

**A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY JOURNAL**

*Of the*



**JSGS**

**School of General Studies  
Delta State Polytechnic  
Ogwashi-Uku**

**Vol. 1. No. 1 December, 2014  
ISSN: 1123-9010**

© JSGS, School of General Studies, Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku

This Journal is a Publication of the  
**School of General Studies**  
**Delta State Polytechnic**  
**Ogwashi-Uku**

**Vol. 1. No. 1 December, 2014**  
**ISSN: 1123-9010**

**All Rights Reserved.**

For Copyright permission contact

**The Editor**

**JSGS**

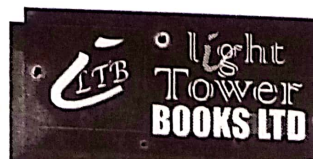
**School of General Studies**

**Delta State Polytechnic,**

**Ogwashi-Uku**

**07061528796**

**Designed & Printed by**



**Kennokoh@yahoo.com**  
**08034664561, 08152838614**



## PROMOTION OF NIGERIA'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE BY THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE

By

**OGBITEN BRICKSON OGBEMI**  
Dept of Mass-communication  
Delta State Polytechnic  
Ogwashi-uku

**ATAKE ODJUVWUEDERIE JOHN**  
Dept of Humanities & Arts.  
Delta State Polytechnic  
Ogwashi-uku

### Abstract

*The Nigeria Police Force has contributed much to peace keeping, maintenance of law, order, training and development of police personnel in other countries. The Police Force has used its membership of Interpol to prevent trans-border crimes. That is why the Force has laudable image abroad. However, the Police Force has always been rejected by Nigerians since its foundation by the British and it has always been at logger head with the public. In the post independent era the Nigeria government redefined the goals of the force as contained in the police Act, yet the force continues to have strained relationship with the public who perceive it as an instrument of state oppression. The involvement of the police in politics derailed her during the military era. It left negative effects on the police personnel and equipment. The consequence is the frustration being vented on the public who sees the police as criminals in uniform. This study highlights the contrasting image of the Police Force abroad as good peace keepers and at home as criminals in uniform. The researchers used both primary and secondary sources. There are many social ills in the country, especially bribery and corruption, which are working against the social, economic, political, and psychological development of Nigerians and the country as a whole. As an institution saddled with the responsibility of maintenance of law and order citizenship education is an avenue and tool by which the educational system can produce a force that is capable of taking the task of nation-building seriously. If the living condition of the police is improved upon and good equipment are provided there will be a change of attitude by the police with a positive impact on Nigerians.*

### Introduction

**T**he Nigeria Police Force is highly rated in the international community because of its contributions to international peace keeping; restoration of peace and stability, training and re-training of police personnel in some countries. As a member of the Interpol, the Nigeria Police Force has also helped to facilitate a crackdown on organized



trans-border crimes. Indeed the Nigeria police force has created a good and positive image for Nigeria in the international community by performing effectively in international assignments.

On the contrary, the Nigeria police force does not command much respect among Nigerians. The reasons are obvious the abysmal performance of the police in Nigeria is a fall-out of the Police involvement in politics: poor and outdated equipment, poor welfare package, inadequate training and exposure to citizenship values that will enable the men and officers of the force appreciate the present and full role expected of them in the challenging task of nation building (Obasi and Erondu,1999 p25). The ever soured relationship between the citizenry and the force are some of the reasons why the police is most unpopular in Nigeria (Atake,1999). It has been hypothetically proven in other countries that any successful police force in the world relies on the support and encouragement of members of the public to gather reliable information to curb crime and to generate positive response on government policies, programmes as well as other national issues.

The conflict of acceptance of the Nigeria Police Force in the international community and the near rejection by the Nigerian citizenry of its Police Force is a complex problem. This paper will attempt to address the problem by examining the Nigeria Police Force and domestic security, the engagements of the Nigeria Police Force in international assignment, the Nigeria Police and Interpol, the Nigeria Police Force and the international image of Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The systems theory is most relevant to this work because it explains series of statements about the relationship among independent variables in which changes in one variable is accompanied by changes in other variables or combination of variables. Notable scholars of the theory include Talcot Parson, David Easton, Gabriel Almond, Karl Deusch and a host of others. Anatol Rapoport as cited in Michael(1989) stated that a system which functions as a whole by virtue of interdependence of its parts is the method which aims at discovering how this is done in the widest variety of system has been called general system theory.

Analytically, the independent variables in this case are poor leadership, corruption, administrative ineptitude, aiding and abetting of criminals etc. A change in any of these variables is accompanied by a change in others and sometimes violent changes.



Citizenship education can therefore be used to inculcate good morals and values into the police force.

Citizenship Education is a political socialization process whereby individual members of a state are made, to know and love their country; to understand the place of government in it; and then, to appreciate their rights and obligations towards the state (Otete and Dodo, 2006:7). Citizenship Education should not be seen as a subject taught to students in schools; but, as a process whereby the government, media, and public institutions, inform, teach or train members of the state to do that which is necessary for the common good in the interests of peace, order, security, and health of their community and the nation as a whole. Citizenship education and enlightenment can easily be achieved through the use of mass communication.

Udeze (2005, P.3-4) asserted that mass communication is the process of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes to many people usually through a medium. This kind of communication has its channels- radio, television, newspapers, magazines, books etc. The information carried by these channels can be received by different people in different places at the same time. Effective communication is therefore very important for good citizenship education

### **Nigeria Police Force and Domestic Security**

The foundation of the Nigeria Police Force dates back to the Colonial times when the British had to use the police force as machinery of repression against Nigerians. This phenomenon continued under the military during the post independent era. In the same vein, the police force has not fared better during the various democratic experiments. At best, they were used to protect the interest of the political office holders. These politicians gave little or no consideration to the recruitment, qualifications, welfare and general interest of police officers.

The consequence of this abandonment is vented on the masses that the police interact with on daily basis. The total dislike of Nigeria Police Force by the Public was first displayed in 1962 when the police football team though won a challenge cup in Lagos, were greeted as "thieves". These insulting jeers were resented by the police (Orobator, 1993:385). The police was conceived, not as a service organization for natives but as an instrument of oppression. The Police Force was used by colonial masters to harass and arrest tax defaulters, brutalize trade Unionists, nationalists and tortured some persons wrongly accused of criminal offences. It could be seen therefore, that from the beginning,



a serious communication gap was built between the police and public.

The problem created by this unfortunate fact of history has affected not only police public relations but also the public perception of police role” (Orobator 1993:396). These incidents and the public perception of the Nigeria Police Force have created negative image and bad public relations for the force. Public Relations according to Achison (2005), is often used in the following senses:

- \* Relationship with individuals or groups, which comprises an organization's publics (the Police Force)
- \* Ways and means used to achieve favourable relationship with any of the sub-publics
- \* The quality of an institutions'(police) relationship with its public.

The negative perception of the Nigeria Police Force has no doubt affected its performance and it has emphasized the need to reposition the force.

Repositioning an organization like the police force according to Ogbemi (2014:4) involves,

- \* anticipating, analyzing and interpreting opinion, attitude, future trends and issues which might be relevant to any section of the organization
- \* establishing and maintaining a two-way communication between the organization and its various public in order to win the cooperation of the society

However, the Nigeria Police Force and the government of Nigeria have tried to re-define the goals of the Nigeria Police Force as contained in the Police Act Cap 359 of the 1990 which amended the Police Act of 1958 that provided for the functions of the police. These functions are classified into three groups:

1. The power to prevent and detect crime, the apprehension of offenders
2. The protection of property and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations of which they are directly charged.
3. The preservation of law and order
4. To perform such military duties within or without Nigeria as may be required of them or under authority of this or any other Act.

It is in regards to the function of the Nigeria Police Force as highlighted above that the force could be perceived by members of the public as a service organization for Nigerians. These measures and others that have been brought in over the years are no doubt efforts to improve the relationship between the police and members of the public in order



to make positive public impression.

### **Nigerian Police Force Participation in Military Government**

However, with the military intervention in Nigeria politics, "Police Participation in military government made them (Police) to perform legislative, executive and judicial functions. Executive, in that the Inspector-General was a member of the Federal Executive Council; while the Commissioners of Police were members of State Executive Councils. The Police became part of the Policy making body for the Country. The police was also part of the law makers (legislature), they initiated and/or discussed all decrees and edicts before they were passed throughout the country. This was in addition to performing their traditional role as law enforcement agents (Asemota, 1993: 397). The effect of the involvement of the police in the legislative, Executive and Judicial functions of government is the reduction of its policing efficiency. The end result was rather than provide adequate man-power and all necessary equipment to enhance police efficiency, "short cut" methods were employed and standard lowered.

The unfortunate involvement of the police in government has inflicted much danger on the role of the police. This is why the police is finding it difficult to adjust in a constitutional democracy. Arising from the above, is the lack of efficiency being displayed by officers and men of the Nigeria Police Force as a result of lack of equipment, dilapidated Barracks, and poor standards that have bred a corrupt Nigeria Police Force. Generally, a military barrack is by far standard inhabitable compared to a police barrack.

A practical example is the Nigeria Police Force Barrack in "A" Division Warri, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Amphibious Battalion Barrack Effurun, the NNS Delta Barrack, all in Warri, Delta State. (based on visit and oral interview). This poor state of the Nigeria police barrack in Warri, speaks for other police barracks throughout Nigeria ("Vanguard" editorial, 2005). Why should Nigeria Policemen and officers live in poor dilapidated barracks and men of the Nigeria Army, Navy and Air Force well housed?

The nature of the job of a policeman necessitates living in a secluded and well protected environment because it is an indisputable fact that every police officer is a target of criminals, drug barons and hoodlums. A police officer also needs to live in secluded and protected area to avoid distraction and unnecessary contact with the public except when on duty. This analogy has become inevitable since the ever soured relationship of the police and the public has grown tremendously.

Of all the forces in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Nigeria Police Force is the



worse catered-for. The huge amount of money being budgeted by the Federal government for the Nigeria police is either being shabbily released to a non-performing minister of police affairs and, or an Inspector General of Police who lacks the vision of a leader. How else can the leadership of the Police Force explain the late and poor payment of its officers and men? Why should a mobile police officer, mobilized from Borno State to serve in Delta State have his salary and allowances paid in Borno State? The poor payment system is one of the reasons why the mobile policemen collect N20 and N100 notes from motorists to enable them feed daily. What a way to serve their father land! The police is not supported materially and psychologically enough to perform its duties. The increase in number of deaths of victims of police brutality; accidental discharge or stray bullets of Nigeria Police Officers is alarming, ("Pointer", editorial, 2006). Drivers, students, traders, vehicle occupants have died at various times and places across the length and breadth of Nigeria in the hands of the police. These deaths will continue to occur as long as the police will shoot at motorist, cyclists and their passengers in order to get the N20 and N100 tip ("Vanguard", editorial, 2006).

There is no justification for the existence of a Ministry of Police Affairs, the Police Service Commission, the Senate and House Committees on Police Affairs without corresponding results. Neither is there justification for the huge allowance being paid to these category of individuals who do not have the interest of the police and the nation at heart. The Ministry of Police Affairs, the Police Service Commission; both Senate and House Committee on Police Affairs, have failed this nation woefully, they seem not to know what to do (Newswatch, 2005:18). Despite the huge budgetary allocation voted for the Nigeria Police Force, the Police Force is still poorly housed, and under paid.

The Welfare of the Police Force is very poor and the Police Force is hardly talked about by the appropriate authorities as regards its welfare. The wives, husbands and children of Police Officers are like paupers in Nigeria despite the enormity of sacrifice being made by their families to maintain law, order and protect properties (The News 2007: P.15).

When the arrest of Mr. Tafa Balogun the former Inspector General of Police, was announced, the rank and file as well as the officers of the Nigeria Police Force jubilated. This was because he had cleared the five years backlog of promotion without paying a dime irrespective of the dates written on such promotion letter(s).

The question that arose from that action is did not the federal government pay for this five years backlog of promotions? Certainly such payments could not have been made



without knowledge of the then Inspector General of Police (Mr. Tafa Balogun), the Police Service Commission, the Senate and House Committees on Police Affairs. If you multiply N7,500 minimum wage (as at 2003) by the number of police constables (men and women), in addition to the multiplication of officers on N18,000 by the total number of officers on such status throughout the Country before the recent increment, it is obvious that the force has lost so much money to swindlers in police uniform.

### **Engagements in International Assignments**

The Nigeria Police Force participated in foreign peace keeping and training of the Congolese in the early 1960s as part of the United Nations peace-keeping operation in the Congo, now Zaire. The police did not only serve on police duties with their Congolese counterparts, they were later involved in the training of Congolese police (Asemota 1993:395). After independence in 1960, Africa was the thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy, this was the reason why Nigeria quickly dispatched the police contingent to work with the United Nations peace keeping force in Zaire.

As a furtherance of its foreign policy objective actualization, the Nigeria government has successfully achieved some diplomatic goals through the contributions of its Police Force. This has been exemplified by the Nigeria Police Force contingent in different troubled Countries. In the 1980s, Mr. Fidelis Oyakhilome and Prince Igbe were both Assistant Commissioners of Police who led different contingent of Nigeria Police to South America at different times. It is on records therefore, that the Nigeria Police Force trained the Police in Barbados and Guyana far away in South America. Presently, a contingent of Nigeria Police Force has been engaged for training of police officers in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Namibia and Rwanda. The participation of the Nigeria Police Force either in peace keeping or training is either a fulfilment of Nigeria's statutory obligation to the United Nations Organization or a fulfilment of Bilateral agreement that Nigeria may have entered into with such countries (Abubakar, 1992:30).

The training of other countries' Police Officers by the Nigerian Police Force therefore, is a function of a Bilateral/Tripartite agreement with such countries. It is not necessarily because of war but because the police in such countries need the policing experience and expertise of the Nigeria Police Personnel. This is exemplified in Barbados, Guyana, and Namibia. On the other hand, peace keeping and training could be part of the statutory obligation of Nigeria to the United Nations Organization. In this case, the police



would have to continue from where the military had stopped peace keeping by training such country's Police Force on maintenance of law and order as well as other civil related matters. This has been carried out in Angola, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Lebanon. However in some cases, the Nigeria Police Contingent had to engage in both peace keeping and subsequently, training.

### **The Nigerian Police and Interpol**

The membership of the Nigerian Police Force in Interpol is strategic. The cooperation being fostered among member countries has facilitated a crack down on organized trans-border criminal syndicate. The successful swop of Nigerian born swindlers (419ners), that duped their German and Brazilian clients was as a result of the effectiveness of Interpol (Newswatch, 2003:P.24-25). The Crack down on cross-border robbery master minded by the Hammani Tidjani of Niger Republic is also a boost to the force international crime combat strategies; because the Nigeria Police was aided by the Interpol based in Mali and Benin Republic (Tell, September 2003: 26-30).

In addition, there are lots of litigations in our courts relating to international crime just as cross-border investigations are presently being carried out by the Nigerian Police with the aid of their counterparts in the countries where the said crime(s) were (was) committed by Nigerians (Newswatch, July 2003:P.24-35). Thus, the Nigerian Police Force does its investigation, collate data, collect samples and compares notes with the Police Force of other Countries' Police Authorities in order to enhance professionalism. It could be said that through the 1960s to 2005, the image of the Nigerian Police Force in the international community was laudable but for the 120 Police Officers sent from Congo on alleged sexual misconduct (The Pointer, October 2005: 8).

### **The Nigerian Police and International Image of Nigeria**

The level of peace and stability attained by the either doing peace keeping or training is enormous. It could be said to be, the best height ever attained by the Nigerian Police Force outside the shores of Nigeria. The restoration of peace and stability in Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Lebanon, Rwanda, and Sierra-Leone has given the Nigerian government good image in the international community. It has also helped the Nigeria government to build political bridges and cement diplomatic relationship. The activities of the Nigerian Police Force abroad have aided and promoted international communication which according to Udeze (2005:5) is the transfer of



information, ideas, opinion, entertainment, advertisement etc from one nation to another via the channels of communication designated for such. The promotion of international communication and ideas have subsequently led to the improvement of the country's image abroad.

Commending on the image of the Nigerian Police Force while evaluating her earliest performance in the Congo in the 60s, Cyprian O. Okonkwo in his Book, *the Police and the Public in Nigeria*, wrote "Abroad, the Nigeria Police Force is held in high repute while visiting statesmen have commented on the efficiency of our police. The high reputation of the Contingent sent to Congo has been acknowledged not only in Congo but throughout the world" (Orobator, 1993: 394). This good reputation however, has been displayed in these countries where the contingent of the Nigeria Police Force has done peace keeping and training in Barbados, Guyana, Namibia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Lebanon.

It is an irony of fate that Congo, where a contingent of the Nigerian Police Force Launched the NPF into lime light in the international arena in the 60s had to witness a plummet in fame and glory of the Nigerian Police Force because of sex scandal in the same country. Nigeria had to withdraw 120 policemen from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2005 because of the sex scandal. The United Nations mission in Congo says it was investigating suspected sexual harassment by some Nigerian Policemen. In fact, the Nigerian Police Spokesman then, Haz Iwendi said "the Commander of the Nigeria Contingent was among those being investigated" (The Pointer, October 2005:8). Be that as it may, it must be acknowledged that Nigeria has special recognition as a nation with a strong police force. The membership of Nigeria in Interpol and the participation of the Nigerian Police Force in International Police Exhibitions and Conferences are testimonies to the fact that the Nigerian Police Force possesses an international appeal and standard.

The Nigerian Police Force was represented by the then Inspector General of Police, Alhaji Aliyu Atta, at a four day International Police Exhibition and Conference held in London in 1990. The IPEC'90 witnessed a conglomeration of delegates from more than 50 countries including the United States, Netherland, Germany, France, Denmark, Sweden, New Zealand, the Soviet Union and Britain. (Abubakar,1992). Issues discussed included improving the police in different countries, problems hampering the smooth operations of police force world wide, closing ranks against international crime, common judicial procedure, recruitment, training of officers and police industrial relations. Incidentally Nigeria was privileged to host the International Policy Conference during the first tenure



of President Olusegun Obasanjo in this democratic era at Abuja. But despite the enviable image of the Nigerian Police Force in the international arena; the Police Force in Nigeria is working harder at home to be accepted by the Nigerian masses. The reasons are not far fetched, the Nigerian Police Force is perceived to be an instrument of state oppression.

### **Recommendations**

The relationship of the members of the Nigerian Police Force and the public can only be improved upon if the welfare of the average police officer and the entire family is given adequate attention. A police officer should be adequately remunerated and such money must be promptly paid irrespective of where such officer is serving. Any redeployment must have a corresponding arrangement to effect the payment of such officer's salary and allowances. If an officer does not move with his family, adequate arrangement must be made to release fund for the family upkeep to such family and the officer simultaneously. This is an easy task in this era of electronic Banking. In other words, if the financial needs of the policemen are met, there will be less enthusiasm to ask for money from Nigerians on the roads and at the police stations.

A Police officer's Harmonized Salary Scale (POHSS) should be created for the police in Nigeria just as NUPENG, ASUU and ASUP have their dignified and professional salary structures. There is no true job satisfaction without a satisfactory financial reward. Those who are toying with the police funds should be prosecuted.

The Federal Government should engage in building new barracks for members of the Nigerian Police Force in the country and routine environmental and maintenance programme must be introduced in order to maintain minimum standard of neatness and to imbibe maintenance culture in the barracks. The creation of good environment for our police officers to function would certainly increase efficiency. Police Officers should not live among members of the public for the safety of our officers.

The police recruitment and training programme should be a deliberate and planned curriculum. The rank and file should be encouraged to further their education and upon graduation should be promoted. At the moment, the ratio of educated officers to illiterates in the force is 2 to 5. The general training being given to the police officers should reflect the dynamics of the society where the police works. Every policeman should keep his personal files of Force Orders, State Orders, Administrative Instructions, Station Orders, Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure, Road Traffic Regulations, Liquor Ordinance, Miscellaneous Acts, Fire Arms and their notebooks to make entries of Happenings



(Asemota, 1993: 395-397). Since citizenship education is centre to the daily function of the police, it should be emphasized and imbibed as such, during and after training. General studies course should be introduced into the curriculum of the police college to enable graduates of the police college have balanced education.

Furthermore, every police officer that is involved in extra judicial killing should be prosecuted and such prosecution should be given adequate publicity to enable aggrieved parties watch proceedings of prosecution of erring police officers. This line of counsel has become inevitable because of the increasing number of victims of extra-judicial killings unaddressed by the authorities of the police force (Newswatch, 2005:17). The National Coordinator of Legal Defence and Assistance Project: Mr. Chino Obiagwu did observe that a total of 2,987 Nigerians were killed in extra-judicial circumstances by police in 2004. Between January and December of the same year, 394 extra-judicial killings cases were reported with non of the suspects ever prosecuted, (The Punch 2005:42).

The effects of extra-judicial killings are multiple and negative, they include inter alia, loss of valuable human assets; erosion of public confidence in the police, encouragement of jungle justice and desecration of our national image. The processing of complaints against the police should receive more systematic attention under the broad supervision of the Inspector General of Police, the police service commission as well as the Senate and House Committee on Police Affairs. Ademulekun and Gboyega (ed 1979: 141-142).

It is important to emphasize on a note of finality that the Nigerian Police Force needs moral re-amendment or rebirth. In this way, sanity will return to the system. Having highlighted the contributions of the Nigerian Police Force to peace keeping and training of foreign police officers, the failures of the force back home in Nigeria and the reasons for the failures were equally noted. But of great significance are the suggestions made by this writer as a way forward. This paper is of the candid opinion that policy makers are challenged by the issues raised by the writer in this article. Furthermore, there is need for psychological transformation which would then galvanize an overall change in the right direction for men and officers of the Nigerian Police Force.

## Conclusions

It is important to emphasize on a note of finality that the Nigerian Police Force needs moral re-armament or rebirth. In this way, sanity will return to the system. Having highlighted the contributions of the Nigerian Police Force to peace keeping and training of



foreign police officers the failures of the force back home in Nigeria and the reasons for the failures were equally noted. But of great significance are the suggestions made by these writers as a way forward. This paper is of the candid opinion that policy makers will be challenged by the issues raised by the writers in this paper. Furthermore, there is need for psychological transformation which would then galvanize an overall change in the right direction for men and officers of the Nigerian Police Force.

The setbacks being experienced by the police force is a cumulative effect of unpaid arrears, allowances and poor welfare packages. The deliberate and nonchalant, attitude of the government towards the police has made the rank and file as well as the officers to learn how to fend for themselves by extorting money from motorists, cyclists, criminals and even engage in gun-running. The inherent difficulty in engaging in these sharp practices and at the same time maintaining law and order has earned the police force poor public relations with the members of the public. Thus every member of the public sees the police officer as an enemy who is either out to make money or kill.

#### References

- Abubakar, M. (1992), Inspector General of Police, Alhaji Aliyu: Legacy for Nigeria Police.
- Achison, C.B (2005) M SC public relations (Lecture Series)University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Unpublished
- Asemota, S.A. (1993), The Political and Socio-Economic Environment of Policing since 1960 in Tamuno T.N. et al (ed) Policing Past Present and Future, Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Atake, O.J. (1999), The Role of the Nigeria Police Force in Socio-Economic and political Development of Nigeria 1979-2000. (Unpublished work)
- Crowder, M. (1962), The Story of Nigeria. Plymouth: Latimer Trend and Co. Limited.
- Ladipo Ademulekun and Alex Gboyega (ed., 1979) Leading issues in Nigeria Public Services: Proceedings of National Symposium Ife: Unife Pres.
- Mackintosh, J.P. (1966), Nigeria Government and Politics, London: Allen and Urwin Ltd.
- Odhe, Samuel Umuakpero & Babatunde, Olanye Williams (1994), Introduction to Citizenship Education in Nigeria. Warri: COEWA Publishers.
- Ogbemi, O.B(2014) Public Relations: Principles, Practice and Management. Lagos: Amfitop Book Company
- Omoweh, D.A (2001) Theories and Concepts in International Relations