



Political Economy of Policing In Nigeria

¹Uche Eme-Uche (Ph.D.); ²Chigozie Ifekwe Okonkwo & ³Ugwu Kenneth Sunday

¹Department of Political Science, Evangel University, Akaeze, Ebonyi State, Nigeria
uchemeuche@yahoo.com

²Institute of African Studies/Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
Chigozie.okonkwo@unn.edu.ng

³Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
Email: ken.jerm@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study places recent trends in policing in Nigeria into an historical context, emphasizing the critical importance of political, economic and social forces on the formation and development of police institutions and practices. Specifically, the study describes two major developments in policing in relation to the Nigeria political economy: colonial and post-colonial policing. Each of these developments has unique characteristics. At the same time, each retains certain structural imperatives which transcend the particulars and ultimately tend to preserve the police as front-line defenders of the status quo. Using the Marxist political economy framework of analyses, the study contributes to a better understanding of police as an agent through which the character of a government and political system may be assessed. The central premise of the framework is that the economic structure of a society determines the character of the superstructure, which includes policing. While adopting qualitative research design, data was sourced from secondary materials like books, journals, magazines and internet. Accordingly, the study recommends the need to reform the deplorable architectural state of service in Nigeria police to enable them meet up their constitutional obligation of securing life and property of the people.

Keywords: Police/Policing, Political Economy, Nigeria, Security architecture, violence.

INTRODUCTION

Since the peace of the Westphalia in 1684, the modern state has generally been presented as a people organized for law and development in a given territory. The elements of the people, law and other, territory and development are encapsulated in sovereignty to operate. However, the state is not an end in itself because it serves some utilitarian purposes especially ensuring a secured people for development (Thomas & Aghedo, 2014). Imobighe (2003) adduced that a secured state is one that is reasonably free from internal sabotage and external aggression.

It is also axiomatic to posit that one government institution that has come under heavy criticism from members of the public in Nigeria is the Police Force. The force has been criticized for its reactive approach and inability to fight crime effectively. More so, it has been lambasted for unprofessionalism, endemic corruption and incompetence. Its reactive attitude to policing has further buttressed the view that the Nigerian Police force is grossly ill-equipped to fight crime. Indeed, major factors militating against the force today are: poor funding, lack of welfare and logistics support as well as inadequate training facilities. These have invariably led to recurrent abysmal performance by the police.

Unfortunately, it appears challenges have increased going by the current rate of crime and criminality in the country. There are cases of armed robbery, terrorism, extrajudicial killing and kidnapping. Moreover, police personnel appear hapless, hopeless and defenseless in the face of these serious security breaches. Ironically, Nigeria Police receives commendation from other countries for performing gallantly at the United Nations peace-keeping operations because of high level of motivation and sundry welfare packages. Yet, the reverse seems to be the case in Nigeria where environmental and operational factors have perhaps, undermined the performance of police personnel.

The questions now agitating the minds of Nigerians are: Can we really expect much from the police when they are not properly funded and equipped? How prepared and equipped are the police in the task of protecting lives and property? Are they well motivated to stake out their lives for Nigerians? These are questions whose answers are far from comforting and can be understood within the context of understanding the political economy of policing. This is because this thesis is first and foremost posits that police personnel must be well motivated in terms of welfare, armed with sophisticated arms and ammunition to be able to nip crime in the bud. In view of the current security challenges, it has become germane to address these challenges of policing over 190 million Nigerians.

Thus, this study delves into the past in order to unravel the present state of things, not only in the Nigeria police force, but also in the totality of the activities of man in Nigeria overtime. It is believed that, before the colonial conquest, the peoples of Nigeria lived in what are called “traditional societies” made up of tribes or ethnic groups of various sizes and degrees of relationship with one another. The socio-political and economic organizations of these societies are indigenous with alien influence only in areas affected by Islam and the trans-saharan trade or Christianity (Asenime, 2014). Colonial rule or its domination is believed to have changed these traditional societies. Hence, in order to understand the Nigeria police force, one should not fail to follow its origin to its present state.

Contextualizing the Police

It is a truism that the Police as one of the institutional structures of the state plays very important and powerful role in any given society. ‘Police’ refer to a particular kind of social institution with specific social functions. The police stand for the civil power of government as opposed to the military power. Supporting this view, Palm (1979) asserts that the police was established to guarantee a crime free society. Viergiver (1995) adds that the development of the police has been largely influenced by the demands of society for relief from problems that cannot be solved in another way or totally solved. He maintained that if one commits crime, and everyone behaved reasonably, the need for a sophisticated police force would not arise at all. But since the above condition is difficult to attain, there will always be need for the police. Supporting these theses, Bunyard (1978) opines that the basic objectives of the police have not radically changed since their inception. He maintained that what has changed is in the way in which the force has responded to these objectives. Gillan (1988) observes that the duty of the policeman in the contemporary world is no longer restricted to acting as watchman and detectives, but has also expanded to include crime prevention by teaching people how to safeguard their own property, and the rule of law in order to divert them from breaking the law. However, Bunyard (1978) maintained that the resources at the disposal of the police and their implications for result oriented policing cannot be reconciled. This he claimed was as a result of the absence of an acceptance gauge or construct with which to measure crime prevention.

Bunyard (1978) thesis supports Tamuno (1970) who maintained that the circumstances and situations in which the police perform their duties make it a rather hard process to evaluate the entire process of law and order maintenance. He opines that a number of persons may be resentful of the police but the society is generally handicapped to actually assess the extent to which the police perform its duties effectively. That the public expects much from the police which is ill-equipped to actualize its set goals. He believes that a change of attitude of people towards the police would also imply a spontaneous acquisition of wonderful records and scores for the police. That for police to be effective and result oriented, good public relations must be established.

Ade (1990:94) affirms this contention and relates it to Nigeria's experience as a state going through the arduous and, oftentimes, tortuous process of nation building. Most developing countries, including Nigeria according to him, employ and engage the police as an instrument for enhancing socio-economic and political development. However, on further consideration, failure to give sufficient resources to the law enforcement agencies may provide an excuse for underperformance and even acts of corruption.

Against the backdrop of the all-important provision of Section 14(2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), government cannot afford to deny the Police whatever it requires to secure society. The Constitution states that 'the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.' It is worth noting that this provision mentions 'security' first, and welfare second for the apparent reason that, nothing worthwhile can be achieved in an unsafe polity.

According to Olewe and Anga (1994, p.2) the term "police" is used primarily to denote, a body of people organized to maintain civil order and public safety, to enforce the law, and to investigate breaches of the law. In other words, Police is concerned with law enforcement. All societies, according to the authors, need some means of maintaining order. Albeit, Police function is to some extent universal in nature, they primarily serve to enforce Law and order in the society. The Nigeria Police, therefore, is the organized body of people established by law to perform police duties as provided for in the Nigerian Constitution. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, section 214(1 & 2) provides among others that:

There shall be a police force for Nigeria which shall be known as Nigeria Police Force and subject to the provision of this section; no other Police Force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof. The members of the Nigeria Police Force shall have such powers and duties as may be conferred upon them by law (FGN, 1999).

The dynamics and complexities of modern society have made it imperative that for law, order, stability and good government to be maintained, there should be an appropriate and well-equipped organ or agent of the state armed adequately with modern equipment/weapons, and expertise to enforce orderliness in the society. Such an organ/agent is expected to curb violations of peace, crime wave, apprehend criminals and protect lives and property as well as individual liberties. In Nigeria, the Police Force is charged with the aforementioned responsibilities. This is in accordance with the Police Act (1990), Part II Section 3, Cap. 359, which provided the impetus to the establishment of the Nigeria Police Force thus: "There shall be established for Nigeria, a Police Force to be known as the Nigeria Police Force".

Black (1979) defined police as the branch of government which is charged with the preservation of public order and tranquillity, the promotion of public health, safety and morals and the prevention, detection and punishment of crimes. Lord Denning (1949:24) buttressed this definition by stating that an ideal police officer must be a young man (person) of excellent character and from good home (that is good background). The implication is that police authorities have a big task in the selection or recruitment of the right calibre of men and women into the force. To achieve these functions and tasks, Small (1984) observed that the police force have dual role to play in a given society:

They are expected to protect the constitution of the society of which they are employed and perform other relevant duties in this regard. While on duty, they should endeavour to avoid pressure from special interest groups, since that will reduce public confidence, without which their job could become not only difficult but also make conviction almost impossible. He further opines that police work is difficult and very sensitive, that this may be connected with why most people usually monitor the activities of policemen more than other government agents (Eme & Ogochie, 2014).

Kennedy (1994) concludes by positing that policing a multicultural world is a key challenge to the police, that this challenge is compounded by contradictions inherent in maintaining public order on the one hand, and sustaining the freedom and wish of other members of the general public. The Police is the nation's first line of security and defense against criminality. Indeed, the wide ranging duties imposed upon this outfit by the Police Act are 'the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of offenders, the preservation of law and order, the protection of life and property, and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged, and [they] shall perform such military duties within

and outside Nigeria as may be required of them by, or under the authority of this or any other Act.' This is a tall order and it is only reasonable and proper that the parent body of the Nigeria Police Force, which is the Federal Government, must without any excuse give it the wherewithal to discharge its duties. It is with much regret and dismay that the underfunded police has not only become a victim at the hands of better equipped criminals, but are also on the receiving end of public disdain, distrust, and occasional hostility. Besides, the inadequacies of the police have directly exposed the citizenry to brazen acts of criminality.

Theoretical Framework

Arguably, the most worrisome issue in Nigeria today is insecurity of lives and property as a result of the increasing wave of crimes, often times violent in character. The all important assignment of crime prevention and enforcement of law and order in the society is given to the Nigeria police force and constitutes the core of policing in the country. The police are agents of the state, established for the maintenance of order and enforcement of law. Therefore, like the state, the character, roles and priority of police are determined by the political and economic structures of their nations. Similarly, the form and activities of policing by state and non-state agencies are dependent on the character and composition of the political economy of the society. Eme and Oko(2009) captured this linkage when they posited that over the years, the Federal Government has been unable to prioritize and provide the resources that are necessary to pay, equip and train policemen to the level required by the challenges they face. With about 300,000 policemen to a population of more than 140 million (a ratio of 1 to 467), it is obvious that Nigeria is grossly under-policed.

These inadequacies are most keenly felt in the more populated areas of Nigeria like Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Rivers, Oyo and Enugu States among others and in spite of a growing army of educated job seekers flocking the cities, this inadequacy in the number of policemen has not been remedied due to funding constraints and administrative inefficiencies of the Police Force itself.

For a State like Lagos, the problem is particularly acute. With a population of over 22 million people and the most rapid population growth profile in Nigeria, the inadequacies of the security system have been most keenly felt. The State have had to take some radical steps to aid the force and bring succour to her people. She has had to inject huge financial resources to support all security agencies in the State. However, this level of involvement is still inadequate, mainly because the State Government has no influence over the number of men recruited for or deployed to Lagos State and the operational command of the force within the State.

It is the position of Lagos State Government and other proponents of State Police that the provision of Section 214 (1) should be amended allowing the States to establish their own State Police Service.

Historians have employed political economy to explore the ways in which persons and groups with common economic interests use politics to effect changes beneficial to their interest. Historically, political economy is the theoretical understanding of the economy of bourgeois society which is both historical and developmental. The tasks of police are dictated by the contradictions and conflict of interests among groups and classes in society which if not regulated can threaten the preservation of the prevailing social order or status quo. In very substantive ways, the police mirror the contradictions and conflicts as well as human cooperation in society. According to Coatman (1959),

A student of the political institutions of any country desirous of understanding the 'ethos' of any country's government can hardly do better than make a close study of its police system, which will provide him with a good measuring rod of the actual extent to which its government is free or authoritarian.

The political economy framework is therefore appropriate for the analysis of police and policing in any society. There are different political economy models of analysis. However, there are common grounds among them, the principal ones being:

- 1) That there is intricate linkages between political and economic structures of society;

- 2) That the political and economic structures of a society determine its general values, cultures and norms as well as direction and practice of governance, and
- 3) That a more robust analysis of society is provided by an understanding of the linkages between the economy and polity and their dialectical interactions with other structures and social institutions.

Supporting these theses, one is forced to conclude that for a country that is under-policed, Nigeria seems to find it difficult managing its lean personnel resource well. More policemen are attached to politicians and the affluent than deployed in crime fighting. For Nigeria to meet the United Nations (UN) ratio of one policeman to 400 people, it must live up to the conventional wisdom of more cops, safer streets.

Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Ibrahim Idris concurs. In 2017, the Police IG emphasized that to secure life and property and meet the UN approved ratio, the country must recruit 155,000 more policemen for its approximately 182 million population. At the opening of the yearly National Security Summit in Abuja, Idris said the police would have to hire 31,000 officers yearly for five years to bridge the gap. He called for the passage of the Nigeria Police Reform Trust Fund (Establishment) Bill, “which was tabled before the National Assembly (NASS) since 2008”, noting that this would provide legal framework for funding police operations including training and equipment supply (Egbe, 2017).

There is good point in the IGP’s suggestion. For want of personnel and resources, the police often collaborated with the military and paramilitary organizations, such as the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and vigilance or neighborhood watch organizations, to enforce law and order.

The most popular strand of political economy is the Marxist model. Its main argument is summarized by the famous statement by Karl Marx in the preface to a contribution to the critique of political economy (1970). According to Marx, in the social production of their existence, man inevitably enters into definite relations of production appropriate to a given stage in their development of material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.

The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political, and intellectual life. Marx strongly argued that the economic structure of society determines the character of the superstructure which includes the political, legal, cultural and religious relations and institutions of society. The application of this theory to the understanding of police and policing in Nigeria suggests that the problems of order, violent and lawlessness are to be understood as the reflections, perception or products of the way the society organizes its economy, especially the dominant interests that drive it.

However, societies are constituted into classes and groups with varying degree of power or influence over political and economic decision-making. One of the most significant dimensions of the Marxist’s doctrine of classes borders on the ownership (by the exploiter) or non-ownership (by the exploited) of the means of production. Thus, in every society, there are two major classes: the class that owns the means of production (the “haves”) and the class that neither owns nor controls the means of production (the “have nots”). While the haves constitute the economically dominant group in society, who reproduce their domination, subjugation and oppression of the have-nots at the economic, political and ideological levels, the have-nots are the economically and politically disadvantaged groups who have only their labour power having been alienated from the means of production.

Classes and groups with dominant economic power control political decision, including the enactment of criminal law by the legislature, security enforcement by the executive and interpretation by the judiciary respectively. Marx and Engels (1973) and Nnoli (2003) have articulated class control thesis on the notion of class struggle. The struggle of classes for the control of state power is inextricably built into the concept of classes. Across centuries, dominant classes have struggled to retain the status quo, while the dominated classes have continued to seek change. Hence, the Marxist social class analysis rests on the premise that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (Marx & Engel, 1973, p. 32). Class struggle applies to social tensions between two opposing classes of society. Although classes form at the level of production; in their struggle, they involve the organisation of power in order to

dominate. Thus, this web of complex contradictory practices of social classes is found at the economic, political and ideological levels. The objective of this struggle is the creation or consolidation of a socio-economic formation in which the interest of that class is dominant. Each of the major classes mobilises all the power resources it can, including other classes and their resources, and organises them appropriately for this struggle. Marxists see class relations as political power relations, class struggle as political struggle, class organisation as political organisation, class consciousness as political consciousness and class conflict as political conflict (Marx & Engels, 1973; Nnoli, 2003).

Police roles vary across societies with different political and economic organizations. According to the Institute for the Study of Labour and Economic Crises (1982), in capitalist societies like Nigeria:

The main function of the police has been to protect the property and wellbeing of those who benefit most from an economy based on extraction of private profit. The police were created primarily in response to rioting and disorder directed against oppressive working and living conditions.

Similarly, in the political economy approach, primacy is given to economic activity because it considers man as he is, not as he should be, and thus makes the fundamental assumption that the physical needs of man come first. Bowden (1978, p.19) argues that the roles of police include the repression of the poor and powerless in order to protect the interests of the governing class. The police, therefore, stand as a “buffer between the governing class and the masses”. As a result, the police perform “the essential holding operation against the mal-contents until military force could be applied in a punitive and salutary manner by the state”. Brodgen (1982, p.203) put this view more forcefully: “police force are structured, organizationally and ideologically to act against the marginal strata”. Thus, in discussing the political economy of policing in Nigeria, the approach is assigned a crucial instrumental value. The role of the police is not limited to repression. A holistic view is that police forces repress and at the same time serve the public. However, priority attached to police repressive and service functions vary across societies and even between regimes within society because the consequence in developed societies paves way to legitimacy crises and eventual collapse of the regime.

Operationally, arising from these arguments, police force embodies ironies as the police are instruments of oppression and exploitation in totalitarian and corrupt social systems. Still, they are essential to the preservation of justice and democracy. As guardians to social order, the police force help to preserve, fortify, maintain and reproduce the prevailing social order, and is hardly catalyst for change. To Alemika (1993), when a social order is oppressive, exploitative and unjust, the police preserve it by suppressing and defusing demand for democracy and elimination of oppression and injustice. Moreover, in a democratic, just and equitable society, the police have greater chances of serving as vanguard for social democracy, human rights and socio-economic justice.

From the above discussion, one can stress the need for political economy theory to see police roles and performance as well as police violence in Nigeria as the product of interaction among political, economic and institutional factors. The force has historically evolved and developed to its present status but its operations have remained highly neo-colonial as it continues to serve the interest of the government rather than that of the governed. It has been observed that the police were occupied with serving individual politicians and influential persons in the society.

The Police in Colonial Nigeria

The penetration of the European into Nigeria, and their eventual establishment of Native Authority Police marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of policing and the police force in Nigeria. In 1861, the British started to colonize the different societies that presently constitute Nigeria, beginning with Lagos. By 1903, the British colonizers have succeeded in colonizing all the nearly four hundred nationalities in the country. The colonizers executed the colonial project employing violence and fraud or deceit. Three important historical issues are relevant to the understanding of the development of police force and police-public relations in Nigeria. First, colonial conquest of Nigerian nationalities took place piecemeal over a long period (1861-1903). Nigeria’s constituent nationalities were conquered at different

period. As a nationality is conquered, British colonial presence is established by establishing police force for the territory. Secondly, violence and fraud were employed in the conquest of nationalities. Consequently, the colonizers feared resistance and police force under various names were established and employed as instrument of violence and oppression against the indigenous population. Thirdly, given the character of colonial rule, police were the instrument used to sustain the alien domination (Alemika, 2010). The colonial police were not accountable to the colonized but to the colonizers.

From the inception of colonial rule in Nigeria in 1861 when Lagos was colonized to 1930, several police force was established for the Lagos colony, the Niger Coast, Northern and Southern protectorate. The ordinance of 1916 established the Native Authority and Local Government police Force in Nigeria (Ekweremadu, 2018). The establishment of police force in colonial Nigeria also reflected administrative policy and concerns. Under the indirect rule system that was adopted as a means of reducing the cost of running the colonial bureaucracy, local police forces under the control of traditional rulers were established in the Western and Northern parts of the territory where centralized traditional institutions existed.

However, it was only in 1936 that the nationwide police force was established out of several police forces in Lagos colony, Niger Coast, Northern and Southern protectorates, and native and local forces reflected administrative policy poised towards the reduction of colonial administrative cost. This is expressed in the direct and indirect rule colonial administrative systems employed in the various parts of Nigeria.

According to Tamuno (1970):

The police given to the Native Authorities after the 1914 amalgamation were therefore of greater relevance to western and northern Nigeria than to the south-eastern parts of Nigeria. As native authorities, the chiefs had their police powers extended and consolidated under the laws of 1916 and 1924. The native authority ordinance (No. 4 of 1916) conferred on the Native Authorities the responsibility of maintaining order in their respective areas. Under it they were allowed to prevent crime and arrest offenders by employing any person to assist them in carrying out their police duties. Their police powers were increased under the protectorate law (Enforcement) ordinance (No.15 of 1924).

However, with these laws in place over time, the Yoruba land palace messengers (akodas) were reformed, renamed Olopas, and recognized. Also, in the northern emirates in Nigeria, the palace dogarai became known as yan Idan doka, which means the enforcer of law. They enforced the colonial laws via the directives of the local chiefs and rulers.

In the early 1936, the nationwide police force was established and amalgamated into a single Nigeria police force, primarily focused on the domination, occupation, suppression, exploitation and consolidation of colonization of the Nigerian peoples. The colonizers subdued, bombarded and occupied resisting indigenes, suppressed up risings, introduced the British colonial economic policies and ensured the consolidation of colonial rule. From 1936 to independence in 1960, there were policemen policing the people through armed mobile patrols, raids, arrests and detention in protection of the colonial economy (Onoge, 1993).

The fundamentals, development and roles of the European type of police force in Nigeria, as shown from the beginning, are traceable to the exploitative nature of British colonial interests and the reactions of the indigenous peoples to such activities. One could submit that colonialism distorted Nigeria's traditional institutions and their apparatus (the police inclusive) and values (Asenime, 2014). These were the values that maintained sustainable peace and security in the pre-colonial Nigeria setting. Through the enforcement of unpopular direct taxation, the raiding of labour camps, and the violent suppression of strikes, the police ensured the creation, supply and discipline of the proletarian labour force required by colonial capitalism. The police enforce the criminalization of lucrative indigenous industries like the manufacture of alcohol and traditional trading patterns across national borders in order to protect the colonial economy from competition. The police in the consciousness of the people became the symbol of the dictatorial establishment rather than the protector of the people's rights. The colonialists replaced or threaten the efficacy of traditional/native laws and customs. According to Achebe (1959):

... the white man had also brought a government. They had built a court where the District commissioner judged cases in ignorance. He had court messengers who brought men to him for trial... they guarded the prison, which was full of men who had offended the white man's law... some of these prisoners were men of title who should be above such mean occupation.

In 1851, the British accused King Kosoko of trading in slaves and used its navy to bombard Lagos into submission. They sacked Kosoko and imposed Akintoye on the people as King (Ikime, 1977). The colonial objectives for the establishment of the police force were the protection and consolidation of the British administration (Tamuno, 1970). The period between 1851 and 1861 was a period of informal jurisdiction and had an important bearing on the fundamental development and role of the modern Nigeria police force that began in Lagos. Looking at the economic motive of the British colonizers, Ahire (1991) opined that the emerging ruling class in colonial Nigeria was foreign and an illegitimate one which sought to dominate and exploit the indigenous people in the interest of its cosmopolitan (British) economy. This was achieved through the use of the police system in both surveillance and conquest.

The early employment of police force to advance the colonial political agenda can explain the present history of the police as an agency of oppression solely used both legally and illegally to enforce whatever policy suits the government of the day. This view is shared by some scholars from different disciplines including Tamuno (1970), Alemika (2010), Crowder (197), Ikime (1977), Ekweremadu (2018), Ahire (1991), among others. To Alemika (2010):

The colonial objectives were (to varying degrees during the phases of colonialism in Nigeria) prosecuted through organized governmental violence, vandalism and plunder on the part of the colonizers... The sundry administrative, coercive and surveillance organs (police, prisons, courts, tribunals, "native" authorities, residents and districts officers) were established to prosecute, promote, and defend British imperialistic interests in Nigeria.

Studies on the evolution and role of colonial police in Nigeria, shows that the legacies of policing Britain left have been maintained by various post-colonial governments in Nigeria despite political independence. Contrary to expectations, the economic exploitation, grand corruption, oppression and gross power abuse and brutality which characterized colonialism still persists. In the formation of the society, government is given enormous power to have control over the instrument of coercion. What has happened now is, that government is not able to perform that responsibility of protecting lives and properties in Nigeria because that instrument of coercion is not structured in ways to be able to contain the rise in criminality.

The Police Force in Independent Nigeria

As Nigeria approached Independence in 1960, its founding fathers maintained the socio-political and exploitative economic structure of their colonial masters. The indigenous political system hurriedly replaced the colonial oppressors and exploiters without any fundamental changes in architecture and existential conditions of the citizens and in operations of governmental institutions, including the police and other organs of security administration. Independent Nigeria witnessed tremendous growth of institutions and infrastructure with pervasive political conflicts and instability, grand corruption, poverty, and economic crimes. Most often, these among other reasons, brought in several regimes of military background and high profile economic crimes, resulting in resistance against the government from the general public. Sometimes, the protests turn violent and demonstrators were quelled by the police in the interest of the government.

Our founding fathers had agreed that for us to live peacefully in multiethnic and large country, there was the need to adapt the federal system of government. And federal system of government comes with certain characteristics. One of the characteristics is that different states handle their affairs differently, but they are coordinated at the national level. Unfortunately, at the time they were laying the foundation of federalism especially as regards the security sector, they did not put in place the proper checks and balances. Those police at sub-regional levels were been abused, especially in 1963 and 1964 elections. When the military came in 1966, they felt Nigeria could not continue with the colonial system of policing by the use of both the local and federal police, thus Gobir panel set up by the J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi regime

disbanded the local police forces. However, it was to the Gowon's regime that the white paper of the committee was submitted. It was observed that the local police force were poorly trained, corrupt and used in partisan politics, especially the repression of opponents by the politicians and traditional rulers in the Northern and western regions.

Part of the concerns people had about Ironsi's military government was that he was trying to unify the country into a unitary system of government, thereby running away from the federal system of government that was agreed upon by our founding fathers. By the time the police report set up to look at the issues around the sub-national police by General Aguiyi Ironsi came out, he had been assassinated. When that report came out, the Gowon government that was accusing Ironsi of a Unitary system of government adopted the report of that committee, which was saying that we should do away with sub-national police and have a centralized police. That was the beginning of Nigeria's problem. Thereafter, we started having armed robbery, kidnapping and terrorism.

From 1966 the Nigeria police force was to work under the military as collaborators. The experience of the Nigeria police force may be characterised as sweet from 1966-1979 and bitter from 1983-1999. The military rule under General Gowon's regime of 1967-1975 may be viewed to have favoured the police, as they were co-opted into the governance of the country as state governors and members of the national ruling council and federal commissioners. More importantly, the police were respected as partners by the military rulers. However, during the period 1983-1999, the police lost their high profile and prominence in government, though they continued to be used by the politicians as agents of violence licensed to oppress, suppress and arrest any resisting or opposing individuals, groups and unions within the Nigerian polity. However, the police force as an organization was neglected in terms of funding and modern technological equipment. Instead of equipping the police with modern equipment to serve as the primary tool for promoting and protecting internal security, the military governments resorted to establishing special task forces with army and police personnel. This demonstrated the subordinate roles assigned to the police.

During the military regimes in the 1990s, recruitments and promotions in the police force were largely suspended. This resulted in shortage of personnel and ineffectiveness of the force in carrying out most of their critical functions of crime control and protection of life and property of people. Another negative impact of military rule on the development of the Nigeria police force was the abolition of the police service commission responsible for the appointment, promotion and discipline of members of the force other than the inspector general of police. In a nutshell, the commission's long absence negatively affected the effective human resources management in the Nigeria police force during the period, and the impact still hunts the force today.

Contemporary Nigeria police force

In May 29, 1999, the military transferred power to an elected government in Nigeria. A new constitution came into effect on the May 31st 1999. The new constitution contains provisions on the Nigeria police force, the police council and the police service commission. Section 214 (1) of the 1999 constitution provided that:

There shall be a police force for Nigeria which shall be known as the Nigeria police force and subject to the provisions of this section, no other police force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof.

The functions of the Nigeria police were specified in section 4 of the police Act (laws of the federation 1999) as:

1. Prevention and detection of crime
2. Apprehension of offenders
3. Preservation of law and order
4. Protection of life and property
5. Enforcement of all laws and regulations which they are charged.
6. Military duties within or outside Nigeria as may be required by them.

Although the constitution granted the Attorneys – General the powers of prosecution, most of the criminal cases in the country handled by the lower courts, are prosecuted by the police. Several laws in the country, especially the police Act, Criminal Procedure Act (CPA) and the Criminal procedure code (CPC) granted the police wide powers.

Command of the Nigeria Police

Section 215 of the 1999 constitution provided that:

- 1) (a) an inspector General of police who, subjects to section 216(2) of the constitution shall be appointed by the president on the advice of the Nigeria police council from among serving members of the Nigeria police force.
 (b) a commissioner of police for each state of the federation who shall be appointed by the police service council.
- 2) The Nigerian police force shall be under the command of the inspector-General of Police, and any contingents of the Nigeria police stationed in a state shall, subject to the authority of the inspector-General of police, be under the command of the commissioner of police.
- 3) The President or such other ministers of the government of the federation as he may authorized in that behalf may give to the inspector general of the Nigeria police such lawful directions with respect to the maintaining and securing of public safety and public order as he may consider necessary, and the inspector-General shall comply with those directions or cause them to be complied with (the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria, 1999).

Operationally, the Nigeria police force is structured as 36 states commands and FCT command, each under a commissioner of police. The state commands are further organized as Area commands, divisional commands, police stations and police posts. The police station and police posts are the primary operational units of policing. In 2016, the personnel strength of the force was of about 371,800. The Nigeria police force is a very large organization consisting of 36 states commands grouped into 12 zones and 7 administrative organs (Wikipedia, 2018). The hierarchy of the force, thus runs from the patrol team to the force Headquarters.

Inspector-General of Nigeria Police Force Since Independence

| NAME | PERIOD IN OFFICE |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| IGP Louis Orok Edet | 1964-1966 |
| IGP Kam Salem | 1966-1975 |
| IGP Muhammadu Dikko Yusufu | 1975-1979 |
| IGP Adamu Suleiman | 1979-1981 |
| IGPSunday Adewusi | 1981-1983 |
| IGP Etim Inyan | 1985-1986 |
| IGP Muhammadu Gambo- Jimeta | 1986-1990 |
| IGP Aliyu Atta | 1990-1993 |
| IGP Ibrahim Coomassie | 1993-1999 |
| IGP Musiliu Smith | 1999-2002 |
| IGP Mustafa Adebayo Balogun | 2002-2005 |
| IGP Sunday Ehindero | 2005-2007 |
| IGP Mike Mbama Okiro | 2007-2009 |
| IGP Ogbonna Okechukwu Onovo | 2009-2010 |
| IGP Hafiz Ringim | 2010-2012 |
| IGP Muhammed Dikko Abubakar | 2012-2014 |
| IGP Suleiman Abba | 2014-2015 |
| IGP Solomon Arase | 2015-2016 |
| IGP Ibrahim Kpotun Idris | 2016 – Till date |

Source: Wikipedia, 2018

From the list of indigenous Inspector Generals of Police, it is obvious that Nigerians assumed leadership of the Nigeria police force in 1964 under Louis Oroko Edet and this position has not changed to date. It is observed that Nigeria police force has historically evolved and developed to its present status but its operations have remained highly post-colonial as it continues to serve the interest of the governing class

rather than that of the masses. In his reaction on assumption of office in 2012, the Acting Inspector-General of Police observed that the police he was to lead were occupied with serving individual politicians and influential persons in the society:

Our men are deployed to rich and influential individuals and corporate entities that we lack manpower to provide security for the common man, our investigative department cannot equitably handle matters unless those involved have money to part with. Our police stations, state criminal investigation Departments and operation offices have become centres and collection points for rendering returns for all kinds of squads and teams set up for the benefit of superior officers (Vanguard, 2013).

This mentality of right of ownership of the institution or the police force by the incumbent authorities in Nigeria has rendered the police as anti-people agency used especially in carrying out repression and dirty jobs. The colonial legacy of suppression and intimidation still exists in the Nigeria police force as a reign of police terror has been unleashed on the Nigeria populace over the years. For the Nigeria police, killing innocent and unarmed civilians is as normal as demanding and taking bribes is part of the institution obliged to maintain order and protect human life and their properties. Students unions, Nigeria Labour Congress and other civil society organizations staging peaceful protest over certain ill policies of the government have in many ways been brutalized by the Nigeria police force in protection of the primitive accumulation of the ruling class.

It is submitted that the current seemingly intractable internal challenges in Nigeria today are direct consequences of the alienation of the people and absence of an internal security policy framework, and poor understanding of the requirements of police management by strategic actors. Effective policing in this age is neither achieved by alienating the people nor excessive violence in quelling disorders but by legitimate use of force and peoples' collaboration.

Ranks in the Nigeria Police (in descending order)

- Inspector-General of Police
- Deputy Inspector-General of Police
- Assistant Inspector-General of Police
- Commissioner of Police
- Deputy Commissioner of Police
- Assistant Commissioner of Police
- Chief Superintendent of Police
- Superintendent of Police
- Deputy Superintendent of Police
- Assistant Superintendent of Police
- Inspector of Police
- Sergeant Major
- Corporal
- Constable

Although generally considered an attractive career, the Nigeria police force experienced endemic problems with recruiting, training, inefficiency, discipline and lacked expertise in specialized fields. Corruption and dishonesty were widespread, engineering a low level of public confidence. The use of excessive violence in quelling student's disorders led the Armed Forces Ruling Council in 1986 to direct the police to use only rubber bullets in containing student's riots. Official reports of police collusion with criminals were common as police duties have been commercialized and provided at the whims and caprices of the highest bidder.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We therefore recommend that the national security architecture must be revised to address the gaps in coordination, collaboration and synergy. In order to increase the capacity of the Nigeria police force to

respond to national security issues, the federal government must ensure that there is further recruitment in these organizations. Nigeria must reduce its dependence on importing its basic security equipment and must immediately develop its internal research and development capacities in order to meet our basic national security needs. Above all, the nation's basic security infrastructure must be comprehensively reviewed and strengthened. Additionally, all international commitment that impacts our domestic national security must be reviewed. The security challenges of the nation must be isolated from political partisanship, and ethno-religious sentiments. Political activities must not fuel the further deterioration of the nation's national security. The architecture of the Nigeria police force is dysfunctional and needs urgent review towards people oriented policing.

CONCLUSION

In the formation of the society, government is given enormous power to have control over the instrument of coercion. What has happened now is that, criminal element have overwhelmed the government. A diagnosis of the performance of the Nigeria police force saddled with the power to secure life and property of the people explicates that the nation's law enforcement agents continue to be enmeshed in challenges of post-colonial swarms of foulness in the detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, recognition and protection of the dignity and rights of citizens, accountability and concern for the general welfare of citizens. The ineluctable fact is that the police deal in and dispense violence in protection of the interests of the state. They are inextricably linked to the political status quo and are in effect, duty bound to sustain and uphold it.

The study therefore concludes that the Nigeria post colonial police force with all its heritage is a failed architecture that needs to be reformed.

REFERENCES

- Abdulkadir, M.B. (2004). *Measuring police effectiveness in Nigeria: An emulation of input and output in crime and policing in Nigeria: Challenges and options*. Lagos: CLEEN Foundation. Pp. 111-115.
- Ade, K. (1990). *Nigerian quest for nation building*, Lagos: Touch Tone Press.
- Adebakin and Raim (2012). National security challenges and sustainable economic development: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, 1, (1) pp. 1-30.
- Adegoke, N. (2014). The Nigeria police and the challenges of security in Nigeria. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 3(6), December
- Agwanwo, D.E. (eds) (2014). *A political economy of policing in Nigeria*. Benue: Aboki publishers.
- Aina, K. (2014). *The Nigeria police law with police Act and code of conduct*. Lagos, Ikeja: Princeton and Associates Publishing Company Limited, pp. 33.
- Alao, B. (1984). *Today's police force: Perspective on its operations*. Uyo: Ufot Publishers.
- Alemika, E. E. O. (1991). *Policing contemporary Nigeria. Problems and prospects*. Jos: Unijos Press.
- Alemika, E.E.O. (1993). Colonialism, state and policing in Nigeria. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 20: pp.189-219.
- Alemika, E. E. O. (1993). Criminology, Criminal Justice and the Philosophy of Policing. In T. N. Tamuno, et al (eds), *Policing Nigeria*, Ibadan; University Press.
- Alemika, E.O. (1993). Criminology, criminal justice and the philosophy of policing. In: T.N. Tamuno, I.L. Babhir, E.O. Alemika and A.O. Akano (eds). *Policing Nigeria: past, present and future*. Lagos: Malthouse press ltd.
- Alemika, E.O. (2010). History, context and crisis of the police in Nigeria. Presentation at the Biennial Retreat of the police service commission on the theme, repositioning the Nigeria police to meet the challenges of the policing a democratic society in the twenty-first century and Beyond, held at the Le Meridian Hotel, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, November 1-4, 2010.
- Anderson, J. (1979). *Policing freedom*. Plymouth: Macdonald and Evans Ltd.
- Anstride C. (1961). *Local police acts in pre-independence Nigeria*. Lagos: Equity Publishers

- Arase, S.E. (2013). Non-state policing and internal security: An implementation strategy. In: S.E. Arase (ed), *National security: Intelligence and community partnership approach*. Abuja: Lawlords publications.
- Arase, S.E. (2018). Strengthening internal security frameworks and community policing in Nigeria: Models, policy options and strategies. *Paper presentation at the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies*, Kuru-Jos, 19th February, 2018.
- Asenime, J.A. (2011). The Nigeria police, policing, rule of law and national security: 1979-2008 A.D. *The NASARA Journal of Humanities*, Keffi, Nigeria, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 125-136.
- Asenime, J.A. (eds) (2014). *The evolution and development of the Nigeria police force: A political economy of policing in Nigeria*. Volume 1, Nigeria: Aboki Publishers.
- Babangida, M.A. (2012). The search for national security in Nigeria: challenges and prospects. *A paper presentation at Obafemi Awolowo Institute of Government and Public Policy*, Agip recital hall, Muson-Lagos, Thursday, 27th September, 2012.
- Barlow, D.E. and Barlow, M.H. (1999). A political economy of community policing. *An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 22 (4) pp. 546-674.
- Binniyat L. U (2012). Nigeria not ripe for state police, IGP insists. *Vanguard*, Friday, July 6, p.44
- Black, D. (1980). *The manners and custom of the police*. New York. Academic Press.
- Boyd, R. and Joan, B. (2003). *How humans evolved*. New York: Norton.
- Chukwuma, I.C. (2001). Police transformation in Nigeria: Problems and prospects in crime and policing. *Transitional Societies Seminar Report No. 8*, Johannesburg: South Africa Institute of International Affairs.
- Coatman, J. (1959). *The police*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coomassie, I.A. (1998). The wind of change in the Nigeria police force'. In: Elo Amucheazi and D.O.P. Sanomi (eds), *Police, law and order in Nigeria*. Abuja: National Orientation Agency.
- Critchley, T. A. (1972). *History of police in England and Wales*, 2nd edition. Montclair. N. J.
- Crossman, A. (2017). *Understanding conflict theory*. <http://www.thoughtco.com/conflict-theory-3026622>, Retrieved 09/02/2019.
- Dambazau, A. B. (n.d.). *Criminology and criminal justice in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Das, D.K. and Palmiotto, M. (eds) (2004). *World police encyclopaedia*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Dempsey, J. S. (1994). *An introduction to law enforcement*. Minneapolis/St. Paul. MN: West.
- Egbe, R. (2017), Wanted: 155,000 more policemen. *The Nation*, May 16
- Ehinder, S. E. (1998). *The Nigeria police and human rights*. Jos: Ehinder Press.
- Ehinder, S.G. (1993). The organization and command structure of the Nigeria police force. In: T. N. Tamuno et al., (eds). *Policing Nigeria*.
- Ekundayo, K. (2014). Why Nigeria is not ripe for state police –IGP. *Daily Trust*, Monday, 27 p.17.
- Ekweremadu, I. (2018). Only state police can stop killings in the country. *Vanguard News*, July 7
- Eme, O. I. and Ogbochie, A. N. (2014). Limitations of state police in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(5), pp.130-140.
- Eme, O.I, Okeke, M.I and Okoh, C.I. (2009). The Police and criminal justice system in Africa: Agenda for reform. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*. Pp166-180.
- Eze, M.O. and Onwo, D.O. (2013). Political economy of maintaining law and order by the Nigerian Police Force and Prison Service, 1993-2001. *University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy*, 6(1&2). Pp 1-22.
- Fanon, F. (1965). *The wretched of the Earth*. Great Britain: Penguin Books.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1990). The Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Justice, Vol. xx. Police Act, Cap. 359, 1990.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1990). The Police Act, (1990), Cap 359, Part II, Section 3.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information. Section 214 (1& 2).
- Gurr, T.R. (1970). *Why men rebel*. Princeton: Centre of International Studies. Princeton University Press.

- Innocent, E.O. and Onyishi, A. (2011). The challenge of insecurity in Nigeria; Athematic, exposition. Interdisciplinary. *Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 3(8)
- Iroanusi and Queen, E. (2018). Nigerian senate adopts 20 recommendations in to improve security. *The Chamber of the Nigerian Senate, Premium Times*, July 5, 2018.
- Ivkovic, S.K. and Shelley, T.O. (2005). The Bosnian police and police integrity: A continuing story. *European Journal of Criminology*, 2 (4) pp. 428-464.
- Johnson, M. (1996). The search for definitions: The vitality of politics and the issue of corruption. cited in Sayed, T. and Bruce, D. (1998a), inside and outside the boundaries of police corruption. *Africa Security Review*, 7(2).
- Jones, R.V. (1965). *The Nigeria Police instructions notes*. Lagos: Government Printers
- Kajo, T. (2013). Nigeria not ripe for state police, says Tsva. *Daily Sun*, Thursday , June 28, P 5.
- Kelling, G.L., Wasserman, R. and Williams, H. (1988). *Police, accountability and community policing perspectives on policing*. USA: National Institute of Justice.
- Krahmann, E. (2003). Conceptualizing security governance. *Journal of the Nordic International States Association*, 38(1).
- Macaulay, J. (1964). *Policing the west for Her Majesty London*: Panther Books Ltd.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F. (1973). *Manifesto of the communist party*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- Marx, K. (1970). *A contribution to the critique of political economy*. New York: International pub.
- Mastrotski, S.D. (1999). *Policing for people*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.
- Membere, C.F.L (1977). *Police studies manual (Nigeria)* Vol. 1. Lagos: UNICOM Books Ltd.
- Meyer, M. and Reyneke-Tarbitt, S. (2009). Attitudes of non-commissioned officers in the South African police Service toward corrupt activities. *Unpublished paper presented at the 46th Annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences*, Boston MA, March 10-14.
- Meyer, M.E. et al (2013). Exploring the public parameter of police integrity. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 36 (1) pp. 140-156.
- Neocleous, M. (2004). *Fabricating social order: A critical history of police power*. London: Pluto Press.
- Nnoli, O. (2003). *Introduction to politics* (2nd ed.). Enugu: PACREP.
- Nwankwo, C., Mbachu, D. and Ugochukwu, B. (1993). *Human rights practices in the Nigeria police*. Lagos: Constitutional Rights Projects.
- Nwaubeze, B. O. (1983), *Federalism in Nigeria under the presidential constitution*. London: Sweet and Maxwell.
- Odeh, A.M. and Umoh, N. (2015). State policing and national security. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(1)
- Odekunle, F. (1979). The Nigeria Police Force: A preliminary assessment functional performance. *International Journal of Sociology of Law*.
- Oderemi (2012). Agitation for state police: Real police or private armies? *Daily Sun*, July 1, p.8
- Odiadi, T. (2012a). State police and effective policing in Nigeria (I). *Vanguard*, Thursday, August 8, p.52.
- Odiadi, T. (2012b). Controversy trails governors demand for state police (2)", *Vanguard*, Friday, August 9, p.52.
- Ogunbuyi, W. (2011). A call for the decentralizations of Nigeria Police. *The Punch*, May 12, p.17.
- Ohonbamu, O. (1972). The dilemma of police organization under a federal system: The Nigerian example. *The Nigerian Law Journal* (6), Pp. 73 – 87.
- Ojo, A et al, (2012). Controversy trails governors' demand for state police. *National Mirror* June 28, pp.1,3-4.
- Olewe B.N. and Anga J.S. (eds.) (1994). *Command administration: The police perspective*. Enugu: New Generation Book.
- Ollorwi, O. (2013). *Community policing and crime control in pre-colonial Eleme: Issues and perspectives*. Port-Harcourt: Nigeria Institute of Security.
- Onyozili, E.C. (2005). Obstacles to effective policing in Nigeria. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*. 1 (1), Spring.

- Otto, G. and Ukpere, W. (2012). National security and development in Nigeria. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6 (23), pp. 6765-6770.
- Otu, N. (2014). The development and growth of the Nigeria police force from social context perspective journals. Sagepub.com/doi/metrics/ 10.1350/pojo.77.1.19.31514
- Oyawale, J.B. (2005). *Policing our society*. Ibadan: Pillar Pub.
- Rothwell, G.R. and Baldwin, J.N. (2007). Whistle-blowing and the code of silence in police agencies: Policy and structural predictors. *Crime and Delinquency*, 53(4), pp. 605-653.
- Rotimi, T. (1993). Local police in western Nigeria: End of an era. in T. N. Tamuno, et al (eds), *Policing Nigeria*. Ibadan: University Press.
- Samuel W. (1992). *The police in America: An introduction*, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw –Hill.
- Sullivan, L.E. (2005). *Encyclopedia of law enforcement*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Tamuno, T. N. (1989). *The Role of the Police in the Maintenance of Internal Security*. Kuru.
- Tamuno, T.N. (1970). *The police in modern Nigeria*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan pres.
- Tamuno, T.N., Bashir; I. L. Alemika, E. E. O. and Akano,A. O. (n.d.). eds. *Policing Nigeria: Past present and future*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Thomas, A.N. and Aghedo, I. (2014). Security architecture and insecurity management: Context, content and challenges in Nigeria. *Sokoto Journal of the Social Sciences*, 4(1)
- Tyokumbur, E. (2014). Still on state police. *Daily Independent*, Friday, March 21, P. 49.
- Ugwuoke, C.U. (2010). *Criminology: Explaining crime in Hadrian context*. Nsukka: Great Ap Express publishers Ltd.
- Van Vuuren, H. (2005). *National integrity systems: Transparency International country study report*. Cape Town: Institute for security studies.
- Webbers, M. (1968). *Economy and society*. University of California Press.