

**Conflictual Nature of Federalism and Police Centralization: A  
Comparative Analysis of Nigeria and Some Selected Western  
States**

**Fortunetus Izuchukwu Oguwuike, Ph.D**

Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka,  
Enugu, Nigeria, Corresponding Author:

[fortuneoguwuike@gmail.com](mailto:fortuneoguwuike@gmail.com)

&

**Joseph Amechi Nwodo, Ph.D**

Institute for Peace, Conflict and Development Studies,  
Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT),  
Nigeria

Email: [amechij007@gmail.com](mailto:amechij007@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

The Nigerian government notwithstanding the fact it operates under a federal system of government, Nigeria maintains a highly centralized police structure that places all operational, administrative, and disciplinary control of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) under the federal government. This centralization has resulted in persistent and suffocative conflicts, particularly between the federal and state governments, over issues of security control. The study employed secondary sources of data. Findings from the study indicated a growing demand for reform among stakeholders and demonstrated that decentralized policing is both feasible and potentially beneficial within Nigeria's federal system. The paper recommended among other things, the constitutional amendment to facilitate decentralization of policing and creation of state police at

subnational levels of governance and an oversight review body to effectively guarantee speedy response.

## **Introduction**

The structure and control of policing systems play a vital role in the internal security architecture of any nation. In Nigeria, the police force has historically operated as a centralized institution under federal authority, with command and administrative powers concentrated at the national level (Onwudiwe & Odo, 2023). This model of policing, inherited from British colonial rule, was designed for control rather than community service, and its legacy persists in contemporary Nigeria. Over the decades, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has struggled with issues of inefficiency, underfunding, lack of trust, and political manipulation, particularly at the local and state levels (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2019).

Conflicts associated with centralized policing in Nigeria have increasingly come to the fore, especially with rising insecurity, ethnic tensions, and widespread calls for restructuring. State governors, who are constitutionally designated as chief security officers of their states, often lament their lack of operational control over police commands within their jurisdictions (Okoro & Akintayo, 2022). This disconnect between responsibility and authority has fueled debates about the effectiveness and fairness of a unitary police structure in a federal system. Consequently, calls for the establishment of state police have gained momentum as stakeholders argue for a system that is more accountable and responsive to local realities (Nnamani & Ibrahim, 2021).

Many federal states in the Western world, such as the United States, Germany, and Australia, operate decentralized policing systems that allow for both federal and state law enforcement agencies. These systems are often structured to foster autonomy, community responsiveness, and checks against authoritarian misuse (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2019). The existence of local police departments that are accountable to municipal governments helps bridge the gap between citizens and law enforcement. The comparative success of these decentralized models has inspired Nigerian policymakers and civil society actors to consider a hybrid or fully decentralized approach as an alternative to the current centralized model (Walker & Katz, 2020).

Despite the arguments in favour of decentralization, some scholars and security experts caution against the possible misuse of state police by governors for political repression, especially in a fragile democratic environment like Nigeria (Nnamani & Ibrahim, 2021). Critics argue that without robust checks and balances, decentralization may merely shift the locus of abuse from the center to sub-national levels. Issues of capacity, funding, and standardization could hamper the effectiveness of state-run police services in less economically viable regions, potentially worsening the national security landscape (Okoro & Akintayo, 2022).

Nonetheless, the persistence of internal security crises including insurgency, kidnapping, armed robbery, and communal violence demands urgent reforms in Nigeria's policing system. The present structure has not adapted well to emerging threats or the complexities of Nigeria's multi-ethnic federal arrangement. As such, comparative analysis with

Western models of policing may provide insights into how Nigeria can navigate the contentious terrain of police reform (Onwudiwe & Odo, 2023). This study, therefore, seeks to explore the conflicts associated with police centralization in Nigeria and evaluate comparative frameworks from selected Western states to recommend suitable models for reform.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite operating under a federal system of government, Nigeria maintains a highly centralized police structure that places all operational, administrative, and disciplinary control of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) under the federal government. This centralization has resulted in persistent conflicts, particularly between the federal and state governments, over issues of security control, responsiveness, and accountability. State governors, although designated as chief security officers of their states, have no direct command over police operations, leading to delays in response to security threats and a breakdown in law enforcement efficiency at the grassroots level.

The centralized system has often been criticized for being disconnected from local contexts, lacking community engagement, and being susceptible to federal political interference. These challenges have contributed to rising insecurity, declining public trust in the police, and widespread calls for the creation of state police to reflect the federal nature of the country. However, the fear of potential abuse of power by state actors and the risk of politicization of police forces have complicated reform efforts.

### **Objective of the Study**

Identify the conflicts arising from the centralized police structure in Nigeria

### **Research Question**

What are the conflicts arising from the centralized police structure in Nigeria?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Concept of Police**

The term police refer to an organized body empowered by the state to enforce laws, maintain public order, protect life and property, and prevent, detect, and investigate crimes. Policing as a practice dates back to ancient civilizations, but in its modern form, it evolved during the rise of the nation-state. Modern policing is not only a function of maintaining law and order but also of serving as a visible representation of state authority. The police serve as the front-line agents of the criminal justice system and are tasked with ensuring compliance with laws through patrol, investigation, and arrest (Ekhomu, 2019). Policing can be broadly categorized into different models based on the political and administrative systems in which it operates. These include centralized policing, where command is concentrated at the national level, and decentralized policing, where authority is distributed across local or state jurisdictions. Each model has implications for accountability, community engagement, and operational efficiency. For instance, decentralized systems tend to be more responsive to local needs, while centralized systems

are often more uniform and standardized in operation (Brogden & Nijhar, 2020).

The role of the police extends beyond enforcing laws; it also includes public service functions such as crowd control, emergency response, and traffic regulation. In democratic societies, the police are expected to operate within a framework of accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights. This requires that police officers be well-trained, adequately equipped, and subject to oversight mechanisms such as civilian review boards and judicial scrutiny. Community policing an approach that encourages collaboration between the police and the communities they serve has increasingly been promoted as a model for building trust and improving effectiveness (Okonkwo, 2021). However, the concept of police varies across societies depending on cultural norms, political structures, and historical experiences. In post-colonial states like Nigeria, the police system inherited from colonial rule was primarily designed for control rather than service, leading to enduring issues of brutality, corruption, and lack of legitimacy. The persistence of a militarized and centralized police structure in Nigeria has often undermined efforts at reform and public trust-building. These issues have fueled national debates on the need to restructure the police to better reflect democratic values and federal principles (Oguejiofor & Ekpo, 2022).

Technological advancement has also significantly shaped the modern concept of policing. The use of digital surveillance, data analytics, and artificial intelligence in crime prevention and investigation has redefined how police operate in many parts of the world. These tools have improved response time and crime detection but also raised ethical and privacy concerns. As

policing continues to evolve, the challenge remains in balancing law enforcement objectives with civil liberties and adapting to rapidly changing social environments (Adebayo, 2023).

### **Types of Policing Systems**

**1. Centralized Policing System:** A centralized policing system is one in which the entire control of law enforcement operations is vested in the national or federal government. In such systems, command structures, recruitment, training, policy directives, and funding are all coordinated from a single central authority. This system aims to maintain national uniformity and streamline operations across regions. However, it has been criticized for being slow in response, unaccountable to local needs, and vulnerable to political manipulation. Nigeria is a classic example, where all police activities are controlled from Abuja, leading to inefficiencies in responding to region-specific security threats (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2019).

**2. Decentralized Policing System:** The decentralized policing system distributes policing responsibilities across different levels of government, typically in federal states. This allows for state, regional, or local police agencies to function independently within their jurisdictions. Countries like the United States and Germany exemplify this model. The advantages include better community engagement, quicker response times, and increased accountability, as local forces are more familiar with their environments. Nonetheless, coordination issues and unequal capacity across regions can arise. Empirical studies show that decentralization promotes democratic policing and enhances public trust in law enforcement (Leonard & Brooks, 2021).

**3. Hybrid Policing System:** A hybrid policing system combines elements of both centralized and decentralized models. In this system, national police forces deal with federal or transboundary crimes such as terrorism, while regional or state police handle local law enforcement duties. Countries like India and South Africa implement this model to balance national security with local autonomy. This structure allows for flexibility and targeted policing while retaining central oversight for complex security issues. It also facilitates better coordination in federal systems where states require some level of control over their internal security affairs (Achumba & Alike, 2022).

**4. Military Policing System:** The military policing system integrates military forces into civilian law enforcement roles, often in authoritarian or conflict-prone states. In such arrangements, military personnel conduct regular policing functions, including arrests, patrols, and riot control. While this system may enhance force presence during emergencies, it often undermines civil liberties, as military institutions are not typically trained for community-based law enforcement. This model is prominent in countries like Egypt, Myanmar, and Venezuela, where civil policing has broken down or is deliberately suppressed (Bakare & Okonkwo, 2020).

**5. Community Policing System:** Community policing is not a structural model but a strategic approach that can exist within any of the above systems. It emphasizes collaboration between the police and the public to identify and solve local safety problems. This strategy improves public trust, reduces crime through intelligence-sharing, and promotes a sense of ownership

of security. Community policing has been successfully implemented in parts of the U.S., U.K., and even in Nigeria through informal outfits like vigilante groups. When implemented correctly, it enhances transparency and mutual respect between the police and communities (Okonkwo & Ezeanya, 2023).

### **Structure of the Nigeria Police Force**

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is the principal law enforcement agency in Nigeria, established under Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution. It is a centralized institution operating under the authority of the Federal Government, with the President as the Commander-in-Chief and the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) as the head of the force. The NPF is structured in such a way that all command, operational, and administrative powers are concentrated at the federal level. This design reflects Nigeria's colonial heritage and has remained largely unchanged despite the country's transition to federalism (Ekhomu, 2020).

The NPF is organized hierarchically into various units and departments, each responsible for specific aspects of policing. At the top is the Force Headquarters in Abuja, which oversees 12 zonal commands. These zones are further subdivided into state commands, each headed by a Commissioner of Police. Below the state level are area commands, divisional police headquarters, and police stations, forming a chain of command that links the central authority to local operations. This centralized structure often limits the autonomy of state and local police officers in responding to region-specific security threats (Abiodun & Okereke, 2020). Functionally, the NPF is divided into various specialized departments such as the Criminal

Investigation Department (CID), State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID), Mobile Police (MOPOL), Anti-Terrorism Unit, and the Intelligence Response Team. These units carry out crime prevention, intelligence gathering, riot control, and other security-related functions. However, the overlapping of roles and lack of coordination between units have frequently led to inefficiencies and internal conflicts within the force (Odekunle & Waziri, 2021).

A significant challenge within the structure of the NPF is the lack of fiscal and operational autonomy at the sub-national level. Although governors are considered "chief security officers" of their states, they possess no legal power to direct police operations within their jurisdiction. This discrepancy creates friction between state governments and federal police authorities, especially when urgent security actions are delayed due to bureaucratic bottlenecks. It also undermines accountability, as police officers primarily respond to federal directives rather than local concerns (Agbakwuru & Sunday, 2022).

In recent years, several attempts have been made to reform the structure of the NPF, including the creation of regional security networks like Amotekun in the Southwest and Ebube Agu in the Southeast. These efforts reflect growing dissatisfaction with the centralized model and a demand for greater community-based policing. However, the federal government's reluctance to relinquish control and the absence of a legal framework for multi-level policing have stalled these initiatives. The structural rigidity of the NPF remains a major impediment to effective law enforcement in a diverse and federal Nigeria (Adisa & Chukwudi, 2023).

### **Arguments for Decentralized Policing**

One of the strongest arguments in favor of decentralized policing is the enhancement of community responsiveness and participation. In a decentralized system, local police units are more attuned to the needs and peculiarities of their communities. This fosters stronger community-police relations, improves intelligence gathering, and builds trust, as officers are seen as part of the local population rather than outsiders. Such responsiveness is critical in multicultural and diverse societies like Nigeria, where local dynamics and security concerns vary significantly from region to region (Eze & Olawale, 2020).

Another major benefit is improved operational efficiency and faster decision-making. Centralized policing systems often suffer from bureaucratic delays and a top-down command structure that inhibits swift responses to emergencies. In contrast, decentralized units can take real-time action without waiting for federal clearance. This autonomy is particularly crucial in volatile or remote regions where immediate police intervention can mean the difference between life and death. Decentralization enables police chiefs at local levels to allocate resources based on specific community needs, leading to more strategic deployment (Olanrewaju & Yakubu, 2021).

Decentralized policing also promotes greater accountability and transparency. Local governments or state authorities that fund and oversee their police forces are better positioned to enforce ethical standards, monitor misconduct, and engage in oversight. Unlike a centralized system where officers are often shielded by distant federal authorities, decentralized systems encourage public scrutiny and civilian participation in holding law enforcement accountable. This has proven effective

in countries like the United States, where local review boards and public inquiries are common (Brown & Chen, 2022).

From a federalism standpoint, decentralized policing aligns more naturally with constitutional principles in federal systems. In countries like Nigeria, where power is constitutionally divided between the federal and state governments, it is inconsistent for the federal government to retain sole control over the police. Allowing states to manage their security apparatus respects the autonomy of federating units and enables each region to adopt tailored policing strategies. This enhances democratic governance and reflects the principle of subsidiarity, where issues are handled at the most immediate level capable of addressing them (Usman & Okorie, 2023).

Decentralization offers a way to reduce political interference and over-centralization of power. In Nigeria, the centralized police have often been accused of being used as tools for political repression by the ruling party at the federal level. A decentralized model, by distributing authority, makes it more difficult for a single political actor to control the entire security apparatus of the country. It fosters a system of checks and balances, where power is spread across multiple levels of government, thereby strengthening democratic institutions and preventing abuse (Ibrahim & Olufemi, 2024).

## **Overview of State Police in Western Countries**

**1. United States:** In the United States, the concept of state policing is deeply entrenched in its federal structure. Each of the 50 states operates its own police agency, commonly known as the State Police or Highway Patrol, depending on the state. These

agencies are responsible for enforcing state laws, especially in areas outside the jurisdiction of local police departments. State police typically have jurisdiction across the entire state and provide assistance to local departments in investigations, traffic control, and criminal enforcement. In addition, they often handle interstate highways and rural areas with limited local policing. Agencies like the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) serve as prominent examples. The U.S. model is characterized by operational independence, rigorous training standards, and strong legal oversight, which collectively help in maintaining a balance between state authority and federal coordination (Chikwendu, & Anifowose, 2023).

**2. Canada:** Canada operates a hybrid policing model where provinces can either establish their own police forces or contract federal services from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Two provinces, Ontario and Quebec, have fully functional provincial police services the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) which are responsible for enforcing provincial laws, traffic regulations, and public order. In contrast, other provinces such as Alberta and British Columbia contract the RCMP to act as their provincial police. These provincial forces operate independently from the federal government in matters concerning internal security and are overseen by provincial ministries of community safety or public security. The Canadian model reflects a nuanced balance between federal oversight and provincial autonomy, with emphasis on community-based policing, bilingual service delivery (especially in Quebec), and multicultural sensitivity, reflecting Canada's diversity (Leonard & Brooks, 2021)

**3. Germany:** Germany's policing system is a quintessential example of a decentralized federal police structure. Each of the 16 federal states (Länder) maintains its own police force, responsible for the enforcement of state laws and internal security within its territory. Known as the Landespolizei, these forces are supervised by their respective state ministries of the interior and are organized into divisions for criminal investigation (Kriminalpolizei), riot control (Bereitschaftspolizei), and general law enforcement (Schutzpolizei). The federal government only intervenes through the Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Police Office) and the Bundespolizei (Federal Police) in matters of national security, organized crime, or cross-border issues. Germany's model emphasizes local accountability, high professional standards, and extensive training. It is regarded as one of the most efficient and community-focused police systems in Europe, with considerable investment in technology, legal education, and respect for civil liberties (Schmidt, & Weber, 2020).

**4. United Kingdom:** Although the United Kingdom operates a unitary government, its policing system is regionally decentralized, with individual police forces serving counties or metropolitan areas. Examples include the Metropolitan Police Service (London), Greater Manchester Police, and Police Scotland. Each force is overseen by a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) or a local authority, depending on the region. The responsibilities of these forces include crime prevention, public order maintenance, counterterrorism collaboration, and traffic control. The UK model stresses local

autonomy, public accountability, and citizen involvement in policing policy through elected PCCs. Despite the absence of a written constitution, a strong tradition of rule of law and judicial oversight ensures checks and balances. One of the unique features of British policing is the emphasis on policing by consent—meaning police derive their authority from public approval rather than coercion—underscoring the importance of public trust (Chikwendu, & Anifowose, 2023).

**5. Australia:** In Australia, each state and territory operates its own police force, such as the New South Wales Police Force and Victoria Police, while federal crimes are handled by the Australian Federal Police (AFP). State police are responsible for a wide range of functions including general crime investigation, road safety, counter-terrorism, and community engagement. These forces are governed by state legislation and report to state ministers of police. Australia's state police model is known for its integrated approach, where collaboration between local communities, intelligence services, and other law enforcement bodies is prioritized. Community policing and proactive crime prevention strategies are emphasized, with officers often engaging in public outreach programs and school-based safety education. Additionally, the Australian model has invested heavily in digital forensics and cybercrime units, reflecting its progressive approach to emerging security challenges (Leonard & Brooks, 2021).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Conflict Theory (Karl Marx, 1848), Conflict theory, rooted in the works of Karl Marx, posits that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due to competition for limited resources. In the context of policing, conflict theory suggests that law enforcement agencies serve as tools used by dominant groups (typically those in power) to maintain control over marginalized or less powerful segments of society. This perspective is relevant to the centralized police structure in Nigeria, where the federal government holds exclusive control over policing powers. Critics argue that this centralized control facilitates the political use of the police to suppress dissent, silence opposition, and enforce conformity, often at the expense of justice and equality (Olayinka & Chukwu, 2020). The frequent allegations of police brutality, unlawful arrests, and partisanship in Nigeria can thus be seen as manifestations of institutional power struggles within the state.

Applying conflict theory also helps to explain the resistance of the federal government to decentralize the police force, despite widespread insecurity and calls for reform from state governments. The retention of centralized control can be interpreted as a strategy by the ruling elite to consolidate power and reduce regional autonomy. In federal systems like Nigeria's, where power is supposed to be shared between tiers of government, centralized policing contradicts the principle of power devolution and exacerbates federal-state tensions. Hence, conflict theory provides a critical lens for analyzing how centralized policing perpetuates inequality, stifles decentralization efforts, and undermines democratic governance (Idowu & Ogunyemi, 2022).

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive-historical research design. This design was considered appropriate because it gives a better and deeper understanding to phenomenon on the basis of an in-depth study of the phenomenon.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The data for the paper were derived from secondary source of data collection. Secondary source include archival works such as encyclopedia, textbooks, journal articles, magazines, internet and other library materials related to the subject matter of the paper.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data for this paper were analyzed qualitatively in line with the research question and validated the hypotheses of the study through contents analysis approach.

### **Findings**

**Operational Inefficiency and Delayed Response to Security Threats:** One of the most pressing challenges of Nigeria's centralized police structure is the delayed response to security emergencies due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and lack of local autonomy. Because police commissioners report directly to the Inspector General in Abuja, state and local authorities are unable to mobilize police resources swiftly during crises. This hierarchical structure hinders proactive crime prevention and undermines timely intervention, especially in volatile regions. Consequently, security threats such as banditry, communal clashes, and kidnappings often escalate before federal forces can respond adequately (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2019). Delayed response is mostly associated with the structural chains of

command especially as it concerns certain emergencies that necessitate speedy intervention. Most officers will tell the victims they were yet to get orders. In most cases, it may be lack of personnels on ground to effectively arrest the situation.

**Weak Accountability and Oversight Mechanisms:** Centralization limits the ability of state governments and local communities to hold police officers accountable for misconduct or human rights abuses. The distance between police operations and civilian oversight creates a culture of impunity, where officers are shielded from consequences by the federal chain of command. Without localized oversight bodies, complaints of brutality, extortion, and unlawful detention are rarely investigated or punished. This has led to a loss of public confidence in the Nigeria Police Force and has fueled repeated calls for police reform (Ajayi & Peters, 2023). The weak accountability situation is debilitating and affects the delivery of the core mandate of policing, mostly because of its federalist composition that institutionalised patterns and chains of directives, which in most cases are weak. Schmidt and Weber (n. d) maintained that Viability of State policing if implemented will erode weak accountability because of the nearness of the control mechanism.

**Politicization and Federal Domination of Law Enforcement:** The centralized nature of policing in Nigeria makes it vulnerable to political manipulation by the federal government. Security agencies are frequently accused of being used to suppress political opposition and manipulate elections, especially during the electoral cycle. Since state governors lack operational control

over police commands, the federal executive can deploy police units in ways that serve political rather than public interest. This politicization erodes the neutrality of law enforcement and contributes to intergovernmental tensions within Nigeria's federal system (Okeke & Lawan, 2022). The palpable reckless use of policing instrument for victimization of opposition voices shrinks its political neutrality and opens the system up for various certain nuances, which runs in contrast with the mandate of constitutional policing arrangement.

**Incompatibility with Nigeria's Federal Structure:** Nigeria operates a federal system where power is constitutionally distributed between the federal and state governments. However, policing remains exclusively under federal control, creating a contradiction in governance. This centralized arrangement undermines the constitutional role of state governors as "chief security officers" and creates conflicts of responsibility and authority. The inability of state governments to enact or implement independent security strategies despite growing insecurity reveals the structural tension between central control and regional governance (Ogunyemi & Ibrahim, 2021).

**Inadequate Community Engagement and Intelligence Gathering:** A centralized police force often lacks deep ties to local communities, which are essential for effective intelligence gathering and crime prevention. In Nigeria, police officers are frequently posted to unfamiliar regions, where they do not speak the local language or understand the cultural dynamics. This disconnect hinders trust-building and reduces the flow of vital information from citizens to the police. Without grassroots

collaboration, policing becomes reactive rather than preventive, allowing crime to thrive in many areas (Ezeanya & Uche, 2020).

### **Discussion of Findings**

The researcher in a herculean and exhaustive intellectual energy deployment has come up with findings which are direct reflections of the objective of the study which sought to Identify the conflicts arising from the centralized police structure in Nigeria and other selected states in West Africa.

The study posited that operational inefficiency and delayed response to security threats are basically an outcome of centralization of policing structure in Nigeria, under this structure, the command is a top to bottom approach, we're the state command has to wait for others from above to proactively responsive to security threats, which jeopardized the essence of security structure in the first place. This findings collaborated the security situation in a state in Nigeria called Enugu under the former Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi who was reported to be stranded after he called the State commissioner of police to intervene in a crisis at a location called New Artisan in Enugu involving cattle sellers, the commissioner told him, he is yet to get orders from above to intervene.

Another important finding is 'Weak accountability and oversight mechanisms' here weak accountability thrives because of poor supervision and effective monitoring infrastructure as a result of centralization of authorisation to act.

The researcher next finding is politicization and federal domination of law enforcement, this is a critical in the sense that it lay bare the constant Politicisation of the law enforcements agencies, during elections in Nigeria thousands of police officers

are deployed for elections purposes and in most cases act in favour of the power at the Centre.,more over the researcher finds out incompatibility with Nigeria's federal structure and inadequate community engagement and intelligence gathering has resulted in conflict of different dimension and has heightened the scourge of insecurity and put the lives and properties of citizens in harms way and among others are the major conflicts arising from the centralized police structure in Nigeria. There is equally a disconnect between the constitutional role of the state governors as "as Chief Security Officers" and their lack of operational control over the police. Findings indicated that this power mismatch frustrates local efforts to combat insecurity, especially in regions with unique security challenges.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study posited that operational inefficiency and delayed response to security threats are basically an outcome of centralization of policing structure in Nigeria, under this structure, the command is a top to bottom approach, were the state command has to wait for orders from above to proactively respond to security threats, which jeopardized the essence of security structure in the first place. The 'Weak accountability and oversight mechanisms' thrives because of poor supervision and effective monitoring infrastructure as a result of centralization of authorisation to act. Equally, the politicization and federal domination of law enforcement, is critical in the sense that it lay bare the constant Politicisation of the law enforcements agencies, during elections in Nigeria thousands of police officers are deployed for elections purposes and in most cases act in favour

of the power at the Centre, more over the researcher finds out incompatibility with Nigeria's federal structure and inadequate community engagement and intelligence gathering has resulted in conflict of different dimension and has heightened the scourge of insecurity and put the lives and properties of citizens in harms way and among others are the major conflicts arising from the centralized police structure in Nigeria and therefore decentralization is a promising prospects in policing in Nigeria and some selected States in West Africa.

### **Recommendation**

The paper recommends the constitutional amendment to facilitate decentralization of policing and creation of state police at sub-national levels of governance and an oversight review body to effectively guarantee speedy response to wanton security threats and averts conflict of interest in appropriation of policing powers and guarantee accountability.

### **References**

- Abiodun, T. F., & Okereke, O. (2020). The paradox of federalism and centralized policing in Nigeria. *Journal of Nigerian Public Administration*, 15(2), 44–58.
- Achumba, I. C., & Alike, R. M. (2022). Hybrid policing systems and federal governance in plural societies. *Global Security Review*, 7(2), 67–83.

- Adebayo, T. A. (2023). Technology and ethics in modern policing: An African perspective. *Global Policing Review*, 5(1), 24–39.
- Adeyemi, B. A. (2022). *Decentralized Policing and Regional Security Networks in Nigeria: The Amotekun Experience*. *Journal of African Security and Development Studies*, 6(2), 66–82.
- Adisa, R. M., & Chukwudi, N. A. (2023). Regional security networks and the decentralization debate in Nigeria. *West African Security Review*, 8(1), 61–78.
- Agbakwuru, V., & Sunday, M. O. (2022). Federal-state relations and police accountability in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Security Studies*, 12(1), 33–50.
- Ajayi, O. B., & Peters, I. T. (2023). Budgeting and policing effectiveness in Nigeria: A structural critique. *Nigerian Journal of Public Policy and Administration*, 19(2), 88–104.
- Akinyele, J. O. (2021). "Centralization and Security Outcomes: A Critical Study of the Nigeria Police Force." *African Journal of Criminology and Security Studies*, 9(2), 45–59.
- Alemika, E. E. O., & Chukwuma, I. C. (2019). *Policing and law enforcement in Nigeria: Issues and challenges*. CLEEN Foundation.
- Alemika, E. E. O., & Chukwuma, I. C. (2019). *Reforming the Nigeria Police Force: Problems and prospects*. CLEEN Foundation.

- Aliyu, M. B., & Ekpenyong, S. A. (2020). *Professionalism and policing: Challenges and prospects in Nigeria*. *Journal of Law and Social Development*, 7(2), 88–103.
- Bakare, T. M., & Okonkwo, E. U. (2020). Military involvement in civilian policing: A human rights perspective. *African Journal of Security and Human Rights*, 12(1), 54–69.
- Balogun, S. A., & Musa, I. T. (2021). Policing and structural stability in Nigeria: A functionalist analysis. *African Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 9(2), 45–61.
- Brogden, M., & Nijhar, P. (2020). *Community Policing: National and International Models and Approaches*. Routledge.
- Brown, D., & Chen, M. L. (2022). Local policing and public accountability in democratic societies. *Global Journal of Criminal Justice Reform*, 9(1), 45–61.
- Chikwendu, C. C., & Anifowose, T. A. (2023). *Security governance and police decentralization: Learning from Western democracies*. *Nigerian Journal of Federalism and Public Security*, 5(2), 41–59.
- Ekhomu, O. (2019). *Effective Personal and Corporate Security in Nigeria*. CSS Ltd.
- Ekhomu, O. (2020). *Policing in Nigeria: A Historical and Structural Analysis*. Lagos: CSS Security Press.

- Eze, N. I., & Olawale, S. T. (2020). Community policing and the decentralization debate in Nigeria. *Journal of African Security Studies*, 12(3), 112–126.
- Eze, R. U., & Adebajo, K. T. (2022). *Community policing and citizen participation in urban security governance*. *African Review of Security Studies*, 6(3), 73–90.
- Ezeanya, L. C., & Tijani, K. R. (2023). Revisiting police decentralization in Nigeria: A structural functionalist perspective. *Journal of African Security and Development*, 6(1), 28–43.
- Ezeanya, L. C., & Uche, R. O. (2020). Community-based policing and security governance in Nigeria. *Journal of African Security Policy*, 5(3), 72–86.
- Gifford, S., & Sharp, A. (2021). *Community policing and institutional trust in the United Kingdom: Decentralization and citizen engagement*. *British Journal of Criminology*, 61(4), 755–772.
- Ibrahim, K. L., & Olufemi, A. J. (2024). Political manipulation and the case for state police in Nigeria. *West African Journal of Governance and Democracy*, 10(1), 33–47.
- Idowu, T. O., & Ogunyemi, M. O. (2022). The centralization of the Nigerian police and power dynamics in a federal state. *Nigerian Journal of Political Science*, 15(1), 77–94.

- Leonard, P. J., & Brooks, C. M. (2021). Decentralization and trust in police: A cross-national study. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 23(3), 211–229.
- Leonard, P. J., & Brooks, C. M. (2021). Policing Structures and Public Safety in Federal Democracies: A Comparative Study of the U.S. and Germany. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 23(3), 251–2231.
- Nnadi, I. A., & Ugochukwu, C. F. (2024). *Financing police reforms in Nigeria: Accountability, autonomy, and sustainability*. *Journal of African Economic and Security Policy*, 10(1), 56–71.
- Nnamani, S. I., & Ibrahim, L. A. (2021). Centralized policing and the quest for state police in Nigeria: Issues and implications. *Journal of Social and Policy Research*, 13(2), 88–101.
- Odekunle, F., & Waziri, M. (2021). Institutional dysfunction in the Nigeria Police Force. *Criminal Justice Studies in Africa*, 9(1), 87–102.
- Oguejiofor, J. C., & Ekpo, E. N. (2022). Colonial legacy and the crisis of policing in Nigeria. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 16(1), 65–78.
- Ogunyemi, T. J., & Ibrahim, A. A. (2021). Policing and federalism in Nigeria: Revisiting constitutional contradictions. *African Journal of Political and Legal Studies*, 14(1), 51–67.

- Ogunyemi, T. J., & Ibrahim, A. A. (2021). *Policing and federalism in Nigeria: Revisiting constitutional contradictions*. *African Journal of Political and Legal Studies*, 14(1), 51–67.
- Ogunyemi, T. J., & Ibrahim, A. A. (2021). *Policing and federalism in Nigeria: Revisiting constitutional contradictions*. *African Journal of Political and Legal Studies*, 14(1), 51–67.
- Oguwuike I. F., & Udeh, C. O., (2024). Foreign Policy As A Panacea to Fight Against Terrorism. *Int'l Journal of Trade and Commerce - IIARTC*, 13(1).
- Oguwuike, I. F., & Udeh, C.O.,(2024). Anti-Open Grazing Law Implementation: Farmers-Herders Conflicts in Benue State, Nigeria. *Int'l Journal of Trade and Commerce*. – *IIARTC*, 13(2).
- Okeke, C. N., & Lawan, M. A. (2022). Political interference and policing in Nigeria: Challenges and implications. *Journal of African Democratic Governance*, 10(2), 44–60.
- Okonkwo, A. E. (2021). Policing and the public in Nigeria: Issues of accountability and professionalism. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 39(2), 180–194.
- Okonkwo, A. E., & Ezeanya, L. C. (2023). Community policing and local security governance: Nigerian lessons. *Journal of African Policing Studies*, 8(1), 43–59.
- Okoro, T. O., & Akintayo, O. A. (2022). Security governance and decentralization in Nigeria: The dilemma of state

policing. *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*, 28(1), 45–62.

Okoye, M. E. (2023). *Police accountability and democratic governance in Nigeria: The role of independent oversight institutions*. *Nigerian Journal of Public Policy and Governance*, 9(1), 34–49.

Olanrewaju, S. A., & Yakubu, T. A. (2021). Centralization, inefficiency, and insecurity: Rethinking Nigeria's police architecture. *Nigerian Journal of Policy and Administration*, 18(2), 55–70.

Olayinka, A. T., & Chukwu, D. I. (2020). Police repression and elite control in Nigeria: A conflict theory approach. *Journal of African Political Economy*, 18(2), 102–118.

Olowu, D., & Hassan, A. (2019). "Governance, Federalism, and Police Reform in Nigeria: An Institutional Analysis." *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration*, 11(1), 78–91.

Onwudiwe, I. D., & Odo, L. U. (2023). Federalism, policing, and internal security in Nigeria: A comparative perspective. *African Security Studies Review*, 15(1), 112–129.

Schmidt, R., & Weber, L. (2020). Federalism and Police Reform: A Comparative Study of Germany and Nigeria. *Journal of International Law and Security Governance*, 14(3), 112–128.

Schmidt, R., & Weber, L. (2020). Federalism and Police Reform: A Comparative Study of Germany and Nigeria. *Journal of International Law and Security Governance*, 14(3), 112–128.

- Usman, H., & Okorie, J. I. (2023). Federalism and the structure of policing in Nigeria: A case for constitutional reform. *Journal of African Law and Policy*, 17(1), 76–92.
- Walker, S., & Katz, C. M. (2020). *The Police in America: An Introduction* (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.