



Review Paper

Security challenges to the Nigeria police in the 21st century: imperative for reform of the police institution

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Abstract

Police reforms in Nigeria were based on the backdrop of the force having a reputation of corruption, inefficiency, lack of accountability and transparency, and gross violations of human rights. These violations ranged from torture, unlawful detention and extrajudicial killing. The reforms were also intended to make the police more efficient containing the challenges of global terrorism and transnational crimes. These shortcomings against the police force necessitated the establishment of the Police Service Commission (PSC) and the Ministry of Police Affairs (MoPA) with oversight functions over the police. However, despite the numerous panels, committees set up by the government to reform the police, the institution is still plagued by corruption, extortion, extra-judicial killing, torture and human rights abuses. Many of the government reforms have focused on improving welfare packages and procuring more equipment for the police rather than tackling the endemic problem of attitudinal change. Robert Merton Anomie together with Messner and Rosenfeld Institutional Anomie Theories are used to critically examine the structural causes of crime in Nigeria and why government reforms have failed to work. We recommend attitudinal and behavioural changes to enable the police institution cope with security challenges that confront Nigeria in the 21st century.

Keywords: Security, Policing, Nigeria, Reforms, 21st century.

Introduction

The importance of the police in a democratic society cannot be overemphasized. They ensure that crimes are kept at their lowest level and maintain law and order. They are also the first point of contact for any person that is entering into the criminal justice system. However, carrying out these responsibilities can be a bit daunting especially where there is distrust of the police by the citizen. In Nigeria, there is lack of public trust of the police force because people see them as corrupt, inefficient and oppressive; which has resulted in the inability of the police to secure the confidence and cooperation of the people in their crime fighting. The poor public perception of the police force has been the reason behind several reforms introduced by successive governments in an effort to making the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) more effective in the performance of their functions. Since independence, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has undergone a lot of reforms; these reforms are due largely to its colonial past. The NPF, without dispute, is a creation of the colonial government. There are conflicting views as to the reason behind the establishment of the NPF. Some believe that the NPF was established to fulfill its primary role of fighting crime and maintaining law and order, while others, on the other hand, however argue that the Nigeria Police Force was established not to fight crime but to pacify agitating indigenous societies in order to entrench colonial political authority and

ensure the uninterrupted extraction of economic resources from Nigeria to Britain¹. An examination of the history of the force will shed some light as to whether its colonial past has some influence on the current state of the Nigeria police.

Methodology

This article relied purely on secondary sources of data, which are based on documents sourced through journals, articles, books and other internet sources.

History of the Nigeria Police Force

Historically, in traditional Nigerian societies, age grades, masquerades, extended family members, secret cults and other carried out policing of the various communities. However, with the advent of colonial administration, the British established a colonial police force in 1861 to enforce sanitary regulations in Lagos. Subsequently, in 1863, an "Armed Hausa Police Force" consisting of mainly Hausa speaking ex-slaves was established to undertake semi-military duties of pacifying the indigenous population and ensuring colonial political domination¹. During the early part of the 20th century, two separate police forces existed in what is today known as Nigeria. They were the Lagos Police Force and the Northern Police Force. In 1914 following the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates, the northern and southern police forces were also united.

In 1930, however, the present Nigeria Police Force was established under the Ordinance No. 2 with headquarters in Lagos. The unification of the various police forces strengthened the police to fight the alarming increase of such crimes such as murder, manslaughter, counterfeiting, theft, housebreaking, child stealing, illicit distillation of gin and illegal mining¹. Further, from 1930 to 1965, the police launched a major offensive against crime and brought to an end the activities of many secret societies and cults, which terrorized, intimidated and even eliminated their opponents.

The Nigerian Police Force became a Federal Force in line with the 1954 constitution. However, despite the federal nature of the Nigeria police, the maintenance of law and order in the country was still the joint responsibility of both the federal and region government. On October 1, 1963 when Nigeria became a republic, the police was structure under five command levels consisting of Lagos territory, Northern Region, Western Region, Eastern Region, and the Mid-Western Region, with each having a commissioner of police with the Inspector General of Police as the overall head at the Force Headquarters².

Problems Facing the Nigeria Police Force in the 21 Century

The Nigeria Police Force is faced with numerous problems in the 21st century, which includes ethnic and religious conflicts, farmers and herdsmen, terrorism especially the Boko Haram insurgency in the North, Niger Delta crisis, white collar-crime, transnational crimes and terrorism, cultism, armed robbery and other street crimes. In addition to these security challenges which the police force has to contain, they also face the problem of low morale due to low salary, inadequate training particularly the rank and file, under-funding, and poor relationship with members of the public.

There is no dispute to the fact that ethnic and religious crisis have been a constant threat to the peace, unity, stability and national security of the Nigeria. Ethnic conflicts happen in every part of the country; however religious crises predominate in the North. Sometimes when they happen, the police are unequipped to deal with them so the government resorts to the military to quell the conflict. For example, the introduction of Sharia law in most Northern States sparked a religious upheaval in that left many lives and property destroyed. More recently, the government and police are confronted with another problem of the Boko Haram insurgency. This group operates in such a clandestine way that it is very difficult for the police and other security agencies to understand their modus operandi. Apart from the crisis in the North, the police also have to deal with the unrest in the South East with Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) agitating for a secessionist state for the Igbos, and in the Niger Delta especially the militant groups such as Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) blowing up pipelines and causing the economic resources of the country to dwindle. The Niger Delta crisis has rendered the entire area unsafe both for the inhabitants and businesses. Kidnapping of oil workers for ransom is very

rampant. The kidnapping has taken a new dimension with civilians and children having become prime targets. The inability of the police to control the situation has forced the government to establish Joint Military Task Forces (JTF) to control the situation. Militant groups operating in the area have met the JTF with stiff resistance. Many encounters result in casualties on both sides. The Niger Delta crisis has also created such big uncertainties in the Nigerian economy.

Transnational criminality is also a serious problem confronting the police in the 21st century. Transnational crimes are crimes perpetrated and perpetuated across national borders. Such crimes include international car theft, black market trade in nuclear materials, smuggling of migrants, international prostitution, arms trafficking, drug trafficking, trade in human organs, environmental crime, computer tampering and money laundering³. The Nigeria Police are either not equipped or poorly trained to handle these crimes. Furthermore, the Nigeria Police are also unable to deal with computer crimes especially the one dealing with computer hacking, Advance Fee Fraud or 419, and online pornography. These crimes are facilitated by globalization and the advent of technology. Additionally, the Nigeria Police are deficient in their inability to fight and control white-collar crime. White-collar crimes are crimes committed by people who belong to the upper socioeconomic class in the ordinary course of their business activities³. Thus they are crimes perpetrated by the rich. Finally, the Nigeria Police is also confronted with the problem of terrorism. Terrorism is defined as the systematic use of violence and intimidation to achieve some goal¹. Other challenges facing the Nigeria Police in the 21 century and hindering their effort to confront the menace of crime and the protection of lives and property includes inadequate training, lack of sophisticated communication, poor detective and investigation equipment; shortage of manpower; acute shortage of accommodation; the problem of logistics such as transport; and the problem of recruiting and retaining of well-qualified men on the job.

History of Reforms of the Nigeria Police Force

Since colonial times, the Nigeria Police has undergone several reforms in attempt to carry out its primary responsibility of fighting crime and maintaining law and order. For instance, between 1945 and 1949 there was a very serious reform especially in the area of transportation and communication. The NPF provided trained policemen for its Signal Branch rather than continue channeling its confidential material through the staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department as it had done previously. In 1950 the NPF obtained the Force High Frequency Wireless System, which later consisted of static stations and mobile sets. Between 1954 and 1961 the NPF had acquired not only more mobile and static Very High Frequency Stations but also several PYE Walkie-Talkie sets and radio tele-printers which linked all its major police networks at the provincial and regional levels⁴ moreover, the innovations in 'Force Communications' made the NPF generally alert and equipped to deal with major emergencies. There was the development of the

NPF's Motor Traffic Unit, which was replaced with Mobile Traffic Units. With the help of the Mobil Units, the NPF was in a better and stronger position to control crowds and riots.

In 1951, Colonial Police Conference emphasized that colonial police forces should be organized as civilian forces existing for service to the community on the general lines obtainable in the United Kingdom. This may have been the brain behind today's concept of community policing. Another reform that was made in the Nigeria Police prior to independence was the recruitment of female officers. In 1953, there was a move to recruit women into the police to deal with the growing number of female offenders. In 1954, the federal government began the 'Women's Police Branch'. Some of the officers employed were to work alongside the Railway Police officers, while others were stationed at the police Headquarters and to focus specifically on matter concerning women and children.

Another very significant reform during colonial period was the decentralization of the NPF. Between 1947 and 1950, the NPF detachments were re-distribute throughout the country including the Southern Cameroons administered by Britain since 1922 as a mandated territory of the League of Nations and after 1945 as a trust territory of the United Nations. The process of decentralized control of the NPF continued under the Macpherson Constitution enforced in 1951. For administrative convenience, the NPF was re-organised under regional commands, which were ultimately responsible to the Inspector General at Force Headquarters⁴. However, following the adoption of the Littleton Constitution of 1954, the NPF became a 'Federal Force'. It reorganized its organization to meet the police requirements of the new political divisions and constitutional responsibilities of the federation. Under the 1954 Constitution, following the adoption of a formal federalism, the federal and regional governments became jointly responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the preservation of public safety in their respective areas of jurisdiction⁴. There were no significant changes and reforms under the Independence Constitution of 1960 except in 1963 when Nigeria became a Republic. Under the Republic Constitution, all officers took their oath of office to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and no longer to the British Crown⁴.

Prior to Nigeria's independence, many regions operated their local police forces, and at independence in 1960, the police force had to co-exist with these local police forces that existed in the North and Western regions of Nigeria. During this first republic, there were widespread complaints against local police forces. The complaints against them included local and sub-standard recruitment of personnel, poor training, use of the police to oppress political opponents and rigging of elections. There were also widespread allegation that Northern and Western local police forces were used for political thuggery during the 1964, and 1965 elections⁴⁻⁶.

During the regime of Major-General J.T.U. Ironsi, the first military President of Nigeria, he set up a panel to investigate the

allegations against regional police forces. This was and among others some of the reasons that the regime was seen as a unitary system of government. The head of state was killed before the panel submitted its report. The General Gowon led military government received the report and dissolved regional police forces. The dissolution of regional police forces marked the origin of a centralized structure of the Nigeria police till date. Both the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions provided that there shall be only one police force in Nigeria.

The 1979 Constitution in Section: 153(1)(n) also had some aspects of reforms which created the Police Service Commission (PSC) which was responsible for Nigeria Police Force policy organization, administration and finance⁶. At inception of his administration President Obasanjo introduced some reforms of the police. Prior to the 2000 President Obasanjo government's instituted reform, the Nigeria Police Force seem to have assumed a caste system status refusing moral and structural reforms. This can be blamed on the antecedents of their origin and historical realities of the Nigeria State. The reform was necessary in order to make the police a civil and democratic police in line with Nigeria's transition from military dictatorship to constitutional democracy. Prior to the reform, there was obvious decay in the general operation of the force. To this effect the reform, the Ministry of Police Affairs (MPA) and Office of Inspector-General of Police were mandated to produce a blueprint for the overhaul of the force. They, therefore, submitted a five-year development plan for the reform of the police. In order to carry out a thorough job, they consulted police agencies of the advanced capitalist economies and the collaborative approach came under the aegis of the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN). The cardinal objective of the panel was to structurally reform the police, in addition to reforming their method of policing from reactionary to a proactive crime fighting technique. The reform gave birth to the first community policing in Nigeria that started in Enugu state where community liaison units were established to bring the police back to the community. Infrastructural, the police got more operational vehicles, helicopter, better guns and improved salary. The target was to meet the international standard of policing. There was also massive recruitment of new personnel in order to meet the United Nations standard of 400 persons to one police. However, the economic challenges at the time made the reform initiative not to have a meaningful outcome.

Another significant reform in the NPF was in 2006 following a seven man committee initiated by Obasanjo, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The President initiated the Presidential Committee on Police Reform, which was inaugurated on his behalf by the Minister of Police Affairs, Alaowei Broderick Bozimo. The committee, which has Alh. Muhammad Dan'Madami, CFR, mni, DIG (rtd) as Chairman with seven (7) other members had the following as its terms of reference: Review and recommend measures on the reorganization, administration, operations and control of the Nigeria Police Force, with a view to enhancing effectiveness and efficiency in its operations and service⁸. In addition, the

President also initiated the establishment of a Presidential Committee on Police Equipment Fund. This Committee was inaugurated on the 3rd of June, 2006. The Committee was saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that the Nigeria Police Force gets adequate monetary contributions from citizens and corporate bodies to effect the acquisition of relevant equipment and facilities that will enable us face the challenges of modern policing. The initiative is laudable because it was intended to bequeath our Nation with a Police Force that is dedicated to the service and protection of the people of Nigeria, police with integrity, pride, dignity, and consummate professionalism⁸.

In 2008, President Musa Yaradua inaugurated a 16 man police reform panel led by retired Inspect General of Police (IGP) Alhaji M. D. Yusuf. The committee submitted its reports, but it was not implemented. Due to the Boko Haram insurgency, President Jonathan created another committee to reform the police on 15 August, 2012. The committee was headed by the current head of Police Service Commission, Parry Osayande, a retired Inspector General of Police. The committee recommended the scrapping of the Police Ministry, whose role affected the proper funding of the police force and the need to increase the pay of police officers. This committee was, however, criticized by Innocent Chukwuma, a member of the NOPRIN for failure to implement previous panel reports, since he was also the chairman of Police Service Commission.

Having looked at the history of reforms mentioned above and the challenges facing the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in the 21 century, it is obvious that the police are still ineffective in controlling crime rate in the country. The federal government has in many occasions called in the armed forces to combat crimes of terrorism and pipeline vandalism, especially where the police force seems overwhelmed. The Nigeria police force inefficiency is due to variety of reasons that include inadequate size of the force, low morale, poor working conditions, and insufficient training, and among others already discussed all encouraging a culture of corruption and brutality within the police force and reinforced its lack of respect among the population.

Despite all these reforms, the police have fallen short of expectation in their effort to rid Nigerian society of crime, especially violent crimes. The tactics implored by militants, terrorist groups, and street criminals have become more sophisticated than the police can imagine. They have also become more daring operating in broad daylight to the amazement of law enforcement agents. In fact, their weaponry has become very sophisticated than most police departments can afford, and transnational crime especially drugs and prostitution and human trafficking are also thriving. Before making proposal for a reform of the police institution, it imperative to understand whether there are structural explanation to the endemic crime problem in Nigeria that explains why government reforms of the police have failed to work.

Structural Explanation of Nigeria Crime Problem

The problems facing the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the solutions on how to deal with them are multifaceted. Although, one can agree that for effective policing and to combat the menace of crime the police needs sophisticated equipment, better communication, adequate manpower, better accommodation for officers, adequate logistics such as transportation, and recruitment and retention of qualified officers for the force. There have been several efforts in the past in these directions however, corruption and extortion of money from automobile operators is still a persistent problem that plague the NPF. Crime rate is still on the rise; and transnational crime is on the increase. Many young Nigerians are being arrested daily for drug trafficking and some are facing execution in South East Asia. In fact, in 2004 in order to tackle police corruption the IG, Tafa Balogun announced the dismissal of 900 police officers from the force who were involved in extortion⁹. The question then is: why are all government efforts and initiatives do not translate into lower levels of crime in the country? I believe the answer to this question lies not in equipping the police, in which many state governments have been doing, but to critically examine the underlying causes of crime in Nigeria. It is only when we understand some of the hidden causes of crime that our proposed reforms can work; otherwise it will be a fruitless effort trying to fight crime in Nigeria. Crime in our society may not be due solely to lack of equipment and welfare package to the police but due to structural imbalances in our society and our value system. Nigeria is becoming very criminogenic like America. There is something in our social system that makes Nigeria very crime prone like America. Let's examine some theories on crime causation; they may help us to tackle Nigeria crime problem and how we train our police officers.

Theoretical Review

The biological school of thought has situated crime problem inside the individual. This is based on the contention that crime is an inherited trait. Cesera Lombroso¹⁰, one of the founding fathers of positivist criminology argued that people are born criminals because they inherited criminal traits. Also, Emile Durkheim¹¹ contended that crime is normal to every society because it contributes positively to society because it creates room for flexibility and change. However, Robert Morten¹² in his anomie theory believes the motivation for crime is derived from society and not due to biological drives. He stresses that crimes occur in the United States because of the cultural emphasis for the pursuit of material success (cultural goals). Therefore the lack of legitimate opportunity to achieve societal goals of material success creates anomie, which in turn leads people to commit crime. He noted that the American societies like all other capitalist oriented societies, enjoins everybody to strive for success goals by approved means. At the same time, opportunities to reach these goals through normatively regulated and approved means are not equitably distributed. Merton

concluded that deviant behaviour ensues on a large scale in society only when a system of cultural values extol, above all else, certain common success goals for the population at large while social structure rigorously or completely closes access to approved modes of reaching these goals for a considerable part of the population. Similarly, Messner and Rosenfeld¹³ draws on Merton's¹² 'Social Structure and Anomie' to develop an institutional anomie theory of crime. Like Merton, Messner and Rosenfeld seek to explain the high rate of crime in the United States. Drawing heavily on Merton's theory, they argue that the high rate of crime in the United States stems partly that the U.S. encourages everyone to pursue the goal of monetary success while deemphasizing the legitimate means to achieving success. Messner and Rosenfeld¹³ also draw on Merton's theory in their analysis of the relationship between American dream and crime in America. The acronym 'American Dream' stipulates that irrespective of your background if you work very hard you can become successful. They contend that the American dream was not realistic because many people from poor neighborhoods did not have the opportunity to achieve the American dream because this opportunity was either restricted or not available; as a result many poor youths have to resort to illegal means to achieve the American dream.

Robert Merton's theory fits into the Nigerian situation very well because we have a value system that emphasizes monetary success but the means to achieve this success is not available to everybody. Similarly, Messner and Rosenfeld's¹³ theory of institutional anomie also fits into the Nigerian situation because we have a culture that enjoins everyone to pursue the goal of monetary success but fails to define hard work as the means to achieve societal goals of monetary success. Social institutions such as the schools, churches, politics and the family have also failed in their effort to instill hard work in the younger population. Crime in Nigeria is partly due to this cultural goal that emphasizes monetary success but de-emphasizes the means to achieving success.

There is also what I succinctly call the "Nigerian dream" which is coined from the American dream that encourages criminal behavior in Nigeria. Although American dream is built on the principle of hardwork, Nigerian dream is not. In the Nigerian dream, there is a cultural believe that everybody can be successful since success is tied to money and possession. Since the means to achieve the Nigerian dream is not clearly defined, people resort to illegal means to achieve it. Nigerian culture does not encourage its citizens to achieve success through hard work; wealth can be attained through any means provided one can be seen as successful. This explains the high levels of crimes such as corruption, armed robbery, advanced fee fraud or 419, drug trafficking, kidnapping for ransom and all manners of crime prevalent in Nigerian society. Most individuals who engage in these crimes do so not because of poverty, per se, but simply trying to fulfill the Nigerian dream.

It should be noted that Robert Merton's theory¹² and Messner and Rosenfeld's¹³ institutional anomie theory are not the only

explanation for the causes of crime, there are the biological, psychological and sociological, however, Merton¹² and Messner and Rosenfeld's¹³ theories are very close to explaining the underlying causes of Nigeria endemic crime problem. Finally, in order to curb this menace, the government should undertake the following reforms of the police institution:

Proposed Reforms of the Nigeria Police Force

Due to the numerous problems and challenges that face the NPF in the 21st century, we hereby propose the following reforms that will help the police in its effort to fight crime and maintain law and order.

The NPF needs to change their method of operations. The NPF still adopts its traditional and antiquated methods of fighting crime, which emphasizes getting tough on crime. Such methods never achieve their desired result as criminals always have a way to get around them. For example, the former Inspector-General of Police (IG), Tafa Balogun, adopted the slogan 'Operation fire for fire' (Nigeria world Feature Article). Instead of the tough language or stance on crime, the NPF should rather adopt Community Policing whereby there is collaboration between the community and the police in ^{fighting} crimes. By this approach, the public sees the police as friends and not as enemies.

There should be increase in the number of officers recruited into the NPF. Several efforts in the past have been aimed at addressing this problem of shortage of personnel.

For example, in 1979, the government authorized the local recruitment and training of constables in the then twelve Area Command of the force. '1 area commands were authorized to recruit 500 men to increase the output of the police colleges at Ikeja, Kaduna, Enugu and Maiduguri'.³ Similarly, in 2006, Tafa Balogun, the then IG also embark on a nationwide recruitment of officers when a campaign was launched to recruit 40,000 new officers per year. Recently new officers are recruited into the NPF but how do these recruitments translate into lower crime rates is yet to be determined.

Officers should be provided with reasonable accommodation by the building of more barracks. It is obvious there is insufficient accommodation for police officers. The barracks around the country are full to the brim. As a result, some newly recruited and transferred officers, especially to big cities such as Lagos and Port-Harcourt have to share rooms with other officers because of insufficient accommodation. Sometimes many of them hang with friends and relatives outside the barracks. To address this problem, in 2002 the IG, Tafa Balogun, ordered the building of supplementary barracks accommodation.⁹ Recently, the IG, Mike Okiro has launched 'Operation Own a Home'. Its primary objective, according to the IG, is to make every serving and retired police officer a proud owner of a house. This philosophy, although started in Lagos, is intended to spread to all parts of the country.¹⁴

The NPF needs to be equipped with up-to-date communication equipment to cope with current crime wave.

It is known that in order for the police to effectively fight crimes they need to communicate effectively amongst the different command stations, and officers on beats. Without effective communication system, police job will be not only cumbersome but also ineffective. In the 1950s and the 19, for instance, there was the use of the walkie talkie as a means of communication amongst officers, however today there is the use of cell phones. The ability of officers to communicate via cellular phones is good steps in the right direction; however this may not be enough in today's world of crime. There should also be officers on duty at every police station to take calls from victims of crime or any members of the public who sees a person with suspicious behaviour. Such an on duty officer who receives calls from the public should be able to reach other officers on beats in order to respond to crime expeditiously. Thus, there should be efficient communication between the officers on the beat and those at the station. The recent effort by the Rivers State government by creating telephone directory is a good step in the right direction to improve police communication with citizen. Police officers should be paid adequate remuneration. Officers should be paid adequate salary in order for them to provide for themselves and their families, and to reduce the urge to collect road side bribes. In 2002, for instance, the IG pledged to improve the welfare package for officers. He did this by promoting 70,000 officers and ensured the payment of one year salary arrears⁹. Despite the increase welfare package, officers are still corrupt.

There should be decentralization of the Nigeria Police Force.

The NPF needs a loosely structured, decentralized, and community-oriented policing. The present situation in which the commissioners of police must obtain instructions and approval from the Inspector General of Police (IG) before responding to certain crimes situations creates problem in democratic system. Crimes such as terrorism requires quick response, and the police are suppose to respond to such crimes in a swift manner. The centralized nature of the Nigeria police does not make police at state level truly independent mere appendage of the federal government since it's the president that appoints the IG.

Provision of modern equipment for the police

The government should provide the police with logistics such as vehicles, motorcycles and bullet proves. Many state governments have acquired new vehicles for their officers, but there is no indication whether officers are armed with protected vest against high- powered ammunitions. The NPF should acquire helicopters to be able to combat crime and trail criminals from the air.

The NPF needs to recruit qualified officers. The NPF needs to recruit qualified officers especially those with criminology, sociology and psychology degrees, and those who are already recruited should be trained regularly. These officers should also

be well trained in computer software and operation to so that they can monitor and track individuals engaging in cyber crime and international criminality. There should also be a collaboration between the police and the EFCC in order to apprehend and try white-collar offenders, and collaboration between the police and other law enforcement agents such as customs, NDLEA, customs etc., who work at our borders in order to apprehend criminals who engage in child slavery, prostitution and drug trafficking.

There should be Attitudinal and Behavioural Change of police officers.

Poor attitude and behavior of uniform men and women leads to distrust and puts the police in constant confrontation with members of the public and makes crime fighting extremely difficult. Police should respect the rights of every citizen and ensure that complaints are treated equally irrespective of the gender, ethnicity and class of the individual involved.

In addition to the aforementioned proposed reforms, there should also be a total value re-orientation of our people. A change of our value system can also help to reshape and refocus the police force since their behavior is a reflection of that of the larger society. Success should not be measured in monetary terms but through achievements gained through hard work. Police corruption is driven by their desire to be materially successful because Nigeria society places so much value on monetary possessions. Police officers have gotten increases in paychecks but still yet they are corrupt. Their corruption is not because they are poor, but because they want to fulfill the Nigerian dream. More importantly, there should be a restructure of our socio-economic system by the redistribution of resources. An unequal distribution of wealth will definitely create poverty and disillusion, which certainly will lead to increase in crime. All government efforts will be fruitless if they only focus on setting up panels and commissions to reform the police, and buying more equipment for the police, and creating all sorts of task force to checkmate the activities militants and terrorist groups without dealing with the underlying causes of crime.

Conclusion

The Nigeria police have been unable to fulfill its primary responsibilities of fighting crime and protecting lives and property. Violent crimes such as armed robbery, rape, kidnapping, cultism and terrorism is on the increase and the police are lacking the ability to contain them. Moreover, the corrupt nature of most officers has put the reputation of the force in disrepute and lacking respect from members of the public. In order to improve the reputation of the police the governments have established Police Service Commission (PSC) and Police Affairs ministry and has also sets up various panels and commissions which have made recommendations for reforms. Despite the various panels and reforms the security situation of the country has continued to deteriorate. Violent crimes have taken over most urban centers in Nigeria, and the

Nigeria police seem overwhelmed to tackle them. Various theories are examined but the prevalence of violent crimes in Nigeria is analyzed using Robert Merton's anomie theory. We made several recommendations for the reforms of the police force particularly the decentralization of the police force, recruitment of qualified personnel and behavioral and attitudinal change of police officers as a way of improving police reputation and enhancing crime fighting and control in Nigeria.

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