

Contemporary Community Policing and National Security in Nigeria

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Abstract

Crime has been identified as the most endemic problem affecting security in Nigeria. This was confirmed by the United Nations which listed Nigeria among the fifteen countries of the world that are most vulnerable to insecurity. Just like a natural disaster, crime and insecurity retard a nation's progress. Thus, the amended 1999 Constitution of Nigeria prescribed a national police structure to maintain internal security for the country. Noting that its incident-driven policing approach has not provided adequate security for Nigeria, the police reinforced it with a police-community partnership paradigm. Even with this, frequent cases of bombings from Boko-Haram, brutal attacks on communities by herdsmen, kidnappings, killings and harvesting of human organs for money rituals among others have not reduced. The paper interrogated the challenges of contemporary community policing against national security in Nigeria and what should be done. It is an analytical-empirical paper whose data were sourced from relevant published materials and observation methods. The data were analysed through descriptive methods. Using the liberal structural conflict theory as a theoretical framework, community policing was found appropriate to deal with national security issues in Nigeria. However, among other challenges, the existing community policing was identified as incompatible with the present Nigerian political environment. Hence, it has failed to guarantee security in Nigeria. The paper concluded that community policing is central to the proper management of public security and recommended comprehensive community policing to deal with national security issues in the country.

Keywords: Community, policing, community policing, security, national security.

Introduction

The police are always known for controlling crime, protecting life and property, enforcing the law, maintaining peace and promoting good order in society. Even though it is difficult for societies to exist without crime, Sir Robert Peel was cited in Oikhala (2019:13) as saying: "Police efficiency is measured with the absence of crime". In this regard, the Nigeria police have undergone a myriad of reforms to enhance crime management. Earlier, three separate police forces were adopted. These were the Lagos, Southern and Northern police forces until the three forces were merged to form the present Nigeria police force on 1st April 1930 (Dawodu, 2007).

However, the 1960 Constitution of Nigeria which made provision for a federal police force to maintain law and order throughout Nigeria also made provision for the regional police force in the country. This led to the establishment of a native authority police force in the Northern Region and a local government police force in the Western Region. Nmerole (2008:13) noted that these regional police forces did not help enforce the law and maintain order in their regions. Instead, "they were used as oppressive instruments by the ruling political party against their opponents. The traditional authorities also used them against their people suspected not loyal to them". As contained in Oikhala (2021:134) "the regional police forces in Nigeria were then phased out in 1968 because of their alleged involvement in fueling violence in their regions".

The 1979 Constitution proscribed regional policing and established a single national policing structure for Nigeria. This single national policing system was supported by the amended 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. As a constitutional establishment with the responsibility of internal security

administration, the Nigeria police force has been identified as having colonial and military upbringings with unfriendly characters with the people they are established to serve. In their annals of crime control, internal security management, peacebuilding and law enforcement, the operations of the Nigeria police have mainly been based on the conventional incident-response approach that is not disposed to police-public synergy and participation. This reactive-driven policing process has been deficient in curbing crime and maintaining public security in Nigeria. This requires a policing approach that is proactive with patent to community partnership in police work. Therefore, the lacuna of not involving the public, or if does, but lack of appropriate police-community in policing Nigeria has the devastating repercussion of insecurity across the country over time with colossal loss of lives and properties. Hence, Alemika (2010:79) argued that police and public collaboration is necessary to enhance national security in Nigeria. According to him, “the police efforts will be in vain if they do not cultivate and enjoy the support of the public”. In line with this, the Nigeria police have tried different types of community-related policing such as the police-community relations committee between 1981 and 2003; and the uniform-based approach which involves recruitment and deployment of rank and file of the existing police within their localities between 2004 and 2020. Presently, the Nigeria police force has shifted its community policing paradigm to a community policing committee system to support the reactive one (Police Act, No. 2, 2020).

Despite the improved policing paradigm, cases of terrorist attacks, kidnappings, robberies, assassinations, ethno-religion bigotries, ritual killings, destruction of properties, political disorders, and crises of unfriendly police-public relations have continued to increase. All of these have continued to inflict high levels of threat, agony, hardship and suffering on the people. Thus, state and space have become unsafe for development and progress. Thus, as already noted, the level of insecurity in Nigeria has gone beyond tolerance. This is in line with Segun (2024:6) who cited the Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yoruba land, Iba Gani Adams as saying: “Pitiably, today, from the North to the South and East to the West, the rate at which Nigerians are being abducted and killed (some, even after the ransom was paid) show that Nigerians are not secure”.

Drawing from the narrative that community policing is a precondition for maintaining national security, the paper interrogates the constraints of extant community policing to improve national security in Nigeria and provides insight into what should be done. By this, the paper helps give insight into how to end the police-public relations crisis as a condition for building police trust and teamwork with the Nigerian public.

Methodology

The paper is analytical-empirical oriented. It used relevant published textbooks, journals, newspapers and official record sources. It equally employed survey and observation methods of data collection to support the secondary data collected. The data analysis was done through descriptive methods.

Theoretical Perspective

The Liberal Structural Conflict Theory (LSCT) that has Galtung Johan and Ross Mare as major exponents is adopted as the theoretical framework of this paper. The theory is concerned with issues economic and social problems. One strong assumption of the theory that suits this paper is that conflict is built into the way societies are structured or governed (Galtung, 1990; Ross, 1993). At the moment, Nigeria operates a three-tier federal system of government, which comprises the federal, (first tier), state (second tier) and local (third tier) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) According to Adelegan (2009), conflict of imbalance has not just bedevilled the peace of Nigeria from the onset, but it has plunged the country into civil war between 1966 and 1970 with colossal loss of lives and properties. Adelegan (2009) also observed the uneven structure of the government organs in Nigeria as a source of governance conflicts. As a third tier, section 162 (6) of the amended 1999 Constitution made local governments to receive their share of federal allocation from the federation account through the state government. Adelegan (2009) also argues that the local government was structured to operate as an

appendage of the state government. Moreover, the unending agitations mostly in the Southern part of Nigeria can be traced to conflict from inequality in power sharing and distribution of resources. As he posited, “This inequality led to infrastructural deficit, bad governance, ethnic tension and conflicts, high unemployment and poverty”.

From the foregoing, this paper has found a relationship between bad governance, poor economic policies of government, social problems and failure of contemporary community policing to tame insecurity in Nigeria. As pointed out by Azelama (2016), bad governance leads to social problems and social problems induce suffering, poverty, hunger and hardship. It was observed that the Obasanjo administration displayed an uncommon contempt for the rule of law in Nigeria as “powers of the state government were usurped and there was a general feeling that government was above the law”. Aliyu et al (2024:5) lamented that several economic policies of the government, especially the removal of fuel subsidies have raised the cost of living in Nigeria today. Consequently, civil servants at all levels of government now go to work two or three times a week because of the high cost of living including transportation.

Conceptual Issues/Literature Review

To fully understand this paper, the five basic concepts, which formed the subject of discourse, are clarified in accordance with their relevance to this paper.

Community

According to Tor-Anyiin ((2013:29), a community is described as “people who reside in one locality and are subject to the same laws and or have the same interests”. This definition would not be universally accepted, because it limits the meaning of community to only a geographical space and cultural lineage. It follows that people could reside in a particular geographical area, yet many of them do not share common interests, values, or beliefs in terms of religion, occupations, economic quests, and educational interests. Thus, a community can be regarded as a socio-economic group based on the natural relationship of its members and whose establishment is inspired by the natural will of people and an act of a deliberate setting.

However, Ekelle et al. (1985) maintained that communities are of various types and sizes. In this case, a continent such as Europe can be identified as a community. Similarly, a bloc such as West Africa; South Africa; a tribe like Esan or Bini, Owan, Ijebu, Egba, Yoruba, Igbo, Ijaw, Ibibio, Nupe, Hausa, or Fulani could be described as a community. In addition, an institution such as a university could be referred to as a community, among others. This suggests that people of different communities could live together to pursue their various interests, values, beliefs or careers and could have collective benefits for the entire society. This implies a conducive environment. Are these communities living together given equal protection or allowed fair and just opportunities to pursue their socio-economic activities? Or in the current community policing in Nigeria, is each community given an equal opportunity for participation by the governing authorities? These questions were relevant to Bassey (2019:23) that:

“the high state of insecurity and the inability of the Federal Government to deal with the orgy of killings by herdsmen in the country certainly challenge the very basis of Nigeria’s existence as a nation”. There is no doubt that there are subsisting issues with the ability of the police, especially its present community policing to effectively police the country and ensure the enforcement of law and order. The present system that allows for deliberate obfuscation of lines of authority, crass abdication of responsibilities and abuse of powers should be done away with”.

Policing

According to Akpuru-Aja (2019:453), policing is a strategic intent that has forecast as its principal key which includes schools, hospitals, markets, security bases, borders, airports, seaports, bridges and railway networks. Others include places of worship, cinemas, supermarkets, legislative and judicial buildings/quarters, oil and telecommunication installations, power supply installations, among others. In effect, policing is not restricted to humans or the state but extended to national security infrastructure as a critical means of survival. This cannot be universally accepted as the definition of policing. While it can be viewed as a means of fighting crime through cooperation between the police and members of the community that are deployed to service, the scholar seemed to have diverted his definition to flash, nipping, black and vulnerable points that must be focused in the course of policing the society.

On his part, Barkindo (2019) contended that policing is not only an activity of the state police, it involves any organised activity that seeks to ensure the maintenance of communal order and security of peace through elements of prevention, deterrence, and investigation of crime, and prosecution for punishment. This presents policing as a mechanism of governance. The scholar went further to support his claim with the nine principles of policing developed by Sir Robert Peels:

1. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder;
2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police action;
3. Police must secure the willing co-operation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public;
4. The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force;
5. Police seek to preserve public favour not by catering to public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law;
6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion advice and warning is found to be insufficient;
7. Police at all times should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests community welfare and existence;
8. Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary; and,
9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.

It is here that other scholars such as Alemika (2012) and Reiner (2009) pitched their tents in defining policing. According to Alemika (2012), policing is the work that the police do to prevent and limit the chances of criminal threats to people and property in any community. This is an initiative, which includes the way or strategy that the police use to enhance formal social controls like adopting covert intelligence gatherings, patrolling, stop and search aimed at crime detection and prevention to keep the society in peace and order. Sharing a similar view, Reiner (2009) maintained that policing is everything necessary to promote social order and is carried out through several different processes and institutional arrangements.

For this paper, policing is considered as any formal or informal act of making community dwellers obey laws and eschew crimes to make them and their properties safe in their environment. In this sense, the Nigeria police force is a formal policing that coordinates the various community members as informal policing for teamwork to guarantee the security needs as a business of everybody in Nigeria. In all of the above, one will be interested to know how well policing has been able to prevent threats to national security in Nigeria through the police and community synergy.

Community Policing

Like the other administrative science concepts, community policing is difficult to give one-best uniform definition. Thus, different people define it in various ways. To some people, community policing means a strategy or initiative that allows community residents to participate in policing not by carrying weapons but through intelligence gathering and sharing with the police to frustrate and deter the commission of crime to make the environment safer (Oikhala, 2021). This presented community policing as collaborative efforts between the police and people in the neighbourhood they are deployed to work together to hunt for information on crime and criminals to deter all forms of social disorder that would not make society safe for socio-economic activities to be transacted. Here, each stakeholder is expected to participate, to act as an informant to the police in giving firsthand information about any suspected crime or criminal to the police. No community member is selected to work with the police, rather, every stakeholder in the community is required to be involved as a reliable police informant making everybody involved in crime control and management. This is what Oikhala (2019:13) described as “people watching the people or people policing the people; Or people policing the people initiatives”, which is captured in number seven (7) policing principle of Robert Peels that “the police are the people and the people are the police”. This is related to Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux (1994) who described community policing as a partnership between the police and members of the community to work together to prevent crime; bring offenders to justice, and improve the overall quality of community life. In Arase (2019:635-665), the 2008 Presidential Committee on Police Reform described community policing as a straightforward concept of shared responsibility between the police and the community, focusing on the provision of efficient and effective service. Defining community policing in this sense means the act of building community confidence and trust among the people and the police as well as working as a team through community engagement in policing. This is supported by Bayley (2005) that community policing is based on the fact that the ability of the police to control crime through law enforcement is enhanced through community partnership and engagement. In his contribution, Okiro (2007) posited that community policing is hinged on a pedestal of cooperative relationships between the police and the people they serve. He then argued that the roles of the police are not merely law enforcement but involve the tackling of emerging community crime-related issues.

As noted by Adamu (2019), “community policing is not a one-size-fits-all”. There are several models in practice. Every country adopts a system that fits its cultural needs. The foregoing presupposes that a police officer who is born and nurtured in a given community will serve that community better in terms of crime control and management. The salient lesson from this practice is that police can be efficient and effective if they are recruited, trained and deployed to serve their local communities.

According to sections 113, 114, and 115 of the Nigeria Police Act (2020), community policing is arranged in the form of committee engagement under two levels of police formation. Section 113 recognised the formation of a community policing committee in Nigeria and sections 114 and 115 prescribed for a committee-based community policing at the levels of state and divisional police commands. With this pattern, the zonal and area commands are well excluded.

For clarity, section 116 (1) highlights the goals of committee-based community policing as to:

1. maintain a partnership between the community and the police force;
2. promote communication between the police force and the community;
3. promote co-operation between the police and the community in fulfilling the needs of the community regarding policing;
4. improve the police service to the community; and
5. improve transparency and accountability in the provision of police services to the community

In addition, section 116 (2) prescribes that the police can still liaise with the community through means other than the committee-based community policing, sub-policing committee and divisional policing committee. Nevertheless, reference was not made as to whether to collapse the existing police-

community relations committee (PCRC), which the Nigeria police force earlier established to exist at both the state, area and divisional commands as community policing.

Security

Security can be viewed as a many-sided concept. In defining it, some thinkers emphasize merely the absence of threats to life, property, environment, quality of living, national unity, political order, socio-economic stability, health, and peace. Others consider security on its typology while some define it as the perspective of the measure used to tackle or even those that provide the service (Nanchin, 2014; Idris, 2019)

According to Nanchin (2014), security covers both lessening opportunities for violence and conflict within the environment and every community. In this case, the reduction of conflict, injustice, disorder, crime, and other wrongdoings that cause unrest in Nigeria's place and space is what security entails. The statement by Robert McNamara, the erstwhile United States of America Secretary of Defence that "security is development" is cited to buttress the relevance of security. Still on this, Oikhala (2022) points to the correlation between development, survival, growth and progress. According to him, just as the absence of security deters meaningful growth, progress, or development in any society, development serves as a factor for measuring peace, security and good order in a society. This also supported Idris (2019) that security is the absence of fear, attack, or threats to attain and sustain values, interests, and peaceful order for lasting progress and development. This corroborated Oikhala (2021) that when discussing security, the absence of danger connotes an enduring presence of safety measures to track and tackle hunger, unemployment, poverty, disorder, injustice, greed and bad governance to deter breaches to public peace, threats to public interest to maintain robust public order and national safety

In the Nigerian situation, the relevance of security and the need for public participation were captured under section 14 (2) (b) (c) of the 1999 Constitution that "security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Therefore, the Nigeria police force was created to perform internal security under section 214 of the amended 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. In line with this, the police are expected to collaborate with community members for meaningful policing. It is with this that Oikhala (2024:59) asserted that as an integral part of public administration to optimally maintain a threat-free Nigeria, security should be able to guarantee the liberty or confidence of people to freely go about all lawful businesses with ease and without fear of threat or molestation or harm.

From the above review, experience has shown that all is not well about security in Nigeria. So far, the threats to security in Nigeria as captured in the Punch Newspaper on July 7, 2021, as cited in Oikhala (2024:61) is that anarchy is gathering momentum as terrorists, gangsters, and bandits are fiercely charging at the soul of the Nigerian state. Bandits have conquered the North-West, Boko-Haram is penetrating the North-East and the South-West communities are confronted by a rising wave of killings and kidnappings by Fulani herdsmen, making the highway unsafe for travelling.

National Security

The concept of national security is sometimes interpreted to mean several similar things by most different thinkers. This was buttressed in Oikhala (2024:59) that "national security revolves around the well-being of people of a particular country". National security is measured by the quality of care and welfare policies of the government and its due diligence to translate them into the reality of not just the comfort life of people concerning their health, wealth, economic, social, cultural and political values without threats, but also to guarantee the nation's freedom on a constant tent of progress, greatness and values within the disposition of both national and international communities. This assertion is in line with Imobighe (2004:101) that:

“without security, individuals within a state will find it difficult to engage in productive activities. Also, without security, the state is bound to experience great difficulty in harnessing its human and material resources towards meaningful development and promotion of well-being of the people.”

Similarly, Nwolise, (2017:68) posited that a country may have “the best armed forces in terms of training and equipment, the most efficient police force, the most efficient customs men, the most active secret service agents, the best quality prisons and yet be the most insecure nation in the world as a result of defence and security problems from within bad governance, alienated and suffering masses, hunger, unemployment, injustice, poverty or hardship”. This paper argues that when the government and its protective architecture, especially the police can optimally guarantee the freedom of people, and safeguard and secure their potential, fortunes, growth, development, or advancement from risk and threat, then, national security is on course. At least, there is no gainsaying the fact that national security is premised on the viability of people in terms of appreciable and high quality of health, wealth, freedom, socio-political order and justice, decent income and available job opportunities, respect for human rights and rule of law, economic, socio-political and cultural values (Nanchin, 2014; Arase, 2019).

Can it be said that national security is guaranteed in Nigeria at the moment? Uja (2024) documented that over seven (7) villagers were killed with many people critically injured at Uzer Community in Logo Local Government Area of Benue State in a recent renewed attack by armed herdsmen on Friday 11th October, 2024. This renewed attack has caused tension in which community dwellers have fled to the internally displaced camp at Logo. So, in Nigeria today, the wind of fear of insecurity has been blowing everywhere in such a manner that no one knows where to run to. In the North, when a person is running away from herdsmen's attack to the South, kidnappers are in the South waiting for him; and, when he decides to play safe by running to the East; armed robbers are on the road to harass him. This reveals the need to interrogate the inability of the current community policing model to combat the threats to national security in Nigeria. According to Oikhala (2021:140):

“The introduction of a teamwork policing system in Nigeria saw a new hope for the relief of insecurity in the lives of people and their properties. However, such hopes have not been fully realised because there is still the presence of violent crimes and criminalities across Nigeria, threatening lives and properties daily.”

This would mean that in the annals of community policing, its starting was leaning on structural issues *ab initio*. Therefore, to logically preview factors confronting the current community policing on national security in Nigeria, it is good to have a cursory overview of how community policing emerged and developed in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Community Policing in Nigeria

On the account of when community policing was exactly introduced in Nigeria, scholars gave different versions. For this article, four versions of them were considered and reviewed.

The first introduction of community policing in Nigeria can be traced to the era of General Ibrahim Babangida's military administration between 1986 and 1989. This was when the Head of State directed the erstwhile Inspector General of Police, Mohammed A. Gambo to transfer Edo police tribes to their localities within the defunct Bendel State to solve the disturbing crime issues in the area and its environs, especially the bank robbery allegedly led by Lawrence Aninin alias ‘De Law’ (Ezeife, 1994). The result was said to be fantastic. The posting was noted to be helpful. The kingpins Lawrence Aninin,

Monday Osunbor and their cohorts were all arrested and the security situation in the defunct Bendel State became normal.

In another version, Nwakanma (2010) traced the evolution of community policing in Nigeria to 2003 and 2004. According to him, the ability of the traditional policing model to maintain national security was difficult. This led to seeking intervention of community engagement in policing. As a project, he argued that community policing in Nigeria was nurtured by the former President Olusegun Obasanjo in December 2003 who instructed the erstwhile Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Mr. Tafa Balogun to adopt it. In doing this, the IGP raised two teams. A seven-man-team headed by an Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) C. Y. Jimoh was sent to understudy how community policing was practised in the United Kingdom while the IGP Tafa Balogun personally led the other team to the United States of America for the same purpose. The study results showed that the practice of community policing in the United Kingdom was tied to the basic idea of providing quality police service that will make the community safer by building more responsive policing on a citizen-focused basis. The police utilised the initiative of citizen-based and neighbourhood-based policing. The study results in the United States of America simply revealed that police service is made everybody's business. This is tactically being referred to as 'people are the police and the police are the people'. Thus, some police officers were trained for this project, President Olusegun Obasanjo launched community policing at Enugu in Nigeria on the 27th of April 2004. It was also noted that this type of community policing helped to reduce the crime rate in Enugu state.

However, there is also the narrative that the practice of community policing in Nigeria started during Muhammadu Buhari's military administration when IGP Etim Inyang on the 8th May 1984 created the Police-Community Relations Committee (PCRC) to ensure police collaboration with the community members to improve police performance and image in Nigeria (Ezeife, 1994). This police collaboration with citizens was also noted to be a good one. It was not sustained. Hence, the search for replacement, even though, the challenges were not highlighted.

In year 2020, community policing committee, which was considered as more appropriate to enlist police confidence with the public, protect life and property and to deal with threats to national security was adopted in Nigeria (Police Act No. 2, 2020). The concern here is like the previous ones, has this been able to tackle crime issues in Nigeria? Or, how safe is Nigeria now? It may also be interested to know if the police-public relationship is still unfriendly. In response to this, Ibrahim (2019) opined that "the relationship between the police and the civil community in Nigeria has been considered by many as hostile; such that men and officers of the police institution are often perceived by the public as lacking a sense of responsibility, integrity and commitment to duty". This buttressed the view of Alemika (2012) that "the public often see the police personnel as stooges of the state whose loyalty wholly is with the political elite and their cronies". Until now, the allegation of police brutality, extra-judicial killings, unlawful arrest and detention, poor handling of cases have been deepened. Even, the EndSars protests in Nigeria, which destroyed colossal lives and valuable properties is accumulation of long suppression, harassment, extortion, and incivility to members of the public (Okorie & Ezirim, 2020; Oikhala, 2022; Udoms & Atakpa, 2021).

Challenges of Contemporary Community Policing against National Security in Nigeria

Studies conducted earlier to interrogate the weakness of community policing in Nigeria showed many excruciating factors. The factors identified include poor knowledge of the police on community policing, poor practice and structure of community policing, corruption; paucity of funds; poor training and development of police officers to carry out community policing, and unwillingness of most police officers to embrace the new paradigm shift (Dawodu, 2007; Nwakanma, 2010). This paper does not argue against any of the aforesaid factors. Of course, the capacity of community policing appears to be dead on arrival if the police lack the will and interest to explore it to deal with crime issues. From the review and discussion so far, the forces that were noted as confronting the existing community policing against national security in Nigeria are the failure of the Nigerian state; government/leadership failure

in Nigeria; the public factor, and the police factor. In summary, the inability of the current community policing to maintain national security is constrained by a governance crisis caused by government actors, which is poor leadership.

The Failing of the Nigerian State

There is a saying that when a country is unable to perform its functions of providing for the welfare needs of the people; keeping law and order has failed. For this reason, section 14 (2) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended) prescribed for government. For over a decade, common Nigerians have been asphyxiated with hunger, poverty, starvation, injustice, hardship, unemployment, and underemployment. As observed in Oyeyemi (2024), President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, like other past leaders in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, acknowledged the struggle of many Nigerians to get jobs and food to eat. Hence, a country that is dominated by an unemployed population where many people are roaming the streets looking for food to eat cannot sustain community policing because the people who are team members of community policing will also be looking for what to eat at any cost and anyhow. This probably explains the reason why policemen who are supposed to maintain peace and security by detecting and apprehending criminals are now involved in extortion and bribe-taken.

Government and Leadership Failure in Nigeria

Another factor that is militating against community policing for national security in Nigeria is the infighting and struggles to grab political power through unpopular means to gain selfish interest instead of public interest. It is by this token that leadership has turned to business ventures in Nigeria. When a leader is only conscious of grabbing political power at any cost by circumventing rules and sometimes through the assistance of political thugs, how will such a leader maintain a police system that will be effective in ensuring national security in Nigeria? This supports Nwolise's (2019:20) belief that to worsen things, loyalty to leaders is valued more than competence and capacity to do the job and loyalty to the country.

Another reason for the failure of community policing to improve national security in Nigeria is the failure of the Nigerian government to do the needful. Today, the Nigerian government has turned to a commercial venture, instead of being an instrument of safety and welfare of people. This has led to precarious privatization, commercialisation of essential public enterprises and fuel subsidy removal policies. All of these cause Nigerians to suffer more socio-economic depression, hardship and poverty, which hinder the effectiveness of community policing.

Besides, most political leaders in Nigeria often do what they like and are left without sanctions. So, the failure of the government of Nigeria to rise to the challenge of refining and redefining the attitude to leadership, national service and running a government of public interest, is affecting the inability of contemporary community policing to have a positive impact on national security in Nigeria. Undoubtedly, it is only irresponsible leadership that loots the public treasury. If senators are involved in bribery scams, how will community policing be able to improve national security when over eighty per cent of Nigeria's population is living below the poverty line? Apart from the government encouraging money politics in Nigeria, it is also promoting do-or-die politics as well as leadership conflicts that have a propensity to unstable political environment. How will community policing be effective and efficient in reducing insecurity in such a country? From the onset, if the orientation of government has been on the safety of Nigerians, the political class would not tolerate poor police performance in any form.

The Police Factor

There has been a protracted crisis of police image in Nigeria. This has robbed the police of a public good image. At the moment, some police bad eggs are still being deployed to stop and search beats, and patrol where most of them still allegedly exhibit brutality and extortive characters. This has not just deepened the unfriendly relationship between the public and the police, but the police efficiency

has been burdened. If the police are still being challenged in taming its bad eggs, there will be no way for community policing to have a positive impact on national security in Nigeria. This is in line with Dawodu (2007) that the police in Nigeria have not been a serious success factor in Nigeria's development process. If the police that introduced a committee-based community policing were confronted in 2020 with such aggressive agitation of EndSars protest that had a coalition of nearly all critical civil society organisations; it showed the uncordial relationship that still exists between the police and community they are serving. The issue then, is if the police and communities are not cordial, it means that community policing is not suitable to reduce national security in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper investigated the challenges faced by contemporary community policing in the course of maintaining national security in Nigeria. The paper is analytical-empirical oriented. It relied on published materials and observation methods to source data. The descriptive method was used for the data analysis. It was found that three different models of community policing were adopted and abandoned in attempts to maintain national security in Nigeria. These models were the Police-Community Relations Committee formed in 1984; the transfer of conventional police officers to their state of origin with the defunct Bendel State as a pilot between 1986 and 1989; and the training and deployment of conventional police on community policing project with Enugu state as a pilot case in 2004. It however showed that posting police officers to serve in their localities was more effective. Within a week of implementing this policy, all the bank robbers with other criminals especially the gangs of Lawrence Anini, Monday Osunbor and their cohorts were arrested and within a month, they were prosecuted and sentenced to firing squad. Other crimes were reduced to the barest minimum in the pilot State and its environs. Therefore, the paper found the governance crisis which led to the failing nature of Nigeria, government and leadership failure, the problem of operational continuity tactics and the adoption of unsuitable methods of community policing as challenges of the current community policing for national security in Nigeria.

Relying on the challenges identified, the paper made the following recommendations:

1. The governance crisis in Nigeria should be addressed. It will be impossible for people to live in hunger and suffering without committing crimes. The government should respect the rule of law and do the needful to reposition Nigeria. Policies of government should be tailored towards public welfare and interest. Community policing cannot tame threats to national security when there is general hunger and a stream of unemployment. Nigeria should reposition the weak institution of government to redeem it from failing.
2. To rule people is not by force. Therefore, Nigerians should be allowed to choose their leaders. But in choosing a leader, the people must not base it on any sentiment. It should be based on those who have capacities to serve the people and provide their security and welfare needs.
3. Nigerians must rise to fight for their good fortunes. For whatever reason, a government or leadership that fails to fight hunger, poverty, unemployment, hardship and injustice is only promoting a threat to national security and it is beyond the capacity of community policing. Nigerians should no longer be deceived by the sweet promises of political leaders that have never been fulfilled. They should stop selling their votes or accepting gifts from political aspirants. Again, Nigerians should watch and withdraw their support from political aspirants engaging political thugs or other unpopular means to grab power to govern them. Such leaders will only protect themselves and allow the masses to suffer. Besides, Nigerians should not forget that any leader who forcefully grabs political power can never allow community policing that will maintain national security. They should start to make their votes count by standing by them and resisting any attempt to rig right from the point of voting in polling units to the point of declaring the winner.
4. Finally, the police should adopt a comprehensive community policing model for everyone to participate in policing. This will involve the practice of people watching the people. This will

make every community member to be a key informant to the police. This type of policing is cheap and cost-effective.

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