

**STATE POLICE AND POLICE- OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY: FOOTING FOR STRENGTHENING NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA: - A SCRUTINY OF OJO IN LAGOS STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The current insecurity in Nigeria which includes widespread killings, kidnappings, cultism and police brutality justifies the agitation for creation of state police in Nigeria. Hence, this paper assessed the creation of state police and police operational efficiency as footing for strengthening national security in Nigeria. The study applied theoretical and quantitative methods; information was sourced secondarily through content analysis of textbooks, journals and newspaper. The quantitative data was obtained through administration of 250 questionnaires to the residents of Ojo Local Government by applying simple random sampling and convince techniques. Findings showed that 66 % ( 165) of the respondents were male while 34% (85) of the respondents were female, 79%(198) of the respondents strongly agreed that state police will resolve insecurity in Nigeria while 15%(37), strongly disagreed that creation of state police will resolve insecurity in Nigeria however 6%(15) of the respondents were neutral. The paper recommends creation of state police with strict judicial control and deployment of smart security technologies. This study will be of immense benefits to government at various levels, NGOs, the Nigeria Police Force and the researchers in the field of security and public administration.*

**KEYWORDS:** State, Police, Police-operation, efficiency, Nigeria, Lagos

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The role of police in sustaining democratic governance could not be over-emphasized; the development of a nation is reflected by the efficiency and combat-readiness of its police. The Nigeria Police Force was created in 1820, before this creation; there are a number of constituents units with its autonomous police structure (Obirisagbon & Omagie ,2018).This is attested to by the creation of Lagos Police, in 1930, the Calabar Police and Niger Police, Northern Police. The merger of these autonomous units gave birth to the Nigeria Police Force. The human population of the country increases everyday and the staff strength of the Nigeria Police Force remains either static or decreasing on the ground of service exit like retirement, death, frequent dismissal on the ground of gross misconduct by the men and women of the Nigeria Police Force. The Nigeria total human population was put at 187,000,000 people and the staff strength is 370,000 people. This mean the ratio of police to citizen is 1:505, this proportion is astronomically disproportionate (Mobolaji & Alabi ,2014). The current insecurity situation in the country like terrorism, kidnapping, armed-robbery and terrorism is unbearable. There are instances where terrorists like Boko Haram taking over some parts of the Northern Nigeria, kidnapping are rampant in the Eastern parts of the country, street cultism like ``one million boys``, `` onyanboo``, in Ikorodu, Mushin, Badagry, Epe, Surulere, Oyingbo. These criminals have inflicted untold hardship on the citizens.

Over one million lives have been lost to these categories of insecurity in Nigeria from the beginning of the year 2018. This raised dust about the operational efficiency of the Nigeria Police Force. Some public analysts have called for the creation of state police in Nigeria as panacea to insecurity in the country (Gurr 2000). The creation of state police is not an alien in the global policing. Some countries have adopted this and it has yielded positive results, countries like Mexico, United State of America, Canada, Germany, India and Spain have effective state police. Some critics of state police have advanced its usage as instrument of oppression and suppression by various states. These arguments have some dependable validity based on some tested hypothesis on abuse of fundamental human rights in the Nigerian states. The reality on the ground is that Nigeria has daunting security issues and the principal law enforcement agency is overwhelmed. Hence, this paper assessed state police creation and police-operational efficiency as footing for insecurity challenges in Nigeria. The study was guided by the major research question what are the roles of state police on police operational efficiency in strengthening national security.

## LITERATURE REVIEW/ THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

This entails work of scholars on the subject matter

**Meanings of Police.** Police could be defined as a body of men and women that are organized principally by the law to perform the functions of law enforcement in the country. In a state there are many law enforcement agents but the principal one in the criminal justice system in the police. As far as internal security system of any state is concerned, police is constitutional empowered to maintain internal security of life and property (Aaron, 2017).

**Police Operational Efficiency.** As maintained by Macolm(2017) police efficiency is the ability of police officers to discharge the following universal mandate of internal security.

**Crime Prevention:** A crime according to is any act that violates the formal rules and ethics of a state. One of the responsibilities of police is to avoid situations of criminalities in a social structure (Orobator, 1993). One of the ways to achieve is constant patrol of their beats or operational areas. The crime scenarios in Nigeria are unbearable, crime reports floods both print and electronic media in Nigeria; rape, kidnapping, murder by herdsman and Boko Haram insurgents are been reported on the daily basis hence, Nigeria Police has not justify their existence in this regard. This function is synonymous to protection of lives and property.

**Crime Investigation.** This is the establishment of facts to determine the culpability or innocence of suspects in a criminal examination. In every justice system, a suspect is deem innocent until is proven otherwise by a competent court of law, thorough and impartial investigation of crime sustains public confidence in a justice system. Based on global practice, advanced digital technology are now been deployed into criminal investigation, this quickens investigations of internet crimes like phishing, online bulling and identity theft.

**Criminal Prosecution.** In criminal justice system, one major duties of police is to made arrangement for the prosecution of culpable suspects after due investigation of the crime. In the tripartite chains of the criminal justice system, Cordner (1986) police institution is the first contact, when an arrest has been made and the suspect is found guilty of the alleged offence, police will

make necessary arrangement to link the suspect to the next level of the criminal justice; the judiciary.

S/N	Country	Index Score
1	Nigeria	0.26
2	Congo	0.27
3	Kenya	0.3
4	Uganda	0.31
5	Mozambique	0.35
6	Cameroun	0.38
7	Sierra Leone	0,4
8	Ethiopia	0.4
9	Zambia	0.42
10	Madagascar	0.42

**Table 1: The 10 Worst Performing African Countries in Policing, 2018**

Source: International Police Science Association and Institute for Economic and Peace, 2017, modified by the author

The report was based on the ability of police to address internal insecurity. The assessors used police in one hundred and twenty seven nations. The parameters used were capacity, process, legitimacy and outcomes; the performance of the Nigerian Police was 0.26 in all variables. There are 210 police officers for every 100,000 Nigerians, below the index median of 300 and the sub-Saharan Africa Region average of 268. Meanwhile the Nigerian Police has refuted this claims, however experiences with police and insecurity have not justified their positions in this regard.

## **IMPEDIMENTS TO POLICE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY**

Odekunle, (2004) identified the following problems of Nigeria police

**Poor Funding:** One of the challenges to the effectiveness of the Nigerian police is the dearth of wherewithal to meet ever demanding financial responsibilities of uplifting the police to the global standard. In theoretical terms, The Nigeria has just left recession; there is huge budget to offset salaries and fringe benefits of the Nigeria Police Force. Aside police, other paramilitary institutions like the Federal Road Safety Agency (FRSC), the Nigerian Custom Services, Nigerian Prison Service, Nigeria Social Security and Civil Defence and others Nigeria require stupendous financial requirement for them to meet their financial needs.

**Corruption:** According to the Amnesty International, corruption is an act of using a position of authority for personal interests. According to reports the Nigeria Police Force is one of the most corrupt institutions in Nigeria, there are evidences where some officers of the Nigerian Police Force have been dismissed on the ground of gross indiscipline. Corruption in Nigeria is systemic; Nigeria police is a product of Nigerian society, so they are one way or the other affected by this social ill. This involves bribe taking, aiding abetting criminals, leaking of sensitive security

information to criminals, indiscriminate and illegal arrest of citizens and brutality. The problem affects the management of the Police Pension Funds in which the fund has been grossly mismanaged in the past (Ferreira, 2000).

**Inadequate Sophisticated Gadgets:** The current trends of criminalities call for application of modern equipment to fight crimes headlong, the kind of obsolete crime fighting devices used by Nigerian Police is part of the rationale for their poor operational efficiency. There are cases where policemen are overpowered by the armed-robbers and kidnappers. These sophisticated weapons include communication gadgets, guns and other related crime-fighting hardware.

**Psychological Problem.** Some police officers are suffering from acute depression and other psychological issues (Adebola, 2006). This personality challenge results in abnormal and unprofessional behavior of some police men and women on duty, some officers have gone berserk killing innocent civilians, some have killed the whole member of their family and at the extreme end some have committed suicide.

**Poor Training and Retraining.** In the opinion of Onyeozili (2005) Most of the Nigerian policemen and women are not adequately trained in the areas of combat-readiness, this is responsible for poor operational efficiency, policemen and women require special training on the best handling rifles, effective public relations, settlement of disputes, rights and privileges of citizens, contentedness, information management and other areas of humanity.

**Faulty Recruitment Processes.** The recruitment in Nigerian Police Force is not wholly based on merit; ethnic, political and religious considerations of the candidates are mostly dominating consideration for appointment into Nigeria Police. Hence, unmerited candidates are eventually employed into the organization. This results in unsuitable performance of the police (Geli de Ciurana, and Filho, 2006).

## TYPES OF POLICE

Aaron (2017) identified the following types of police officers

**Uniformed Police Officers.** These are the police officers that engage in regular patrol of streets or communities to maintain law and order, they move around the community in order to detect crimes and respond to emergencies. In Nigeria, most police officers fall under this category. Examples of uniformed police officers in Nigeria are the marine police; that ensures regular patrol of our marine environment, traffic police that ensures free flow of traffic in Nigeria **cities**; others are military police, intelligence police; that investigate crimes, **and riot** police that manage riot scene to avert their escalations. (Ugwuoke, 2011).

**Police Detectives:** This kind of police investigate crimes thoroughly to get to the roots of matters, they work in the crime scene and accumulate evidences based their findings .

**State Police and Highway Patrol.** This kind of police officers patrol the streets to ensure law and order, they assist other police in the time emergencies and other areas that exceed their control (Osaghae, 1994).

**Fish and Game Wardens.** These officers ensure effective control of marine environment and protection of game reserves. This kind of police organization is scarce in most countries.

**State Police.** According to Arase (2018) this is a type of police organization that is wholly controlled by state government. They are autonomous police, being financed, staffed and developed by the state government. In some countries like Mexico, United State of America, Germany and other countries.

### **Arguments for the Creation of State Police**

**Enhanced Funding:** The current police structure in Nigeria is under-funded , some states like Lagos, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom have enough financial capability to fund state police in terms of provision of enough money to buy uniforms, safety boots, modern communication gadgets and better salaries for enhanced operational performance.

**Better Knowledge of the Environments.** Most policemen were posted to the remote places; they are ignorant of the local languages and topography of their areas of operations, these shortcomings gave criminals advantages over them especially kidnappers that operate in thick forests (Adegoke, 2014).

**Closed Operational Supervision.** The establishment of state police will enable state government to monitor their activities to avoid abuse of power by the police. A typical example is banning of the Vehicle Inspection Officers from the roads in Lagos by Governor Akinwunmi Ambode on the ground of gross misconduct (Arase, 2013).

**Better Equipped Police.** One of the merits of state police is that it leads to provision of equipment for police office both soft and hard operational wares will be giving to police officers (Orobator, 1993).These include patrol vehicles, communication devices, and personal protective devices like hard caps, bullet proof jackets and serviceable vehicles.

**Employment Opportunities for indigenes.** The current police structure provides employment opportunities but most officers are non-indigenes (Thomas, 2004).However, the current staff strength of the Nigeria police skewed in favour of a particular part of the nation at the expense of other parts of the nation as maintained by Uwa (2013) sighted in (Wegman, et al,2008).

**Competitive Police.** As explained by Langmang (2011) one merit of state police agenda is that more states will be in positive competition to outperform each others, take for instance, the administration of former Governor Ahmed Bola Tinubu established platforms like Lagos State Transport Management Authority (LASTMA) which other states like Ogun established Ogun State Compliance and Enforcement Corps (TRACE) and Oyo and others have emulated.

### **Argument against the Creation of State Police in Nigeria**

**Agents of Oppression.** One demerit of state police is the possibility of abuse of power by the governors to achieve their political interests especially during elections to thwart their political opponents (Buzan, 1991).Power corrupts absolute power corrupts absolutely; the critics of creation of state police have advanced this reason for their actions (Arase, 2018).

**States` Financial Incapacity.** In Nigeria some states are struggling to pay their workers and their retirees. We have states like Ekiti, Ondo, Kogi, Benue, Oyo, Kwara others. These states may not be able to finance state police effectively. So, creation of state police will be additional financial burden to those constituents units of the federation (Ugwuoke, 2011).

**National Disparity.** In Crime Control. Police is symbol of national unity, in terms of internal security of life and property (Chan 1997). There is central administration of internal security, establishment of state police may dismantle this feature and each state may adopt independent structures, this may negatively affect cooperation and collaboration in policing a nation.

### **Consolidations of Existing Structures for Establishment of State Police.**

**Lagos State Drives.** The establishment of Lagos State Transport Management Authority (LASTMA) under the administration of Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Governor Akinwunmi Ambode restructuring and empowerment the Lagos State Nerborhood Service through employment of more hands to boost the human resource capability of the force, it ensures prompt payment of their salaries, provision of patrol vehicles and ensuring their presence in all the twenty local government areas and the thirty seven local council development areas.

**High Level National Insecurity.** The country returned to democracy in 1999 there have been increased rate of criminalities like kidnapping, armed-robbery, rape and terrorism, the current federal police is overwhelmed to deal with current insecurity in Nigeria, so, what we have been practicing for over nineteen years without positive results requires fresh approach to tackles the insecurity through state police (Emmanuel & Ogu et al ,2014).

**State Police Bill in the National Assembly.** A bill for the creation of a police force in each of the thirty-six States of the Federation and the FCT is currently before the National Assembly, Nigeria's bicameral legislature (Vanguard, 28th September, 2016 P.9). Sponsored in the House of Representatives, the lower legislative Chamber, the bill has passed second reading. When finally passed by the National Assembly and accented by the President, the bill will change the current structure of the Nigerian Police

### **Linkage between State Police and Police Operational Efficiency**

The creation of state police will confine the operation of police officers to particular state in Nigeria, this will enhance security tentacle of the various states in Nigeria( Eme and Anthony, 2011).It also enhances quick payment of salaries and allowances to improve their moral for greater performance. State police will also enhances community policing by ensuring that substantial member of staff are indigene of the state (Wilson, 2005).



**Figure1: Nigerian Police Officers on Duty**

Source: <https://www.thecable.ng/nigeria-police-ranks-worst-world-internal-security-police-index>, the CableNews, November 10,2017 retrieved 20/07/2018

**Theoretical Framework.** This study anchors on the systems theory by Talcott Parsons, the Nigerian state is a system that comprises sub-systems like politics, economy, family, religion and education, if one sub-system is deficient the whole system will be dysfunctional (Armstrong, 2006). Policing a country is a political issue because the principal duty of every government is the security of life and property of the citizens of a country. If a government fails in this regard, other aspects of the system will be negatively affected. The current insecurity in Nigeria has plunged other key sectors into jeopardy Akintunde (2002), for instance insecurity has driven away foreign investors; this result in loss of jobs and tax remittance into government coffers, loss of jobs will create family crises. Insecurity has abysmal effects on religious institutions a there are instances, where many religious institutions have been robbed by armed robbers, some rich religious leaders have been kidnapped by kidnappers some have lost their lives in the process and in the educational sector, there are many students that were kidnapped examples are the kidnapping of students in Igboland in Epe, Lagos State., 250 Chibuk girls saga and 100 girls in Dapchi sighted in ( Ewetan & Urhie,2014).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study applied theoretical and quantitative methods; information was sourced secondarily through content analysis of textbooks, journals and newspaper. The quantitative data was obtained through administration of 250 questionnaires on the residents of Ojo Local Government by applying simple random sampling and convince techniques. The secondary data gave information

about functions of police, meanings of state police, arguments for and against the establishment for and against the establishment of State police Lagos was chosen because of its drive towards the establishment of state police through Lagos State Neighborhood Services and its financial capability to fund state police. The questionnaires were divided into various sections section has questions about socio-economic and demographic dominants of the respondents and other sections cover various questions on desirability or otherwise on state police, out 300 questionnaires that were administered 270 returned and out of the returned 250 were found to be appropriate, the response rate was 83% which was admissible. The questionnaires were analyzed through frequency distribution tables. The results of both methods were used to draw conclusion.

## FINDINGS/RESULTS

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	165	66
Female	85	34
Total	250	100
Age		
18- 28	44	17.6
29—39	130	52.0
40—50	52	20.8
Above 51	24	9.6
Total	250	100
Educational Level		
Illiterate	27	10.8
Primary	39	15.6
Secondary	81	32.4
Tertiary Level	103	41.2
Total	250	100
Residential Status		
Urban	119	47.6
Semi-urban	77	30.8
Rural	31	12.4
Hamlet	13	5.2
Non-response	10	4
Total	250	100
Ethnic Group		
Yoruba	133	53.2
Hausa	31	12.4
Igbo	63	25.2
Edo	18	7.2
Others	5	2
Total	250	100
Religion		



Islam	98	39.2
Christianity	104	41.6
Others	48	19.2
Total	250	100

**Table 2: Socio-economic and Demographic Determinants of the respondents**

Source: Field Survey 2017

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	13	5.2
Agreed	22	8.8
Strongly disagreed	121	48.4
Disagreed	85	34
No response	9	3.6
Total	250	100

Table 3 : The Current Police structure could to tackle insecurity in Nigeria

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	161	64.4
No	78	31.2
Neutral	11	4.4
Total	250	100

**Table 4: Establishment State police reliable mean of achieving police efficiency**

Source: Field Survey, 2017

## DISCUSSIONS

From table out of the 250 respondents 66% were male 44% were female,(52.1%) felt within age bracket of (29-39) years, 17.6% of the respondents were within age bracket of (18-28) years, 20.8% of the respondents were within age bracket of (40-50) years, 9.6% were above 51 years old,41.2% were in their tertiary level of education while 82.4%)were at their secondary educational level, 119(42.8%) of the respondents lived in the urban areas, 77(30.8%) of the respondents were living in semi-urban areas, majority of the respondents were Muslims

From table 3 above out of the 250 respondents 13(5.2%) strongly agreed that the current federal police structure could tackle insecurity in Nigeria, 22(8.8%) agreed, while the majority of the respondents121(48.4%) strongly disagreed that the current police could tackle insecurity in Nigeria, 85(34%) of the respondents disagreed that current police could tackle insecurity in Nigeria, 9(3.6%) of the respondents were silent on the question.

From table 4, the out of 250 respondents 161 representing 64.4% of the respondents were of the opinion that the establishment of state police lead to police efficiency in Nigeria, while 78

representing 31.2% maintained that establishment of state police will not lead to police efficiency in Nigeria, 11(4.45) offered no answer

### **Implications to Research and Practices**

This study provides various data on state police, police-operational efficiency and some other variables surrounding police operations. The explanations will boost the available literature on police and researchers can avail themselves these opportunities. As far as practicability is concerned the results of this research will be useful for the police personnel in enhancing their operational efficiency. It will serve as points of consolidating the calls for state police and adherents for state police.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

From findings there are many operational challenges that confronts policing in Nigeria, findings from both primary and secondary data showed that establishment of state police is the panacea for police operational efficiency, 64.4 percent of the respondents supported the idea and similarly 48.4 % strongly disagreed that current police structure could address internal security crisis Nigeria is passing through more than nineteen years of the country return to democracy. The paper recommends the establishment of regulated state police with efficient control mechanism to avert state governors using it as means of suppressing political opponents and there should be deployment of modern technology and internet of things like body cameras and CCTV cameras to strategic places to monitor the activities of the police officers, there should be strict disciplinary measures for erring officers through special court, free press and other fundamental human rights should be well established. This study will be valuable to government at both federal and state levels and researchers in the social science disciplines.

### **Future Research**

This piece of study creates grounds for upcoming scholars in the area state police and its relevance, they can work on its desirability in the nearest future. And their findings will buttress or undermine my findings based on the reality them.

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