arms and human traffic (Ogbonna, 2023). This would not only ease the burden on the NPF but also promote an environment conducive to peace and security in the long term.

6.6 Integrative Outlook

In sum, the NPF has commenced with some reform processes, which the fruition of the latter would be determined by a long-term lust for NPF capacity building, legitimacy restoration, structural reform and adaptive policymaking. Policing should be recognized as a security and governance, which involve inter governmental, private sectors and civil society coordination. The future of peace policing in Nigeria, as depicted by Akinlabi (2020) and Olowu (2023), is not merely institutional reform but also the reconstitution of the social contract between the police and the public. Thus, transforming the NPF must transcend technical fixes and encompass embedding accountability, professionalism and community trust at the heart of its operational culture.

7. Conclusion

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has been pursuing its own process of modernization via reforms such as community policing, leveraging technology, and the passing of the Police Act 2020 among others. These efforts have not,

however, fully resulted in enhanced performance and public confidence. Chronic problems such as insufficient funding, inadequate training, corruption, compromised intelligence capability, and institutional inflexibility continue to plague the force. Although new laws and policy frameworks have been adopted, there is still a significant gap between the intent of reform and the outcome on the ground, largely due to weak implementation and limited accountability mechanisms. Reforms to redress these problems must go beyond policy to encompass changes in institutional culture, enhanced welfare, and sincere engagement with communities to re build trust and legitimacy.

A holistic approach that links security reform with wider socio-economic development is needed for a viable system of policing in Nigeria. "We Are Not the Enemy": Police Brutality, Insecurity, Poverty and the Roots of Effective Policing should be contingent upon asexual solutions for global poverty, unemployment, and inequality none of which are necessary for global insecurity. Enhancing the NPF, therefore, will necessitate sustained investment in capacity building, transparent management, ethical leadership, and the strategic application of technology. Implementation of the Police Act 2020 and other reforms should be guided by policy-oriented practice-based activities, by police–public collaboration, and by strong mechanisms for evaluation. It is only through such inclusive mobilization of energies that the NPF can be transformed into a contemporary, accountable and people-centric agency that can guarantee peace, justice, and sustainable national development.

8. Recommendations

i. Strengthening of Training and Capacity Building

The NPF should also institutionalize regular and specialized trainings in the areas of intelligence gathering, community policing, cybercrime investigation, and professional conduct. Focus should be placed on leadership development and scenario-based training that reflects increasingly complex and dynamic criminal investigations. Partnerships with international law enforcement and universities can enhance training quality and disseminate global best practices.

ii. Increase Funding and Resources

The essential element of efficient administration is sufficient funding. The Federal Government should make the Police Trust Fund its priority and make

disbursement of the funds open for all to see. The acquisition of modern tools, vehicles, forensic laboratories, surveillance infrastructure, and communication gear would undoubtedly bolster the NPF's capability to respond and investigate.

iii. Foster Community Policing and Public Trust

Establishing trust between the police and the public is key. The NPF should also expand its community policing approach to include meaningful engagements with traditional institutions, civil society and CBOs. Frequent town-hall meetings with citizens and leaders, mechanisms for soliciting feedback, platforms for public accountability are to be developed as institutional vehicles for fostering a culture of transparency and mutual understanding.

iv. Institutionalize Accountability and Oversight Mechanisms

In order to check corruption and abuse of power, NPF should implement strong internal disciplinary system and strengthen external oversight bodies like the Police Service Commission (PSC) and National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Channels for public complaints must be digitized and independently supervised to enable prompt inquiries and dispensation of justice.

v. Use of Technology and Data-Driven Policing

Use of new digital technologies including crime-mapping software, biometric databases, and integrated command systems should be promoted. While data-driven policing facilitates evidence-based decisions, promotes intelligence sharing, and supports patrol scheduling. Nigeria should build a national crime-database that is made accessible to all security agencies.

vi. Improve Welfare and Motivation of Staff

Welfare of the police officers has a direct bearing on their morale and performance. The government needs to reassess the collapsing salary structure, provide sufficient insurance, housing, and establish psychological assistance mechanisms for coping with stress and trauma. Institutions should be formed to reward good service in order to foster professionalism and honesty.

vii. Encourage Interagency Cooperation

There should be better coordination between the security units: Department of State Services (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC), and the military, so as not to duplicate or contradict roles and functions. A common intelligence system and joint operations command may add efficiency for addressing insecurity.

viii. Legislative and Policy Reforms

The National Assembly should conduct a periodic review of the Police Act 2020 and other related Acts to accommodate evolving security situation. The law should enable communities and empower local policing, as well as allow them the right to be free from political interference. Policy reforms should also consider the need for inclusiveness, gender sensitivity and compliance with h human rights in the police force.

ix. Public Awareness and Civic Education

There should be public education on the police and the citizens' duties in crime prevention. Media campaigns, school programs, and community activities can help foster greater understanding and cooperation between police and citizens, developing a shared ethos of security responsibility.

x. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Developing a comprehensive performance measurement and evaluation framework will enable the assessment of the impact of reforms. Use periodic reviews, citizen surveys and impact assessments to inform decisions, and to promote accountability and continuous improvement in police performance.

Reference

Abdullahi, M. (2023). *Public perception and police trust in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. Journal of African Security Studies, 18*(2), 77–93.

Adebayo, A. (2021). *Police reform and institutional accountability in Nigeria. Journal of African Security Studies, 15*(2), 88–104.

Adebayo, K., & Eze, J. (2024). *Assessing the challenges to effective crime control and management by the Nigerian Police Force. Journal of African Security Studies, 16*(2), 44–61.

Adebisi, F., & Idowu, A. (2021). *Police reform and governance in Nigeria: Examining the limits of institutional transformation. African Governance Review, 9*(1), 112–128.

Adeosun, O., & Oladele, M. (2022). *Reinventing the Nigeria Police Force: Challenges and prospects of policing reform. International Journal of Public Policy and Administration, 15*(4), 78–95.

Adamu, B., & Obaje, I. (2022). *Training and technological deficits in Nigeria's law enforcement agencies. Security Studies Quarterly, 14*(3), 33–49.

Adeleke, M., & Musa, J. (2022). *Youth unemployment and crime proliferation in Nigeria. Social Development Review, 8*(4), 77–93.

Adeniran, T., & Ayoola, K. (2023). *Transparency and policing performance in Nigeria. International Journal of Law and Security, 9*(1), 55–73.

Agbiboa, D. E. (2022). *Policing reform and governance in Nigeria: A study of the Police Act 2020. African Security Review, 31*(1), 54–70.

Agbiboa, D. E. (2023). *They eat our sweat: Police corruption and resistance in Nigeria.* Princeton University Press.

Akinlabi, O. (2020). *Police legitimacy and the rule of law in Nigeria. African Policing Review, 6*(2), 22–41.

Akinlabi, O. (2021). *Citizen activism and police reform in Nigeria: Lessons from #EndSARS. Policing and Society, 31*(7), 823–839.

Akinlabi, O. M., & Murphy, K. (2023). *Digital policing and the challenges of implementation in Nigeria. Policing and Society, 33*(1), 21–39.

Akinlabi, O., & Murphy, K. (2022). *Trust, legitimacy, and procedural justice in African policing. International Criminology, 2*(1), 45–59.

Alemika, E. E. O., & Chukwuma, I. C. (2021). *Policing and accountability in Nigeria's federal structure.* CLEEN Foundation.

Amnesty International. (2024). *Nigeria: Excessive use of force during protests must end. Amnesty International Report, August 2024.*

Amnesty International. (2024). *Nigeria: Police violence and the aftermath of #EndSARS.* London: Amnesty Publications.

Chukwuma, E., & Okeke, M. (2021). *Trust deficit and the dynamics of police–community relations in Nigeria. Security and Development Journal, 7*(1), 15–30.

Dambazau, A., & Ogunyemi, O. (2021). *Security governance and the operational challenges of policing in Nigeria. African Peace and Security Review, 5*(3), 62–80.

Ekanem, S., & Nwosu, P. (2023). *Rethinking intelligence-led policing in Nigeria. Nigerian Journal of Policy Studies, 18*(1), 101–119.

Eneanya, A., & Oboh, R. (2022). *Public sector reforms and the Police Trust Fund in Nigeria. Governance Today, 5*(3), 59–70.

Eze, C., & Nnam, M. (2022). *Institutional accountability and police oversight in Nigeria. Journal of Criminal Justice Policy, 12*(2), 48–65.

Eze, N. (2023). *Community policing and security challenges in the South-East of Nigeria. Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies, 15*(1), 41–59.

Eze, N. (2023). *Regional security outfits and federalism in Nigeria: Revisiting the policing debate. Nigerian Journal of Political Studies, 29*(1), 1–18.

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2020). *Police Act 2020.* Government Printer, Abuja.

Ibrahim, A. (2022). *Institutional rivalry in Nigeria's police governance: The PSC and IGP dilemma. Public Policy Quarterly, 9*(4), 56–71.

Ibrahim, S., & Audu, U. (2022). *Federalism and the debate on state policing in Nigeria. Nigerian Political Science Review, 10*(2), 23–40.

Ibrahim, T., Musa, I., & Bello, R. (2024). *Smart policing and value creation in the Nigeria Police Force. African Journal of Law, Crime and Security Studies, 12*(1), 19–37.

National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). *Crime and law enforcement statistics in Nigeria.* NBS Report.

Nwaorgu, B., & Alade, T. (2021). *Transforming law enforcement: Leveraging smart policing for value creation in the Nigeria Police Force. Journal of Technology and Security, 4*(3), 45–60.

Nwankwo, C. (2021). *Intelligence-led policing in Nigeria: Prospects and challenges. Security and Development Review, 5*(2), 122–136.

Nwokedi, G. (2023). *Challenges of decentralised policing in fragile democracies. Comparative Security Studies, 4*(1), 71–89.

Obi, L., & Adekoya, F. (2021). *Federal policing and public safety in Nigeria. African Journal of Public Administration, 13*(3), 99–115.

Ogu, E., & Falade, A. (2022). *Police reform and public trust in Nigeria: A critical appraisal. Journal of Social Policy and Governance, 14*(3), 99–117.

Ogbonna, C. (2023). *Cross-border cooperation and arms proliferation in West Africa. West African Security Review, 5*(2), 122–138.

Ogbonnaya, C., & Ojo, F. (2022). *The crisis of capability and legitimacy in Nigeria's policing system. Nigerian Journal of Social and Security Studies, 8*(2), 33–52.

Oko, J. (2021). *Colonial legacy and the crisis of policing in Nigeria. African Journal of History and Governance, 6*(1), 71–88.

Okafor, C. (2020). *Corruption and accountability in the Nigerian police: A structural analysis. Journal of Social Development, 15*(4), 98–112.

Okafor, C. (2023). *The police in Nigeria: Recruitment, formation and responsibility. African Journal of Public Administration, 18*(2), 85–104.

Okorie, J., & Yusuf, H. (2023). *Institutional accountability and performance monitoring in the Nigeria Police Force. International Journal of Security Studies, 11*(2), 50–68.

Oladipo, R., & Eze, U. (2022). *Institutional reforms and policing performance in Nigeria. African Governance Journal, 11*(4), 25–44.

Olayinka, B., & Chukwuma, E. (2023). *Police brutality and public confidence in Nigeria: An empirical assessment post-#EndSARS. Journal of Human Rights and Governance, 7*(4), 45–63.

Oluwaniyi, O. (2021). *Politics and policing in Nigeria: A study of institutional manipulation. Governance and Security Journal, 5*(2), 13–28.

Oluwasanmi, A. (2022). *Technological innovation in policing: Assessing Nigeria's modernization agenda. Journal of Security Studies, 10*(3), 37–52.

Olowu, D. (2023). *Governance and performance management in the Nigerian Police Force. Journal of Public Policy and Management, 17*(2), 65–83.

Reuters. (2024). *Armed gangs attack police stations in Zamfara and Katsina States. Reuters Security Bulletin, May 2024.*

Tankebe, J. (2020). *Legitimacy and the police: African perspectives. Policing and Society, 30*(3), 289–303.

Tankebe, J., & Mesko, G. (2021). *Trust in the police: Global lessons for African policing. Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice, 15*(3), 200–219.

Transparency International & CLEEN Foundation. (2022). *Nigeria Police Integrity Survey: Public perception and accountability.* CLEEN Foundation Report.

Umar, L. (2021). *Community security and vigilante groups in Nigeria: Implications for state policing. African Security Review, 30*(3), 215–233.

Ume, P., & Ezenagu, E. (2023). *Community policing practice and employee burnout in Nigeria. International Journal of Policing Studies, 9*(2), 87–105.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2023). *Police-population ratio and global security indicators. UNODC Data Portal.*

Uzochukwu, C., & Eneh, B. (2022). *Community policing practice in the Nigerian Police: Implications of employee burnout. Journal of Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement, 10*(1), 55–73.