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Police Reform: A gateway to crime prevention and a Secured Nigerian state

Ruth Ochanya Adio-Moses & Babatunde Adebayo Adeparusi

Abstract

Within the confines of the criminal justice system or institutions, the police are not only the most visible but also considered the “friend of the masses”; hence, there is a general presumption which suggests a close relationship between the protector and the protected. This paper sought to identify the various security issues posing threats to the people, economy as well as the unity of the Nigerian nation, while focusing attention on police reform as a tool for possible solution. this paper also considers the “new visibility” of the police especially in the age of technological advances (e.g. pervasive new camera/video technologies and the proliferation of social networking practices by the general public), in which case, the media have expanded far beyond their media houses and information is at the speed of light (especially in terms of public perception of the police and their accountability). This is quite significant as it shows that building public trust in the police requires serious democratic reforms in which the general public also have important roles to play. However, this is not to say that this reform will help wipe out the Nigerian security challenges in totality, rather it may help sensitize the criminal justice system as well as suggest strategies for a secured Nigerian State, hence the security challenges confronting Nigeria may be better managed through good policing.

Keywords: *Police reform, Nigerian security, technologies, crime prevention.*

Introduction

Looking at factors that define security, especially in a democratic setting peace, freedom, full human rights protection, access to basic infrastructure or social amenities, good governance, food, shelter and more. It is only proper to conclude that the hope of any nation depends on security. And for this reason, it is not out of place for a people living in a democratic setting to demand, as a right, any of the above highlighted factors, especially if deficient. Therefore, it is expected that all attention is focused on the police whenever there are issues of insecurity. It is for this reason that the police have been identified as agents of social control. Hence, the function of the police as the most visible component of the criminal justice system is not limited to enforcing laws of society; they also serve as the intermediary maintaining a good balance between the ruler and the ruled.

Furthermore, the police are not only visible (Goldsmith, 2010), but are also considered the “friend of the masses”; hence there is a general presumption which also suggests a close relationship between the protector and the protected. This presumption is predicated on one primary reason or purpose for the establishment of the former – to serve the latter. Police, as agents of formal social control, are also responsible for ensuring compliance with existing laws and the protection of the public, as well as maintaining peace and order in society

(Wolfe and Piquero, 2011). However, the spate of criticism and complaints against the Nigerian police is considerable high which give grave cause for concern. There is, therefore, no doubt that the rise in crime rates and insecurity (Aremu 2014, Albert 2018, Adio-Moses 2018) do have direct impacts on the social system and have necessitated the need to embark on serious academic research to, investigate and document strategies to help mitigate the effects of these anomalies so that people in this particular social and cultural milieu may learn to either manage the anomalies or find a lasting solution to it. For instance, last couple of decades have witnessed a renaissance within criminology of interest in the role of police legitimacy in facilitating public law-abiding behaviour (Tankebe, 2008). This may have inspired corpus of literature especially towards examining the police-public relationship in the light of the perceived loss of public confidence (Ren L., Cao L., Lovrich N. & Gaffney M, 2005) however, when police effectiveness is analyzed from a cross-national perspective, differential structural dynamics and historical experiences of countries come to form the most adequate framework to understand what police do and achieve (Hung-En, 2006). Therefore, contextualizing police and policing in Nigeria should be holistic in terms of approach.

Nevertheless, police reform becomes a major focus especially in a modern society characterized by industrialization, urbanization,

conflicts, ideologies, religiosity and proliferation of “modernized” social network interactions and practices. There is need for reform not necessarily because things seem “bad” but because global societies (including Nigeria) are fast becoming transitional economies, and the need for effective overhauling of the criminal justice system in order to conform to the global best practices becomes critical. Hence, this paper may not have directly provided answers, particularly, to the Nigerian socio-economic challenges, especially those predicated on apparent defects or anomalies in the criminal justice system, but it has endeavoured to highlight, examine and review peculiar security issues in view of the main desideratum –police reform –a means believed to be the gateway to crime prevention, security, peace and long-lasting economic recovery.

Theoretical Context

In Nigeria, the police are described more in negative terms by major segments of the public (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2005). Sampled public opinions on police operations and activities in Nigeria have often revealed a force that is characterized by corruption, human rights abuse and lacking proper education and intelligence skills. This may have been made evident due to the prevailing recurrent security issues threatening the economy and unity of the country.

Policing, in its widest sense, goes beyond investigation, leading to prosecution and enforcement of the criminal law. Prevention of crime is also part of the repertoire in ‘policing’ criminal behaviour (Harfield, 2008), and of course prevention may not be considered in isolation without relation to such reform initiatives (inclusive of criminalization processes and procedure) which may help in the deterrence process against criminality and criminal behaviour. These include good policing models, intelligence gathering, core understanding of social values, basic education, adequate trainings, regard for human rights, hitch-free social interactions (public–police relationship), well-articulated and well-defined policing functions. All these are in a cultural context predicated on individual society being policed, and more especially what kind of issues that are prevalent in (or peculiar to) such societies. For example, policing in Britain is not the same as policing in Somalia. Also, policing in China is not same as policing in Columbia. Policing in the United States is not the same as policing in Saudi Arabia. Hence, policing in Nigeria may not be the same as policing elsewhere. Even though crime is of major concern to all countries in transition (Lange, 2000), it is important to note that in different countries there are always peculiarities in the “how” and “nature” of crime. In other words, every country has its peculiarities in social, cultural and historical terms and without understanding this prevention may not only be

an impossible task in policing, but may also redefine the concept of policing.

In view of the above, it may be argued that social and cultural interaction within a society defines an ideal policing. That is, in an ideal society, there would be no need for the modern police. Jones (2006) argued that it is important to realize at the outset that what is nowadays thought of as a 'criminal justice system' is a development of modern history". This view is pertinent to a full understanding of how modernization and globalization are turning societies around the world into transitional cultures. This has also inevitably influenced the criminal justice system, redefined social values and affected public perceptions (and/or judgement) of what the ideal police and policing should be.

Furthermore, Alao (2000) argued that at independence, Nigeria inherited a police force whose orientation had been defined and refined under colonial rule. The Nigeria Police saw itself as a tool of government that was used to wage war against the people. As a result, it became a ready instrument in the hands of regimes wishing to coerce any perceived opposition." Inasmuch as this statement is neither absolutely right nor absolutely incorrect, it is, however, important to always acknowledge the powers of the executive branch of the State apparatus and the influence of these powers, particularly over the criminal justice system of which the police

are also a component. For example, subsection 1 of section 9 of the Nigeria Police Act and regulations states clearly that "There is hereby established a body to be known as the Nigeria Police Council (in this Act referred to as 'the Council') which shall consist of: a. The President who shall be chairman; b. the Governor of each State of the Federation; c. The chairman of the Police Service Commission; d. The Inspector-General of Police." Subsections 2a and 2b of section 9 further state that the function of the Council shall include "the organization and administration of the Nigeria Police Force and all other matters relating thereto and the general supervision of the Nigeria Police Force'. However, looking at this from another angle in a democratic society, the police are accountable to the law and the citizenry rather than to the executive branch of the State apparatus, because legal mandates and the public trust are parts of 'measuring instruments' to determine police effectiveness" (Hung-En, 2006).

Intrinsic Security Issues

Increase in crime rate

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One of such legislation is the Police Act. By virtue of the provision of section 4 of the Police Act.

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enforcement of all laws and regulation with which they are directly charged...” (Cap 359 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1990).

Increase in the rate of crime in Nigeria was being reported as far back as in the eighties (Times International, 1985). Security of lives and properties could no longer be guaranteed; there have been so many reported cases of criminal activities across the 6 geo-political zones: persistent cases of killing of the helpless innocent citizens by herdsmen, kidnapping, armed robbery, militancy, molestation of children, internet fraud (otherwise referred to as ‘Yahoo yahoo’), police brutality (e.g. unlawful arrest and killings of innocent people by certain criminal elements within the force), abuse of firearms (e.g. indiscriminate shooting of security agents in public spaces), egregious abuses of human right, corruption, and the list is endless. The crime waves and the extent of violence in Nigeria are becoming more frequent, more offensive and horrendous. There are daily reports of more violent crimes (Agbola, 1997; Fabiyi, 2004; Adio-Moses, 2018). It is noteworthy not to be oblivious of the fact that crime statistics are based on the reported cases, however it also a fact that there are many unreported cases taking place especially in certain neighbourhoods where the media lens may have skipped. Therefore, the police force is mandated to prevent and control crime as a government agent. The inability of the police to control and prevent crime, the breakdown of

family values, prevalence of bribery and corruption and high unemployment rate, have all contributed to a further breakdown of law and order (Adebayo, 2013; Aremu, 2014).

Reforms in Nigeria (Post-military Era)

Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has faced various socio-economic and political challenges and the need to reform the police has become increasingly apparent. Hence, various committees have been set up to address different issues confronting the Nigeria Police Force as an organization. Until recent times, there have been several calls especially by the Civil Society Organizations through the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) to reform the police; generally speaking, there has been on-going discourse in various quarters on the need to reform this arm of the criminal justice system. In view of systemic issues facing Nigeria as a country, it has become apparent that the reform agenda may not be as effective as expected without also considering other sectors of the economy. For example, “fighting corruption, improving transparency and accountability is a major area that needs wholesome and unfettered reforms” (Pogson, 2009). But this chapter turns its searchlights on the most controversial component of the criminal justice system – the police.

A brief study of the history of police reform in Nigeria in the post-military era reveals the following facts:

- a. In 2005, the Judicial Commission of Enquiry was set to look into the Apo 6 killings.
- b. In 2006, the Presidential Committee on Reform of the Police headed by Retired DIG Muhammed Dan Madami was set up.
- c. In 2008, the Mohammed D. Yusuf Panel was set up.
- d. In 2012, the Osayande Panel on Police Reform was also set up.

However, civil society became concerned, and probably also feared that the last Panel (Osayande Panel, 2012) on police reform would share the fate of its predecessors (i.e. never being implemented), so it set up its own panel of enquiry (under the auspices of NOPRIN) to look into the critical issues facing the Nigerian police force and make the case for the reform of this sector. It submitted a comprehensive and explicit report (identifying and highlighting the major problems confronting the Nigeria Police as well as making useful suggestions and recommendations) to the federal government (Civil Society, 2012). This only goes to show that reform has been identified as the key solution to the various security challenges undermining the unity and economy of the Nigerian state (most especially in recent times) and the public have come to realize that “we now live in a changing world, and our society has joined the transitional societies” – hence the inevitable call overhauled criminal justice

system, especially the police, in order to be able to handle the new challenges and restore public confidence in the Police.

Major reforms that have taken place (within the criminal justice system) in Nigeria since her return to democratic rule in 1999 are the establishment of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC); the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); the National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC); the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA); and the Ministry of Police Affairs. The Ministry of Police Affairs was reportedly created to oversee the Nigerian Police Force and its activities (see www.policeaffairs.gov.ng). The Ministry of Police Affairs has the following as its core mission and vision:

Mission: To design and implement policies and programmes for the Ministry to realize the goals and objectives of the Nigeria Police in serving the Nigerian public efficiently, effectively and with integrity'

Vision: To provide the Nigerian nation with a well-trained, disciplined, dedicated, effective, highly motivated and efficient Police Force that is the best in Africa and comparable to any Police Force in the developed world.

However, it is to be noted that the mission statement the Ministry of Police Affairs does not

correspond to the overwhelming public experience in Nigeria, especially with regard to measuring safety and police effectiveness. As a matter of fact, the experience has been the direct opposite of the mission and vision of the Ministry of Police Affairs. This is also apparent in recent events which have culminated in the history of human rights abuse, corruption, public fears (all across the regions due to insecurity) and terrorism among others in Nigeria. To consider the widely distribution of policing functions among the newly created policing agencies is to question the legitimacy of the Nigeria Police as an entity. With this picture depicting a weak and ineffective Nigeria Police coupled with the sharing of its responsibilities with/by other policing agencies, it may then be right to reconsider the existing reform initiatives. Otherwise, the whole idea of reform, as far as the Nigerian Criminal Justice system is concerned, would be a futile exercise.

While the importance of reform may have been clearly elucidated and understood within the Nigerian context, what apparently seems unclear and yet disturbing is the apparent lack of understanding how to achieve success. This remains elusive. For example, Hills (2008) argued that "reform can change organizational structures and regulations but without socio-political change, its effects tend to be superficial, localised and temporary. Rather than being incremental, police reforms follow a dialectical process where reform and resistance interact.

Therefore, a systemic comprehensive restructuring is needed for a way out of the prevailing security issues confronting Nigeria.

The literature on police and policing has also argued that police “are not only responsible for enforcing laws and protecting the public but also are entrusted to represent order and justice in society” (Wolfe and Piquero, 2011). In other words, responsibility to the public and commitment to security and safety of a government could be measured based on the output or performance of its uniformed men in society. Therefore, it may be completely out of place to consider the poor performance of the Nigeria Police Force in isolation with the feeble social structure, misguided economic forces and awful political organization of the Nigerian state. Pogoson remarked that “weak and battered institutions, poor culture of accountability and transparency, abuse of human rights and the neglect of the majority of the population created an environment in which reforms had been difficult” (2009). However, the depth of systemic decadence in the Nigerian society may not be unconnected with the security challenges the nation has faced in recent times. This has also resulted in non/ill-implementation of good and well-meaning reform initiatives. Corroborating this, Aremu (2014) stated that the Nigeria Police seems to be in dire need of reform however, it is important that political players and institutions embrace the principles of true democracy and allow

open, free and fair aggregation of national opinions and development choices.

The Nigeria Police Force and Terrorism

Since the December 31, 2010 bomb blast in Abuja the security industry has realised that Nigeria has come to witness her own version of terrorism, concern about terrorism in Nigeria has not only been seriously discussed in security circle and among the stakeholders, the seat of government in Abuja is seriously worried because of the effect of this on internal security, body of polity and foreign investments. After the December 31, 2010 attack the country has witnessed more ferocious home-grown terrorism in which over 220 attacks and over 2000 Nigerian have lost their lives (Aremu, 2014). Terrorism though, strange to Nigerian society, is a serious challenge that is militating against the effectiveness and efficiency of the police, making their performance more visibly weak – lacking proper coordination and adequate/necessary intelligence-gathering mechanism.

Furthermore, transitional cultures also came with their challenges and some of these are emerging new kinds of (strange) attack as seen in other transitional societies around the globe. And because these issues are seen as “strange”, corresponding “strange” and systemic approaches are also required to nip them in the bud, bearing in mind that the pace of such

systemic social reform initiatives could also become a militating factor if not properly handled or implemented, especially regarding public expectation.

One major factor that makes the phenomenon of terrorist attacks in Nigeria seem successful is because the ideology that is driving the movement is not without an element of culture and religiosity, through which it is subtly sold and accepted (Adeparusi, 2012). Hence, the proliferation of the “gospel” being preached by the “religious radicals” and its acceptance among the poor and vulnerable youths seems to be the real terror that must be conquered before time. However, for the police to record success in their fight against current terrorist activities in Nigeria, it will require special skills that are intelligence-based. This is because “in policing terrorism, intelligence allows the security forces fighting terrorism to weaken one of the most important advantages of terrorist tactics – the element of surprise, which allows terrorists to attack the weak underbelly of security coverage, use unexpected methods and tactics, keep security forces from planning in advantage, and force them to spread themselves thin defending ‘unnecessary’ targets” (Perligeret al., 2009). The efforts of the Nigeria Police Force and the uninterrupted attacks (against the public) by the Nigerian Islamic sect Boko Haram seem uncomplimentary, and this is not only resulting in further loss of public confidence in the force, but also showcasing gross perception of total systemic social failure.

The Nigeria Police Force and its Complexities of Loyalty

In every moral life loyalty plays a very important role. Also, it is also expected to “play an important part in a police force in enabling significant virtues to flourish” (Ewin, 1990). However, Ewin argued that there are usually more than two objects in a matrix of loyalty, for example “A can be loyal to B only if there is a third party C . . . who stands as a potential competitor to B, the object of loyalty. The competitor is always lurking in the wings” (1990). This simply points to the fact that loyalty may not apply if there are no (potentially) other available standing options. That is, when individuals’ express loyalty towards some individual, organization or group, they may forsake other loyalties by default. Conversely, Nathanson (1993) too argued that loyalty should not be seen as mutually exclusive, in that there are levels of loyalty and that being loyal is not necessarily coupled with uncritical support or unquestioning obedience. Loyalty can be and should be tempered.

However, corpus of literatures on loyalty, especially as it relates to the Police and the assessment of their performances, have revealed the complexities of this subject. For example, if we must go by Peterson and Uhnno’s (2012) argument above, could it then be right to regard

police officer's loyalty as exclusive, forsaking other loyalties by default? On the other hand, if we agree to Nathanson's (2019) argument, should we accept an officer's loyalty that is not necessarily coupled with uncritical support or unquestioning obedience as the right kind of loyalty needed for expected performance? Whichever way these may be viewed, there may not be a balance without first identifying the officer's main object of loyalty and second, considering the available potential competitors challenging the identified object. However loyalty to people sometimes comes into conflict with loyalty to principles and vice versa. So also, loyalty to someone may come in conflict of loyalty to some other (Peterson and Uhnou, 2012). Therefore, in the context of the present state of affairs in Nigeria, especially with regard to the level of poverty recorded among the citizenry and most importantly the deplorable living conditions of an average Nigerian police officer, the complexities of loyalty of the Nigeria Police Force is more understandable. In view of this, highlighted below are some of the "aggressive competitors" believed to be competing for the loyalty of an average Nigerian police officer:

- the general public – which the force was established to protect;
- the police organizational authority – which serves as his overseeing authority;
- the code of conduct and police ethics – to which the officer swore allegiance;

- the rich – who are in control and often act as though they are above the law;
- the corrupt government officials – who always demand police protection;
- the politicians – who use the police as tools for election malpractice, manipulation and harassment;
- the fellow officers – colleagues who often help to cover-up corruption, human rights abuse, brutality, extra-judicial killings etc.; and lastly
- the officer's immediate family – wife, children, mother, father, sisters and brothers for whom he is the breadwinner.

So now the question is: to which among the above-listed should the Nigerian police officer express his sincere loyalty? Until the underlying factors (i.e. the socio-political and economic problems, responsible for the divided attention of the Nigeria Police Force) are addressed no reform initiative may be effective as far as an average Nigerian police officer is concerned. And until this time, in his mind, an average Nigerian police officer is confused about which among the above-highlighted deserves his loyalty. Hence, the Nigerian social systems assume an unreformable position.

State Police in Nigeria

In recent times, there has been an on-going discourse on whether or not the creation of individual State Police in each of the 36 States in Nigeria is necessary. A peep into Section 214(1)

of the 1999 Constitution shows that “There shall be a police force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigerian Police Force and subject to the provisions of this section no other police force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof” (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). In addition, the Part I section 1 of the Constitution states clearly that “This Constitution is supreme and its provisions shall have binding force on the authorities and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria”. Hence, until there is an amendment to this section of the Nigerian constitution, there is presently no provision for the establishment of a State Police force in the country, and bypassing the constitution will constitute gross disregard to the rule of law of the Land. However, there is no doubt that the present deplorable security state of the nation must have initiated the emergence of this topic. But if justice, equality, accountability and efficiency have been identified as basic minimum demands of democratic policing (Law Commission of Canada, 2002), with the present picture of defects and anomalies of the federal police as well as the deplorable state of policing and police affairs, then the ideal way to compound a retrogressive state and further multiply complexities within the Nigerian social space will be to consider State Police as a way of proffering immediate solution to the prevailing security challenges at hand. Otherwise, to have each state of the federation being in total control

of its police and policing affairs is ideal for a democratic economy.

In further reaction to the above, it is important to note that the condition of the police always reflects that of society. For example, the federal police “have little professional pride and suffer intense career frustration. Bad living and working conditions, poor pay, and wage arrears of several months are common, making officers vulnerable to bribery and other forms of corruption” (Alao, 2000). Aremu (2014) advised that beyond the clamour and agitation for and not for state policing, what should be paramount in the discourse of state policing is its relevance or otherwise to criminal justice and security of life and property. Indeed, many of the states of the federation are yet to manage the present economic burden confronting them and yet unable to alleviate the suffering of the people living in the states; even the oil-producing states (despite the higher revenue) are no exceptions in this case. For decades, the government has accrued huge oil revenues, yet the country struggles and tens of millions live in poverty (Aluko, 2009). Basic infrastructures are not in view, accountability is elusive, corruption is celebrated and unemployment is on the rise by the day, to mention a few. “Nigerian society as an entity operates a totally vulnerable system that has no appropriate structures by which her active young people may be positioned for positive and productive use” (Adeparusi, 2011; Adio-Moses, 2018). These are issues to be

debated and resolved in order to have a sturdy platform for healthy economic growth, strong political structure and a more secure social space.

“New Visibility” of the Nigeria Police Force The Media Factor

The emergence of the new media has also evidently confirmed the reality of systemic decadence of the Nigerian state, and particularly that of the Nigeria Police Force. The “new media”, as one would describe them, comprise modern high-powered devices and media such as the Internet (e.g. using social platforms like *YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook etc.*), covert cameras, CCTV, *iPhone, iPad, Blackberry* and other electronic devices, which could be used for conveying information (inclusive of graphics) as well as transmitting any kind of social events (of interest) at high speed, accessible at any location around the globe. Typical examples reaffirming the effectiveness of the new media include the incessant and quick dissemination of information through the use of the social media platforms by the members of the public in which police brutality, corrupt practices and other illegality involving the Nigerian Police officers have been exposed. The new body of evidences against the police in the public sphere is undeniable, unlike in the past when there was no internet facility.

Moreover, there was a significant incident that occurred in Port Harcourt Nigeria back in 2012,

in which four undergraduate students of the University of Port Harcourt were lynched based on the verdict of a community leader who accused them of being armed robbers. Punch(2012) reported that both the beating and the burning were videotaped and the film clip had gone viral on the Internet.” This new medium of social interaction has not only reiterated the fact that the world has truly become a global village, but has also served as means of social empowerment to resist and discourage human rights abuse all across the globe, particularly by exposing the covert activities and bizarre operations of “bad law-enforcers” in the society. Now, the Nigerian majority no longer rely on the *9 O'clock Network News* for truth and facts.

Generally speaking, in modern society, the new media technology as well as the globally centralized social platforms could help the police become more sensitive in carrying out their policing functions more efficiently and effectively. Conversely, this new social invention may also have a negative effect on the outlook of the police in terms of public assessment of their effectiveness. In other words, because of the fast-advancing modern age of the new media (e.g. the active social networking platforms), the police and their covert activities are becoming more visible than ever before, and as a result of this, optimum performance level of standard is required of the police to be able to meet up with the social demand of their public responsibility.

Situationalism

Apart from the media factors surrounding the new visibility of the Nigeria Police Force as enumerated above, it is also very important to discuss what is called “situationalism”: This is the theory that changes in human behaviour are factors of the situation rather than traits a person possesses (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia). Situationalism is a word that helps capture the idea of how truth-values are situation-dependent (Corazza, 2007). And in this context, situationalism plays significantly determinant roles in the new visibility of the police force in the Nigerian society. It can be argued that “situationalism” could determine a “positive police” and a “negative police” in any democratic setting, bearing in mind the primary purpose and functions of the police – to protect the public and maintain peace within the working legal frames provided. For example, some of the woeful performances of the Nigeria Police Force which have made them more negatively visible to the public, especially in recent times, may have been due to the overwhelming nature of the unprecedented security challenge they face. For example, in the recurrent terrorist attacks and kidnapping cases the public perception of the Nigeria Police Force could be absolutely situation-dependent. This means if there were no cases of terrorism and kidnapping in view, the Nigeria Police Force may not have been so negatively visible to the public and the public assessment and

perception of them may not have been so awful. Nonetheless the police are often perceived as the closest government representative to the Public. In other words, the police (as the security agent) is a significant factor in rating the performance of a government. “Nowhere is the failure of societies emerging from authoritarian rule more clearly illustrated than in citizens’ perceptions of the police” (Shaw, 2000).

Conclusion and Recommendations

In contemporary Nigeria, corruption in public offices predated Nigeria’s independence. Allegations of corrupt practices against civil servants and police officers predate independence. Nigeria’s post-independence history has been overshadowed by the depredations of a series of corrupt, abusive, and unaccountable governments. Also, large-scale grand-style electoral fraud and wanton stealing of public funds characterized the First Republic” (Aluko, 2009). For reform to thrive, to be effective and sustainable, a society must be rid of corruption, or at least be seen to make a visible effort. The judiciary plays very active roles in the fight against corruption. But the attitude of the Nigerian judiciary over corruption and the abuse of the judicial process also sends wrong signals, making all hope seem lost. Like the judiciary in developed democracies, judges would be held accountable for judgements and any abuse of process would

be investigated. These are not only steps that show that a nation is serious about ridding its system of corruption but these are also positive steps towards the progress and development of a nation. However, the biggest challenge for Nigeria is not just to punish corrupt behaviour but also to frustrate the prevailing culture that allows corruption to thrive.

In view of the systemic factors that militate against the Nigerian social space, it is very important that the negative public perception of the Nigeria Police Force be changed. And how may this happen? The police organization should do more in the area of adequate training of its force, have a benchmark for the standards or quality of individuals who have the mental capacity to undergo such training and that could apply this exercise practically in real life situations. Also, the need for the Nigeria Police Force to be properly trained in order to exercise their considerable discretionary powers cannot be overemphasized. This is because it is also very important for officers to be free to choose their style of policing. This will enable them to act ethically. Hence, police decisions can affect life, liberty and property and, as guardians of the interest of the public, the police should maintain high standards of integrity (Pollock-Byrne, 1998). Therefore, adequate training of the force is good recommendation for reform initiative.

In addition, an upward review of the remunerations for the Nigeria Police Force is

one of the most essentials of the reformative initiatives the government should consider. Hence, this may serve as a means of motivation for the police to be more efficient and effective in their responsibility to protect and serve the public better. It will also discourage corruption within and outside the organization because with better remunerations, the act of compromising integrity and utmost disregard for professional ethics would become unpopular.

Terrorism may be strange to the Nigerian social system, however, its reality cannot be denied, especially with the spate of sporadic bombings and high level of criminality by Boko Haram. It is highly recommended that intelligence-led policing model of operation is adopted by the Nigeria Police Force in order to combat the menace. Also the government should focus on the training of the Nigeria Police Force in the area of intelligence- the most effective tool in the fight against terrorism. This will go a long way in the area of dissemination of important and sensitive information to the appropriate quarters before the terrorists could carry out their dastardly acts.

Moreover, the government should review and implement the reports of various reform initiatives in which resources have been heavily invested. This will not only guard against economic wastage but will also help restore public confidence in the government-oriented reform programmes. A reform initiative like the

police reform is a move in the right direction for Nigeria to at least, indicate seriousness in her readiness to addressing security issues challenging the system.

Since reform is an initiative that always greets transitional cultures, and in this, Nigeria is no exception, the various discussions highlighted in this paper have been able to demonstrate that security as a terminology does not only define the condition of freedom, peace and safety, but also defined such characteristics reflective of good governance, crime prevention, protection of human rights, accessibility to basic resources and necessities of life, citizen's empowerment and well-being. This is quite important and useful as it will go a long way in educating the public and sensitizing the criminal justice system so as to be better equipped and awaken to the reality of the transitional state of Nigeria's social space as well as understand the importance of public perception of the police and its governing authorities. Proper education and accurate knowledge of problems are essential stages proffering solutions, especially to difficult problems. But where there are delusion of knowledge and misguided understanding of issues, there is bound to be complexities and confusion even in the face of workable measures or parameters. This is not far from what is confronting Nigeria as a nation. Hence, this paper has been able to highlight some of the various intricate security issues facing the Nigerian state, and it is to be noted

that many of these have been identified as problems frustrating both the past and current reform initiatives.

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