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THE CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE POLICING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

There has been serious crave for socio-political and economic development in Nigeria. Over the years, this desire appeared elusive premised on an institution to effect and check maintenance of law and order. Historically, there have not been an enduring and visible stable security and order in Nigeria, capable of guaranteeing development in a developing and heterogeneous society such as Nigeria. It is an axiomatic fact that every multi-cultural society requires an efficient police force. This requirement of efficiency is lacking in Nigeria. Members of the public have occasionally been miffed with the present police system, and usually, their resentment has not conveyed the much desired lessons on the NPF. There is mutual distrust operating between the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force and the members of the public, apparently on account of the performance of the members of the police force. Policing requires a taciturn reciprocity on the part of the public as well as approval of its existence, actions and behaviour in order to maintain public respect. It is in view of the above, that the authors argued that reciprocity remains an indispensable relationship and a desideratum. The paper therefore maintained the existence of challenges which are both systemic and institution-based impeding the wheel of progress to effective policing system. The authors therefore concluded by recommending both executive, legislative and socio-political interventions, in order to have an enduring, stable and effective police force in Nigeria.

Key words: Security, Community, Partnership, Performance, Brutality, Law Enforcer

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1. Introduction

All over the world, the importance of safety and security cannot be over-emphasised. It is against this background that every country of the world established a police department/unit to deal with internal security issues. In the light of the foregoing, the Nigerian constitution being the ‘*grund-norm*’ equally established the Nigeria Police Force,¹ and mandated that the members of the NPF shall have such powers and duties as

¹[Hereafter, The NPF] See S. 214 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as amended. See also, section 3(1) of the Nigeria Police Act, 2020.

may be conferred upon them by law.² Significantly, there are many other subsequent enactments in Nigeria that have vested enormous powers to the NPF.³ The powers include the power of arrest without warrant, power to search arrested persons, power to release on bail of a suspect arrested without warrant, powers of ingress and egress just to mention but a few. However, the principal statute that deals with the police as well as spelling out the NPF powers and duties is the Police Act.⁴

The focus of this manuscript is on the examination of the challenges of effective policing system in Nigeria. By implication, this is suggestive of the fact that act of policing is currently not effective in Nigeria. This assertion is conclusive of the fact that the word ‘effectiveness’ means producing the result that is wanted or desired.⁵ The paper adopts the fact that the above assertion, barring all odds, remains incontrovertible, premised on the fact that subsisting policing system has not significantly produced the desired results in Nigeria.⁶ Consequently, the paper shall examine among other things, the evolution and utility of the Nigeria Police Force, the transition of the colonial police force into an indigenous police force and attendant role reversal inability, expectations of Nigerians from the NPF, gaps between the expectations and the performance of the NPF, challenges or possible reasons for the inadequacies and the prospects of boosting the effectiveness of the NPF.

2. Evolution and Utility of the Nigeria Police Force

The current perception and relative non-cordial relationship between the members of public and the NPF has been the motivating factor of the evolution and usage, right from the inception. It is germane to note that the territory which is known at the moment as Nigeria was inhabited by different ethnic groups and independent communities prior to colonisation and eventual unification through the historic amalgamation of 1914. It is also imperative to note that before the advent of colonialism, most communities and even the present day cities and urban centres in Nigeria were highly undeveloped. The use of crude farm implements and unsophisticated weapons of warfare were in vogue. Notwithstanding the observed adumbrated factors, the inhabitants were very industrious, morally sound and highly religious, both in traditional and orthodox systems of worship. For instance, it was observed that the indigenes were as a matter of fact, usually regaled

² Section 214(2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended

³ Some of the enactments that confer powers on the police include the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, (ACJA) 2015, the Administration of Criminal Justice Laws (ACJLs) of the various States that domesticated the ACJA, the Criminal Procedure Act, Cap C41, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and the Criminal Procedure Code, Cap. C42, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

⁴ The Nigeria Police Act, 2020 which repealed the Police Act, Cap. P19, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

⁵ A. S Hornby, Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, 7th ed., (Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 469.

⁶ Although Nigerians expect much more from the NPF, it must be acknowledged that Policemen in Nigeria are rowing their boat very hard but the storm in the sea is enormous. This can be seen from the various successes that are oftentimes recorded and made public in various parts of Nigeria, notwithstanding the inadequacies.

in demonstration of love, care for one another and other socio-cultural etiquettes and virtues, such as peaceful co-existence and frank disposition to 'we-feelings.'⁷

In a typical customary regime, crime was generally condemned, and the commission or omission was occasionally perceived as an abomination, nonetheless, an affront on the gods and deities. Therefore, those who indulged in the commission of crime were perceived as outcast. Beyond the traditional setting remains the truism that there is no society that is crime free. There were many and varied crimes which typology included petty stealing, assault, sexual offences and the homicide cases of murder and manslaughter usually resulting from land disputes, communal clashes and inter-tribal wars. Many of the violent and non-violent crimes of today were unknown to this part of the world before the coming of the Europeans.⁸ Crimes were committed at that time through physical contacts (although some uninformed persons also recognised the commission of crimes through spiritual and diabolical means). For instance, paper crimes, internet and cyber-crimes, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism and the likes were unknown to the traditional system. Consequently, instruments of violence in primitive communities were usually crude and included bows and arrows, clubs, dane-guns, catapult and sticks compared to modern day sophisticated weaponry such as the use of English single and double barrel guns, pistols and assault rifles, which was introduced by the colonialists and ostensibly resulted in the promotion of violent crimes. Law enforcement and crime control were community based being carried out by the various age grades because policing was not institutionalised.

The profound peace enjoyed in the territory known today as Nigeria was truncated following the coming of the Europeans who had the intention of taking over and controlling the affairs in the area as well as dominating the domestic economy, politics and social regimes. The Europeans were resisted at the beginning by the natives, leading to many wars in which many crimes such as murder and abduction were committed and some of the powerful kings who were protagonists of the resistance were dethroned and sent into exile.⁹ These battles for conquest which eventually led to the subjugation of the

⁷ A K Anya., *Moral Rules, Effective Laws and the Nigerian Society*, Igbinedion University College of Law Journal (2009) 8 Pp. 68-83; ResearchGate.com/profile/anyakingsleyanya.

⁸ For instance, the violent crime of armed robbery became rampant only after the Nigerian civil war in the 1970s.

⁹ On 12/01/1897, a British force led by Britain's Acting Consul General James Philips that was heading to Benin was ambushed by an Edo force killing almost the entire force including its leader. On 12/02/1897, the British force re-assembled and entered Benin and in time captured Oba Ovonramwen of Benin and deported him to Calabar where he stayed until he died in exile in 1914. <Ovonramwen-Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org> Accessed on 12/02/2017 at 12:05 pm. Prior to this time, Oba Kosoko of Lagos (1845-1851) who was at loggerhead with the British on economic grounds bothering on slave trade was dethroned first to Badagry and later to Epe. <Kosoko-Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org >Accessed on 12/02/2017 at 12:30 pm. See generally, Jubo Jubogha who was sold into slavery at the age of 12 and who later became a business mogul and king popularly known as King Jaja of Opobo. He was able to gain the monopoly of the lucrative palm oil trade of his time against the Europeans. This led to the conspiracy that culminated to the declaration of Opobo as a British colony in the Berlin conference of 1884 and when Jaja refused to cede taxation to the British, he was invited for negotiations in 1887 and upon his arrival, he was arrested and tried in Accra Gold Coast and exiled to Saint Vincent in the West Indies. In 1891, Jaja was granted

natives through stronger military sophistication, tact and manoeuvres as well as subsequent establishment of colonial administrations increased crime by number and typology.

The consequent consolidation of the conquest and the fostering of interests ordinarily required the formation and establishment of institutionalised police force. Consequently, two major police forces were established-namely: the Northern Nigeria Police Force and Southern Nigeria Police Force existed in Nigeria, as at 1929. These two police forces coexisted with the Local Administration Police Force in Western Nigeria and the Native Authority Police Force in Northern Nigeria. However, just the way the amalgamation of 1914 brought the different parts of Nigeria together to form one entity called Nigeria, so were the two major Police Forces brought together and unified in 1930 to form a national police force, known as the “Nigeria Police Force” which coexisted with the two local police forces until 1966 when they were disbanded.¹⁰

Historically, the police force was established by the colonial masters (though apparently dominated by foreigners then) was essentially for the protection of the interest of the colonial masters and not the protection of the life and property of Nigerians. This was because their quests for conquest and occupation of lands required a force against the locals. Consequently, the police force was highly militarised and used for suppressing, repressing and oppressing the people who inhabited the area. The force was also used for duties that pitched it against the inhabitants. Such duties include the collection of taxes for the colonial administration and the arrest and detention of persons who dare confront the colonial masters either physically or in words.

2.1 The Transition of the Colonial Force to Indigenous Police Force

Nigeria gained her political independence from the United Kingdom on 1st October, 1960 but had its republican status three years afterwards. The political change no doubt affected the NPF through its transition from a police force predominantly dominated by foreigners to a full-fledged indigenous police force whose personnel are Nigerians. The transition hit the climax by the appointment of L. O Edet as the first indigenous Inspector-General of Police.

Contrary to the initial role of the segmented police forces at their inception under the colonial masters, the duties of the newly established NPF as provided by law ought to make it a ‘people-oriented and friendly police force’ devoid of the vices for which it was known. However, it is sad to note that the transition from the colonial police force to the “Indigenous or People Oriented Police Force” has been and continue to be bedevilled and incomplete in actions and duties. This is because some of the vices and running mentalities such as corruption, extortion, brutality, oppression and non-compliance with

permission to return to Opobo but died en route allegedly poisoned with a cup of tea. <Jaja-of-Opobo-Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org> Accessed on 12/02/2017 at 2:00 pm.

¹⁰ S. G. Ehindero., *Police and the Law in Nigeria* (Time Press, 1986), Pp. 1-3.

due process often-times associated with the military also characterised the colonial police force as well as the present personnel, who are Nigerians. This is the foundation of the hatred and mutual distrust between the members of public and the Nigeria Police Force.

3. The Expectation of Nigerians from a truly indigenous Nigeria Police Force

Having transited from the colonial to an indigenous police force, the fundamental question that comes to mind is: what are the expectations of Nigerians from the Nigeria Police Force? The paper shall consider this under two sub-heads, (i) the statutory responsibilities of the Nigeria Police Force, and (ii) the expected standard of performance and results.

I. Statutory Responsibilities of the Nigeria Police Force

By statute,¹¹ the Nigeria Police Force is to perform the following responsibilities tagged as the “primary functions of the Police Force.”¹²

- (a) Prevent and detect crimes, and protect the rights and freedom of every person in Nigeria as provided in the Constitution, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and any other law;
- (b) Maintain public safety, law and order;
- (c) Protect the lives and property of all persons in Nigeria;
- (d) Enforce all laws and regulations without any prejudice to the enabling Act of other security agencies;
- (e) Discharge such duties within and outside Nigeria as may be required of it under this Act or any other law;
- (f) Collaborate with other agencies to take any necessary actions and provide the required assistance or support to persons in distress, including victims of road accident, fire disasters, earthquakes and flood;
- (g) Facilitate the free passage and movement on highways, roads and streets open to the public;
- (h) Adopt community partnership in the discharge of its responsibilities under this Act or under any other law; and

¹¹ Nigeria Police Act, 2020.

¹² *Ibid.*, see section 4.

- (i) Vet and approve the registration of private detective schools and private investigative outfits.

In section 5 of the Act, some other duties to be performed by the NPF were specified as follows:

- a. The Police Force is responsible for promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of persons in Police custody as guaranteed by the Constitution.
- b. For the purpose of sub section 1, the Police Force shall collaborate with and maintain close working relationship with any government agency or relevant private initiative in the establishment of schemes or mechanisms offering legal services to accused persons, detainees and accused persons in Police custody in need of legal services to ensure that they have full access to justice as laid down under the relevant provisions of chapter IV of the Constitution.
- c. In addition to the provisions of sub sections (1) and (2), the Police Force is also charged with the responsibility for promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of all persons as guaranteed under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act and other international legal instruments on human rights to which Nigeria is a signatory.

In addition to the above enumerated duties of the Nigeria Police Force, the Act further gave powers to prosecute before any court in Nigeria to police officers who are legal practitioners in the following words:¹³

Subject to the provisions of sections 174 and 211 of the Constitution and section 106 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act which

¹³ S. 66 Police Act. The term "prosecution" in criminal litigation presupposes the institution and carrying on of legal proceedings against a person accused of having committed a crime. The legal proceeding is to be brought before a court of competent jurisdiction which will determine whether the accused person actually committed the offence in a fair trial so that appropriate or commensurate punishment can be meted on an accused person who is guilty and where it is otherwise, such accused person is discharged. The person who prosecutes is called a prosecutor and it is his responsibility to present the case for the prosecution through a carefully drafted charge or information against the accused person and by calling relevant witnesses on behalf of the State. Well known prosecutors in Nigeria are the Attorney-Generals of the Federation and the State as provided in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 in sections 174 and 211; and the Police as provided in section 66 of the Police Act, 2020. Private prosecutors may also carry out the duties of prosecution based on a fiat issued by an Attorney-General. Enactments can also make provision for prosecution under it as in section 61 of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission.

relates to the powers of the Attorney-General of the Federation and of a State to institute, take over and continue or discontinue criminal proceedings against any person before any court of law in Nigeria, a Police Officer who is a legal practitioner, may prosecute in person before any court whether or not the information or complaint is laid in his name.

II. Expected Standard of Performance and Results from the NPF

It is a known fact that an employer who assigns responsibilities to his employee deserves and requires nothing but the best from that employee in the discharge of the assigned duties. Consequently, Nigerians being the employers of the members of the Nigeria Police Force and having assigned them responsibilities through enactments expect the best from them in the performance of the functions. What Nigerians expect from the NPF is the security or safety of lives and properties which is the basic mission for which the police exist. This goal is expected to be pursued in a protective, proactive and friendly manner to the members of public; civil in its approach to tackling issues and problem solving; firm and unbiased in its discharge of duties; exemplary life style by obeying the laws which they are employed to maintain; respect for the rights and dignity of the citizens and incorruptible.

III. Gaps between Expectations of Nigerians and the Performance of the NPF

In Nigeria, there is serious hatred for the NPF and its personnel by members of the public. This has resulted not only to the un-cooperative attitude of members of public to the police and the over blowing of the inadequacies of police officers, but also, regrettable attacks on the personnel and property of the police. A clear evidence of this is the invent that resulted to the ENDSARS protests of October 2020 and the killing of many police officers, burning and wilful destruction of police stations, vehicles and other facilities.¹⁴ Being aware of the foregoing and the need to reverse the trend, IGP Mohammed A. Adamu while advocating community policing remarked with respect to the Special Constables, thus:¹⁵

...is not a full-fledged police officer but an auxiliary officer, though he has the powers of a police officer in his area where he is engaged by his community to help in crime control. He is a member of his community and must not be seen as a bully and autocratic or a force of occupation. This is what Nigerians have been up against with the present system.... The Special Constable should be owned by the

¹⁴ As the “tag” of the protests suggests, the protests were intended to make the relevant authorities to “end” or disband the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) unit of the Nigeria Police Force across the country which was alleged of extra judicial killings, extortion, human rights violations and many other misconducts.

¹⁵ He is the 20th indigenous Inspector-General of Police. He made the above statement while defining the status of the Special Constable with respect to the use of firearms as published in the Nigeria Police Force Community Policing Handbook, 2020 at p. 21.

community and work for the community not as a power of occupation as most other Security Agencies are being perceived by our people - a situation from the colonial period.¹⁶

It is thus, clear that the Nigeria Police Force is in acknowledgement of the fact that Nigerians are dissatisfied and have been up against the police system. The reasons for the dissatisfaction and hatred are but not limited to the followings:

a. Brutality and incivility.

Nigerians want a Police Force that is friendly and civil in its approach to law enforcement but often times, citizens are bullied, brutalised and subjected to torture and many other inhuman treatments as well as extra judicial killings of citizens in some cases. The above misconducts were alleged to be the remote causes of the October, 2020 “ENDSARS” protests which rocked many cities of Nigeria. The question is, have we learnt our lessons?

b. Corruption.

The Nigeria Police Force is one of the agencies statutorily charged with the responsibility of enforcing criminal laws including anti-corruption laws. Rather than be enforcers of these laws, many of the personnel of the force are seen openly and publicly collecting bribes in different places all over the country especially on the public highways and police stations and formations. This is certainly not what Nigerians bargained for when establishing the Nigeria Police Force and it is one of the sources of concern, hatred and dissatisfaction of members of the Nigerian public for the NPF.

c. Human Rights Violations.

This is another area where the police have often received attacks and condemnation from members of the public including medical practitioners, legal practitioners, human rights activists, non-governmental organisations, youth organisations and the civil society groups. The Nigeria Police Force has been alleged of many human right violations including unlawful arrests and arrests of proxies, torture and denial of basic necessities while in custody, denial of administrative bail and prolonged detention. The frequency of the occurrence of these abuses and violations and the fact that they occur in almost all police detention facilities especially when the youths are arrested for investigation have pitched the members of public against the NPF.

d. Inability to stem the tide of insecurity in Nigeria.

The primary duty of the police is the prevention of crime. This could be achieved through proactive measures like intelligence gathering and police visibility. Where the police fail in the prevention of crime, the next line of duty is the detection of crime. The police in Nigeria have not only failed to prevent many crimes including high and low profile cases of murder but have also failed to detect them because there are so many undetected and

¹⁶ Italics, mine for emphasis.

unresolved crimes in Nigeria. Besides, it is no news that the rate of crime in Nigeria is increasing daily. People no longer feel safe to travel for fear of armed robbery and kidnapping attacks. Sadly, people's fear is heightened because the attacks are not only on the highways and waterways but also in places of business and residential homes of citizens. There is insecurity in all parts of Nigeria and the inability of the police to protect life and property within Nigeria is a source of serious concern.

e. Breakers of the law.

Policemen are employed to fight crimes but unfortunately, many policemen have been involved in the commission of serious crimes such as murder, armed robbery and kidnapping. Although, the Nigeria Police Force has been bold in prosecuting some of them, many of these incidents have remained indelible in the minds of Nigerians. The social media has always and promptly brought all misconducts to the public domain. The members of public are unhappy seeing law enforcers becoming criminals and maintainers of the law becoming violators of the law. It must be remarked here that each time the news of any misconduct hits the public domain, it becomes a serious concern not only to members of the public but also to the law abiding policemen and the police high echelon.

f. Willing tools in the hands of dubious politicians and money bags.

Many politicians and wealthy Nigerians move about with police escorts and long convoys. The presence of these security personnel in their convoy is a motivator for them to misbehave to other members of public through assaults and other acts of public nuisance. They see themselves above the law, drive the common man out of the road with sirens and even drive against the traffic with impunity. Although, the members of the public who had such nasty experiences may not recognise or know the particular politician or rich man or the particular policeman who perpetrated the act, the fact that the security officer is wearing police uniform makes such aggression directed against the NPF.

4. Challenges and Prospects of the Nigeria Police Force

There are daunting challenges that has always confronted the NPF. Notwithstanding the challenges, the NPF has succeeded in no mean measure to achieve the objectives associated with the establishment.

I. Challenges of the NPF.

Although, it is not intended to defend the Nigeria Police Force in areas where there are obvious wrongs, trying to advance ways of effective policing in Nigeria must of necessity involve the examination of the possible causes of their ineffectiveness with a view to providing remedies. This is important because many of their shortcomings and problems are systemic and systemically connected to the socio-political system of Nigeria, while others are institutional-based and can be jointly tackled from the socio-political system as well as the police institutional perspectives in Nigeria, and hence to wit:

(i) Systemic challenges, and (ii) Institutional challenges.

1. Systemic Challenges

These are the causes of the poor performance of the Nigeria Police Force which cannot be attributed only to the police institution and which remedy lies in the entire Nigerian system. They are but not limited to:

a. Crime and Insecurity in Nigeria.

It would be recalled that the inability of the NPF to stem the tide of increase in crime has become one of the many causes of hatred for the NPF by the members of the public. This is essentially true because the Nigerian Constitution¹⁷ specified that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the government¹⁸ whereas, by statute,¹⁹ the protection of life and property within the geographical space of Nigeria is assigned to the Nigeria Police Force.²⁰ Apart from the internal aspect, security in the context of the constitution encompasses security in terms of being saved from external aggression. The two perspectives have been summarised and explained by a former US Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara:²¹

... any society that seeks to achieve adequate military security against the background of acute food shortage, population explosion, low level of productivity and per capita income, high rate of illiteracy, a fragile infrastructure / technological development, inadequate and inefficient public utilities and chronic unemployment, has a false sense of security. ... in a modernising society, security means development, security is not military force, though it may involve it, security is not traditional military activity though it encompasses it, security is not military hardware, though it may include it. Security is development, and without development there can be no security.

The above is a testimony to the fact that security has shifted from the army concept of guns and boats to include the provision of social amenities and infrastructure such as water, roads, housing and food for the benefit of the society as the absence of these social and infrastructural amenities portends security danger in the political, economic and social fronts. This is because insecurity results primarily from the way a society organises its economic and political system and the distribution of its economic and socio-political benefits as well as the relationships between the citizens and their rulers or leaders in the areas of economic and political structures. As noted by CP. Olayinka Balogun, fsi (Rtd.):

¹⁷ The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended

¹⁸ *Ibid.* section 14 (1) (b).

¹⁹ Nigeria Police Act, 2020

²⁰ *Ibid.* section 4.

²¹ Robert McNamara is an American business executive and was the 8th Secretary of Defence in the United States of America between 1961 and 1968 under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. His view on security was written by CP. Olayinka Balogun, fsi (Rtd.) in an article captioned: "Security Challenges in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Panacea from Islamic Perspective." See, *Crime World Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 4, April 2014, at p. 51.

... the government of the day may be held solely for security or insecurity in a given environment, that is, the absence of good governance and subsequently infrastructural development can perpetrate or cause multi-dimensional insecurity problems.²²

b. Effect of unemployment on increasing Population.

Nigeria is the acclaimed giant of Africa being the most populous country in the continent. The population census of 2006 puts Nigeria's population at 140,431,790 while the United Nations estimated the population of Nigeria at 162,471,000 as at July, 2011. No doubt, the current population of Nigeria in 2023 may be more than 200 million.

It could be recalled that the Military Administration of General Ibrahim Babangida-1988, came up with a National Policy on Population for Development, Unity, Progress and Self-Reliance. The major objective of the policy was the reduction of the population growth rate through voluntary fertility regulations. Specific steps for the actualisation of the policy were: (i) encouragement of male youths to marry not earlier than 25 years while females youths not earlier than 18 years of age; and (ii) reduction of the number of children a woman is likely to have in her lifetime to 4.

These suggestions were neither decreed into law nor adhered to with the resultant demographic explosion in Nigeria unlike India and China who have successfully controlled their birth rates and reduced their populations through law. At the moment, unemployment rate is high and Nigeria has become the largest abode of unemployed youths in Africa. There is pressure on the land and infrastructure whereas there is no concerted effort at controlling the population growth rate. This has increased the number of herdsmen and peasant crop farmers who are all struggling for space, land and means of livelihood with the attendant clash of interests. The consequence is increase in crime and criminality.

c. Breakdown of traditional institutions.

The Nigerian traditional / customary system held morals in high esteem. Consequently, there was adequate parental care and control for children. Marriages were more secured through tolerance and single parenthood was discouraged. Children were brought up and youths were well guided in atmosphere relatively free from acute moral decadence. Today, the so called "civilisation and gender equality" have corrupted our people that single parenthoods are flourishing here and there. Single parents have no time to adequately care and guide their children. The responsibility of the upbringing of their children is left in the hands of their house maids and peer groups. The unfortunate result is increase in crime and criminality.

d. High inequality among the citizens and alarming poverty.

²² CP. Olayinka Balogun, fsi (Rtd.), is a lawyer, political scientist, a security expert and a retired Commissioner of Police. See generally, "Security Challenges in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Panacea from Islamic Perspective," in the *Crime World Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 4, April 2014, Pp. 51, 52

Nigeria is a capitalist state and one of the inherent characteristics of capitalism is inequality and maximisation of profit. Inequality is high and glaringly seen in Nigeria. There are people who cannot afford a meal per day whereas there are others who have reserves for their yet unborn grandchildren. The result of such a high pitched inequality where there is too much affluence in some quarters whereas in other quarters, there is alarming poverty is conflict and insecurity.

e. Ostentatious living and abuse of social relationships.

As a consequence of the inequality in the society, some persons embrace ostentatious and flamboyant living in the face of want in some quarters. Those who are not favoured under the economic situation are likely to fight the system that produced such inequality and this may be through the commission of crimes.

f. Desertification of Northern Nigeria.

The Sahara desert is pacing down south with the attendant consequence of desertification of the usual swathes arable land, causing rivers, lakes and streams to dry up. The olden day's grasslands in the North have become sites for sand dunes and other arid geographical physical features. This has caused many herdsmen to migrate together with their livestock from the north to the southern part of Nigeria in search of grass, land and space. The consequence is herders / farmers crises in Nigeria with the attendant crimes and insecurity.

g. Lack of electricity to power production.

It should be noted that one of the most potent tools in checking unemployment and by extension crime can be reduced through the establishment of industries where people can be gainfully employed. The machines and equipment of industries are powered by electricity and in Nigeria the power sector is comatose for many years. Many companies and industries in the textile, rubber and distribution sectors have folded up while many others have relocated to neighbouring countries like Ghana and Republic of Benin where electricity supply is stable. There is virtually no meaningful production going on in Nigeria at the moment. Persons hitherto employed in those companies and industries have been laid off to join the large army of the unemployed with the inevitable consequence of increase in crime.

h. Acrimonious politics.

There is the politics of hatred in Nigeria. Politicians want to grab power at all cost, even if it means doing something that is criminal. This is typified by the concept of "do or die affair politics." Political thugs are recruited, trained and armed by dishonest and self-centred politicians for the purposes of intimidating political opponents and their followers and the perpetration of other electoral offences. After the elections, the promises made to the political thugs are not kept and the arms and ammunition given to them by the political god-fathers are not mopped up. The result is that such political thugs take to the commission of crimes.

i. Consumption of drugs and alcohol.

Many of the youths involved in the commission of crimes are also involved in the excessive consumption of both drugs and alcohol. This provides them with the "Dutch

courage” through which they can do or attempt to do what they could not have done or attempted to do in their clear and normal sense. Drugs like cocaine, heroin, Indian hemp, tramadol and codeine as well as illicit gins are still consumed in large quantity in Nigeria despite the law and ban placed on them.

j. High illiteracy.

Many youths are illiterates especially those from poor homes which are more in Nigeria than those from rich homes. A combination of factors like illiteracy, poverty and homelessness renders many youths vulnerable to the commission of crimes. For instance, illiterate youths like the *Almajiris*, *Alayes*, *Omonile* and Area Boys can easily be mobilised with “peanuts” or a little consideration to commit violence.

k. Impunity by political and public officials.

There seems to be a culture of impunity in the Nigerian society. The impunity has always been at the peak during electioneering campaigns and on the days of elections. Opponents and their followers are molested and many property destroyed by the perpetrators of impunity who are always government and party officials. Since the orchestrators of impunity are the powers that be in Nigeria, no significant effort has been made to abate it.

2. Institutional Challenges.

Many of the institutional problems causing low performances in the Nigeria Police Force are linked with systemic causes of inefficiency. This is because the Nigeria Police Force is not a statutory income generating agency and as such the funds for its effective operation must be provided by the government. The requirement of funding from the government and the executive has led to manipulation and manoeuvring of the authority of the NPF.²³

l. Shortage of manpower.

The present workforce of the police is less than satisfactory and cannot cope with the present population of Nigeria and its security challenges. The strength of the Nigeria Police Force is put at 258,200 officers and men²⁴ as at year 2019 and there were manpower wastages within the year.²⁵ As remarked by the Nigeria Police Force, “although unrealistic, the police population ratio based on the 2006 census figure was 1:542” as against the United Nations recommended ratio of 1:400.²⁶ The strength and

²³ The need for financial autonomy of the NPF cannot be over-emphasized. The autonomy of the NPF must be reflected and effected in the Constitution of the FRN 1999.

²⁴ 2019 Annual Report of the Nigeria Police, Published by the Department of Research and Planning, Force Headquarters, Abuja, p. 32.

²⁵ 'Manpower wastages' is a concept used to describe all those who exited the force through death, retirement, dismissal, desertion etc.

²⁶ 2019 Annual Report of the Nigeria Police Force, Published by the Department of Research and Planning, Force Headquarters, Abuja, p. 32.

ratio may further deplete, if concerted efforts are not sustained to increase the strength of the NPF. Shortage of manpower is one of the causes of the inability of the police to promptly and effectively respond to distress calls and the workforce is seriously overstretched.

m. Lack of / inadequate logistics.

Materials to work with are not and where available are inadequate. Many Police Stations have no vehicles to respond to distress calls and where available are rickety and cannot be used effectively to pursue fast moving vehicles in the hands of criminals. There are no institutional arrangements for fuelling of the vehicle being used for the performance of their statutory duties and when the vehicles develop mechanical faults, there are no official arrangements for effecting repairs on such vehicles. Weapons are inadequate and not as sophisticated as those in the hands of criminals. As noted in a report by the Economic Intelligence Unit which rated Nigeria as the riskiest country in the world for business:²⁷

Nigeria is an insecure environment for commercial operations. Security risk arises at three levels. The first comes from the rising violent crimes, (from) simple armed robbery (to) carjacking and violent attacks... Second, companies can be subjected to direct attack or blackmail... facilities can be vandalised and staff kidnapped. Third, incidences of inter-communal violence have risen... Nigeria's ill-equipped police force... has been ineffective in stemming the crime wave.

This is worrisome because where equipment is not available, effective performance cannot be expected and where a parent sends his child to a supermarket to get some items without giving him the money to purchase the items, such a parent has only sent the child to go and steal such items.

n. Unmotivated workforce.

Many of the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force are not promoted as and when due. Some are on the same rank for eight or nine years without any disciplinary problem whereas their counterparts in other services are promoted within three or four years. Transfers are done indiscriminately to favour some and punish others and allowances for such transfers and other special duties are not paid.

o. Barracks and Housing.

The performance of a workforce is directly affected by the conditions of service which include housing in an organisation. Barracks and housing accommodation for policemen are grossly inadequate. Many of the available blocks of residence are dilapidated and rendered uninhabitable as a result of either age or lack of maintenance.

p. Training and Retraining.

²⁷ Economic Intelligence Unit (2005) Riskwire, 1 Feb., 2005, <http://riskwire.eiu.com>, as quoted in A. B. Dambazau, *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, (Spectrum Books Limited, 2012 at page 153.

A trained workforce is an asset to any organisation just the way an untrained workforce constitutes a liability to the organisation. Many of the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force have not been re-trained after their basic training which in some cases is short training programmes otherwise called “crash programmes”. Besides, where training is to be done, selection is done without procedure as some of the personnel are punitively sent for such training after which the personnel are deployed to perform duties that are not related to the knowledge acquired. Furthermore, allowances meant for such trainings are not paid rather it is the participants that spend out of their savings for feeding and other costs of training.

q. Welfare of Policemen.

Courage is required for law enforcement as law enforcement agents are enemies to and are constantly at war with criminals. The result of this is that, often times in the course of displaying courage and gallantry, some policemen are injured or killed. It is regrettable to state here that there is no adequate arrangement put in place for immediate care of injured personnel and the families of policemen who died in the line of duty. The individual policeman is allowed to bear the cost of treatment of the injury he sustained in active service to the nation and where he dies in the process, the family and friends bear the immediate cost of burial. Why do you think that a policeman will not run away when the assignment given to him is likely to give him temporary or permanent injury or even take his life? Thus, compensation is good for a police force or security agency that is expected to perform creditably well and above board.

II. Prospects on Effective Policing in Nigeria

Notwithstanding the myriads of challenges confronting the Nigeria police, there are positive aspects associated with the growth and efficiency of the NPF. The NPF has been in the forefront in maintaining peace and security in Nigeria. Beyond this, the NPF has always been rated very high in peace keeping operations of the United Nations.

Furthermore, the recruitment and enlistment of officers and men to the NPF has steadily been attracting literate persons, not only into the regular force but in specialist units.²⁸

Even the structural organisation of the NPF has been harmonised to reflect professionalism. The NPF is presently enjoying an institutional and regulatory agency of the Police Service Commission.²⁹

5. Conclusion

Although the systemic decay in Nigeria and the institutional challenges confronting the Nigeria Police Force are enormous, a government with political will can turn the situation around in a short time. The personnel of the Nigeria Police Force must accept the fact that their ability to perform depends on the approval of their actions by the members of public. Therefore, their model of community policing must accord priority to and be built

²⁸ Such as Medical units, electrical and electronics, telecommunications, and other support services.

²⁹ [Hereafter, The PSC]

on three principles namely, community partnership, readiness to solve problems affecting members of the public and be ready to transform the police organisation through exemplary character. We are optimistic that if the identified challenges are addressed and the recommendations in this article are implemented, there will be an effective policing system in Nigeria.