

## THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE IN CRIME PREVENTION AND DETECTION: AN INQUISITION OF CHALLENGES

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### Abstract

Crime is one of the major intractable problems worldwide. Peaceful coexistence and development in any society hinges on the extent to which crime is effectively prevented and detected. In contemporary times, advance in technology has opened a flood gate of new dimensions in criminality with its attendant sophistication. The Nigeria Police Force statutorily saddled with crime prevention and detection is bedeviled with myriad of challenges. Consequently, many crimes are rarely averted and detected. This paper adopted the empirical research methodology to investigate the inherent challenges. It was found that centralisation of the Nigeria Police Force among other statutory hurdles, lack of state of the art equipment and deliberate training in the modern art of crime prevention and detection are hurdles. It is recommended that the Constitution should be amended to provide for state police. Furthermore, a deliberate effort should be made to specifically engage, train and retrain officers in modern skills apposite to crime prevention and detection and make available state of the art equipment and facilities in this regard.

**Keywords:** Nigeria Police Force, Crime, Prevention, Detection, Challenges

### 1 Introduction

Crime has been a problem to society since the formal regulation of human conduct. No society has completely eradicated crime. The rate differs across different times and countries.<sup>1</sup> Prevention and detection of crime are key obligations of the government of any country as part of her duty to protect the human rights of all who have become or may become the victim of crime.<sup>2</sup> Police agencies the world over are saddled primarily with the responsibilities of preventing and detecting crimes amongst others.<sup>3</sup> In Nigeria, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN)<sup>4</sup> provides for a single police force for the entire country with duties and powers conferred on her by other laws. As a result, the Police Act (PA)<sup>5</sup> specifies the duties of the police to include crime prevention and detection. In order to effectively prosecute these assignments, the force is given wide

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<sup>1</sup> MC Ashton, 'Crime Rate' <[www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)...> accessed 25 September 2019.

<sup>2</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross, 'International Rules and Standards for Policing' <<https://www.icrc.org/en/assets/files/0809>> accessed 5 February 2019.

<sup>3</sup> K Blackburn, KC Neanidis and Others, 'A Theory of Organised Crime, Corruption and Economic Growth' <[link.springer.com/article/10.007](https://link.springer.com/article/10.007)...> accessed 25 September 2019.

<sup>4</sup> CFRN 1999 (as amended) s 214.

<sup>5</sup> PA s 4.

powers in various legislation such as power to arrest, search detain, investigate, interpose, prosecute and so on.<sup>6</sup>

With the advent of democracy in 1999, crime rate in Nigeria increased in a geometric progression and sophistication.<sup>7</sup> Incidences of armed robbery and assassination carried out with perfection are on the increase. Other crimes that are prevalent include ransom-driven kidnapping, political violence, fraud, money laundering, human trafficking, drug trafficking, ethnic violence,<sup>8</sup> herders/farmer clashes and terrorism<sup>9</sup> among others. Consequently, the Nigeria Police Force considered some reforms and refinement of operational strategies including the introduction of community policing<sup>10</sup> and various squads such as anti-robbery anti-kidnapping<sup>11</sup> and among others to ensure effective crime prevention and detection.

Despite the powers and strategies put in place to ensure effectiveness in crime prevention and detection, many crimes go unabated and undetected. It is against this substratum that this paper embarked on empirical research to ascertain the various challenges that bedevil the Nigeria Police Force in the prosecution of her duties. The paper is divided into four parts. The first part introduces the work, the second part captures the methodological framework used. Part three present, analysis and discusses the data obtained. Part four encapsulates the discussion of the results, findings, recommendations and conclusion.

## 2 Methodology Framework

In order to undertake a proper discourse of the various challenges to the prevention and detection of crime by the Nigeria Police Force, a survey was employed using multi stage sampling technique<sup>12</sup> utilizing the division of Nigeria into six geo-political zones. The zones are North-West, North-East, North-Central, South-West, South-East and South-

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<sup>6</sup> These powers are provided in various enactments such as Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015 (ACJA), Criminal Procedure Act (CPA), Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), Police Act (PA) etc.

<sup>7</sup> EC Chinwokwu, 'Trend and Patterns of Violent Crimes in Nigeria: Analysis of the Boko Haram Terrorist Outrage' (2014) *Journal of Culture, Society and Development* <[www.liste.orh/journals/index.php/JESD/...9399](http://www.liste.orh/journals/index.php/JESD/...9399)> accessed 4 August 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> N Adegoke, 'The Nigeria Police and the Challenges of Security in Nigeria' (2014) 3(6) *Review of Public Administration and Management* <[www.anabianjanjbm.com.RPAMindex.php](http://www.anabianjanjbm.com.RPAMindex.php)> accessed 3 October 2016.

<sup>10</sup> BC Okoro, *The Police, Law and Your Rights* (Princeton Publishing Company, 2013) 219.

<sup>11</sup> Human Rights Watch, 'Rest in Peace: Public Torture and Death in Custody in Nigeria' (2005) <<https://www.hr/report/2009/nigeria.0715pdf>> accessed 5 October 2018.

<sup>12</sup> M Biereenu-Nnabugwu, *Methodology of Political Inquiry* (Quintagon Publishers 2006) 192. Multi Stage Sampling involves sampling in successive stages. It is very useful when sample is likely to be drawn on geographical basis.

South. One state<sup>13</sup> was randomly selected from each of the six geo-political zones are follows:

1. North-West - Kaduna
2. North-East - Adamawa
3. North-Central - Benue
4. South-West - Lagos
5. South-East - Enugu
6. South-South - Rivers

To obtain the required information on the subject matter of the research, three separate questionnaires were designed and administered to legal practitioners, police officers and the general public (persons other than the categories stated). Data was generated and analysed using Likert<sup>14</sup> Five Point Rating Scale. The scale was employed in this research to determine the level to which respondents accepted or rejected each factor presented in the questionnaires as constituting a challenge. The scores are rated as follows:

- |                   |   |          |
|-------------------|---|----------|
| Strongly Agree    | - | 5 Points |
| Agree             | - | 4 Points |
| Undecided         | - | 3 Points |
| Disagree          | - | 2 Points |
| Strongly Disagree | - | 1 Points |

In rating the responses to the challenges of crime prevention and detection by the Nigeria Police, descriptive statistics of the mean was used. The numbers of options are five (1-5). It is divided by the sum total of the point (15). The formula is:

$$\frac{1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5}{5} = \frac{5}{15} = 3.0$$

3.0 is the critical mean. Any item on the questionnaires that has a mean value below the critical value of 3.0 is considered rejected by the respondents.

The population for this study consist the number of people in the six (6) states selected (Adamawa, Benue, Enugu, Kaduna, Lagos and Rivers) with a total population of 30,910,139 people. The population of each of these states is presented below:

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<sup>13</sup> The reason for the selection is that the researcher has no enough funds to carry out research in all the states within a particular geopolitical zone.

<sup>14</sup> N Asika, *Research Methodology in the Behavioural Sciences* (Longman Nigeria Plc 2006) 62. Likert Rating Scale Measures the intensity or degree of agreement by the respondents to a statement that describes a situation, phenomenon, item or treatment. The commonest likert scale has 5 points.

	States	Population
	Adamawa	3,168,101
	Benue	4,219,244
	Enugu	3,257,298
	Kaduna	6,066,562
	Lagos	9,013,534
	Rivers	5,185,400
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30,910,139</b>

**Source:** Nigerian Finder, 'Population of Nigeria by States' (2019 Estimate) <<http://nigerianfinder.com>> accessed 3 July 2019.

The sample size for this study was determined using Taro Yamane's Formula<sup>15</sup> for sample size determination as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where,

n = Sample Size  
e = Level of Significance  
N = Population Size  
l = Constant

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} = \frac{30,910,139}{1+30,910,139(0.05)^2} = \frac{30,910,139}{1+(30,910,139 \times 0.0025)}$$

$$= 399.994$$

$$\approx 400$$

In order to arrive at the number of respondents from each state, Bowley's Formula<sup>16</sup> was used to determine this as follows:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$$

Where,

nh = Number of respondents in a given state  
n = The sample size  
Nh = The population of the respective states  
N = The total population

$$\text{Adamawa State} = \frac{400 \times 3,168,101}{30,910,139} = 41$$

$$\text{Benue State} = \frac{400 \times 4,219,244}{30,910,139} = 55$$

$$\text{Enugu State} = \frac{400 \times 3,257,298}{30,910,139} = 42$$

<sup>15</sup> T Yamane, *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis* (Harper and Row Publishers 1984) 288.

<sup>16</sup> FA Ayatse, 'Impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Corporate Performance' In Yangien Ornguga, 'An Appraisal of Violation of Civil and Political Rights in Nigeria, 2003-2014' (2016) Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted for the Award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Faculty of Law, Benue State University, Makurdi, 117.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Kaduna State} &= \frac{400 \times 6,066,562}{30,910,139} = 78 \\ \text{Lagos State} &= \frac{400 \times 9,013,534}{30,910,139} = 117 \\ \text{Rivers State} &= \frac{400 \times 5,185,400}{30,910,139} = 67 \end{aligned}$$

This gives a total sample of 400.

	State	Population	Sample size
	Adamawa	3,168,101	41
	Benue	4,219,244	55
	Enugu	3,257,298	42
	Kaduna	6,066,562	78
	Lagos	9,013,534	117
	Rivers	5,185,400	67
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30,910,139</b>	<b>400</b>

### 3 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Numbers of questionnaires distributed were 400 in total. The number returned were as follows: The general public – 133, Police Officers – 125 and Legal Practitioners - 131 giving a total of returned questionnaires as 389 which is 97.25% of the number distributed. The missing questionnaires were as a result of misplacement by the respondents or respondents could not be contacted at the time of collection. The mean of each item was computed to determine on which side the respondents fall.

Figure 1 is a bar chart showing the response per state depending on the number of questionnaires distributed. The highest being Lagos State with 29.3% followed by Kaduna state with 19.5%. Rivers State 16.5%, Benue State 13.5% while Adamawa and Enugu have 10.5% return each.

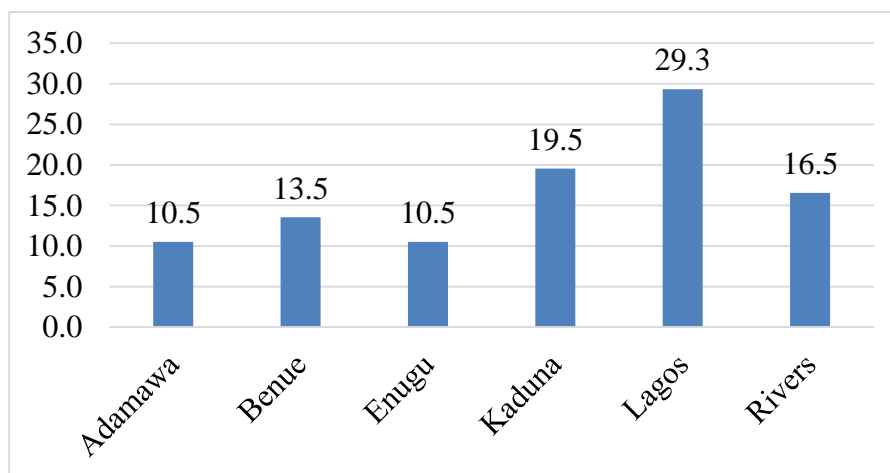


Figure 1: Percentage Response from the States

The following research questions guided the construction of the questions in the questionnaire.

1. How effective are the laws regulating the Nigeria Police Force in the prevention and detection of crime?
2. How effective is the Nigeria Police Force in crime prevention and detection?
3. What are the factors militating against effective and efficient crime prevention and detection?

**Research Question 1:**

How effective are the laws regulating the Nigerian Police Force in the prevention and detection of crime?

**Table 1: The effectiveness of the laws regulating the Nigeria Police Force in the prevention and detection of crime.**

S/ N	Item Description	S D	D	U	A	S A	N	Mea n	SD
1	Force Order 237 which authorises police officers to shoot to disperse rioters in order to prevent the commission of crime leads to human right abuses.	0	1 2	3	3 7	79	13 1	4.40	.917
2	The power of arrest conferred on the police in various enactments without a monitoring and accountability machinery for her actions is too wide.	3	6	0	0	79	13 1	4.44	.896
3	Police officers who are not formally trained as legal practitioners do not effectively conduct criminal prosecution.	8	7	8	2 8	80	13 1	4.26	1.174
4	Centralization of the police force with its attendant bureaucratic bottleneck affects crime prevention and detection.	4	1 2	4	4 5	66	13 1	4.20	1.070
<b>Total</b>								<b>4.32</b>	<b>1.01</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2019**

Table 1 gives an item by item analysis of how the legal practitioners responded to the effectiveness of the laws regulating the Nigeria Police Force in the prevention and detection of crime. Item 1 asserts that ‘Force Order 237 which authorises police officers to shoot to disperse rioters in order to prevent the commission of crime leads to human right abuses’. Majority of the respondents agreed with this assertion. Looking at the mean, which is 4.40, hence above the critical mean of 3.0, it means that respondents have agreed with this assertion.

Item 2 which assert that “the power of arrest conferred on the police in various enactments without a monitoring and accountability machinery for her actions is too wide,” has attracted majority of the respondents in favour of the assertion, with a mean of 4.44 which is above the critical mean of 3.0. This means that respondents agreed with the assertion.

Item 3 which states that ‘Police officers who are not formally trained as legal practitioners do not effectively conduct criminal prosecution’ has also attracted majority of respondents with mean of 4.26 which is above the critical mean of 3.0 showing that respondents agreed with this assertion. Item 4 with the assertion that ‘Centralization of the police force with its attendant bureaucratic bottleneck affects crime prevention and detection’ has a mean of 4.20 above the mean of 3.0. This means that respondents are in favour of this assertion.

Overall, a mean of 4.32 is obtained from the respondents. This is an indication that the laws regulating the Nigeria Police Force in the prevention and detection of crime are not effective.

### Research Question 2:

How effective is the Nigeria Police Force in crime prevention and detection?

**Table 2: Effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force in crime prevention and detection**

S/ N	Item Description	S D	D	U	A	S A	N	Mean	SD
1	Police officers do not respond swiftly to distress calls.	7	7	0	5 1	68	13 3	4.25	1.06 9
2	Police officers do not keep the identity of their informants in confidence.	2	1 3	2 8	3 0	60	13 3	4.00	1.09 4
3	Officers do not act upon criminal complaints without monetary demands from complainants.	8	1 4	0	2 4	87	13 3	4.26	1.24 9
4	Officers do not carry out investigation of crime to logical conclusion.	4	1 7	5	4 2	65	13 3	4.11	1.14 3
5	Police officers engage in extortion, cruelty and gross abuse of human rights.	1	4	7	3 1	90	13 3	4.54	.793

6	Lack of confidence in police officers hamper community involvement in assisting the police to effectively prevent and detect crime.	1	0	4	4	85	13	4.59	.629
7	Road block is not effective in preventing and detecting crime.	11	1	1	3	54	13	3.80	1.31
	<b>Total</b>							<b>4.22</b>	<b>1.04</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2019**

Table 2 gives an item by item analysis of how the general public responded to the effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force in crime prevention and detection. Item 1 posits that ‘Police officers do not respond swiftly to distress calls.’ Majority of the respondents agreed with this assertion with a mean of 4.25 which is above the critical mean of 3.0. It means that respondents have agreed with this assertion.

Item 2 which asserts that ‘Police officers do not keep the identity of their informants in confidence’, has attracted majority of the respondents in favour of the assertion, with a mean of 4.00 which is above the critical mean of 3.0. This means that respondents agreed with the assertion that the Police officers do not keep the identity of their informants in confidence.

Item 3 which states that ‘officers do not act upon criminal complaints without monetary demands from complainants’ has also attracted majority of respondents with mean of 4.26 which is above the critical mean of 3.0. It indicates that respondents agreed with this assertion. Item 4 with the assertion that ‘officers do not carry out investigation of crime to logical conclusion’ has a mean of 4.20 above the mean of 3.0. This means that respondents are in favour of this assertion.

Item 5 with the assertion that, ‘police officers engage in extortion, cruelty and gross abuse of human rights’ has also attracted majority of the respondents with a mean of 4.54 above the mean of 3.0. This means that respondents accepted that police officers engage in extortion, cruelty and gross abuse of human rights.

Item 6 which assert that ‘lack of confidence in police officers hamper community involvement in assisting the police to effectively prevent and detect crime.’ This has also attracted majority of the respondents with mean of 4.59 above the mean of 3.0. Evidents respondents have aligned with this position in the assertion.

Item 7 with the assertion that 'road block is not effective in preventing and detecting crime' has majority of the respondents with mean of 3.80 above the mean of 3.0. This means that respondents have agreed with this.

Overall, a mean of 4.22 is procured from the respondents. This is an indication that the Nigeria Police Force is not effective in crime prevention and detention.

### Research Question 3:

What are the factors militating against effective and efficient crime prevention and detection?

**Table 3: Factors militating against effective and efficient crime prevention and detection.**

S/N	Item Description	S	D	U	A	SA	N	Mean	SD
1	The Nigeria Police Force lacks Geographical Information Software, Crimestat and other modern technology incidental to crime prevention and detection.	1	3	0	81	40	125	4.25	.656
2	The Nigeria Police lacks basic skills and equipment for forensic investigation.	14	35	1	63	12	125	3.19	1.262
3	The extant Police training curriculum does not equip the police with skills for obtaining electronic evidence and forensic investigation.	0	27	34	52	12	125	3.39	.932
4	The force lacks adequate vehicles and other facilities incidentals to crime prevention and detection.	12	16	0	52	45	125	3.82	1.310
5	Psychiatric test is not a mandatory requirement during recruitment exercise into the police force.	35	32	30	7	21	125	2.58	1.393

6	Inadequate funding is a major obstacle to crime prevention and detection.	1 3	30	1 1	3 8	33	12 5	3.38	1.37 2
7	The creation of state police will facilitate prevention and detection of crime.	3 5	44	1	3 9	6	12 5	2.50	1.31 8
<b>Total</b>								<b>3.30</b>	<b>1.18</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2019**

Table 3 is an item by item analysis of how police officers responded to the factors militating against the effective and efficient crime prevention and detection. Looking at item 1 which says “the Nigeria Police Force lacks geographical information software, crime stat and other modern technology incidental to crime prevention and detection.” Majority of the respondents accepted this assertion. The item has a mean of 4.25 which is higher than the accepted mean of 3.0.

Item 2 which states that “the Nigeria Police lacks basic skills and equipment for forensic investigation” has a mean of 3.19 hence, is above the critical mean of 3.0. Item 3 which asserts, that “the extant police training curriculum does not equip the police with skills for obtaining electronic evidence and forensic investigation”, has a mean of 3.39 with majority of respondents agreeing with it.

Item 4 asserts that “The force lacks adequate vehicles and other facilities incidentals to crime prevention and detection”. This item has mean of 3.82 which is above the acceptable mean of 3.0 indicating that respondents agreed with the assertion.

Item 6 states, “inadequate funding is a major obstacle to crime prevention and detection,” has a mean of 3.38 with majority of respondent agreeing with the assertion.

However, items 5 and 7 have means less than 3.0 which means that, respondents are not in agreement with these items. Item 5 which assert that, “psychiatric test is not a mandatory requirement during recruitment exercise into the police force”, has a mean of 2.58 while item 7 which assert that, “the creation of state police will facilitate prevention and detection of crime” has a mean of 2.50.

A review of the totality of the responses from this cluster, the overall mean is 3.30 which is above the acceptable mean of 3.0. This indicates that the factors listed in this cluster are the factors militating against the effective and efficient crime prevention and detection.

## 4 Discussion of Results

It must be noted that despite the various powers given the police to facilitate her duties of preventing and detecting crime, it is obvious from the data presented and analysed in this work that there exist numerous challenges to performing these task. Some of the challenges are discussed below;

### 4.1 Statutory Hurdles

Various statutory hurdles bedevil the Nigeria Police Force in the performance of her functions of crime prevention and detection. In particular, the wide power of arrest, Force Order 237 which authorises shooting with gun to disperse rioters and the centralisation of the force constitute major hurdles. Table 1 of the field work which addresses the effectiveness of laws regulating crime prevention and detection has a total mean of 4.40 hence giving credence to this assertion.

#### 4.1.1 Power of Arrest

The power of arrest<sup>17</sup> has been abused variously. The Robbery and Firearms Act<sup>18</sup> authorises police officers to arrest without warrant any person reasonably suspected of having committed or about to commit robbery. In effecting arrest or preventing the escape of a suspect, the arresting officer is permitted to use firearms as may be reasonably necessary. Unfortunately, some officers of the Nigeria Police harped on this provision and used their gun rashly on innocent and defenceless citizens.<sup>19</sup> In *Agbo v The State*<sup>20</sup>, Mukhtar JSC decried rash use of gun by police officers at the slightest provocation without being mindful of the consequences. Further, Bulkachuwa JSC in *Oyakhere v The State*<sup>21</sup> held that it is about time something is done to curtail the excesses of trigger happy policemen and that police authorities should ensure that constant checks including examination by psychiatrists be carried out on gun carrying officers.

Moreover, in some cases regardless of the nature of the alleged offence and the disposition of a suspect, some police officers unleash unwarranted violence in the process of arrest. Some suspects are beaten, kicked with boots, shot on the limbs and other forms of inhuman treatment.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> CFRN s35(1), ACJA s3, 18, PA 24, CPA s10, CPC s26 and Robbery and Firearms (Special Provision) Act Cap R11 LFN 2004 s8.

<sup>18</sup> Robbery and Firearms (Special Provision) Act s8.

<sup>19</sup> *Oyakhere v State* (2006) All FWLR (pt. 305) 105 CA; *Agbo v State* (2000) All FWLR (pt. 309) 1380 SC.

<sup>20</sup> *Agbo*, Ibid p 1418 para F-A.

<sup>21</sup> *Oyakhere*, Ibid p 720 para F-H.

<sup>22</sup> Okoro (n10) 40.

#### **4.1.2 Police Use of Firearm: Force Order 237**

Force Order 237<sup>23</sup> provides amongst others that a police officer may use firearms where necessary to disperse rioters, or prevent them from committing serious offences against life and property or where suspects take to flight to avoid arrest if the officer cannot effect arrest by any other means. In view of this permissive order, police officers have gruesomely shot many unsuspected persons to death. An instance of the use of firearm in dispersing a crowd in Lagos led to the death of unsuspected Kolade Johnson on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2019.<sup>24</sup> Obviously, the Order is inconsistent with democratic policing, human rights standard and international standard for police use of force and firearms.<sup>25</sup> Many human rights abuses have churned out from application of this order which rather increases crime.

In response to public outcry, the order was reviewed. It provides that officers are permitted to use firearms when necessary to disperse violent assembly in the event that there is an imminent threat of death or serious injury.<sup>26</sup> It is submitted that the reviewed order does not promote democratic policing as other innocent persons can be shot to death in the process. Non-lethal weapons are capable to demobilising a violent assembly.

#### **4.1.3 Centralisation of the Force**

The challenge of centralisation of the police has been a front burner issue. The Constitution provides for a single police force and gives the President control over the Nigeria Police Force.<sup>27</sup> Further, it provides that the directives of the Governor of a State to the Commissioner of Police with regards to security may be referred to the President for his directive.<sup>28</sup> First of all, the implication of this bureaucratic chain is that security matters which require urgency would escalate as State Governors under this arrangement are mere ceremonial chief security officers. Secondly, the role of the Federal Government in giving directives with regard to security matters that bother on states may be tainted with political consideration. A classical example of the usage of presidential power to undermine the directive of a State Governor with respect to a security challenge is the case of Benue state. The President was not proactive in responding to the herders and farmers clashes in January 2018 which led to the loss of many lives and property.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Force Order 237, 'Rules for Guidance in the Use of Firearms by the Police'. Paragraphs 3(c) and (d) <[policemanrightsresources.org/wp...](http://policemanrightsresources.org/wp...)> accessed 10 April 2019.

<sup>24</sup> S Tomorade, 'Police Officer Responsible for Kolade Johnson's Death' <<https://www.pulseng/...>> accessed 10 April 2019.

<sup>25</sup> United Nations Officer on Drugs and Crime, 'Modernising the Nigeria Police Force' <<https://www.unodc.org/nigeriaen/...>> accessed 10 April 2019.

<sup>26</sup> NPF, Reviewed Force Order 237: Manual for Guidance on the Use of Firearms s21.1(c) <[www.policinglaw.info/assets](http://www.policinglaw.info/assets)> accessed 15 January 2021.

<sup>27</sup> CFRN ss214(1) and 215(3).

<sup>28</sup> CFRN s215(4) and PA s10(1).

<sup>29</sup> I Baufewu, 'President Ignored Warnings for Benue Killings' <<https://punch.com>> accessed 5 January 2019.

United States of America and Australia like Nigeria are countries with federal political structure. Yet, they operate both federal and state police system.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, unitary police architecture does not support community policing.<sup>31</sup> Community policing involves partnership between the police and individuals in a given community in order to solve problem of crime.<sup>32</sup> To develop community partnership, police must develop positive relationship with the community. Crime prevention and control remains the central priorities. As links between police and the community are strengthened overtime, the ensuring partnership will be able to pinpoint and mitigate the underlying causes of crime.<sup>33</sup> This strategy will not be achieved with a unitary police system because officers are transferred at any time from one state to the other hence, the goal of crime prevention and detection becomes mirage.

## 4.2 Operational Flaws

In assessing the effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force in crime prevention and detection, table 2 presented respondents with various items such as delayed response to distress calls, corrupt practices, porous investigation, disclosure of informant's identity and poor Police public relations. An overall mean of 4.22 obtained from the respondents questions police effectiveness in performing her duties.

### 4.2.1 Delayed Response to Distress Calls

Emergency response to distress calls is an important part of crime prevention and detection. It is used for crimes in progress, traffic accidents with serious injuries, natural disasters, incidents of terrorism and other situations in which human life may be in jeopardy. An important aspect of police training involves emergency response techniques. One vital measure of police success that is strongly linked to citizen satisfaction is response to emergency situation.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, the Nigeria Police Force has not lived up to expectation in terms of responding promptly to distress calls. Most times, they either fail to respond or delay thereby leading to loss of lives, properties and consequently producing a society vulnerable to all kinds of assaults.<sup>35</sup> In other climes

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<sup>30</sup> JP Brodeur, 'Decentralise Police Organisation' <[https://www.britannica.com/...](https://www.britannica.com/)> accessed 9 December 2019.

<sup>31</sup> O Aremu, 'State Police: Challenges and Security' <[https://punch/ng.com/...](https://punch/ng.com/)> accessed 18 April 2018.

<sup>32</sup> OI Eme and NO Anyadike, 'Security Challenges and the Imperative of State Police' (2012) 11(2) *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 212.

<sup>33</sup> Bureau of Justice Assistance, 'Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action' <<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/comp.pdf>> accessed 11 April 2019.

<sup>34</sup> F Schmallegger, *Criminal Justice Today: An Introductory Text for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Pearson Educational Inc. 2015) 165.

<sup>35</sup> CF Nwoye, 'An Appraisal of the Causes of Delayed Response to Crime Incidents in Area B Police Command Metropolitan Lagos' <<https://www.omicsonline.org/open-access...>> accessed 26 February 2019.

like the United States, emergency response is a vital aspect of what police agency does and it takes priority over all other police work.<sup>36</sup> Despite the Inspector General's directive in 2016 of 10 minutes response time to emergency calls in Nigeria, incidences of delay abound. For instance, in response to a citizen's emergency call at Ojodu in Lagos, the police arrived two hours after the bandits left.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Corrupt Practice

Corruption among officers of the Nigeria Police Force like canker-worm has eaten deep into the fabric of the system.<sup>38</sup> Victims of crime or complainants are obliged to pay police officers from the time of lodging their complaints until the matter is taken to court otherwise no action will be taken on their complaint. Such payments are tied to purchase of case files, fueling of vehicle or transport fare to facilitate the investigation of the particular case. Officers often extort money from commercial drivers, shop owners, market traders amongst others. The most common venue for extortion occurs at police road blocks or check points. Extortion-related confrontations between the police and road users or commercial drivers often escalate into crimes such as murder, rape, grievous harm and the likes where the victims fail to cooperate.<sup>39</sup>

In some instances, police officers conduct random arrest of innocent citizens at public places and detain them in a bid to extort money from them under the guise of bail.<sup>40</sup> So many crimes go uninvestigated by the police where influential persons including those at the corridors of power are involved<sup>41</sup> while other criminals harp on police corruption and give bribe to officers in order to escape the long arm of justice. This has led to the increase of criminal activities since it is a known fact that police could be bought at a price. Consequently, corrupt practices among officers have greatly affected the effectiveness of crime prevention and detection in Nigeria.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Schmallegger (n34).

<sup>37</sup> A Hanafi, CYMI: 'Lagos Policemen Respond to Distress Call Two Hours after Robbery'. Punch Lagos December 17 2018 <[https://punch.com/...](https://punch.com/)> accessed 26 February 2019.

<sup>38</sup> MO Ekwonwa, 'The Nigeria Police and Crime Prevention and Control for Good Governance: Challenges and Prospect' <[sirenjournals.com/index.php/journals?id=183](https://sirenjournals.com/index.php/journals?id=183)> accessed 31 October 2019.

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch, 'Corruption Fueling Police Abuses' <[hrw.org/report/2010/08/17/...](https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/08/17/)> accessed 30 October 2019.

<sup>40</sup> TA Odisu, 'Law Enforcement in Nigeria by the Police Force and the Travails of Rule of Law' <[https://www.omicsonline.org](https://www.omicsonline.org/)> accessed 30 October 2019.

<sup>41</sup> A Imosemi and A Kupoluyi, 'Ensuring Effective Criminal Trial and Investigation by the Nigeria Police Force: Challenges and Prospects (2017) 5(4) *International Journal of Innovative Legal and Political Studies*, 27.

<sup>42</sup> AA Adebayo, 'Social Facture Affecting Effecting Crime Prevention and Control in Nigeria' <[article.sapub.org/101.5923j.ijax.20130304.01.html](https://www.sapub.org/101.5923j.ijax.20130304.01.html)> 5 January 2017.

### 4.2.3 Disclosure of Informant Identity

The police rely substantially on informants to provide information about the commission of crime. The use of informants as a source of information about crime is as old as policing itself.<sup>43</sup> An informant gives information to the police about a crime or planned criminal activity hence facilitating crime prevention and detection.<sup>44</sup> The successful use of informants depends on the demonstrable reliability of their information.<sup>45</sup> Information obtained from informants can establish probable cause if two criteria are met. First, the source of the information must be made clear. Secondly, there must be over rely circumstances that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the informant is reliable and credible in what he/she said.<sup>46</sup> If the informant is a known or suspected criminal, establishing credibility is more difficult.<sup>47</sup>

Investigators bear an ethical and professional responsibility to safeguard the identity of confidential informants and their families to the best of their ability.<sup>48</sup> However, the experience in Nigeria is that police officers have often failed to act professionally in concealing the identity of their informants. This lapse has led some informants to suffer attacks from criminals whom they informed the police about their activities. The effect is lack of public confidence in the police.<sup>49</sup> Hence, it has greatly hampered effective investigation.

### 4.2.4 Porous Investigation

Criminal investigation is central to police mission.<sup>50</sup> It is an art specialised in by persons not only skilled in but well trained in putting together clues and material evidence suggesting the inference that the person accused of committing an offence is the actual culprit.<sup>51</sup> Hence, the prevention and detection of crime in any society is dependent to a very large extent on the effectiveness of the police in managing her criminal investigation department.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> P Cooper and J Murphy, 'Ethical Approaches for Police Officers when working with Informants in the Development of Criminal Intelligence in the United Kingdom'

<<https://static.cambridge.org/resource..0801>> accessed 26 September 2018.

<sup>44</sup> ST Reid, *Criminal Justice Today* (8<sup>th</sup> edn Thomson Publishers, 2008) 103.

<sup>45</sup> Schmallegger (n34) 220.

<sup>46</sup> *Aguilar v Texas* (1964) US 108.

<sup>47</sup> Reid (n44) 103.

<sup>48</sup> MD Lyman, *Criminal Investigation: The Art and Science* (Pearson Education Inc, 2008).

<sup>49</sup> Okoro (n10) 122-123.

<sup>50</sup> Schmallegger (n34).

<sup>51</sup> JB Daudu, 'Criminal Investigation, Procedure and Evidence Reform Imperatives', in JB Daudu and D Adekunle (eds), *Reforming Criminal Law in Nigeria* (Nigeria Bar Association 2012) 92.

<sup>52</sup> EC Chinwokwu and EUM Igbo, 'The Police and Criminal Investigation in South Eastern Nigeria' (2017) 2 (11) *Online Journal of Arts, Management and Social Sciences* <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1789153229fff867e255>> accessed 31 October 2019.

In Nigeria, the police lack capacity to effectively investigate crime. Hence, rather than engaging in a holistic approach of sourcing, analysing and interpreting evidence, the police overlying on obtaining confessional statements from suspects through oppression and other unlawful means. During trials, such statements if objected to and upheld are rejected and rendered inadmissible by the court thereby leaving the prosecution with no evidence to support her case.<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, a significant number of accused persons have been discharged and or acquitted as a result of incomplete, incompetent or shoddy investigation by the police.<sup>54</sup> In such instances, the court lacks sufficient evidence on which to base her conviction. Omaleye JSC decried the shoddy nature in which some police officers handle investigation in the case of *Dele v The State*<sup>55</sup>, as follows:

I must condemn in very strong words the shoddy trick employed by the police in the investigation of the circumstances surrounding the gruesome murder of the deceased in broad day light and nearly in the full glare of onlookers. It is heart-rending to observe how some police officers have consistently remained out of step with practice which smack of upholding the cause of justice. In the instant matter, it is obvious that the investigating police officers did not merely look the other way, they practically charted the course for the escape of those who were probably the real culprits in the murder of the deceased.

More worrisome is the fact that in most trials where accused persons are discharged and acquitted, it is the testimony of Investigating Police Officers that informs such decision. Most often than not, the Investigating Police Officers appear in court ill prepared with the facts of the cases they claim to have investigated.<sup>56</sup>

#### **4.3 Absence of Modern Tools and Necessary Skills**

Due to sophistication and mobility in criminal activities, forensic investigation and technological innovations evolved as useful tools in crime prevention and detection. Table 3 presents factors that militate against effective crime prevention and detection including lack of modern technology, basic skills and equipment for forensic investigation, obsolete training curriculum and inadequate funding. The table has an overall mean of 3.30 indicating that respondents agree with the factors listed as inhibiting crime prevention and detection.

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<sup>53</sup> OA Ladipo, 'Effective Investigations, a Pivot to Efficient Criminal Justice Administration' (2011) 5(1) 8(2) *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 83, *State v Azeez* (2008) 14 NWLR (pt. 1108) 439 CA

<sup>54</sup> *State v Onwueriaku & Ors* (2017) LPELR – 42613 CA; *Otterlette v The State* (2000) FWLR (pt. 12) 2081 @ 2102 SC.

<sup>55</sup> (2011) NWLR (pt. 1129) para A-C SC.

<sup>56</sup> Daudu (n51) 94.

### 4.3.1 Lack of Modern Technology

Crime is inherently linked to a changing technological world in which Nigeria is a part.<sup>57</sup> Technological and forensic solutions are indispensable to crime prevention and detection. Modern hardware and software technology such as Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Compstat, Crime Mapping System, Geographical Information System (GIS), Non-Electronic Immobilising devices are in use and have proved to be effective in United States of America,<sup>58</sup> Digital Criminal Forensic<sup>59</sup> and scientific investigation of physical, chemical and biological traces from crime scene have greatly aided the police in United Kingdom and United States of America.<sup>60</sup>

However, the Nigeria police is technologically and scientifically backward in modern innovations incidental to crime prevention and detection. Though the establishment of forensic laboratory in Abuja<sup>61</sup> is a step in the right direction, a single functional laboratory for criminal investigation is not adequate for a country like Nigeria with 36 states and a population of about 200 million people.

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras plays significant role in detection of crime, the government has not made elaborate efforts in this direction. A contract for the installation of cameras in Abuja and Lagos was awarded in 2011. Unfortunately only 200 substandard cameras were installed.<sup>62</sup> No further attempt was made in other states.

### 4.3.2 Obsolete Training Curriculum

The current programme content of police training is poor and not rich in content<sup>63</sup> to equip officers with modern trends in crime prevention and detection. Officers go through the basic three-month entry training at the police college where the most significant part of their training is centered on physical drills with less attention on the art of policing.<sup>64</sup>

Corollary to obsolete curriculum is the fact that lack of specialisation has robbed the Nigeria Police Force of the capacity to develop her personnel with capacity to detect

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<sup>57</sup> N Otu and OO Elechi, 'The Nigeria Police Forensic Investigation Failure' (2018) 9(1) *Journal of Forensic Sciences and Criminal Investigation*, 3.

<sup>58</sup> J Bryn and G Marx, 'Technological Innovations in Crime Prevention and Policing: A Review of the Research on Implementation and Impact' <<http://pdf.semanticscholar.org/6...>> accessed 17 May 2017. Schmallegger (n34) 234.

<sup>59</sup> Otu & Elechi (n57) 3.

<sup>60</sup> E Okakwu, 'Nigeria Police Launch Forensic Laboratory in Abuja' *Premium Times* (Abuja June 16 2010) <<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news...>> accessed 23 September 2017.

<sup>61</sup> TA Ayinde and E. Agwu, 'Technological Innovation and Crime Prevention: Implications for Effective Performance of Nigeria Police' (2016) 4(6) *International Journal of Science and Technology* <<https://www.researchgate.net/.../319136348...pdf>> accessed 19 September 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Okoro (n10) 223.

<sup>63</sup> Ladipo (n53) 82.

complex crimes.<sup>65</sup> Police investigators are drawn from the general pool of police personnel. The knowledge and skills of practical investigation are left to the officer to discover and learn on the job. This accounts for the failure of the police to successfully investigate complex crime.<sup>66</sup> In the United States of America and United Kingdom, police personnel are specifically trained as investigators.<sup>67</sup>

### 4.3.3 Inadequate Funding

Crime prevention and detection are capital intensive.<sup>68</sup> It requires considerable government commitment in funding.<sup>69</sup> Money is required to employ and train adequate number of criminal investigators, equip and mobilise them.<sup>70</sup> Budgetary allocation to the Nigeria Police Force is low and often not released on time. This makes planning in the Nigeria Police Force a herculean task.<sup>71</sup>

Details of the budgetary allocation to the Nigeria Police Force for the preceding five years are ₦321,332,224,611 in 2015<sup>72</sup>, ₦946,590,000 in 2016<sup>73</sup>, ₦1,464,672.631 in 2017<sup>74</sup>, ₦6,865,973,709 in 2018<sup>75</sup> and ₦175,274,031 in 2019<sup>76</sup>. In March 2019, the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu lamented the underfunding of the force and stated that the quantum of funds required to address the operational and administrative needs of the force can hardly be met through annual appropriation. He suggested the passage of the Police Reform Trust Fund Bill into law as the only remedy that would address inadequate funding.<sup>77</sup> In line with this, the Bill was passed into law in June 2019. It is hoped that the fund be adequately utilised to meet its purpose.<sup>78</sup>

Besides under funding is the fact that money voted for police hardly trickle down to the station unit level due to corruption in the hierarchical order. Hence, the stations are left impoverished, lacking in equipment and funds for general maintenance.<sup>79</sup> Invariably,

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<sup>65</sup> Civil Society Panel, 'Police Reform in Nigeria 2012 Final Report' <[www.nopnn.org/CSO%panel%final%Reportpdf](http://www.nopnn.org/CSO%panel%final%Reportpdf)> accessed 23 February 2017.

<sup>66</sup> Ladipo (n53) 82.

<sup>67</sup> O Bamgbose, 'The Use of Modern Technology in Crime Control: A Plus or Minus' (2011) 1(1) University of Ibadan Law Journal 10.

<sup>68</sup> Ladipo (n53) 81.

<sup>69</sup> Okoro (n10) 233.

<sup>70</sup> Ladipo (n53) 81.

<sup>71</sup> Civil Society Panel (n115) 16.

<sup>72</sup> 2015 Appropriation Act, Vol. I, 85.

<sup>73</sup> 2016 Appropriation Act, Vol. I, 532.

<sup>74</sup> 2017 Appropriation Act, Vol. I, 332.

<sup>75</sup> 2018 Appropriation Act, Vol. II.

<sup>76</sup> 2019 Appropriation Act, Vol. I, 479.

<sup>77</sup> S Oyeyipo, 'IG Laments Poor Police Funding' <<https://www.PressRelease.com-Nigeria-ThisDay-20190307>> accessed 21 November 2019.

<sup>78</sup> Nigeria Police Trust Fund (Establishment) Act 2019.

<sup>79</sup> Okoro (n10) 233.

officers are denied necessary funds for basic expenditure and purchase of state-of-the-art equipment incidental to crime prevention and detection.

#### 4.4 Findings

The work examined the various challenges to crime prevention and detection by the Nigeria Police Force. The research adopted both doctrinal and empirical methods. In carrying out the empirical survey, questionnaires were administered. The following findings were made.

1. The police power of arrest enshrined in several legislation is too wide hence, it leads to abuse. Many persons have been arrested arbitrarily by police officers in a bid to extort money from them under the guise of bail. There is neither provision in the laws or any institutional mechanism to check excesses in the exercise of the power of arrest.
2. The permissive use of gun in Section 8 of the Robbery and Firearms (Special Provision) Act 2004 and Force Order 237 to effect arrest has led to human rights violations. Many persons have been injured and others lost their lives by the irrational use of guns by some police officers. Instances of rash use of gun at the slightest provocation from motorists abound. Moreover, gun carrying officers are not subjected to periodic psychiatric test.
3. Centralisation of the force encapsulated in Section 214 of the Constitution is characterised by bureaucratic bottlenecks that hamper police effectiveness. Directives on security matters by state governors to the commissioner of police in their various states are referred to the Inspector General of the Police who may refer such matters to the president for his directive. Under this arrangement, the governor is a mere ceremonial security chief of the state. Instances abound of the escalation of security matters in some states due to the bureaucratic hurdles created in the constitution. Furthermore, community policing would not work effectively under a centrally controlled police force.
4. Many cases are left uninvestigated due to police corruption. Police demand for money for stationery and other logistics. Complainants who have no money to facilitate police investigation rarely get justice. Some police officers demand for money from criminals in order to cover up facts and destroy evidence.
5. The unethical behaviour of disclosing informant's identity to criminals has created distrust between the public and police officers. This accounts for the uncooperative attitude of the public towards police investigation. Hence, community policing is ineffective. Furthermore, porous investigation has led to the discharge and acquittal of many criminals.
6. The Nigeria Police Force lack modern technological innovation and scientific skills in crime prevention and detection. State-of-the-Art gadgets including Crimestat, Geographical Information System, Crime Databases and so on are not available. Her training curriculum has become obsolete and lacks specialisation especially in

crime prevention and detection. For instance, officers are not trained in digital criminal forensic hence are handicapped in preventing and detecting cyber crime.

#### **4.5 Recommendations**

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. The police power of arrest should be curtailed by incorporating provisions that will enhance monitoring of officers effecting arrest. First, a provision should be included in the Police Act proscribing arbitrary arrest. Secondly, every officer who effects an arrest should be made to first report to the legal department of his/her station where it can be ascertained whether the arrest is lawful or arbitrarily done. This check would enable the police to release immediately any person arbitrarily arrested so as to reduce chances of fundamental human rights violation cases against the force.
2. Non lethal weapons such as taser and stun gun should be introduced in the force in place of guns for the purpose of effecting arrest in order to curtail human right violations. The use of gun should be restricted and gun carrying officers should be subjected to periodic psychiatric test.
3. Section 215 of the Constitution should be amended to make provision for the creation of state police. The removal of the long bureaucratic chain would guarantee quick response to security matters in the state. Furthermore, the creation of state police would facilitate community policing which would in turn improve on crime prevention and detection. The model of decentralised police force in USA and Australia should be adopted in Nigeria despite the tendency of abuse canvassed by opponents.
4. Periodic lectures, seminars and symposiums should be held for police officers on their work ethnics particularly the need to keep informants identity secret. Stringent penalty should be proscribed against unethical disclosure of informant's identity by officers.
5. The training curriculum should be upgraded in line with modern skills in crime prevention and detection. Courses such as crime scene management, digital criminal forensic, human rights, interview techniques among others should be introduced. Specialisation should be introduced into the Police Force to enable adequate training and retraining of police investigators.
6. The government should provide adequate funds for the police so as to aid the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment and other necessary logistics so to cater for her training, retraining such as purchase of modern equipment and construction of forensic laboratories in each state among others.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

There is no doubt that the Nigeria Police Force has not fared well in her crime prevention and detection mandate due to the identified challenges. If the recommendations proffered particularly the provision of adequate funds, amendment of the constitution to provide

for state police and upgrading of training curriculum are implemented, the force will be repositioned for effectiveness and efficiency.