

## STATE POLICING AND CRIME CONTROL IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

There is a growing crime problem across the length and breathe of Nigeria. It appears there is no viable security architecture to checkmate the incidence of crime that threatens life and property thereby distorting the peaceful co-existence of Nigeria/Nigerians. Undoubtedly, the establishment of Nigeria Police was meant to ensure for the security and safety of the people and society in general. However, the adopted centralized nature of policing which has restricted the right to establish, fund, manage and control the Nigeria Police by the Federal Government has made the attainable of effective policing in Nigeria a mirage. This paper argued for the creation of state policing was a panacea for effective crime control in Nigeria. the paper recommends the following: The National Assembly should amend the provision of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which allocates exclusive security ownership powers to the central government and same powers should be allocated to the Federating States in Nigeria; State governments and civil society organizations should champion the course for the establishment of State Policing in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Police, State Policing. Crime Control, Contemporary, Nigeria

### **Introduction**

The need for a decentralized police force—which would require the federating states of Nigeria to establish, fund, regulate, maintain, and control

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their own police formations—arose from concerns about the efficacy and efficiency of the nation's current centralised policing structure. Many bills proposing the establishment of State Police in each of the thirty-six States of the Federation, including the Federal Capital Territory, are currently before the National Assembly in response to calls for the decentralization of the Federal Police structure in Nigeria (Vanguard, September 28, 2016). Similar to this, the National Conference was held on March 14, 2014, along with several public hearings, town hall meetings, and security summits, in an effort to mobilize support for the enactment of existing Acts that establish state policing in Nigeria in the future.

The immediate need to supplement the Federal Police in order to improve crime control is what sparked the agitations for the establishment of the State Police. The distant goals of the call for state policing in Nigeria are to break the monopoly of policing in that country, improve effective crime control, provide jobs for indigenous people, establish a competitive policing system, establish a policing agency with greater operational environment knowledge, and have better-equipped police. (Arase, 2013; Orobator, 1993; Wegman, 2008; Langmang, 2011; Thomas, 2004; Eme and Anthony, 2011). However, some constitutional clauses seem to have given the Federal Government the exclusive right to provide security and safety, which has prevented the development of State policing in Nigeria over time. For example, Section 214, sub-section (1) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) Constitution declares: There will be a Nigerian police force, known as the Nigeria Police Force, and no other police force will be established for the federation or any part of it, subject to the provisions of this section.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution states in Section 14(b) that the government's main duty is to ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens. The Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution's Section 14(b) failed to specify which level of government—federal, state, or local—should protect the people in a federal system. Section 194 of the 1979 constitution designates the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) as the National Police Force, with exclusive jurisdiction over the entire nation (Egbosiuba, 2013). Section 215 of the 1999 constitution also stipulates that before a State Commissioner of

Police carries out an order issued by a Governor, he may *“request that the matter be referred to the President or such Minister of the government of the federation as maybe authorised in that behalf by the President for his directions”*. The President of Nigeria and any other appointee of the President, including the Minister for Police Affairs and the Inspector General of Police, have direct control over the Nigerian police force due to the aforementioned constitutional provisions. These clauses have severed the regulatory stake that the various federating States had in the Nigeria Police's operations. The underlying premise is that Nigerian State Policing cannot be established due to certain constitutional provisions.

Prior to the Nigeria Police Force's establishment in 1820, several constituent units had unique autonomous police structures (Obirisagbon & Omagie, 2018). The different ethnic nationalities that make up modern-day Nigeria had some form of community-based police service prior to the arrival of British colonial rule. These included secret societies like the Ogboni and Oro cults in the south-west and the Ekpe cult among the Efiks in the south-south, as well as the highly developed age-grade system among the Igbos of southeast Nigeria. Before the arrival of colonial rule, similar organizations were also in place in Benue Province, where community watch groups like the Tiv "Mbakwav (age grade)" and "Mbayev Kyaiaor (youth)" and the Idoma "(Olode) community policing group" were used for social and criminal control. In order to maintain law and order, they policed the behavior of community members, punished those who disobeyed, protected their communities from outside aggression, promoted peace, and reduced crime (Anyo and Zunve, 2020). These platforms can be included, in modern terms, into State policing frameworks that predated colonialism and were terminated by the British colonial government in stateless communities.

The British introduced various aspects of their government, including their policing systems, into their colonial enclaves. To further the objectives of the British colonial government, the British established the contemporary Nigerian police, which are armed and separate from the general populace. The approximately 400 ethnic groups that make up modern-day Nigeria were subjected to colonial rule by British colonialists between 1861 and

1904; in order to safeguard their colonial interests, the British established police forces and constabularies (Tamuno, 1970; 1985; 1993). These quasi-military forces and constabularies were made up of strangers in the communities where they were stationed, and they carried weapons. This was a planned practice. In order to guarantee that these officials, when sent on a punitive expedition, would behave as an army of occupation and employ the utmost violence to compel the populace to submit and remain loyal, it sought to distance the police from the communities they were supposed to serve. This explains why, even in a democratic system where the police are supposed to protect citizens' rights, the Nigeria Police Force brutalizes and dehumanizes Nigerians (Tamuno, 1970; 1985; 1993).

In 1861, colonial decree established a consular guard consisting of thirty men, whose main duty was to maintain public order and peace. This marked the beginning of Nigeria's centralised police system. Tamuno (1970) states that the Hausa guard, which was led by an Inspector General, replaced the consular guard in 1863. The Hausa guard was then expanded into the Hausa constabulary in 1879. The Royal Niger Company took charge of law enforcement when colonial economic activity increased, particularly in coastal regions where profitable trade in wood, oil, and local gin was conducted. In 1888, the Royal Niger Constabulary was formed by repurposing the remnants of the Hausa Constabulary. Their activities were mostly focused on the coast (Tamuno, 1970). The current police force was essentially established with the goals of upholding the status quo and maintaining order.

The Nigeria Police Force, which was reorganized in 1930 and has its headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, is governed by the Inspector General of Police. The Nigeria Police Force was formed by the colonial fiat of merging the Southern Nigeria Regiment and the Northern Nigeria Police Force. Since then, the composition of the Nigeria Police Force has changed significantly, both in terms of the types of crimes it polices and in terms of the particular concepts involved in policing a society as complex and fast evolving as ours (Tamuno, 1985; 1993). Nonetheless, the Nigeria Police Force's responsibilities and roles have not been dispersed to support State Policing,

in which States with varying degrees of autonomy are permitted to create their own law enforcement agencies. The Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution gives the Nigeria Police Force its law enforcement authority. They are the top legally recognized organization, empowered by the constitution to uphold law and order, deter and combat crime, and offer security and safety for everyone living in Nigeria as well as for their belongings (ies). According to Section (4) of the Police Act, the responsibilities of the Nigerian police include preventing and detecting crimes, apprehending offenders, maintaining law and order, safeguarding property, and properly enforcing all laws and regulations that they are directly charged with. The question here is whether the Nigeria Police Force can fulfill these duties in the country's post-independence environment, where crime is rising and population is rapidly expanding?

There were hopes that the Nigeria Police would be reorganized and refocused from a colonial occupation force to one established to serve the people when Nigeria gained independence in 1960 (Tamuno, 1993). Although it hasn't happened, this nightmare has persisted. In an effort to hold onto power and win the allegiance and compliance of the populace, Nigerians who seized control of the country's political administrations from their colonial overlords found it expedient to keep the colonial police apparatus in place as a tool of coercion. The ceremonial oath that changed the Nigeria Police Force's (NPF) allegiance from the British Crown to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and replaced their previous crests bearing the British Crown symbol with the Federal Coat of Arms did not reorganize or reposition the police force to serve the interests of the people. According to Tamuno (1985), the Nigeria Police Force is still a centralized police system that usually consists of one sizable, indivisible system that is in charge of policing the entire society. This suggests that there is institutional, administrative, and operational centralization within the Nigeria Police Force. Because of the Nigeria Police Force's centralization, their efforts to combat crime in the country's semi-autonomous states are nothing more than illusions.

The Nigerian government has not recognized the need to decentralize the Nigeria Police Force in order to address the nation's mounting security challenges, despite the country's population explosion, sophisticated criminality, and global policing practices and trends. The number of people living in Nigeria is growing daily, but the number of police officers in the country is either staying the same or declining due to retirement, death, or frequent termination due to serious misconduct by officers (Mobolaji & Alabi, 2014). According to the most recent United Nations estimates, Nigeria is home to over 250 million people. The population of Nigeria makes up 2.55% of the global population. Nigeria is ranked seventh among the nations with the highest population density. Nigeria has 211 persons per km<sup>2</sup> (or 545 persons per mi<sup>2</sup>). There are 910,802 Km<sup>2</sup> (351,662 sq. miles) of land total. 95,764,092 people, or 49.9% of the population, live in cities as of 2021. According to <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population>, the median age in Nigeria is 18. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which employs roughly 371,800 people, is the country's main law enforcement organization. 36 State commands organized into 12 zones and 7 administrative organs make up the enormous Nigeria Police ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria\\_Police\\_Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria_Police_Force)).

Nigeria has a ratio of 1:400 police officers to citizens, which increases the gap between the population's need for security and the ability of the centralized police force to address peoples' safety concerns. In comparison to the population of its citizens, Nigeria's police to citizen ratio is lower than that recommended by the United Nations. The United Nations states that there should be 222 police officers for every lakh citizens. The establishment of State policing as the magic bullet for efficient policing in Nigeria is triggered by factors such as population density and police activity. The Nigeria Police Force has faced issues with inefficiency over the years due to understaffing, which has left them underrepresented in Nigerian communities. Scholars and policy makers have blamed institutional corruption and financial difficulties for the Nigeria Police's inefficiency, ignoring the stark shortage of officers and men needed to police the country's densely populated society. One of the obstacles to effective policing in Nigeria is the Nigeria Police Force's exclusive jurisdiction over official operations (Anyo and Yecho, 2020).

(Anyo and Yecho, 2020) state that the Nigeria Police Force's duties of maintaining public order, preventing crime, and defending the lives and property of Nigerians have been transferred to other sister Federal government-established security agencies due to the force's apparent manpower shortage. Nigeria's police force is becoming increasingly ineffective due to a lack of personnel, as evidenced by the establishment of crime control agencies such as the Nigeria Civil Defense and Security Corps, the recently advocated for Peace Corps of Nigeria, the Department of State Security Service, the Federal Road Safety Commission, the Nigeria Customs Service, and the Nigeria Immigration Service. These agencies are derived from the statutory functions of the Nigeria Police Force, with the exception of prosecutorial duties. The entities to which the Nigeria Police's powers were assigned are still Federal government establishments, whose operations are not widely dispersed and over which State governments have no authority, leaving the populace in severe need of local security. The centralised nature of the Nigerian police in the face of the country's population explosion provides a better explanation for the country's internal security challenges. This makes it easier for criminals to operate in Nigeria, putting citizens' lives and property at risk.

From political and justice professional perspectives, increasing police numbers and policing structures has long been accepted as an effective way to prevent crime through deterrence and increase apprehension rates; evidence from the empirical literature does consistently support this assertion (Eck & Maguire, 2006; Sherman, Gottfredson, Mackenzie, 1997). There is, in fact, evidence to support the idea that fewer crimes occur when there are more police officers on the scene (Eck & Maguire, 2006; Klinger, 2004). Ultimately, State Policing would enable all 36 of Nigeria's states to create their own police forces; as a result, more officers would be hired to join the police at both the federal and state levels, increasing their representation in all Nigerian communities and enhancing crime control.

### **Conceptual issues and Theoretical Framework**

This section of the paper examines conceptual issues and theoretical framework. Here, the concepts of State, State policing, crime control and

contemporary are conceptualized while conflict theory is adopted as the theoretical framework for the paper.

**Police:** The main focus of this talk is state policing, which is a phenomenon that requires an explanation of the history of law enforcement as well as an examination of the definitions of police, policing, and crime control. The term "police" designates a state agency created by the state's current laws, whose main responsibilities are maintaining order and enforcing the law. The Greek words *politeuein*, which means to be a citizen or participate in politics, and *polis*, which means a city or state, are related to the English word "police" (Roberg, Crank, and Kuykendall, 2000). In this context, police serve as agents of the law, upholding public order, and gathering intelligence. Thus, the police are the major representatives of the criminal justice system in their transactions with citizens. They are also the major emergency arm of the community in times of personal and public crisis. In carrying out their mandate, the police possess a vital monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Reiss, 1971).

According to Bowden (1978), the roles of the police include acting as a go-between for the elite and the general public as well as carrying out the crucial holding operation against the malcontents until military force can be used in a way that is both punitive and beneficial. The police's role in an authoritarian and economically unequal society will be primarily to uphold the status quo of political oppression and economic inequality. On the other hand, police are more likely to offer services that advance democracy and development in a democratic society (Alemika, 1993). Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that the police play a variety of roles in society, depending on the sociopolitical and economic climate at the time. Alemika (1995) asserts that policing is the use of various State intelligence and security forces, police operations, and other measures to deter and suppress behavior, actions, and orientations that pose a threat to the established social order in order to coerce and/or ideologically regiment social life.

**Policing:** According to Nwolise (2004), policing entails resolving conflicts. From an analytical perspective, policing encompasses the various formal

and informal institutions and groups that regulate social relations and practices to ensure community members' safety and conformity to societal norms and values (Nwogwugwu and Adewale, 2015). Thus, it is a subset of control procedures that include "building surveillance systems and threatening to punish deviants who are found, either immediately or by starting a legal process, or both" (Reiner 2000). Community organizations and state agencies with the authority to enforce laws are both involved in policing. However, community policing organizations that engage in operations to maintain social order and safety are not the same as the police. There cannot be a society without police. Though historical evidence suggests otherwise (Tamuno, 1970; 1985; and 1993; Newburn, 2004; Obiekezie, 1986; and Nwolise, 2004), societies have existed without formal police forces.

**State Policing:** According to Arase (2018), a State Police 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. State police portends the establishment of a police formation that is owned, managed, mobilized and assessed solely by State government and within a geographically defined State. It is a policing approach that seeks to devolve the control of the Police by the Federal government and gives the component States the regulatory stake in policing. The benefits of this strategy for crime control are highlighted by proponents of state policing (Roberg, Novak, Cordner & Smith, 2012; Conklin, 2007; Bewaji & Amolegbe, 2015). Beyond ownership, State police, according to Roberg (2012), support strong community partnerships, close police-community relationships, and an expansive understanding of police responsibility. A few philosophical schools have also criticized the federal police's existence as the only police organization under federalism.

Regretfully, the so-called "small crimes" are widespread in the community and frequently serve as the impetus for more serious crimes (Roberg, 2012; Hughes & Kroehler, 2002). State police are viewed as a "specially organized and highly trained body, acting under State rather than local authority, and constantly employed in the prevention of crime, the apprehension of

criminals, and the protection of life and property generally throughout the State and especially in the rural and sparsely settled districts" by the Committee of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology (Corcoran, 1924).

**Crime control:** According to Dambazau (2007), crime control is a pattern of beliefs and actions aimed at lowering the risk of crime, boosting people's feelings of safety and security, improving their quality of life, and creating conditions that prevent crime from occurring. It also refers to the foresight, identification, and evaluation of crime risk as well as the start of measures to lessen or eliminate it. He goes on to say that the concepts of problem-solving, apprehending, prosecuting, and rendering criminals incapable of committing new crimes are all part of crime control. Therefore, the goal of controlling crime is to immediately lessen the current state of crime, and the discovery of previous criminal behavior is the foundation for making necessary corrections. Okunola (2002) asserts that controlling the factors that lead to criminal activity is the fundamental component of crime control. To put it another way, the key to crime control is a pattern of beliefs and actions aimed at lowering the risk of crime as well as raising people's feelings of safety and security in order to improve their quality of life and create conditions that prevent crime from occurring (Dambazau, 2007; Okunola, 2002). Crime control encompasses the entire criminal justice system, including the police, courts, and prisons; it also includes informal policing alternatives like vigilante groups and community watch programs. Crime control involves the community, the government, and individual citizens. According to paragraph 3 of the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, crime control is defined as: Strategies and actions aimed at lowering the likelihood of crimes happening as well as their possible negative impacts on people and society, such as fear of crime, by addressing their various root causes.

Crime control models differ amongst nations. Three perspectives have been adopted by criminologists, according to Robert (2003): primary, secondary, and tertiary controls. The main objective of control is to alter the external circumstances that either encourage or hinder criminal activity. Increasing

efforts, lowering the risk of crime, and lowering the reward for potential offenders are the three main issues at hand, with the police being the primary focus at this point. Secondary control entails identifying possible offenders early on and making an effort to stop criminal behavior before it starts. Put another way, its goal is to transform individuals, particularly those who are highly susceptible to pursuing a criminal career, before they take that step. Propaganda, the mass media, and other entities and organizations such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are all involved. Actual offenders and interventions meant to stop more crimes are the focus of tertiary control. It also emphasizes how the length, gravity, and frequency of offenses can be reduced during a criminal career.

**Theoretical Framework:** The foundation of conflict theory is Karl Marx's (1818–1883) writings. According to conflict theory, society is always reacting to social conflict and inequality. According to conflict theorists, social change brought about by social conflict is the norm. Conflict theorists contend that the institutions that provide dominant groups with their wealth, power, and status ensure that subordinate groups are treated as royals. This produces social order. Regarding the establishment and operations of the police, conflict theorists maintain that the force was created in reaction to a threat to the social order in order to protect the dominant hegemony's interests. As can be seen from the above, police are organized against the vast majority in a country where there are severe political and socioeconomic divides between the oppressed majority and the ruling minority (Alemika, 1993).

In light of the conflict theory's aforementioned claims, there are three (3) parts of government in the federal system of governance, arranged hierarchically. The local government is at the base of the pyramid, with the federal government at the top and the state government in the middle. As a result, under the exclusive list of powers, the Federal government of Nigeria has taken precedence over the other elements of federalism, including state and local governments. As a result, the Federal government is required to use lawful force against other system elements, making it a dominant State structure. It is implied that the Nigeria Police Force was founded by the

federal government as a centralized social control tool to uphold its total security hegemony over state and local governments. Thus, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) Constitution's Section 214, Sub-section (1) stipulates that: Subject to the provisions of this section, no other police force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof; there shall be a police for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force. The aforementioned constitutional clause opposes the creation of a state police force in Nigeria. State governments in Nigeria, however, are pushing for the establishment of a state police force, which would require a constitutional amendment to make it possible for the establishment of a state police force in Nigeria.

### **State Policing: A Panacea to Effective Crime Control**

Certain nation-states have implemented state policing in an effort to secure better security for people and property through effective crime control. Several nations have embraced state policing after realizing its benefits, including Mexico, the United States of America, Germany, and others. According to Conklin (2007), states with federalist systems have unique state police. According to Roberg (2012), there are three types of police in the United States of America (USA): citizen-police, private police, and public police. According to Roberg (2012), there are 18,000 public police agencies in the United States, and 15,833 of those agencies, or 90% of the total, are local police, which includes parish, city, town, village, borough, and county police. This suggests that the United States of America runs its own federal, state, and local police agencies, making policing a widespread endeavor that guarantees efficient crime control.

The goal of multipolicing structures being established in the USA and other countries is to put security right at the doorstep of the populace. Similar to how every province in Argentina has its own independent police force, every state in Mexico has state police. Every State and territory in India has a State police as well as a unique police service (Roberg, 2012). Most nations that practice true federalism, which permits the decentralization of central government powers, have adopted the State police system. Nigeria, a federal state, hasn't decentralized its law enforcement system, though. Without

effective crime control organizations to slow it down, crime will continue to grow as a result of Nigeria's centralized policing model.

Because of the inefficiency of centralized policing, crime control in Nigeria appears to have remained elusive. The Nigeria Police have not yet been able to keep crime under control in a way that guarantees the security of Nigerians' lives and property. The Nigeria Police unfamiliarity with the environment in which they are deployed to police, their insensitivity to the values and belief systems of the indigenous communities they police, the cost and time-consuming nature of their services, and their general institutional, administrative, and operational challenges are the main causes of the ineffectiveness of crime control agencies in Nigeria (Anyo, 2021).

Both the government and the populace of Nigeria are interested in achieving sustainable security. In actuality, security issues are present throughout the country of Nigeria. The advent of new security challenges such as kidnapping, insurgency, terrorism, and armed banditry that have gained prominence in the world shows how ubiquitous these issues are in Nigeria and how there are almost no effective State security agencies to counter these threats. This has raised doubts about the State's ability to provide security. State governments in Nigeria have been pushing for the establishment of State Police in order to support the Federal Police's efforts in their jurisdiction and address the growing challenges of insecurity in both rural and urban communities (Anyo, 2021).

It appears that the Federal Government is the only entity with the authority to create statutory security agencies in Nigeria, whose job it is to protect people and property. The Federal Government's commendable efforts to maintain law and order are demonstrated by the establishment of State security agencies like the Nigeria Police Force, State Security Service, Nigeria Civil Defence and Security Corps, Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigeria Custom Service, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, and even the Armed Forces. These organizations are funded by the federal government and authorized by law to carry out particular security and law enforcement-related tasks. The Federating States of Nigeria appear to be dissatisfied with

the services these State agencies are offering. This might be as a result of their failure to control the growing wave of security threats. The agitations for the establishment of State policing to supplement the security needs of the society appear to have been caused by the growing number of insecurity challenges in Nigeria. Due to obstacles to the actualization of State policing in Nigeria, state governments have established alternative security groups like AMOTEKUN in Southwest Nigeria and the Benue Community Volunteer Guard in Benue State (Anyo, 2021).

In order to improve security across all of Nigeria's states, State police were established with the intention of expanding the field of policing while limiting police operations to a single State (Eme and Anthony, 2011). By guaranteeing that a significant portion of the staff is comprised of native residents of the state, state policing will also improve local policing (Wilson, 2005). It seems that Nigeria's federal government is adamant about the benefits of state policing under the democratic system. It can be further argued that Nigeria's central government opposes the establishment of State policing agencies because it wants to regain control over security. Nigeria's state governments have made a variety of financial interventions to improve the Nigeria Police Force's overall effectiveness, but the country's centralized police structure is underfunded (Eme and Anthony, 2011). These interventions are evident in the way that operational logistics, like patrol vans, are provided. Nigeria's semi-autonomous states have shown they have the financial wherewithal to establish and support State police, as evidenced by their ability to provide funds for the purchase of uniforms, safety boots, cutting-edge communication devices, and salaries for vigilantes who perform better on the job. From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the State Government's sponsorship of vigilante groups demonstrates their ability to oversee State policing once it is put into place.

Because most police officers are stationed in isolated areas and lack familiarity with the local languages and topography, criminals, particularly kidnappers who operate in densely forested areas, have an advantage over them (Adegoke, 2014). The assignment of officers to police in a foreign setting is one of the problems that has made the Nigeria Police Force

ineffectual in combating crime. Acquiring intelligence is essential to improving crime prevention. The Nigerian Police Force's officers and men are unfamiliar with their surroundings, and a language barrier has hindered their ability to function effectively. The implementation of state policing throughout the Nigerian states would enable the hiring and deployment of native inhabitants who possess accurate knowledge of their working environment. This would have a favourable effect on Nigeria's overall crime control.

The State government will be able to keep an eye on the police's operations thanks to the establishment of the State police, preventing power abuse by the force. Governor Akinwunmi Ambode's decision to bar Vehicle Inspection Officers from Lagos' roads due to egregious misconduct is a prime example (Arase, 2013). The majority of their excesses were caused by the Nigeria Police Force's lack of closed supervision. The President, the Inspector General, and the Police Commissioners of Police oversee the centralized police force in Nigeria. As a result, their operations and activities are uncontrolled and unsupervised by the government or state governors. The creation of the State police would require the State Governors and the Chairmen of Local Governments to oversee the police directly and closely in order to rein in their abuses. The state and local governments' strict oversight of the state police will act as a wake-up call for the federal government to oversee the federal police.

One benefit of state policing is that it results in the provision of operational goods for police, including both soft and hard items (Orobator, 1993). These consist of patrol cars, radios, and personal defense equipment like bulletproof jackets, hard hats, and functional cars. The Nigeria Police Force's near total lack of operational equipment is one of its flaws. No security formation in existence today functions as well without equipment. The State Governors would be required to use the security voltage they receive from the Federation account on a monthly basis if State Policing was established. The misappropriation of the security intervention funds that State Governors have neglected to account for would be lessened by state policing. Better equipment for more effective crime control would result from the

state governor's security vote funding the state's established police. Although there are job opportunities in the current centralized police structure, the majority of officers are not native to the states in which they are employed (Thomas, 2004). However, according to Uwa (2013), cited in (Wegman, 2008), the current staff strength of the Nigerian police is biased in favour of a specific region at the expense of other regions. Nigeria faces difficulties related to unemployment in all of the member states. Young men with potential are idle; in Nigeria, human capital is actually underutilized. When State policing was established in Nigeria, job opportunities for unemployed individuals were created within the State police service. The employment rate in society would decline as a result of these job opportunities. For example, the creation of the Benue Community Volunteer Guard in the state of Benue has made a significant contribution to the decline in local unemployment.

One benefit of the State policing agenda, according to Langmang (2011), is that more States will compete favourably with one another in terms of security provision. A crucial instrument for exposing inefficiencies and ending an agency's monopoly is competition. When agencies are in competition with one another, service delivery becomes more efficient and effective. The Nigeria Police Force and other State police formations would compete with one another as a result of State policing being established in Nigeria. This competition would be in the aspects of effective policing for enhanced protection of lives and properties, competing for relevance in terms of safeguarding the fundamental rights of the people while policing, competition in the aspects of adoption of modern and advanced policing operational tactics, and the acquisition and utilisation of crime fighting equipment for enhanced crime control.

The best justification for state policing is that it adheres to the federalism principle, which is the foundation of Nigeria's constitution. Section 2 subsection 2 of the 1999 Constitution divides the authority of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, a Federal State, between the 36 States of the federation and the federal government. The national assembly is in charge of making laws at the federal level, and state houses of assembly carry out similar tasks

within the bounds set by the legislative list in the second schedule of the constitution (Section 4 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria). More so, the executive powers of the federation are by virtue of section 5 (1) of Nigeria 1999 constitution vested in the President while that of the States are vested in the Governors. The exercise of these executive powers on both cases extend to the execution and maintenance of the constitution and all laws made by either the National or State Assemblies, as may be appropriate.

Once upon a time, Lagos State Governor Babatunde Fashola contended that every State with the authority to enact laws through legislators and State Assemblies and to render judgments through magistrates and State High Courts also needed the authority to police and enforce laws within the State (Onwuzuligbo, 2012). This is an expansion of Nigeria's Federal and State Court systems' operation under the federalism principle (Section 6 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution). Thus, without the State police, federalism would be incomplete. In more advanced federating societies, there are Federal and State police. For instance, the American federal system has Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), State Police establishments and City or County Police. The provision according to section 215 (4) of 1999 constitution of Nigeria is unequivocal that a State Commissioner of police shall be at liberty to refer a directive given by a State Governor to the President before acting on them. This implies that the Nigeria Police Force is not a creation of component States hence State Governors have no control over their operations.

The demand for the establishment of the State Police in Nigeria has been conditioned by the gradual rise in the number of sophisticated crimes, killings, and security threats over time, as well as by the powerlessness, carelessness, and sluggishness of the country's centrally administered police force (Ehindero, 2012). The fundamental claim is that because of their current organizational structure, the police are estranged from the general public and would be less effective if they were part of the State police, who would be more familiar with the local community and terrain. The conviction held by many that security is a local issue best handled by those who know the area well has been reinforced by the effectiveness and

efficiency of local militias such as the Vigilante Groups, Bakassi boys, Egbesu boys, and Oodua People's Congress (OPC). In keeping with the previous point, there is also the argument that Nigeria is too big and diverse for its security issues to be overly centralized.

A nation that frequently suffers from unneeded bureaucracies and administrative bottlenecks wastes time on unimportant things like sending troops to put down an uprising (Adedeji, 2012). The protracted procedure of obtaining authorization from the Inspector-General of Police prior to initiating measures to suppress insurrection or security threats within a particular State exacerbates the nation's security predicament. Specialization, efficiency, and proactivity are encouraged by decentralization. This can be achieved, among other things, by giving an independent commission or body authority over the selection, training, and dismissal of State Police Chiefs. We shouldn't pretend otherwise because the current structural control over the police in Nigeria has an impact on the police and does not truly represent federalism. Nigeria had both local and regional government police when it gained independence. If they were left to blossom, the system would not have allowed the security of Nigerians to degenerate to the current abysmal level.

Without a doubt, the implementation of state policing in Nigeria would have a favourable effect on the reduction of crime. State policing, however, is not without flaws. A drawback of state police is that state governors may misuse their authority to further their own political agendas, particularly when trying to thwart their rivals in elections (Buzan, 1991). The argument put forth by those who oppose the establishment of the State police is that "power corrupts absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Arase, 2018). Certain states in Nigeria are having financial difficulties covering the pension and gratuity of their employees and retirees. States like Ekiti, Ondo, Kogi, Benue, Oyo, and Kwara are among those we have. It's possible that these States can't adequately fund their state police. Therefore, the establishment of the State police will put an additional financial strain on those federation's constituent units (Ugwuoke, 2011). In terms of internal security of life and property, the police represent national unity (Chan 1997). Centralized

management of internal security may be eliminated by the creation of state police, and individual state structures may be adopted. This could have a detrimental impact on national cooperation and coordination in policing, leading to disparities in crime control. There are worries that state governors, faced with boundary conflicts, might deploy their police forces to put an end to neighborly conflicts.

### **Conclusion**

Following the military regime's overthrow and the liberalization and democratization of the country's economy, the constituent states of Nigeria have united in their demand for the decentralization of the country's currently centralized police structure. The Federal Police is in a state of flux, marked by incompetent crime control, which is why there is such agitation for the establishment of State police. The need for a plural policing structure stems from the fact that the Federal police are understaffed, underequipped, and lack resources. In light of these conditions, it seems likely that the search for a state-policing model will supplement the efforts of the federal police to improve crime control. Several times in the National Assembly, attempts to firmly establish State policing as part of Nigeria's security framework have failed. In order to effectively control crime in Nigeria, people-oriented policing strategies could be strengthened by the entrenchment of State policing initiatives. State policing may be able to offer creative ideas for how Federal and State policing agencies might collaborate to manage crime in Nigeria under various political and economic circumstances.

The Federal Police may currently have a disproportionate amount of control over crime, which has made it harder to control crime in Nigeria's densely populated areas. The use of the self-help justice system has become common in Nigerian rural and urban communities due to relatively frequent lapses in crime control caused by the positive aspects of centralised policing. Because of the growing security concerns in Nigeria, there has been a lot of push for state policing. In the upcoming years, more funding and laws may be directed toward the devolution and decentralization of the central policing structure in order to improve the effectiveness of crime control. Until a decentralized policing system is established, crime control in Nigeria is still largely unattainable.

## Recommendations

The study recommends the following among others:

- I. The National Assembly should amend the provision of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which allocates exclusive security ownership powers to the central government and same powers should be allocated to the Federating States in Nigeria.
- ii. State governments should agitate more for the establishment State police. This is because State Policing would complement Federal Police in controlling crimes, security of political personnel, deterring crimes such as terrorism, kidnapping, banditry and fraud and misbehaviours such as ganging, vandalism, loitering, accosting for money, drug abuse, sexual misbehaviours and minor assaults within their domain.

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