

**Evaluation of the Punch and the Nigerian Tribune Reportage of Police Brutality  
between January 2016 and September 2020**

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**2022**

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**Certification**

This is to certify that Romario Ayibanadei MIZPAH (LCU/PG/001468) conducted this study for the award of Master of Science (M.Sc.) Degree in Mass Communication and Media Technology in Faculty of Communication and Information Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, under my supervision.

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**Date**

### **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, the giver of life.

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### **Acknowledgement**

I am grateful to God Almighty for seeing me through the attainment of another important milestone in my search for knowledge.

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Even though the above-mentioned institutions and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in the work

### **Abstract**

Police brutality has occurred all across the world and is still a major concern amongst society and police organizations. This brutality ranges from assaults, death as a result of use of force, harassment. In Nigeria, cases of brutality have been part of country history as it was happening during the colonial era because of protests, and at the present moment it is worse as people have rights and most people have access to camcorders to record such incidents which at the later stage attract media attention. The study assessed *the Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* reportage of police brutality between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The study adopted Agenda-Setting and Social Responsibility theory as theoretical framework. Content analysis research design was adopted to examine contents of the selected newspapers in addressing the research objectives. Findings show that a total of 1446 items were reported by the selected newspapers within the study period. Individually, *The Punch* reported 551 items while *Nigerian Tribune* reported 895 items on Police brutality. The study revealed that 106(53.3%) of *The Punch* publications and 421(85.6) of the Nigerian Tribune publications performed the correlation functions while 93(46.7%) of Punch publications and 71(14.4%) of the Nigerian Tribune's publications performed surveillance functions of the media. 426 publications on Police brutality involved eyewitness accounts, 265 publications included

Police reports, 259 publications comprised relatives of the victims on the incidents, and 224 of the publications had sources for their reports. The study recommended newspapers should constantly cover and report cases of Police brutality as to inform and educate the society on the dangers caused as a result of Police brutality.

**Keywords:** Human rights, Mass media, Newspapers, Police brutality, Violence

**Word Count:** 271

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### **List of Acronyms**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
SARS	Special Anti-Robbery Squad
NTA	Nigerian Television Authority
MOPOL	Nigerian Mobile Police
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPF	Nigeria Police Force

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the study

The Media are expected to play an important public accountability role by monitoring and investigating the actions of those who are granted public trust and who may be tempted to abuse their office for private gain hence the role of the media in reporting Police crimes cannot be overemphasized<sup>1</sup>. Mass media in Nigeria started in 1859 when Reverend Henry Townsend published *Iwe Iroyin Fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Yoruba* (The Newspaper for the Egba's and Yoruba). In 1926, the Nigerian Daily Times was started by the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company. The West African Pilot of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and The Nigerian Tribune of Chief Obafemi Awolowo started in 1926 and 1949 respectively<sup>3</sup>. Today, there are so many newspapers in circulation, some of them are, *The Punch, The Guardian, This Day, Vanguard, Leadership* etc. The media are powerful tools of communication and it serves as the fourth estate of the realm.

Police legitimacy has faced constant challenges in Nigeria given the prevalence of anti-authoritarian attitudes and the importance Nigerian citizens' place on liberty. As such, Police have frequently resorted to force against both individuals and groups as a way of asserting and/or maintaining their authority and legitimacy. In turn, accusations and complaints of Police brutality in Nigeria span the lifetime of the profession of policing. Periods of increased Police violence have generally been followed by the formation of Commissions to investigate such allegations. The newspaper as a medium of mass communication is very powerful in influencing people through its agenda setting functions; the newspaper set topics for public discussion. People mostly tend to live by what they see, listen or read from the media. Hence, the newspaper is mostly restricted to only the literate and financially strong members of the society who can buy and read and have access to daily newspaper review on radio or

television. The newspapers provide in-depth and interpretative information in the form of features, in-depth news, investigative reports, cartoons, special columns news analysis etc. Also, newspapers provide permanence and convenience to its readers; it can be stored for a long period and can be read at will. Thus, the Nigerian press has a role to play in influencing public dialogue that would help in social change.

Newspapers play a very significant role in the society by reporting events, happenings, occurrences in the society, serving as an advocacy instrument by providing the platform for opinions (letter to the editors, op-ed, editorials, etc.), as well as performing the watchdog function against the government, authorities and the ills of the society<sup>3</sup>. Newspapers keep the people aware of the activities of the government at all level. They influence public opinion and play an important role in fighting the menace of Police brutality. In a democracy, there should be an efficient and fearless press as it is the mirror of the society.

Police brutality in the form of torture as interrogative technique and other wanton abuses of human rights remain some of the major flaws of the Nigeria Police Force which has attracted public outrage and condemnation against the Force. Police action has been particularly gruesome in their fight against crime. The proliferation of anti-crime operations by the Police has resulted in extrajudicial executions and degrading treatment in Police detention facilities throughout the country. General public concern over crime has increased the pressure on the Police to arrest many suspected criminals. However, this outcry by the public has also been used by the Nigerian Police to systematically justify human rights violations as being an unavoidable part of this fight against crime.

The mass media as agent of expression of public opinion have long been recognized as having social and constitutional responsibilities in monitoring law enforcement agencies such as the Police and exposing their excesses and ensuring that they are accountable for their actions and inactions. The role of the media as active participants in its responsibility to rid society of corruption and promote good governance is undeniably established and guaranteed

in Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It states that the Press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people<sup>4</sup>. This constitutional role requires the media as a social institution to be responsive to social problems and needs. The press has a paramount role to play in providing information, discussion, and debate, and act as watchdogs over government institutions. This suggests that the press can strengthen democratic institutions by conscientiously and effectively reporting Police brutality.

Amongst the core responsibilities of the media is the surveillance function that places a critical role in democratic dispensation. Here, the media is expected to bring to the consciousness of the public impending dangers. This function places a demand on the media to analyze and report impending dangers that are threats to lives and properties of a given society. The surveillance function or role of the media presupposes that the media is the eyes and ears of the public. The media provide information and alert its heterogeneous audiences of the changes that take place around them. The media consistently survey the environment and convey salient issues or mediated messages to the audience in order to reduce uncertainties and consequently react to the conflict or change in a responsible manner. The media in discharging its surveillance function, usually scout round the environment and bring news of social, economic and political developments, dangers that are threats to national stability and threats to public attention.

News, in its diversified formats, is fundamentally a narrative about a current but unexpected event whose occurrence interests readers and draws debates and discussions on the event. News reporting is a type of journalism, typically written or broadcast, which involves a social process of narrative construction (information gathering, processing and reporting) guided by acceptable news language, news style and news distribution systems<sup>5</sup>. News reporting is centrally concerned with the construction of social reality and the representation of dominant discourses in a society. This becomes even more imperative in the print industry where

reporters have greater opportunity of preserving permanently records of social events and of becoming more objective and detached in the expression of ideas and views. The role of the media in the construction of reality and how people view the world around them has received critical and evaluative studies in media research over the years. The construction of reality considers the processes by which social, political and ideological meanings are framed, processed and carried through the news media. Typically, researchers tend to focus on how media represents social reality; manages social change; and affects the well-being of audiences<sup>6</sup>.

The reporting style of the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* as two of the major national newspapers in the country reporting Police brutality comes into questioning as some stakeholders in the media industry have raised doubt as to whether their reports are objective, fair, give importance to stories of Police brutality and are in tandem with the professional standards of media practice in Nigeria given the prevalence of Police brutality in the country. There is major concern among readers of *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* newspapers, scholars and the general public as to how stories related to Police brutality are being reported by the two dailies. Hence, the study seeks to review Police brutality reportage of *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* being two of the leading daily newspapers.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

No nation can thrive in the atmosphere of insecurity, the police are very important in ensuring security of lives and property in every society. However, over the years, the image of the Nigerian Police is on the decrease due to cases of Police brutality, which makes members of the public to see the Nigerian police with distrust. Police brutality and unfriendliness are some contributors to the problem of lack of understanding between the Nigerian Police and the public. This has led Nigerians to see the Nigerian Police with disdain and express reservations in employing the services of the police in distress situation.

The media have a dual role to play: it not only raises public awareness about Police brutality, its causes, consequences, and possible remedies but also investigates and reports incidences of Police brutality aiding other oversight (and prosecutorial) bodies”. The media are agents of social change that can bring about positive attitudinal change in the audience (readers); they set the agenda for the people to follow in any society. The mass media are very crucial to opinion formulation and eventual outcomes of events. They act as the eyes, ears, and voices of the public, drawing rights often at considerable personal risk. Through their work, they can encourage governments and civil society organizations to effect change that will improve the quality of people's lives. The mass media are central to the provision of relevant communication for nation building. The press can bring to public notice, issues that require attention with a view to mobilizing development efforts in that area.

The main function of the newspaper is to tell its readers what is happening in the world, including the country, the state, the town or city and the locality. Newspaper is an information carrier as people believe strongly in what they read because newspapers give the truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the daily event in a context- which gives them meaning. This research is aimed at ascertaining *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* reportage of Police brutality being two of the leading daily newspapers.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to evaluate the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch*'s reportage of Police brutality in Nigeria between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The specific objectives are:

- i. identify Police brutality reports in the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* Newspapers during the period of the study;
- ii. measure the extent at which the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* Newspapers carried Police brutality stories during the period under review;

- iii. measure the level of prominence ascribed to Police brutality stories by the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers during the period of the study;
- iv. identify the function (s) performed by *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers in reporting Police brutality in Nigeria under the period of study; and
- v. determine the level of compliance with ethical standard journalism practice in Police brutality reportage of *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>h</sup>, 2020.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. Are there Police brutality reportage in *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch's* Newspapers during the period under the study?
- ii. What is the extent at which the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers carried Police brutality stories during the period under study?
- iii. What is the level of prominence ascribed to Police brutality stories by the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers during the period of the study?
- iv. What are the function (s) performed by the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers in reporting Police brutality in Nigeria under the study period?
- v. What is the level of compliance with ethical standard of journalism in Police brutality by the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* Newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>h</sup>, 2020 in the reportage of Police brutalities stories?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study is of immense importance to both the media and the masses. The media are conventionally said to be the watchdog of the society that not only entertain but educate, enlighten and inform the society.

The study is also of benefit to Police Service Commission in order to formulate policies that

would help curb the menace of Police brutality. It will be of importance to Public Relations department of the NPF as it will inform them of the activities of Police officers and check-mate them

Finally, the findings of this research will serve as reference materials for both scholars and students who may want to carry out study on Police community relations. It would serve as a reference point for them.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study assessed the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* newspaper's reportage of Police brutality in Nigeria with a particular focus on the extent, and prominence given to such issues. These two dailies were selected considering their national outlook.

The study was centred on daily editions of the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* from Mondays to Fridays within the period of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 was chosen because it was this period campaign against Police brutality (ENDSARS) gathered momentum with the hashtag #Endsars started by Activist Segun Awosanya on Twitter which led to SARS being investigated several times in response to protests without results. Reforms were promises in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 but SARS was disbanded on October 2020 after worldwide protests. The justification for the use of the *Nigerian Tribune* and the *Punch* Newspapers is because both newspapers carried straight news, features, editorials, cartoons, columns that reflected on the issues in this period.

### **1.7 Limitations to the study**

The major limitations to the study were missing editions of the two newspapers. Some of the editions of *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* Newspapers within the period of study were not available and that affected the number of Editions was used for the study.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Extrajudicial Killings:** This is the killing of a person by governmental authorities without

sanction of any judicial proceeding or legal process.

**#EndSars:** It is a decentralized social movement, and series of mass protests against police brutality in Nigeria. The slogan calls for the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian Police with a long record of abuses.

**Human Rights Violation:** It is the disallowance of the freedom of thought and movement to which humans legally have a right.

**Nigeria Police:** It is the principal law enforcement and the lead security agency in Nigeria saddled with the responsibility of preventing and detecting of crime, the apprehension of offenders, the preservation of the law and order.

**Media:** The plural form of medium. Medium means that by which something is expressed. In this study, media is the same as mass media. The mass media are the channels of mass communication used to disseminate information to a very heterogeneous large number of people.

**Newspaper:** A newspaper is a serial publication containing news about current events, other informative articles about politics, sports, arts, and so on, and advertising. Newspaper can also be described as printed and unbound paper that has the content of news about current political, economic, socio-cultural, educational, environmental, scientific-cum-technological and sundry affairs, as well as other relevant information.

**Police Brutality:** it is used to refer to various human rights violations by Police. This might include beatings, racial abuse, unlawful killings, and torture.

**SARS:** The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was a branch of the Nigeria Police Force under the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID). It was founded in late 1992 as one of the 14 units in the Force Criminal Investigation and

Intelligence Department, which was established to detain, investigate, and prosecute people involved in crimes like armed robbery, kidnapping, and other violent crimes.

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## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

To provide empirical background to this study and also make this work comprehensive, the literature will be reviewed under the following sub-headings:

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

2.4 Appraisal of Literature Review

#### **2.1.1 Concept of Police Brutality**

Police brutality has occurred all across the world and is still a major concern among society and police organizations<sup>1</sup>. This brutality ranges from assaults, death as a result of use of force, harassment. It takes two forms, which is physical brutality and this include assaults, and non-physical brutality which includes use of verbal language. In Nigeria, cases of brutality have been part of country history as it was happening during the colonial era because of protests, and at the present moment it is worse as people have rights and most people have access to camcorders to record such incidents which at the later stage attract media attention.

The public is losing trust in the police because of among other things such as brutality itself, criminal behaviour and abuse of power<sup>2</sup>. Police torture has covered media headlines for the last few years. This torture exceeds the standard range of punishment. Extra judicial killing are becoming common. The police officers responsible for the torture are not held for long before they are released to their normal duties. It is noted that police use excessive force to the general people rather than criminals<sup>2</sup>. The police use this force on suspects, rather than the ideal victims of the offense.

Worried by the incessant reports of human rights abuse of the members of the Police Force, former Inspector-General of Police, warned the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) operatives against torture and extrajudicial killings, saying no Police in the world have the right or authority to kill crime suspects<sup>3</sup>. He admonished the SARS personnel to always respect the right of every Nigerian, noting that this was the way they could change the negative public perception about them. Constant and consistent reports are received from lawyers, human rights activists, social analysts, and journalists about the Police demanding bribes, stealing, extorting money and engaging in different forms of brutality and abuse of rights.

Police brutality is the excessive and unwarranted use of force by law enforcement agents. It is an extreme form of police misconduct or violence and is a civil rights violation. It also refers to a situation where officers exercise undue or excessive force against a person. Police violence includes but is not limited to physical or verbal harassment, physical or mental injury, property damage, inaction of police officers, and in some cases, death<sup>4</sup>.

The perception of police brutality vary widely across populations. For example, it is also described as the way in which the general public can label all sorts of police actions as brutality, including verbal commands and threats, but points out that physical force is a necessary component of brutality<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, many scholars explain the way that police officers often expand their definitions and perceptions of necessary force to include those actions that might be seen as excessive or unnecessary by that same public. Some scholars, for example, write of the way that police have very different accounts of both normal and excessive force, and they provide a moral defense for “street justice” or “informal distributive and retributive justice in situations where individuals violated community norms and impinged on the personal and property right of others<sup>6</sup>.

Though this use of force is taken for granted, scholars and police do distinguish between necessary and unnecessary force, excessive force and brutality. Necessary force is, as the

label implies, that force necessary to arrest or otherwise perform the official duties of policing. Unnecessary force is generally seen as a problem, the result of ineptitude or insensitivity” and involves the use of force when perhaps the situation does not require it. Excessive force is the use of more force than necessary and overlaps with brutality, which is a “conscious and venal act by officers who usually take great pains to conceal their misconduct”. Research describe how excessive force can be either brutal or unnecessary depending on whether it was a result of bad judgment or malicious intent<sup>7</sup>. Despite definitional issues and confusion, Police brutality is as old as the profession of policing itself. Forms of Police brutality include:

**Use of Excessive Force:** Excessive force is one of the most common situation in which it can be proven that officers have committed police brutality. This may involve an officer becoming physically violent with an individual who is fully cooperating or otherwise opting to use more physical or verbal force than is necessary to control the situation. Police officers are required to begin their contact with the least aggressive methods first, only escalating when the individual they are in contact with is not cooperating in resolving the situation. Use of tasers, chokeholds, and batons are not first step solutions.

**Unlawful Arrest or Detention:** Police officers must have probable cause or a warrant in order to arrest or detain a suspect. If a suspect has been arrested or detained for no reason, he may have a case for police brutality. Being in contact with police officers can have significant impacts on your physical wellbeing, safety, and reputation, and officers who have detained you without cause may be guilty of brutality even if they have not become physically aggressive.

**Wrongful Deaths by Law Enforcement Agents:** Another common cause for police brutality charges is when a law enforcement officer is guilty of the wrongful death for an individual. If a situation did not call for the use of deadly force and the officer utilized deadly force anyway, there is a strong case for police brutality. The use of deadly force to resolve a situation is

subject to strict guidelines: the use of such force must be the only means remaining to prevent the escape of the individual. The person must be a significant and tangible threat to officers or the public. If both of these criteria are not met, the use of deadly force is prohibited.

**Wrongful Confessions:** Law enforcement officers do not always rely on physical actions to control a situation. If you are coerced into giving a confession or pleading guilty due to an officer's verbal threats, physical presence, or other actions, the officer may be guilty of police brutality. A suspect cannot legally be coerced into confessing, and officers may not use physical force, trickery, torture, or deceit to fool you into confessing. If a suspect does not feel that officers gave him any choice but to confess or plead guilty, he may be a victim of police brutality.

**Improper take-downs:** There are not a lot of situations in which a violent takedown is actually allowed, and it is often in cases where a suspect is resisting arrest with great force. If the person is not resisting arrest for a serious crime and is subjected to an improper takedown, they generally should not be subjected to an injurious takedown.

**High-Speed Chases:** Some law enforcement agencies have policies or General Orders that officers should cease and desist from high-speed chases in a variety of situations. When these orders are not followed, it can result in injuries or death.

### **2.1.2 Causes of Police Brutality**

**Corrupt Law Enforcement is a Contributing Factor:** There are decent and honorable Police officers, men and women who are dedicated to the true ideals of law enforcement. But, unfortunately, there are all too many who slip through the cracks and get onto the force who see their badges and guns through the lens of a power trip to abuse all against whom they have personal biases.

Then, the notorious Blue Wall of Silence closes ranks around the abusive officers. Even decent cops are loathe to report or testify against one of their own even when they privately may acknowledge that officer's inherent unfitness.

**Inadequate Training of Officers:** Here, the focus of the problem is less on the individual officers' actions than on the bureaucratic lapses that turned them loose on the community ill-prepared for the myriad challenges they will face.

Inadequate training lowers morale and foments distrust even among fellow officers. The street cops may be unsure that their partners or team members will truly "have their backs" in a life-or-death situation. It sets the stage for a harrowing experience for the citizens these badly trained officers will encounter.

**Lack of Accountability:** A key factor allowing a culture of police brutality to grow is that law enforcement officers are not required to maintain a set level of accountability or transparency in their community interaction. In this situation, a police officer does something questionable and never receives a reprimand for his or her actions. The result is that the law enforcement officer continues to choose brutal tactics over the official way to accomplish the day-to-day tasks of his or her job.

**Police Stress Finds an Outlet:** Stress can also be considered a factor in the causes for police brutality. In this scenario, law enforcement chooses to view members of the public as hostile or unsympathetic to the job at hand. The matter at hand becomes more problematic if the officer does not have a confidant in which to confide regarding the trials of his or her position. When a law enforcement officer grows increasingly isolated and considers the better part of the public to be hostile, it is not unusual for an officer to target citizens.

### **2.1.3 Historical Perspective of Police Brutality in Nigeria**

Prior to the onset of colonization by the British in 1861, traditional African policing methods were rooted in the community and closely interlinked with social and religious structures. The enforcement of traditional customs and beliefs were carried out by community structures

such as age grades (formal organizations whose membership is based on pre-determined age range), secret societies or vocational guilds (for example, of hunters, farmers or fishermen). Through these diffuse systems of crime control, law and order were maintained, largely without the use of violence<sup>8</sup>.

As the British sought colonial expansion across the territories known today as Nigeria, they established local, decentralized police forces. The first such force was created in the Lagos colony in 1861. Subsequently, constabularies were formed in what became the northern and southern protectorates. The composition of these Police Forces varied depending on location. For example, in the Lagos colony, a deliberate strategy utilized officers from the linguistically and culturally distinct Hausa ethnic group from the north of the country. This practice appeared to alienate the police from the local community they were employed to control. By contrast in the northern Nigerian protectorate a system of indirect rule depended on the Hausa chiefs and emirs, and thus the emir's existing police system was strengthened<sup>9</sup>. The primary purpose of the police during this time was to advance the economic and political agenda of the colonizers. In many areas, the police engaged in the brutal subjugation of communities and the suppression of resistance to colonial rule. The use of violence and repression from the beginning of the colonial era, marked a dislocation in the relationship between the police and local communities, which has characterized law enforcement practices in Nigeria ever since<sup>10</sup>.

In 1930, the northern and southern police forces merged into the first National Police Force – the Nigerian Police Force -- headed by an Inspector General of Police. The following years saw further changes in the organization of the force, such as the introduction of regional commands to reflect the federalism of Nigeria. Responsibility for maintaining law and order was now shared by federal and regional governments. The same basic structure was retained after Nigeria gained independence from the British in 1960. By this time, public perceptions of the police were firmly grounded in their experience of the use of the police force to extend colonial domination, for example, in the suppression of demonstrations from the late 1920s,

workers strikes in the 1940s and communal violence from the 1950s. Post-independence, successive military regimes used the police to enforce authoritarian rule, further entrenching a culture of violence and inhibiting the development of democratic institutions, founded on the rule of law<sup>11</sup>.

For decades the Police in Nigeria have neglected their responsibility to protect Nigerian citizens and have instead preyed on them for economic gain. Indeed, the relationship between citizens and the police is very often characterized by brutality, confrontation and exploitation. Research conducted in 2000 by the Centre for Law Enforcement and Education (CLEEN), a Lagos based NGO, found that the use of violence by the police against citizens in Nigeria was widespread. Of 637 respondents to a survey carried out in fourteen states, 14.8 percent said they had been beaten by the police, 22.5 percent said police had threatened to shoot them in the past, and 73.2 percent said they had witnessed the police beating another person. A sample of 197 prison inmates, revealed higher figures of police abuse; 81 percent of respondents said they had been beaten or slapped and 39 percent burnt with hot objects.

#### **2.1.4 Police and Policing**

Police is an agency of government that is responsible for maintaining public order and preventing crime. Policemen are the government officials most proximate to crime-temporally and procedurally and are the leading figures in crime-prevention/control and in the law-enforcement process<sup>12</sup>. In general, the responsibility of law enforcement agencies is to detect crimes, apprehend the perpetrators, and provide evidence that will convince judges and juries that the perpetrators are guilty beyond a reasonable doubt<sup>13</sup>. Police also refers to a socio-political and quasi-legal institution charged with the responsibility of enforcing criminal law and the maintenance of law and order.

Moreover, policing is the measures and actions taken by a variety of institutions and groups (both formal and non-formal) in the society to regulate social relations and practice in order to secure the safety of members of community as well as conformity to the norms and values

of society. It is therefore a sub-set of control processes which involves the creation of system of surveillance coupled with the threat of sanction for discovered deviance<sup>14</sup>.

#### **2.1.4.1 The Nigerian Police and Policing in Nigeria**

The police in Nigeria are State officials charged with responsibility for 'law enforcement and order maintenance' in society. To discharge these twin responsibilities, the police are empowered to use force, indeed violence. National constitutions and statutes, international conventions and rules; police departmental orders and professional ethics regulate the use of force or violence by police. But despite these provisions, the police in most societies use force and violence beyond the limits permissible by law.

There are two dimensions of police violence and they include the use of violence against the citizens and citizen's use of violence against the police. The incidence, extent and pattern of both forms of violence in different communities are determined by social, political, economic and institutional factors. Police violence is generally conceived in terms of police brutality, torture, homicide, unnecessary use of excessive force, lethal use of firearms including extra-judicial executions of suspects, and sometimes-innocent citizens by the Nigerian police. In Nigeria, police violence is widespread. Its manifestations include beating and kicking of citizens, unnecessary use of restraints such as handcuffs and leg chains, unnecessary use of lethal firearms against suspects and members of the public, torture of suspects in order to extract confession or extort gratification<sup>15</sup>.

A further conceptualization of what policing is, according to studies, show that it is paramilitary in nature and it is so constituted to comprise able-bodied men and women, trained with the sole purpose of defending the status quo. That is, enforce the laws, values and ideologies that justify, legitimize and defend prevailing distribution of power and wealth in society<sup>16</sup>. However, police brutality is one of the major obstacles to the prospect of the Nigerian police being a positive factor in pro-social change initiatives.

The police in Nigeria, with the backing of autocratic leaders and repressive laws - frequently acted outside the rule of law. Often, they were laws unto themselves, maiming, killing and

detaining persons arbitrarily and with impunity. In Nigeria, police repression had been institutionalized since colonial rule. However, police repression became increasingly intensified under the successive military regimes after 1966<sup>17</sup>. As been observed, police repression has persisted, and in most cases intensified. For instance: The Nigeria Police Force is still largely vicious and corrupt.

Political opponents of governments and military administrations - usually workers, students, radicals and human rights activists - continue to suffer excessive and recurrent waves of brutalities, abductions, unwarranted searches and violations of privacy and private family life, extra-judicial killings, bodily injury, intimidation, harassment and loss of personal liberties in the hands of the police and sundry state "intelligence" and security agencies in the country<sup>18</sup>.

#### **2.1.4.2 Nigeria Police Force and the Challenges of Law Enforcement**

In a healthy democracy, the law and the provision it makes for the detection, arrest, trial and punishment of offenders is an expression of the will of the public; it constitutes the institutionalized norms of society. It is the society that elects members of parliament in order to frame the law, that appoint judges and magistrates to interpret and enforce that law and that recruits police forces to be the more active protectors of that law<sup>19</sup>.

Unfortunately, Nigerian government and the security system of the country have failed and need to be reshaped. The ongoing debate in Nigeria about the creation of state police is connected to the present insecurity situation and the failure of the security system in the country. In this regard, findings revealed that, one issue that has continued to generate controversy and heated debate with regard to the practice of Federalism in Nigeria is the issue of states having their individual police force or departments. It was the former Lagos State governor, Asiwaju Bola Tinibu, who first flew the kite during his first term as governor. He posited that the security of the state was porous thereby giving room for criminality and that there was the need for a state police force to effectively combat the ugly trend of crime in Lagos State<sup>20</sup>.

Furthermore, There are serious problems with the country's judicial system that hamper its ability to protect life, property and liberty of the people, and this has brought about a general loss of confidence in Nigeria's laws, law enforcement machinery and judiciary<sup>21</sup>. A study conducted on 'crime prevention and control in Nigeria', has found that, "concerning crime prevention in most of the Nigerian cities, 65% of the informants agreed that a lot is being done in modern times to stem the tide of crime in these cities". Majority of the respondents said that: Even with the advances made thus far by government, the impact of the police on combating through such slogans as "fire for fire", "operation sweep", etc. have only been cosmetic. There is a great deal more to combating crime than providing a stronger police presence or security operatives as well as providing more and better alarm systems<sup>22</sup>.

Complains and criticism against the activities of Nigeria police is not a recent phenomenon, Research shows that, "at the present time, pressure upon the police is mountain irresistibly and from every quarter, it comes from politicians, government minority groups and local communities, from the general public and the media. They all want changes in policing - more efficient policing, stronger policing, more responsive policing, and some no policing at all<sup>23</sup>.

In Nigeria for example, it was identified during a workshop on 'the police and social justice' organized in 1994-1997 that political and social instability, economic insecurity, poor accountability by holders of public offices, inconsistencies and lack of continuity in government programme' constitute major constraints and defaults to social justice in the country. Others include; poor working condition and lack of adequate welfare for police force. Similarly, the police force suffers from poor funding, poor remuneration, lack of modern facilities, and corruption among some policemen, inadequate personnel and poor training", which so also hampers the smooth running of law enforcement as one of their primary functions<sup>24</sup>.

From the above therefore, the following are identified as the major challenges faced by the entire NPF institution for effectively carrying out the task of law enforcement in Nigeria, thus:

### **(i) Corruption and Political Influence**

Corruption is one of the most widely pervasive problems in Africa. In developing countries, corruption is really regarded as a crime, even though it is specified crime<sup>25</sup>. Corruption is preserved in Nigeria, it is being practiced by the rich and the poor, the height and the lowly. Corruption in Nigeria is attributed to the growing spin of materialism and the craze for wealth<sup>26</sup>. In support of this, studies show: “the ordinary Nigerian appears helpless in the face of weak and selective application of sanctions against the perpetrators since the law enforcement agencies have themselves become infected with corruption<sup>27</sup>.”

Nigeria’s legacy of mismanagement and corrupt governance has encouraged many people to find a way of sharing the National cake instead of helping to bake it. By 1999, corruption was practically institutionalized. Over time, the judiciary became intimidated, as the rich and powerful manipulated laws and regulations to their advantage<sup>28</sup>. The police take the lead in corruption, particularly the shameless type of bribe giving and taking. It is known to the majority of the low and high that bribery and corruption are so widespread and of daily occurrence; that it is the rule rather than an exception, and it is now assumed that no citizen can obtain justice from the police except by bribery. It does not matter that you are innocent or that you are the complainant to the police. You must have to give something to a Nigeria police officer; otherwise, a complainant may end up being the suspect to be charged to court<sup>29</sup>. In this regard, it is discovered that: through intimidation, some people offer bribe in simple matters that do not constitute a breach of law. Many members of the public often do not want to be involved in case such as reporting accidents on the high ways and crime they have witnessed. They believed that the police could turn the case against them after receiving bribe from the suspect.

Corruption among the police started right from the level of recruitment, as such, it was reported that, “no fewer than 234 police recruits undergoing training at Kaduna Police Training College have been dismissed from the training for various offences ranging from

forgery, theft and leprosy”. Similarly, not less than 812 policemen including 17 officers up to the rank of deputy superintendent of police in Nigeria faced one disciplinary action or the other during the year (1996) for extortion and bribery<sup>30</sup>. It is also observed that, “if the police are corrupt, the society in which they operate bears the greater blame<sup>31</sup>.”

The hostility of the public towards the police and the public image of the Nigeria police can be traced to the fact that police came into existence during the colonial period and were used as a paramilitary force to enforce colonial policies<sup>32</sup>. After independence the trend of political influence on the police continued, for example, findings reveal that, “the Nigeria police have had the problem of political influence. The Nigeria Police Force was very badly used against political opponents of the ruling National Party of Nigeria and against the masses of the people in the period 1979-1983<sup>33</sup>. The police arrested thousands of members of other political parties”. Political interference with the activities of the police has a long history in Nigeria and is still in existence.

Presently, in order to rig elections and to intimidate their opponents, politicians in Nigeria use the police. The most significant fact about Nigeria is not only that it is an underdeveloped neo-colonial economy, but that its society is so badly cleft along social, economic and political lines that conflict is almost a built in endemic of the political system<sup>34</sup>. It is significant to note that to have a well-ordered society, there must be honest and law-abiding police force that will set examples and carry through the necessary reforms in the attitude of Nigerians towards discipline and conforming to the law.

Summarily, the police is a tool in the hands of the political class, and so if any member or associate of that class commits a crime, it is difficult to enforce the law as it is required. Again, they take orders from the politicians in office. So, politically motivated crimes are always treated differently in the eyes of the law. The police have the challenge of operating with obsolete laws, and so regulations to check contemporary crimes are not adequately provided for by our laws. Thus, effective enforcement of the law is difficult to achieve. The

police also have the problem of lack of adequate and modern equipment to carry out the function of law enforcement effectively in the face of contemporary crimes.

### **(ii) Poor Condition of Service and Lack of Modern Police Equipment**

So much had been said about the deplorable condition of the Nigeria police. The police should not be blamed always for the state of insecurity in the country; it is unrealistic of anyone to expect decent behavior from anyone who is made to work under the condition and situation which police personnel do. It was stated in the Communiqué that, “the police are not satisfied with the low level of logistic and financial support currently provided for the police force, a factor which affect morale and the effective functioning of the force, despite the overwhelming responsibilities entrusted to the force”<sup>35</sup>. Furthermore, the condition of service in the police force, including basic salaries, allowances office and residential accommodation, is very poor and has tended to aggravate the problem of corruption within the force.

Similarly, Scholars identified “discouraging salary, condition of service, rank-mobility, promotion-criteria and procedure, distrust and non-usage of outside help (e.g. research), as some of the human problems that affect the performance of the force”<sup>36</sup>. If one considered the statement made by Freie, who posited in his book, ‘the pedagogy of the oppressed’, that, “the oppressed usually let off the steam of their wrath and frustration on their fellow oppressed”<sup>37</sup>.

We therefore concluded that the situation in which the Nigeria police found themselves may be part of the reasons why they engage in unethical behaviors. A practical example of the condition of the Nigeria police is the description of the challenges facing Mpape police station located in Abuja were four discarded shipping containers served as operational based for the police force<sup>38</sup>.

Furthermore, it explained that “it is from here 93 police personnel manage one patrol vehicle and were expected to provide security to one of the most densely populated satellite town in the country’s Federal Capital Territory. We have one non-serviceable vehicle, which is presently grounded. The station has just one obsolete computer with no internet access and

some of the containers have no light fittings no adequate ventilation”. It was further discovered in the station that: It was a Ship wooden structure constructed in to a police counter and charge room. The station has no pipe borne water and drainage system<sup>39</sup>. No person, suspect or even criminal should be kept in this kind of place. The conditions are terrible for humans to live in. The situation in Mpape is the reality of too many police stations in the country.

In addition, the police officers complain of poor salaries, which are irregularly paid, no life insurance policy, indecent and insufficient barracks, lack of equipments, absence of motivation packages, etcetera. In the face of hazardous duty they perform and are expected to perform<sup>40</sup>.

In connection to the above, findings observed that “ armed robbers in Nigeria operate almost freely in the society, using deadly weapons without being challenged and detected by the police and were the police are fully informed they give excuses that they do not have weapons to fight armed robbers<sup>41</sup>.

### **(iii) Inadequate Personnel, Training and Staff Development**

Concerning the inadequate police personal, It has been observed in a workshop organized at Ilorin, Kwara State, that the Nigeria police is under staffed, especially at the lower cadre (rank and file). Because of this demand placed on the force (partly as a result of the creation of State and Local Government council Areas, and vacuum created by dismissal and retirements) commissioned officers are now performing the statutory duties of the rank and file. The workshop therefore recommended that the embargo on recruitment of personnel be lifted.

In support of the forgoing, research indicated that “whereas the United Nations prescribes an ideal police-population ratio of 1:400, the current ratio in Nigeria is 1:700. It was mentioned further that it is not only in number that the police force is deficient, its quality is also poor”.

The above is an indication that shortage of police personnel has been a problem in Nigeria long before now. The current security situation in the country is an indication that additional police personnel are needed in the country. In support of the above, it was observed at Maitama police headquarters that: As many as 278 of the station's total strength of 327 personnel are security guards to top government officials and politician, the station is left with only 47 police personnel to cater for the security demands of the less privileged ones in the Area.

The Nigeria police force experienced endemic problems with recruiting, training inefficiency and indiscipline, and it lacked expertise in specialized field. In this regard, education and monetary rewards enhance one's social prestige. Since many in the police force have neither good education nor income, their prestige suffers<sup>37</sup>. During a workshop on 'police and social justice' organized in September 1996, at Owerri, Imo State. It was observed that there is lack of standardized career development of the police personnel. There is need for the training and retraining of the police to be adequately funded to meet the need of the society<sup>42</sup>.

There is ignorance, both in the population at large and in those agencies that deal directly with the people about the nature of police organization and police work and of the problems involved in managing them<sup>39</sup>. The overt lack of knowledge of the laws in security duties has informed a gross misapplication by security operatives in Nigeria. In addition, on the part of the citizen, the level of illiteracy and apathy to security matters hence failed to exercise the fundamental right appropriately. In support of this, scholars believe that: Prevention and elimination of crime is truly a problem of education, educating each man and woman to find within him or herself, worthwhile values by which he or she can live.

In connection to the above, a study conducted on 'violence specific and burglary specific fear', by research, it is discovered that "lifestyle patterns and routine activities of individuals are also important in signaling criminal opportunity, and therefore, rational levels of fear in general, increased exposure, increased target attractiveness, and diminished guardianship are expected to heighten the respondent's fear<sup>43</sup>.

### **2.1.4.3 Nigeria Police and Abuse of Human Rights**

The activities of the police as an institution are meant to be guided at the national and international level by conventions, standards and treaties (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966). In spite of state prohibitions against torture and custodial misconduct by the police, torture has been reported as being commonly used in police custodies across Nigeria, which is a major reason behind deaths in custody. According to the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria, personnel of the Nigeria Police routinely carry out summary executions of persons accused or suspected of crime; rely on torture as a principal means of investigation; commit rape of both sexes, and engage in extortion at nearly every opportunity. Violent treatment of accused persons by the police or other law enforcement officers is strongly against Article 5 of the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, resolution 34/169 of 17 December 1979: “No law enforcement official may inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, nor may any law enforcement official invoke superior orders or exceptional circumstances such as a state of war or a threat of war, a threat to national security, internal political instability or any other public emergency as a justification of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment<sup>44</sup>. Constant and consistent reports are received from lawyers, human rights activists, social analysts, and journalists about police regularly demanding bribes, stealing, extorting money and engaging in different forms of brutality and abuse of rights. However, not many empirical studies have been done regarding this to give detail report about the kind of abuse and the level of the brutality that people are facing when they are being arrested or detained by the police. It may be due to the difficulty researchers will face when they intend to embark on this type of research because gathering data from the police department may not be easy, as they will not want to release such sensitive data.

#### **2.1.4.3.1 Torture by Nigerian Police Force**

Unfortunately, police brutality did not end with the colonial regime. Political instability and authoritarianism in post-colonial Nigeria established a 'tradition of unaccountable governments and cemented the culture of police brutality'<sup>45</sup>. Research conducted among 882 police detainees across the country during the military regime revealed that 'nearly half of the accused persons interviewed (48.7 percent) stated that their arrest involved insult or abuse by the police. A significant 35.9 percent were roughly handled or slapped; 7.4 percent were beaten with a baton; and three percent were threatened with a gun'<sup>46</sup>.

However, police brutality persisted after military rule. Research conducted by Amnesty in 2014, 15 years after the end of military rule, revealed that Police brutality remains a regular occurrence in the operations of NPF, even to this day. Joint research conducted by the Nigerian Human Rights Commission and the Centre for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) revealed that about 80 percent of inmates in police detention had either been beaten or threatened with weapons.

This abuse is so commonplace and widespread that police interrogation rooms have been nicknamed 'torture rooms'<sup>23</sup> and the officers in charge (O/C) are called 'O/C Torture'. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, after a visit to several Criminal Investigation Department detention facilities in Nigeria, noted that it is difficult to find a police detainee in Nigeria who had not been tortured.

Extrajudicial executions, killing of suspected criminals, excessive and arbitrary use of force, and deaths in custody are all too common in the operations of the Nigerian police. This brutality is inflicted by NPF at all levels of police work ranging from 'crowd control, arrest, investigation, to detention'.

Examples of brutality inflicted by the Nigerian police include dragging of suspects across the road; molestation; beating of detainees with rifle butts, rods and cables while suspended with a rope; nail, tooth, fingernail and toenail extractions; starvation; sitting on sharp nails and

throwing hot water on wounds; shootings in the leg, foot or hand; water torture and rape. Even though these acts amount to *prima facie* violations of international prohibition against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, it is necessary to engage in legal analysis in order to demonstrate that these acts constitute torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, especially as defined within the CAT.

#### **2.1.4.3.2 Extrajudicial Killings by Nigerian Police Force**

Extrajudicial killings are a routine feature of policing in Nigeria. Hundreds of Nigerians are murdered each year by the NPF. Field monitoring uncovered the existence of an unwritten rule in police stations: “confirmed” armed robbery suspects should be “escorted,” sent on an “errand,” or “transferred to Abuja”—all euphemisms for the unlawful summary and extrajudicial execution of suspects. Suspects are “confirmed” through torture and “escorted” or “transferred” through summary execution or disappearance<sup>47</sup>.

Persons suspected of, or arrested for, armed robbery are particularly at risk of extrajudicial execution. “Abdullahi,” a local politician in Kano State, described being tortured in September 2006 at the Karfi police post in Kano. Abdullahi was being beaten by a police officer and thought he would be killed. But he was saved by the timely intervention of a police sergeant who called off his more enthusiastic colleague by noting that what the colleague was about to do to Abdullahi was “only reserved for robbers<sup>48</sup>.”

Innocent Daa’gba, a lawyer in private practice, described for The Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) researcher the standard NPF practice as follows:

Once an accused is arrested and is suspected to be a robber, instead of taking him to court, they would rather want to take him along the road. They take the suspect to the highway under the pretext that they are going to conduct further investigation, only to come back and report that in the course of moving on the highway the suspect attempted to run, so they had no choice but to take him down.

The police frequently label as “armed robbers” the innocent victims of their extrajudicial executions. Not only does this label help cover their crimes, but it exacerbates public fear of

armed robbers and creates the perception that anyone described as such automatically loses the rights to both life and due process. On December 12, 2008, the police in Makun, Ogun State, shot and killed Waliyu Abudu, a wife, mother, and poultry farm worker. The killing appeared entirely unprovoked. In the face of mounting evidence from Abudu's family and employers that she was an innocent victim of unjustifiable police homicide, the Ogun State Police Command staged an elaborate press conference in December 2008 at which they branded Abudu as the leader of an armed robbery gang. The police refused to release her body to the family for postmortem or autopsy and provided no evidence to substantiate their public accusation. No one in the NPF was ever punished for Abudu's death.

Field monitoring revealed that police personnel refer to detainees marked for execution as "rams" or "bush meat." In all states, two NPF units—the State Anti-Robbery Squads (SARS) and State Criminal Investigation Divisions (SCIDs)—are widely believed responsible for extrajudicial executions. Certain locations are also well known to the public as sites for killing by police<sup>45</sup>. The police checkpoint at the Abuja Junction on the Abuja-Kaduna Road is one such spot, remarkable for the perennial stench of decomposing human remains. Police sources in Anambra State pointed NOPRIN researchers to dump sites and graves for victims of police killings in Awada near the MCC settlement and in Upper Iweka, both in Onitsha, Anambra State. They also mentioned other isolated dumping sites, such as the one at Agu, Awka, also in Anambra State<sup>49</sup>.

Following an execution, the police often inform the victim's family that the victim has been sent on an "errand," "escorted," or "transferred to Abuja." Dayo Anjorin, a student of the Osun State College of Technology who lived in Ibadan with his family, left his home around January 31, 2007 to visit his school in connection with his posting for the compulsory National Youth Service Corps program. His family last saw him in the cells of the SARS in Oshogbo, Osun State, about one week later when he was reported to be "in very bad condition with broken hands, legs, and could not stand on his own. There were several wounds all over his body and blood was gushing out of the right side of his abdomen and he

could not speak.”<sup>210</sup> The family never heard from or saw Anjorin again. When they returned to ask for Anjorin around February 15, they were told that “he had been taken to the Force Headquarters.”

In another instance of police deception, Ekeh Nwose’s family located him in the cells of the Area F Police Station in Ikeja, Lagos State, two days after he left his home around March 15, 2005, to have a meal with a friend from school. The family was initially advised to pay a bribe of N11,000 for the privilege of visiting Nwose in detention. After they paid their bribe, they were told that Nwose had been transferred to the SCID in Panti, Lagos. Over one year later, in March 2006, after persistent inquiries, the police informed them that Nwose had been “transferred to Abuja.” He has never been seen nor heard from again and the police have declined to provide any information on his whereabouts<sup>50</sup>.

#### **2.1.4.3.3 Structure and Organization of the Nigerian Police Force**

The Nigerian Police Force is a centralized and federally administered institution. It is headed by an Inspector General of Police appointed by and accountable to the President. The constitution vests the overall operational control of the force in the hands of the President. Section 215 (3) states: The President or such other Minister of the Government of the Federation as he may authorize in that behalf may give to the Inspector-General of Police such lawful directions with respect to the maintenance and securing of public safety and public order as he may consider necessary, and the Inspector-General of Police shall comply with those directions or cause them to be complied with. This is further codified in the Police Act which states: “The President shall be charged with operational control of the Force” and that “the Inspector-General shall be charged with the command of the force subject to the directive of the President<sup>51</sup>.”

A system of patronage, where individuals are favored by the government in return for their support, appears to extend to the middle ranks and has led to accusations that the police function as a tool of the ruling party. There are numerous examples of this documented by

Human Rights Watch including the use of the police to harass journalists, protestors, and members of groups opposing government policies.

Each of the thirty-six states and the federal capital territory is served by a unit called a Command, under a state Commissioner of Police. Three or four state commands are grouped to form one of twelve zones, each under an Assistant Inspector General. State commands are divided into smaller area commands, below which are divisional police stations, headed by a Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and finally local police posts. The force size currently stands at approximately 325,000 officers<sup>52</sup>. With an overall population of roughly 130 million people, this is a ratio of one officer to every 400 Nigerians. This compares with similar ratios in South Africa and the United Kingdom<sup>53</sup>.

As a federal institution, the Nigerian Police Force recruits officers from across the country. New recruits are posted to any one of the thirty-six state commands. Under a strict system of rotation officers are transferred to a new post every few years and therefore communities are policed by officers who may be from different ethnic or religious backgrounds to their own<sup>54</sup>. Serving alongside the regular police force are the Mobile Police, an especially trained anti-riot unit, numbering approximately 30,000 officers. Known locally as MOPOL, they were originally created to contain civil disturbance or large-scale conflict but today are also deployed to carry out various other policing duties. The Mobile Police operate under a parallel authority structure with forty-six squadrons, organized into state and zonal commands and headed by a commissioner of police at the force headquarters.

Several other national agencies carry out law enforcement functions and have the power to arrest and detain suspects, some at their own detention facilities. These include the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Customs and Immigration Service and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), a body established in 2002 to investigate a range of financial crimes such as money transfer fraud and money laundering. In addition, there are two principal intelligence agencies: the Department of State Services (DSS)

and the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), dealing with criminal matters affecting the security of the state.

#### **2.1.4.4 The Role of Police**

Historically and universally, the police have been charged with numerous and diverse functions. As a result, there are divergent views on the nature and significance of different police roles.

Consensus-functionalist perspective in social theory, portrays state laws as products and expression of consensus among the disparate classes and social groups in society over norms governing their social, political and economic institutions. According to this school of thought, the police being law enforcers are responsible for the enforcement of laws that promote the common interests of these different classes and groups. For example, in democratic societies, it is advocated that, the police should contribute towards liberty, equality and fraternity, help reconcile freedom with security and to uphold the rule of law, facilitate human dignity through upholding and protecting human rights and pursuit of happiness, provide leadership and participation in dispelling crimogenic social conditions contribute towards the creation or reinforcement of trust in communities strengthen the security of persons and property and the feeling of security of persons investigate, detect and activate the prosecution of offences, within the rule of law facilitate free passage and movement on highways and roads and on streets and avenues open to public passage curb public disorder deal with major and minor crises and to help and advise those in distress, where necessary activating other agencies. This is an idealistic vision of police roles, which is characteristic of the consensus functionalist perspective of state and law as supra-class, mediating and integrating forces for harmonious existence in society.

Social conflict perspective in social theory postulates that society is divided into groups and classes with common interests in some areas and conflicting interests in many fundamental areas, including the organisation, mobilisation and distribution of economic and socio-political resources. It has therefore, been argued “that the police were not created to serve

“society” or the “people” but to serve some parts of society and some people at the expense of others”<sup>55</sup>. The variation in attitudes towards the police reflects the differential services rendered by the police to different segments of society. Police roles vary across societies with different political and economic organisations. For example it has been argued that in capitalist societies, the main function of the police has been to protect the property and well-being of those who benefit most from an economy based on the extraction of private profit. The police were created primarily in response to rioting and disorder directed against oppressive working and living conditions.

Some scholars have given the roles of police include the repression of the poor and powerless in order to protect the interests of the rulers. The police roles, therefore, include standing as a “buffer between elite and masses” and to perform “the essential holding operation against the mal-contented until military force could be applied in a punitive and salutary manner” in supporting this view, scholars put this view more forcefully, stating that “Police forces are structured, organisationally and ideologically to act against the marginal strata”<sup>56</sup>.

The social conflict theorists concentrate on the repressive aspects of police work in a society characterised by class conflict, underlined by unequal and inequitable economic and power relations among groups in society. Their views explain why the poor and the powerless are more likely to be victims of police violence than the elite is. But police role is not limited to repression. No government governs by repression alone, precisely because this renders governance unstable, expensive and unacceptable. Consequently, rulers also enforce compliance, law and order by means of persuasion, indoctrination and incorporation of diverse interests into public crime control and law enforcement policies.

In many societies, such as the United States of America, Canada, Britain and other European nations, police spend more than one-half of their working hours attending to non-crime-related needs and concerns of citizens or providing social services.

#### **2.1.4.5 Functions and Powers of Police in Nigeria**

The colonial police forces in Nigeria performed a variety of functions including: investigating and detecting crime, escorting residents and other officials; prosecuting offenders; guarding goals and prisoners at work outside the precincts of the prisons, serving summons and executing warrants; patrolling, aiding and protecting revenue and customs officials, guarding and escorting goods; and suppressing slave raiding.

The colonial police were 'general utility force'. The functions of the Nigeria Police Force are more clearly stated in section 4 of Police Act and Decree No. 23 of 1979:

The Police shall be employed for the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension of offenders, the preservation of law and order, the protection of life and property, and due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged and perform such military duties within or without Nigeria as may be required of them by, or under the Authority of this or any other Act<sup>57</sup>.

The police in the country also have statutory powers to investigate crimes, apprehend offenders, interrogate suspects, prosecute suspects, grant bail to suspects pending completion of investigation or prior to court arraignment, to serve summons, to regulate or disperse unlawful processions and assemblies. The police are also empowered to search and seize properties suspected to be stolen or associated with crime, and "to take and record for purposes of identification, the measurements, photographs and fingerprint impressions of all persons in custody (Police Act, Criminal Code, Penal Code).

Police powers in Nigeria are counter-balanced by constitutional guarantee of human rights in the country's successive constitutions. In chapter 4 of the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions, and under the criminal procedure statutes, the following fundamental rights are guaranteed.

1. Right to life, human dignity (freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment, torture) personal liberty, and privacy
2. Right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
3. Right to remain silent during criminal investigation and trial processes.
4. Right to notice of charges within a reasonable period.

5. Right to be arraigned before a court or tribunal, and to a judicial proceeding in language(s) understood by the suspect (including interpretation of proceeding in language understood by suspect).
6. Right to be arraigned before a court within a reasonable period.
7. Right to be represented by a counsel of one's own choice provided one is able to pay for the services (and to state legal aid for indigent persons in cases of capital offences)
8. Right to bail
9. Right to cross-examine prosecutions witnesses and to present witnesses
10. Right to speedy trial
11. Right against self-incrimination and compulsion to testify against or for oneself
12. Right to a fair, open and impartial judicial process
13. Right against unduly long detention without trial
14. Right against retroactive laws
15. Right against double jeopardy –(multiple trials for the same offence)
16. Right to an appeal in respect of the decisions of a court of first instance.

Notwithstanding these provisions, these rights are frequently breached at all phases of criminal justice administration in the country. This is due to several factors, including a legacy of colonial arbitrariness, excesses of politicians and their manipulation of the judiciary and police, as well as police and judicial corruption. The most important source of the infringement of these rights is protracted military rule. Under previous military regimes, the subsisting Constitutions were suspended, retroactive legislation and ouster clauses were introduced. Special(military)Tribunals which composition, processes and rule of evidence fall below the standard prescribed by these rights were established. This generally resulted in atmosphere of persecution and repression. Police violence, brutality, and corruption were more common under the military regimes, which promoted or condoned them.

#### **2.1.4.6 Extent and Pattern of Police Violence in Nigeria**

Violence by police in Nigeria, is not only widespread, but is also manifested in several ways. The report of a national study of the Nigerian criminal justice system provided an insight into the extent of police violence in the country. According to the report, based on 882 respondents drawn from suspects in custody across the country: Nearly half of the accused persons interviewed (48.7%) stated that their arrest involved insult or abuse by the police. Roughly half (51.1%) of the accused persons interviewed indicated that their arrest did not involve use of physical force by the police, however, 35.9% were rough handled or slapped; 7.4% were beaten with a baton; and 3% were threatened with a gun. As to why force was used on them, 24.2% said they did nothing to warrant the use of force, 3% resisted arrest, while 1.6% returned verbal abuse. 5.2% were assaulted because they questioned police behaviour; and 22.5% were assaulted because they either refused to admit the offence or make a statement<sup>58</sup>.

Police violence in the form of summary executions occurs frequently among Special Task Forces assigned to the patrol of highways and cities to curb armed robbery. Police torture in the form of physical assault frequently occurs at all levels of police work- crowd control, arrest, investigation, and detention. The use of violence by the police against citizens has been recognised as a widespread and persistent problem in the country by the government, public and even the police authority. As a result, senior government and police officials at various times warned against the practice. However, senior government officials usually fail to acknowledge that police violence thrives because of the undemocratic political structures and unjust economic relations in the country.

Apart from the political and economic foundations of violent encounter between the police and citizens, several aspects and problems of the institutional management of Nigeria Police play important roles in promoting or inhibiting violence by and against police in Nigeria. These institutional factors include (a) scope and context of police citizen contacts, and (b)

quality of police services which are influenced by quality and quantity of human and material resources available to police. These factors influence police-public relations and level of violence between the police and citizens.

#### **2.1.4.7 Police Corruption and Rule of Law in Nigeria**

The corruption of the police affects virtually every Nigerian, though at disproportionate level, as the impact weighs down more on the poor people<sup>59</sup>. Those that are not in vantage economic position within the society, especially those that are day to day scrapping for a living are more susceptible to police extortion because of the profound effects that unlawful detention, or the mere threat of arbitrary arrest, have on their livelihoods. Considering the ways and manners that the police operate on Nigerian roads, questions have been raised as to the level of conscience and professional ethics possessed by the institution. In respect of the police coverage of the society, this is grossly inadequate as ordinary Nigerians are denied equal protection under the law. This is as a result of a widespread practice whereby senior police officers sell police protection to Nigeria's wealthy elites for their own benefits and gratification. This further depletes the already low number of police officers available to provide protection in the society. By the accounts of inspector general of police, in 2009 at least 100,000 police officers were working as personal guards for the wealthy, at the expense of the majority<sup>60</sup>. In addition, the abject failure of the police to provide for the security of ordinary citizens has led some communities to turn for protection to armed vigilante groups who often operate outside the law and commit further abuses. There is no gainsaying about the fact that to an ordinary man, the Nigerian police is not living up to expectation of providing security and ensuring rule of law. In the country, there have been several cases of people picked up indiscriminately on the street by the police and detained for unfounded charges until they are able to secure their release after paying demanded ransom. Meanwhile, social miscreants, otherwise known as area boys who disrupt law and order and often intimidate fellow citizens are spared without any arrest by these policemen. Meanwhile, in their bid to get justice, victims of crimes are routinely forced to pay the police to conduct

every stage of an investigation from the moment they enter a police station to report the crime until the day their case is handed on for prosecution. Victims that are not buoyant enough to “fund” their case are left without justice, while criminal suspects with money or that are highly placed in the society simply bribe their way and the case against them is dropped, or they influence the outcome of criminal investigation, or in certain instances, turn the case against the victim. As one civil society activist concluded: Justice is for sale to the highest bidder<sup>61</sup>. Ironically, government agencies that are expected to monitor and ensure that the police perform its constitutional duties, oversight functions; discipline and reform have failed to root out systemic corruption. Mechanisms for public complaints, internal police controls, and civilian oversight has continued to be weakened, underfunded, and largely ineffective. Victims of police abuse and extortion also cited fear of further victimization as a key reason for not reporting these abuses<sup>63</sup>. Successive governments and administrators have acknowledged several problems associated with policing Nigeria and have set up panels and committees to examine and make recommendations for police reform. However, the recommendations that have evolved from such panels, civil society groups, as well as other stakeholders in security in the country have been largely ignored. Internally, in response to the growing need to meet with service expectation of the public, the Nigerian Police Force established a Human Rights Desk, which monitors police conduct, and an internal anti-graft unit known as the X-Squad. The inspector general of the police and each state commissioner of police also have monitoring teams to investigate incidents of police misconducts. Just as it is with the case of public complaints mechanisms, the internal monitoring units in the police force are poorly funded and lack support from the police leadership to effectively address systemic corruption and abuse within the police force.

#### **2.1.4.8 The Implication of Corruption in Nigeria Police Force**

The police whose duty it is to provide security have consistently admitted that they are handicapped because of a combination of factors among which are: lack of resources, poor government support and poor conditions of service resulting in ill-motivated, ill-trained and

ill-equipped workforce<sup>62</sup>. It is arguable that, the poor performance of the Nigeria police due to these factors is resultant effects of corruption. Police corruption is a gangrene which has eaten deep into the fabrics of law enforcement apparatus in Nigeria as in other. Allegations of police corruption erupt on daily basis. These come in various forms: extortion from motorists at illegally mounted road blocks, collection of monetary gratification (bribery) in order to alter justice in favour of the highest bidder. This cankerworm had deeply affected the social image of the Nigeria Police perceived as a corrupt law enforcement agency. On this note Nigeria police have not lived to the expectations of the general public; they have been pro-government right from the colonial time. The presence of the police in any place in Nigerian society, portend sorrow, agony, ill-wind and no one ever sees them as friends to the public. Police corruption implies the manipulation of security institution and the rules of procedure, for private benefit, and therefore it distorts the institutions. Police corruption is a deviation from the rational-legal values and principles of the agency, and leads to institutional decay. “criminalization” of the force becomes the consequence of widespread corruption in Nigeria police force. Systemic corruption was long held to be a cultural, moral and historical problem in Nigeria police force has clearly become a political and institutional problem as well. With the heads of the police involved in multi corrupt scheme in Nigeria, one can see why the Nigeria police cannot be effective in law enforcement. When the head is rotten, the rot infects all rank and file of the police. The effect of corruption on police is that corruption renders the force incapacitated and impotent. Corruption is destructive to the police’s ability to prevent and detect crime, apprehension of offenders and preservation of law and order for national development; and consequently to its ability to maintain orders and enforce law which are critical to development and human cooperation in general. Due to corruption, rules and regulations are manipulated and operated in a confusing and impenetrable manner in the implementation end to enable police to collect bribes and other personal advantages, and as the police officers are preoccupied with other tasks, insecurity hampers investments, peace security and safety shrink further and its ability to protect life and property is shattered.

Besides, few wealthy citizens, commercial businesses (local and international) and various interest groups (formal and informal, modern and traditional) are able to buy justice cheaply, buy exceptions, privileges, immunity and impunity through the use of kickbacks and mafia methods vis-à-vis, using police force and consequently the development potential of the nation is being undermined. More so, police corruption has led to a morbid and porous security situation resulting in the wanton destruction of lives and property as currently initiated by the Boko Haram terror envoys and a cortege of criminal sociopaths such as armed robbers, carjackers, kidnappers, ritual killers and assassins in the country. In a related note, scholars argue that Police corruption elicits serious concern for three significant reasons<sup>64</sup>. First, the police are expected to be moral as well as law enforcement agents. If the police which are employed to prevent and detect corruption, and bring culprits to judgment are themselves stinking corrupt, the society's crusade against corruption is guaranteed to fail. Second, the police exercise powers that have profound implications for the life, property, safety and freedoms of citizens. Where the exercise of such powers is contaminated by corrupt motives, the citizens feel exceedingly vulnerable, insecure and powerless. Third, police corruption is often tantamount to extortion, a form of robbery or demand with force. These dimensions of police corruption explain why the public is threatened by such practices. The most significant source of negative police-community relations is corruption. Corrupt motive is also a source of police brutality. In many circumstances, police brutality is a means of coercing individuals to succumb to demands for bribes, and at some other time, it is punishment for not cooperating with the police in their demand for gratification<sup>65</sup>. In a nutshell therefore over the years, Nigeria police has established the dubious reputation as a security agency where no justice gets done until money changes hand.

#### **2.1.4.9 Measures of Control of Police Corruption in Nigeria**

Corruption with the police like crime within the society is unlikely to be eradicated; however, it can be controlled by the government, the Police organisation, and with strong support of the society.

### **Police Leadership's Resolution to Check Corruption**

At the organisational level, controlling corruption requires strong and determined leadership, since corruption occurs at the very top as well as the bottom and all points in between in the hierarchy. If the top brass are able to stamp their feet against corruption and their intentions are sincere and resolute, the change will trickle down the ladder of the force. Thereon, officers that are caught exhibiting corrupt practices should be severely punished. Once the principle of severity and certainty of punishment is applied to police corruption by the administrators, the rank and file will be deterred from such practices.

### **Value Reorientation of Police Officers**

Considering that corruption within the police has become systemic, hence, new recruits are socialised into it, it is the suggestion of this paper that a value reorientation need to be introduced into the system. This must be done with sincerity of purpose and intensity. In training, institutions of the force, ethical behaviour and decision should be rewarded, promoted and applauded because failing to make officers aware of the consequences of corruption will only serve to encourage it. This process must be allowed to have a stronghold and be intensified at police training schools, academy and staff colleges, and be totally consolidated in the larger society where perceptible and honest priorities must exist.

### **Prompt and Adequate Payment of Salaries and other Financial Incentives of Officers**

Payments of salaries and other remunerations of the police should be made prompt and consistent while other welfare packages should be made attractive to ensure high level of job satisfaction and contentment within the officers. Government should ensure that police are able to live a worthy life that guarantees the meeting of basic needs if they choose to be honest and bribe-free. It will be difficult to enforce anti-graft when salaries are delayed and inadequate. Transparency in posting and promotion of officers It is public knowledge that officers engage in massive bribery to influence their posting and promotions. Consequently, officers that have paid their way through their posting will make every effort towards

recouping their money as soon as possible and corruption becomes a tool for getting better return on “investment.”<sup>65</sup> In addition, transfers or redeployment of staff are often used as a retribution tool against officers as a pressure tactic and to coerce officers that are reluctant to engage in corrupt practices. However, if there could be a design where postings are automatically generated by software after a given time interval for each officer, corruption in the police can be effectively combated. In the same manner, objective criteria for promotion could be developed and published so that individual judgement plays a very minor role in promotions. This will reduce the need for bribes or engage in other misconduct in order to get promotion.

### **Automation of Crime and Complain Reporting**

The present system where the recording of crime and complains of the public is left at the discretion of officer is grossly inadequate. This has contributed to the growing rate of ‘dark figures’ of crime as well as increased corrupt practices among the officers. Since the registration of complaint is the first step towards receiving justice, citizens are compelled to pay bribe in order to get their complaints registered. The use of technology to automate the reporting and handling of cases can play a pivotal role in arresting corruption associated with crime reporting by the public. Filing of cases could be done through internet and if required, detailed information can be given later on. Case status could be made available online to bring in more transparency and make the police force more accountable. This would ease the trend of complainants being asked to buy report sheets and other writing materials when they try to register their complaints. Operations and performance monitoring Though, there are internal and external monitoring agencies being put in place to monitor and check the excesses of the police, independent and civil society groups should also be co-opted into the system by the government. Objective performance and efficiency indicators can be chosen and tracked to monitor the performance of the Police force. The monitoring of the performance of the police by governmental and non- governmental agencies can substantially increase the accountability of the force. This will lead to having clear improvement goals for

the force on objective and measurable parameters. In particular, government should give more recognition to the activities of the likes of Human Rights Watch and other nongovernment agencies that are equally stakeholders in ensuring proper service delivery of the police.

### **Reducing Political Interferences**

There is a dire need for the police to be given adequate autonomy to operate without interferences from the political class in the country. At present, the political class has rendered the police into mere instruments that can be used at will to satisfy their selfish ends. In particular, the police are being used as agents of intimidation and torture against the perceived and real political enemies of the ruling political class. This present situation will do no good than to further strengthen the corrupt structures within the force. It has been commonplace in Nigeria for transfers and postings of officers to be used as a kind of reward and punishment, as a result of which, many senior police officers have had allegiances to political parties. A case in point is the recent transfer of the Commissioner of Police of Rivers State that has been accused by the State governor (who belongs to the opposition party) of insubordination and intimidation to Abuja (FCT) as commissioner. This is perceived by a large section of the public as a reward from the presidency to acknowledge the 'good job done' in frustrating the governor of Rivers who was at loggerheads with the presidency. Consequently, the selection of the inspector general of police, state commissioners, their transfers and redeployments should be entrusted to an independent expert committee that are apolitical.

### **Introducing Greater Accountability**

In the present scenario, there is very little or no accountability of police to the citizen in respect of satisfactory delivery of services. For example, if a citizen's complaint is not recorded by the police under whatever guise, the citizen should have the option of going to an independent regulator that is empowered to check the police and ensure compliance to minimum standards of service delivery to the public. It is very essential that accountability of

officials at different levels be defined and a degree of immediate proximity to the people and third party intervention introduced. Public hearings could be an effective tool for this purpose, as shown in experiments with other services.

### **2.1.5 The Special Anti- Robbery Squad (SARS)**

The Nigeria Police was first established in 1820 but it was over a century later – in 1930 – that the northern and southern police forces merged into the first national police force; called the Nigeria Police Force. In 1992, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was formed to combat armed robbery and other serious crimes<sup>66</sup>.

Before that, anti-robbery was the responsibility of the Nigerian Police Force generally although, from 1984, anti-robbery units existed separately as part of different states' criminal investigation departments. Other special units, which went by different names at different times, included the Intelligence Response Team, Special Tactical Squad, Counterterrorism Unit and Force Intelligence unit, formed to tackle rising violent crime following the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970.

By the early 1990s, armed robbers and bandits were terrorising Lagos and southern Nigeria. Police officer Simeon Danladi Midenda was in charge of the anti-robbery unit of the Criminal Investigation Department in Benin, southern Nigeria, at the time. He had some success in combatting armed robbery, earning a recommendation from the then inspector general of police. With crime on the rise in Lagos, Midenda was transferred there and tasked with uniting the three existing anti-robbery squads operating in the former federal capital into one unit in a bid to break the stronghold of armed gangs. As the new sheriff in town, equipped with 15 officers and two station wagons, Midenda formed an amalgamated unit and named it the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in 1992<sup>67</sup>.

In the early days of the unit, combat-ready SARS officers operated undercover in plain clothes and plain vehicles without any security or government insignia and did not carry arms in public. Their main job was to monitor radio communications and facilitate successful arrests of criminals and armed robbers such as Chukwudi Onuamadike – known as "Evans" –

who was arrested in 2017 after the police spent five years tracking him and placed a monetary reward on his head<sup>68</sup>.

For 10 years, SARS only operated in Lagos, but by 2002, it had spread to all 36 states of the federation as well as the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It was counted as one of the 14 units under the Nigerian Police Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department. Its mandate included arrest, investigation and prosecution of suspected armed robbers, murderers, kidnappers, hired assassins and other suspected violent criminals. Emboldened by its new powers, the unit moved on from its main function of carrying out covert operations and began to set up roadblocks, extorting money from citizens. Officers remained in plain clothes but started to carry arms in public<sup>69</sup>.

Over time, the unit has been implicated in widespread human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention and extortion. SARS officers then allegedly moved on to targeting and detaining young men for cybercrime or being “online fraudsters”, simply on the evidence of their owning a laptop or smartphone, and then demanding excessive bail fees to let them go<sup>70</sup>. In 2016, Amnesty International documented its own visit to one of the SARS detention centres in Abuja, situated in a disused abattoir. There, it found 130 detainees living in overcrowded cells and being regularly subjected to methods of torture including hanging, starvations, beatings, shootings and mock executions.

#### **2.1.5.1 Campaign Against Police Brutality – #EndSARS**

#EndSARS is a decentralised social movement, and series of mass protests against police brutality in Nigeria. The slogan calls for the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian Police with a long record of abuses. The protests which takes its name from the slogan started in 2017 as a Twitter campaign using the hashtag EndSARS to demand the disbanding of the unit by the Nigerian government. After experiencing a revitalisation in October 2020 following more revelations of the abuses of the unit, mass demonstrations occurred throughout the major cities of Nigeria,

accompanied by vociferous outrage on social media platforms. Solidarity protests and demonstrations by Nigerians in diaspora and sympathizers occurred in many major cities of the world. The protests was notable for its patronage by a demographic that is made of entirely young Nigerians. The movement has since expanded to include demands for good and accountable governance.

Within a few days of renewed protests, on 11 October 2020, the Nigerian Police Force announced that it was dissolving the unit with immediate effect. The move was widely received as a triumph of the demonstrations. However, it was noted in many quarters that similar announcements had been made in recent years to pacify the public without the unit actually being disbanded, and that the government had merely planned to reassign and review SARS officers to medical centres rather than disband the unit entirely. Protests have continued accordingly, and the Nigerian government has maintained a pattern of violent repression including the killing of demonstrators. There have been international demonstrations in solidarity with those happening in the country, and the movement has also grown increasingly critical of Muhammadu Buhari's government response to the protests.

SARS officers have been alleged to profile young Nigerians, mostly males, based on fashion choices, tattoos and hairstyles. They were also known to mount illegal road blocks, conduct unwarranted checks and searches, arrest and detain without warrant or trial, rape women, and extort young male Nigerians for driving expensive vehicles and using laptops and iPhones. Nigerians have shared both stories and video evidence of how officers of SARS engaged in kidnapping, murder, theft, rape, torture, unlawful arrests, humiliation, unlawful detention, extrajudicial killings and extortion of Nigerian citizens. A large section of the victims of the abuses of SARS have been young male Nigerians<sup>71</sup>.

### **2.1.6 Conceptualization of Mass Media**

Mass media refers to media technologies used to disseminate information to a wide audience. The messages are communicated through television, movies, advertising, radio, internet,

magazines, and newspapers. They are the means or channels that people bring to their utility in order to communicate with people and get information. When we watch the news or our favorite TV show on our TVs and listen to our favorite programmes on the radio, it is all possible because of the existence of mass media.

Mass media is any source that sends information to public (masses). It can include channels like newspapers, magazines, internet, TV, radio etc. TV and radio are not mass media per se but they become mass media only when they have the connection and they are capable of accessing the media so they are the sources<sup>72</sup>.

There are diverse applications of mass media in the world today. However, it exists since ages. Back in older times, people used drums to invite the residents of a community where they would gather and then announce the news to them. This is how their mass media would be like. Then gradually when they could write, they would paste the news on the places where majority could read and update others. It became more advanced with the passage of time and today we have internet and social media which is the most advanced form of mass media.

Mass media develops awareness among people regarding social and political issues. It's also a means to educate, entertain and connect. It has strengthened our modes of accessibility.

Most people use mass media as a source of information. For example, students use it for academic purposes, business tycoons for business information and all adults for news and political updates. Businesses make use of mass media to promote their products and services in the form of advertisements. It is the biggest source of entertainment. Not all people love stage and standing comedy shows where 99% of the world population prefers TVs, Cinemas and computers for entertainment.

#### **2.1.6.1 Types of Mass Media**

Books, newspapers, radio, social media platforms, booklets, and streaming services are all various forms of mass media. However, we distinguish four main types of mass media.

- i. **Print media.** It can range from billboards to coupons and is one of the easiest and oldest ways to reach the masses. Originally, print media refers to newspapers which were the main sources of information. Further, this type of media expanded to journals, books, and magazines.
- ii. **Outdoor media.** Ambient marketing is a great example of modern outdoor media. Brands use unusual locations and items to promote their products. Let's take Folgers, for example. This brand of coffee used manhole covers to promote coffee in a unique and eye-catching way. So, places like bus stops, public transports, and buildings can serve creative companies as places for promotion.
- iii. **Broadcasting media.** With the help of an electronic broadcasting medium, audio and video content is distributed to a dispersed audience. Television, radio, video, and games appeal to heterogeneous audiences, people who differ in age, background, views, goals, and interests.
- iv. **Digital media.** In 2021, there are around 4.66 billion active internet users worldwide which means that the world is dependent on digital media. Today, brands promote their goods and services through sites, YouTube, podcasts, and more. Besides, companies often refer to Instagram marketing and Facebook advertising to pitch their products.

#### **2.1.6.2 Features of Mass Media**

- i. It can appeal to a wide target audience;
- ii. It communicates a public message;
- iii. There's a distance between a source of information and people who obtain it;
- iv. It can be transmitted through various channels: TV, the internet, radio, and newspapers;
- v. It has a heterogeneous audience; news or information communicated through TV, radio, and print media can't receive feedback.

### 2.1.6.3 Functions of Mass Media

The mass media serves several general and many specific functions. In general, the mass media serves information, interpretation, instructive, bonding, and diversion functions:

- i. **Information function.** We have a need for information to satisfy curiosity, reduce uncertainty, and better understand how we fit into the world. The amount and availability of information is now overwhelming compared to forty years ago when a few television networks, local radio stations, and newspapers competed to keep us informed. The media saturation has led to increased competition to provide information, which creates the potential for news media outlets, for example, to report information prematurely, inaccurately, or partially.
- ii. **Interpretation function.** Media outlets interpret messages in more or less explicit and ethical ways. Newspaper editorials have long been explicit interpretations of current events, and now cable television and radio personalities offer social, cultural, and political commentary that is full of subjective interpretations. Although some of them operate in ethical gray areas because they use formats that make them seem like traditional news programs, most are open about their motives.
- iii. **Instructive function.** Some media outlets exist to cultivate knowledge by teaching instead of just relaying information. Major news networks like CNN and BBC primarily serve the information function, while cable news networks like Fox News and MSNBC serve a mixture of informational and interpretation functions. The in-depth coverage on National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting Service, and the more dramatized but still educational content of the History Channel, the National Geographic Channel, and the Discovery Channel, serve more instructive functions.

- iv. **Bonding function.** Media outlets can bring people closer together, which serves the bonding function. For example, people who share common values and interests can gather on online forums, and masses of people can be brought together while watching coverage of a tragic event like 9/11 or a deadly tornado outbreak.
- v. **Diversion function.** We all use the media to escape our day-to-day lives, to distract us from our upcoming exam, or to help us relax. When we are being distracted, amused, or relaxed, the media is performing the diversion function.
- vi. **Surveillance Function:** An important function of the media is to keep up a surveillance of all the happenings in the world and provide information to the human society. The media has the responsibility of providing news and cover a wide variety of issues that is of some service to the society. Media help maintain social order by providing instructions on what has to be done in times of crisis, thereby reducing confusion among the masses.



### **2.1.7 Code of ethics for Nigerian journalists**

A journalistic code of ethics refers to a set of principles of professional conduct that are adopted and guarded by journalists themselves. Nigerian journalists with approval of Nigerian Press Organization and Nigerian Press Council came up with new ethical code of journalism in 1996. The council claimed that the old code of ethics was deficient in many vital areas. The new code was adopted and ratified. The new codes are fifteen ranging from editorial independence to press freedom and responsibility.

1. **Editorial Independence:** Decisions concerning the content of news should be the responsibility of a professional journalist.

2. **Accuracy and Fairness:** The public has a right to know. Factual, accurate balance and fair reporting is the ultimate objective of good journalism and the basis of earning public trust and confidence. A journalist should refrain from publishing inaccurate and misleading information. Where such information has been inadvertently published, prompt correction should be made. A journalist must hold the right of reply as a cardinal rule of practice. In the course of his duties a journalist should strive to separate facts from conjecture and comment.

3. **Privacy:** As a general rule, a journalist should respect the privacy of individuals and their families unless it affects public interest. Information on the private life of an individual or his family should only be published if it impinges on public interest.

4. **Privilege / Non-Disclosure:** A journalist should observe the universally accepted principle of confidentiality and should not disclose the source of information obtained in confidence. A journalist should not breach an agreement with a source of information obtained as “off- the-record” or as “back ground information.

5. **Decency:** A journalist should dress and comport himself in a manner that conforms with public taste. A journalist should refrain from using offensive, abusive or vulgar language. A journalist should not present lurid details, either in words or picture, of violence, sexual acts, abhorrent or horrid scenes. In case involving personal grief or shock, enquiries should be carried out and approaches made with sympathy and discretion. Unless it is in the furtherance of the public’s right to know, a journalist should generally avoid identifying relatives or friends of persons convicted or accused of crime.

6. **Discrimination:** A journalist should refrain from making pejorative reference to a person’s ethnic group, religion, sex or to any physical or mental illness or handicap.

7. **Reward and Gratification:** A journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribe, gratification or patronage to suppress or publish information. To demand payment for the publication of news is inimical to the notion of news as a fair, accurate, unbiased and factual report of an event.

8. **Violence:** A journalist should not present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts in the eyes of the public.

9. **Children and Minors:** A journalist should not identify, either by name or picture, or interview children under the age of 16 who are involved in cases concerning sexual offences, crimes and rituals or witchcraft either as victims, witnesses or defendants.

10. **Access to Information:** A journalist should strive to employ open and honest means in the gathering of information. Exceptional methods may be employed only when the public interest is at stake.

11. **Public Interest:** A journalist should strive to enhance national unity and public good.

12. **Social Responsibility:** A journalist should promote universal principles of human rights, democracy, justice, equity, peace and international understanding.

13. **Copyright:** Where a journalist reproduces a work, be it in print, broadcast, art work or design, proper acknowledgement should be accorded the author. A journalist should abide by all rules of copyright, established by national and international laws and conventions.

14. **Press Freedom and Responsibility:** A journalist should strive at all-times to enhance press freedom and responsibility.

### 2.1.8 Ethical Standard of Media Practices in Nigeria

1. **Editorial Independence** is a definitive prerequisite for media quality. Traditionally, editorial independence has been defined as a separation between decisions that are taken by media owners and those that are taken by editors. In reality, however, the interests of the editorial board and the media outlet's advertising, marketing and finance departments interweave, which means that the existing understanding of editorial independence at each media company is crucial.

Editorial independence is one of the most important principles in media operations, because at the level of the practices of media organisations, it reveals the way in which freedom of the press operates and how pluralism is ensured <sup>73</sup>. Editorial independence is also a part of normative views about media operations in that it is linked to honesty, truth, neutrality, objectivity and a professional understanding of journalism. Several other terms have been used to describe editorial independence, including editorial freedom and editorial autonomy. Editorial independence or freedom usually means that editors-in-chief must have full authority over the editorial content of their media unit. Descriptions of editorial independence usually emphasise the right of the editor to be independent from the owners and top managers of the media organisations, whose decisions cannot have an effect on the selection and choice of media content, the editorial process, or the form of publications. For that reason, appropriate circumstances must be created at media outlets in accordance with the aforementioned principles. Editorial independence or freedom usually refers to the professional work of media professionals, while editorial autonomy refers to the structure of media organisations, in which the development of content at the management level is kept separate from co-operation with advertisers or other business partners, as well as from the company's financial operations, marketing and other functions, which are essential in medial operations. The term also covers the autonomy of journalists <sup>74</sup>.

In everyday situations, however, editorial independence is not something unambiguous and stable in terms of editorial operations, because the process of shaping content at media organisations is influenced both by external factors (sources of information, partners, advertisers) and by internal factors (business interests and the goals of the media owner and the managers of the outlet). Editorial independence depends on the business models of the media, as well as on the commercialised media environment of the present way – one in which many decisions are taken on the basis of their advantages and profit potentials.

Studies related to the media in Eastern Europe regularly identify violations of editorial independence because of the ability of politicians or political parties to influence media content <sup>75</sup>. Editorial independence in present-day media practices can be evaluated on the basis of the extent to which the media outlet, its manager or editor and each journalist can collect, correlate and publish information, viewpoints and interpretations. There are three levels at which editorial independence can be evaluated in accordance with various players in the media environment – the level of the individual, the media organisation and the media industry.

Editorial independence at each of these levels, in turn, depends on self-regulation and media regulation mechanisms. Editorial independence is also influenced by the overall status of the media industry, the legal status of journalists, wage and compensation systems, and the operations of media regulators. There is always interaction among legal regulations, self-regulations and private regulations which apply to each specific media organisation. These and other issues are analysed in detail in the European Council's which finds that the greatest threats against editorial independence relate to the liberal and commercialised media system. The study was focused on an analysis of media policies and media freedoms in the European Union, and it concluded that in countries with powerful traditions related to the education of journalists and with strong labour unions there are fewer problems with editorial independence and the autonomy of journalists.

Although editorial independence is an inviolable component of media policy and is of unquestionable importance, the fact is that editorial independence is not absolute in any country or any segment of the media world. Because of this approximate situation, a critical evaluation of the real manifestations of media practices leads to a situation in which the concept of editorial independence is seen as old-fashioned or as one which is not realistic and is more of a myth, because it sometimes reflects the desire of media professionals to avoid the changes which occur in the media environment. Editorial independence in a commercial media system, is understood as the obligation of the editor not only to ensure free media content and to be responsible for it, but also to satisfy the duties of media directors. This usually relates to specific ratings, the obligation of reaching a specific target audience, and the need to take responsibility for the financial results of the media content as the content is put together. In her blog, Michele McLellan has called for a true evaluation of the everyday nature of the media, writing that it is naïve to think that editors can fail to count on the business strategies of their media companies. An editor cannot act at the national level and spend money for this purpose if the relevant media outlet is focused on the local audience.

Invariably, the editor cannot change the owner's attempts to develop or not develop content for the Internet audience, and editorial independence does not allow the editor to influence the place on the page where a specific advertisement will be placed alongside a specific article<sup>77</sup>. In other words, editorial independence is not similar to the Sunday-best suit of an editor. It changes and must be defended at all phases of creating media content. Editorial independence is discussed not just by the media, but also by specific publications such as scholarly journals in the field of medicine and other niche publications which link it to intellectual liberty<sup>78</sup>. As the media system, policies related to media regulations, and the condition of the media business change, there are also alterations in views about editorial independence, interpretations of the concept and the use of the concept in the work of every media professional.

Events occurring during the first decade and the early part of the second decade of the 21st century offer good reason to analyse the situation with editorial independence. In many countries, the media industry has experienced an economic recession, finding it necessary to adapt to operations in the Internet environment, to seek out new business models, and to experiment with media content. Latvia's media environment lost more than 50% of its advertising investments over the past five years, and those investments are returning to the environment very slowly. Moreover, there have been ownership changes in all media sectors, and there has been an exacerbation during the period of economic difficulties of previously identified problems with media responsibilities their commercial orientation, and the use of hidden advertising in the business models of the media <sup>79</sup>.

The Latvian media system is currently undergoing increased concentration in the media business. The nature of the work of journalists and editors is changing, and the modern communications environment means that editors have less and less of an opportunity to dictate media content. The job market for journalists is unstable and shrinking. The principle of editorial independence that was enshrined in Latvian law in 2010 is only declarative. Can we hope during this period of change that the situation with editorial independence has remained unchanged?

**2. Truth and Accuracy:** It is a journalist's top priority to report and write the truth, this is the reason why truthfulness and accuracy make up one of the most important standards in the code of ethics<sup>59</sup>. Reporters are always anticipated to look for trustworthy sources and to be as accurate as they possibly can with the size of the project given to them. When editors come across different errors, it is important for the writers to correct them in the most accurate and true way possible. Most journalists' fact-check alongside another employee or writer to help verify everything is in line before submitting to the editor as well <sup>80</sup>.

When reporting on crimes or incidents, it is very important that journalists remember to consider that those under trial or being regarded as suspects are always innocent until proven

guilty. If this is not followed, there is the possibility of wrongful conviction. The best word reporters use in this incident is "allegedly", until sentencing. Afterwards, the crimes can then be reported as fact.

A basic rule journalists follow is when there are two or more individual witnesses of an event, it can be reported as fact. If there is only one witness, the event is conveyed with acknowledgment to the witness. This also goes for controversial facts. Journalists cannot always guarantee 'truth', but getting the facts right is the cardinal principle of journalism. We should always strive for accuracy, give all the relevant facts we have and ensure that they have been checked. When we cannot corroborate information we should say so.

Fast is good, but right is better. We need the strongest possible commitment to accuracy and its close cousin, fairness. - Margaret Sullivan, public editor for the New York Times After news organisations, including the New York Times, wrongly identified the perpetrator of the Newtown school shootings in the US, Margaret Sullivan said a reader wrote to say "she had always believed that if 'I read it in the New York Times it's always true,' but her belief in that truth had been shaken"<sup>57</sup>. Being accurate has always been a core tenet of journalism, but in an age of viral news, verification is an increasingly essential skill.

The sheer volume of material requiring verification is crippling news organisations whose budgets are shrinking. Writing in the New York Times, study claim "truth has never been an essential ingredient of viral content on the internet. But in the stepped up competition for readers, digital news sites are increasingly blurring the line between fact and fiction, and saying that it is all part of doing business in the rough-and tumble world of online journalism<sup>81</sup>." Some media outlets are placing the responsibility for scepticism with the audience, thereby absolving the journalism outlet of the responsibility to fact-check because it's physically impossible to keep up with the information deluge. "We assume a certain level of sophistication and scepticism of our readers," says John Cook, editor-in-chief of Gawker.

Further, former BBC director of news and Cardiff University journalism professor, Richard Sambrook, also identifies that “some now believe the responsibility for assessing the accuracy and quality of information should switch from the providers of news to the consumers; that in an age of plenty the consumer has a greater role to play and responsibility for what they consume <sup>82</sup>.” Others see this out-sourcing of fact-checking as a way to free up limited resources within a newsroom for other tasks. Those other tasks may include interpreting and contextualising the information, a skill that can move the trained journalist to a position of greater power. “The journalist has not been replaced but displaced, moved higher up the editorial chain from the production of initial observations to a role that emphasises verification and interpretation, bringing sense to the streams of text, audio, photos and video produced by the public <sup>83</sup>. This gets us into deterministic ‘truth’ versus probabilistic ‘truth’ territory. In other words, from: Here it is, take it or leave it, to: Here it is, subject to arbitrary on-going revision.

**3. The Right to Privacy:** Journalism is a public service that permits its practitioners to write and publish information about groups, governments and individuals. This places a high degree of responsibility on journalists. As a study has observed: Journalism is not a job for men and women who have no respect for the hard earned reputation of their fellow countrymen and women. Rather, it is a profession for sober and mature people who would act in the interest of society as a whole by treating every story with fairness and, of course, by obeying the laws that affect media practice.

It is a universal fact that news is all about human beings- their activities, actions, inactions, mistakes, foibles, achievements and others. However, in reporting these activities, the reporter must show a high level of professionalism and introspection so that an individual’s reputation is not needlessly destroyed or his/her privacy unnecessarily invaded. This is because every individual deserves a measure of privacy, depending on the level of intimacy he/she has with other members of society. A person whose privacy is recklessly invaded is

empty and even naked. This affects his/her mental and emotional stability, with negative consequences on his reasoning and by extension, productivity. Such a person is often not in a position to meaningfully contribute to national development efforts. Therefore, is the careless use of personal information often provided by internet users. The need to protect the privacy of an individual has been widely acknowledged, perhaps all over the world, except in authoritarian regimes. The Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalist draws attention to the need to protect the privacy of an individual in the following words: As a general rule, a journalist should respect the privacy of individuals and their families unless it affects public interest: Information on the private life of an individual or his family should only be published if it impinges on public interest, publishing of such information about an individual as mentioned above should be deemed justifiable only if it is directed at, exposing crime or serious misdemeanour; exposing anti-social conduct, protecting public health, morality and safety, preventing the public from being misled by some statement or action of the individual concerned. The above code of ethics clearly shows that the individual deserves privacy in his/her every activity but also provides the circumstances under which such protection could be vitiated or annulled. For instance, an armed robber, having shattered social harmony and caused perhaps bodily harm or economic adversity, loses his right to privacy, as he/she is paraded before television cameras. Even if such a person seeks legal protection, it is unlikely that he/she would have any legal reprieve.

**4. Privilege / Non-Disclosure:** Source protection, sometimes also referred to as source confidentiality or in the U.S. as the reporter's privilege, is a right accorded to journalists under the laws of many countries, as well as under international law. It prohibits authorities, including the courts, from compelling a journalist to reveal the identity of an anonymous source for a story. The right is based on recognition that without a strong guarantee of anonymity, many would be deterred from coming forward and sharing information of public interests with journalists.

Regardless of whether the right to source confidentiality is protected by law, the process of communicating between journalists and sources can jeopardize the privacy and safety of sources, as third parties can hack electronic communications or otherwise spy on interactions between journalists and sources. News media and their sources have expressed concern over government covertly accessing their private communications <sup>84</sup>. To mitigate these risks, journalists and sources often rely on encrypted messaging.

Journalists rely on source protection to gather and reveal information in the public interest from confidential sources. Such sources may require anonymity to protect them from physical, economic or professional reprisals in response to their revelations. There is a strong tradition of legal source protection internationally, in recognition of the function that confidential sources play in facilitating 'watchdog' or 'accountability' journalism. While professional journalistic practice entails multi-sourcing, verification and corroboration, confidential sources are a key component of this practice.

## **5. Taste, Decency and Acceptability**

Audiences have different reactions to depictions of violence, nudity, coarse language, or to people in any other situation that is unacceptable to or stigmatized by the local culture or laws (such as the consumption of alcohol, homosexuality, illegal drug use, scatological images, etc.). Even with similar audiences, different organizations and even individual reporters have different standards and practices.

These decisions often revolve around what facts are necessary for the audience to know.

When certain distasteful or shocking material is considered important to the story, there are a variety of common methods for mitigating negative audience reaction. Advance warning of explicit or disturbing material may allow listeners or readers to avoid content they would rather not be exposed to. Offensive words may be partially obscured or bleeped. Potentially offensive images may be blurred or narrowly cropped. Descriptions may be substituted for pictures; graphic detail might be omitted. Disturbing content might be moved from a cover to

an inside page, or from daytime to late evening when children are less likely to be watching. There is often considerable controversy over these techniques, especially concern that obscuring or not reporting certain facts or details is self-censorship that compromises objectivity and fidelity to the truth, and which does not serve the public interest.

For example, images and graphic descriptions of war often depict violent, bloody, shocking and profoundly tragic. This makes certain content disturbing to some audience members, but it is precisely these aspects of war that some consider to be the most important to convey. Some argue that "sanitizing" the depiction of war influences public opinion about the merits of continuing to fight, and about the policies or circumstances that precipitated the conflict. The amount of explicit violence and mutilation depicted in war coverage varies considerably from time to time, from organization to organization, and from country to country. Implying that reporters have also been accused of indecency in the process of collecting news, namely that they are overly intrusive in the name of journalistic insensitivity. War correspondent Edward Behr recounts the story of a reporter during the Congo Crisis who walked into a crowd of Belgian evacuees and shouted, "Anyone here been raped and speaks English? <sup>85</sup>”

**6. Discrimination and Disabled People.** The fact that disabled people have a substantially poorer standard of living to that of non-disabled people is no longer in doubt. Orthodox medical explanations suggest this be because impairment has such a traumatic physical and psychological effect on individuals they are unable to achieve a comparable lifestyle by their own efforts. Disabled people and their organizations reject this view as a sound basis for understanding the problems associated with disability. They, along with a growing number of professionals and policy makers - particularly overseas, maintain that it is not impairment, which prevents people from achieving a reasonable lifestyle, but restrictive environments and disabling barriers. 'Disability', therefore, represents a complex system of social constraints imposed on people with impairments by a highly discriminatory society; to be a disabled

person means to be discriminated against. The problem is worse for disabled members of the gay and lesbian communities, black people, and women with impairments.

Research by the British Council of Organizations of Disabled People (BCODP) focusing on 'Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination: A Case for Anti-Discrimination Legislation' shows that the type of discrimination encountered by disabled people is not just a question of individual prejudice; it is institutionalized in the very fabric of our society. Institutional discrimination - attitudes and policies which deny equal opportunities to disabled people - are evident in education, employment, the benefit system, support services, the built environment, the leisure industry, and politics <sup>86</sup>.

**7. Violence:** Most studies on the effects of media violence have examined passive visual media (dramatic television and movies, television news, and music videos), in terms of the media that viewers observe only. However, there have also been a limited number of investigations of interactive visual media (video games and the Internet), media that viewers both observe and interact with. In this section, we examine both kinds of studies. Within each genre, it begins with experimental studies, in which cause and effect are unambiguous but the effects observed are short term. Of necessity, the outcomes in these experiments tend to be physical aggression that is not life threatening, or else verbal aggression, aggressive thoughts, or aggressive emotions. It then turns to surveys, or cross-sectional studies, that provide a snapshot of the relation at one point in time between individuals' habitual consumption of media violence and their aggressive behaviour <sup>87</sup>. These surveys often deal with more serious forms of physical aggression, but this type of methodology by itself is not as conclusive about causation as experimental studies are. For genres for which longitudinal studies exist, we conclude our review by examining how youths' habitual consumption of violence affects their violent and aggressive behaviour later in life. Like cross-sectional investigations, longitudinal studies often examine serious physical aggression, but they generally provide better evidence about causal influences than can cross-sectional studies. Because of space

constraints, we provide illustrative examples of carefully selected key studies in each area, rather than an exhaustive review of the research literature. However, in addition to discussing these selected studies, we describe (if available) meta-analyses that have aggregated the results of most major investigations to reach overall estimates of effect sizes. A meta-analysis essentially averages the effect sizes of multiple studies, and allows the researcher to ask whether a particular factor (e.g., exposure to media violence) is significantly linked to a particular outcome (e.g., violent behaviour). There are several commonly used measures of effect size, any of which can be applied to experimental, correlational, and longitudinal types of studies. To provide a common metric for this discussion, we have converted all effect sizes to correlation coefficients ( $r_s$ )<sup>88</sup>.

**8. Access to Information** is the ability for an individual to seek, receive and impart information effectively. This sometimes includes "scientific, indigenous, and traditional knowledge; freedom of information, building of open knowledge resources, including open Internet and open standards, and open access and availability of data; preservation of digital heritage; respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, such as fostering access to local content in accessible languages; quality education for all, including lifelong and e-learning; diffusion of new media and information literacy and skills, and social inclusion online, including addressing inequalities based on skills, education, gender, age, race, ethnicity, and accessibility by those with disabilities; and the development of connectivity and affordable ICTs, including mobile, the Internet, and broadband infrastructures <sup>89</sup>."

Michael Buckland defines six types of barriers that have to be overcome in order for access to information to be achieved: identification of the source, availability of the source, price of the user, cost to the provider, cognitive access and acceptability <sup>90</sup>. While "access to information", "right to information", "right to know" and "freedom of information" are sometimes used as synonyms, the diverse terminology does highlight particular (albeit related) dimensions of the issue <sup>91</sup>.

While there has been an increase in countries with freedom of information laws, their implementation and effectiveness vary considerably across the world. The Global Right to Information Rating is a programme providing advocates, legislators, reformers with tools to assess the strength of a legal framework <sup>92</sup>. In measuring the strength and legal framework of each country's freedom of information law using the Right to Information Rating, one notable trend appears<sup>93</sup>. Largely regardless of geographic location, top scoring countries tend to have younger laws<sup>94</sup>. United Nations Secretary General's 2017 report on the Sustainable Development Goals, to which United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) contributed freedom of information-related information, of the 109 countries with available data on implementation of freedom of information laws, 43 per cent do not sufficiently provide for public outreach and 43 per cent have overly-wide definitions of exceptions to disclosure, which run counter to the aim of increased transparency and accountability <sup>95</sup>.

Despite the adoption of freedom of information laws; officials are often unfamiliar with the norms of transparency at the core of freedom of information or are unwilling to recognize them in practice. Journalists often do not make effective use of freedom of information laws for a multitude of reasons: official failure to respond to information requests, extensive delays, receipt of heavily redacted documents, arbitrarily steep fees for certain types of requests, and a lack of professional training <sup>96</sup>.

Debates around public access to information have also focused on further developments in encouraging open data approaches to government transparency. In 2009, the data.gov portal was launched in the United States, collecting in one place most of the government open data; in the years following, there was a wave of government data opening around the world. As part of the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral network established in 2011, some 70 countries have now issued National Action Plans, the majority of which contain strong open data commitments designed to foster greater transparency, generate economic growth, empower citizens, fight corruption and more generally enhance governance. In 2015 the

Open Data Charter was founded in a multi stakeholder process in order to establish principles for 'how governments should be publishing information'<sup>97</sup>. The Charter has been adopted by 17 national governments half of which were from Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>98</sup>.

**9. Freedom of the Press or Freedom of the Media** is the principle that communication and expression through various media, including printed and electronic media, especially published materials, should be considered a right to be exercised freely. Such freedom implies the absence of interference from an overreaching state; its preservation may be sought through constitution or other legal protection and security. With respect to governmental information, any government may distinguish which materials are public or protected from disclosure to the public. State materials are protected due to either of 2 reasons: the classification of information as sensitive, classified or secret, or the relevance of the information to protecting the national interest. Many governments are also subject to "sunshine laws" or freedom of information legislation that are used to define the ambit of national interest and enable citizens to request access to government-held information.

The United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers"<sup>99</sup>. This philosophy is usually accompanied by legislation ensuring various degrees of freedom of scientific research (known as scientific freedom), publishing, and press. The depth to which these laws are entrenched in a country's legal system can go as far down as its constitution. The concept of freedom of speech is often covered by the same laws as freedom of the press, thereby giving equal treatment to spoken and published expression. Sweden was the first country in the world to adopt freedom of the press into its constitution with the *Freedom of the Press Act* of 1766.

## **10. Copyright**

The evolution of copyright has been closely linked to technological development. Whereas, most of the technologies made copyright protection more difficult, digital computers managed to alter the fundamental concepts behind copyright. Copyrights have a great influence on majority of library activities. They shape the type of services offered by libraries to their users and the conditions on which a library can offer access to materials protected by copyright. As a result, copyright affect the way libraries can function and conduct activities such as storing, protecting and making their collections available. Copyright is “a procedure whereby the originator of a piece of intellectual property (book, article, piece of music etc.) acquires a series of rights over the work created, including copying, publishing, performing, broadcasting and adaptation. The changing world and multiplicity of items led to substantial changes in copyright legislation and international agreements, current technological advances have put copyright law under stress again <sup>100</sup>.”

11. **Plagiarism** has always been a difficulty in publishing but the problem has aggravated with the unauthorized re-use of material found on the Internet. It can be intentional or no intentional. Harrod’s Librarians’ Glossary explains Plagiarism as “using another person’s work and publishing it as one’s own without payment or acknowledgement <sup>101</sup>.” Plagiarism is not the same as copyright infringement. While both the terms may apply to a particular act, they are different terms, and false claims of authorship may subject to plagiarism regardless of whether the material is protected by copyright or not. It is considered an ethical offense and can be harmful to one's academic reputation and honesty.

What is Plagiarism? Oxford English Dictionary defines Plagiarism as the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's "language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions" and the representation of them as one's own original work. Plagiarism by mentioning various elements involved in it <sup>102</sup>: Plagiarism occurs when someone: Uses words, ideas, or work products, attributable to another identifiable person or source, without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained, in a situation in which there is

a legitimate expectation of original authorship and in order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary The above definition clearly explains that plagiarism is mainly harmful because someone is trying to get credit for some work, ideas which he is not his own.

## **12. Children and Minors**

Children are regarded as precious gifts from God. It is rather curious and unfortunate that these same children are subjected to abuses and neglect. Universally, childhood is recognised as a period of sensitivity requiring special care, attention and protection. Perhaps it is in recognition of this fact that a study opined that: Children's rights has been a world focus since 1979, when the United Nations designated that year as the International year of the child and developed a list of children's rights. Among the rights suggested are the rights to love and understanding, adequate food and health, free education, play, an identity and special attention of handicapped regardless of colour, sex, religion and national or social origin. To further concretize global efforts and attention on child development and protection against any form of abuse or mistreatment, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was passed on November 20th 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly. The instrument which is in three (3) parts with fifty-four (54) articles opens with a preamble.

The preamble states the aims and objectives which the convention seeks to accomplish for the child. It states: Recognising that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow in a family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. In Africa, the Organisation of Africa Unity (now African Union) at its Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa in 1990 adopted a Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child. The charter which derives from the United Nations Convention takes cognisance of the sociocultural peculiarities of the African Child.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child notes: That the situation of most African Children, remains critical due to the unique factors of their socio-economic, cultural,

traditional and developmental circumstances, natural disasters, armed conflicts, exploitation and hunger and on account of the child's physical and mental immaturity, he/she needs special safeguards and care. To further the mobilization of attention on the African Child, a reported noted that: The Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) subsequently proclaimed in Abuja 1991, the 1990s as the "Decade of the Africa Child" and set June 16 of every year as the "Day of the African Child". The documents also report that every child must be protected against all forms of exploitation, indecent or degrading treatment including child labour, abuse and torture, sexual exploitation, sale, abduction and drug abuse. It goes without saying that every nation who is a signatory to the convention is expected to make concerted effort at protecting children against all forms of abuses, through the enforcement of relevant instruments.

Again, Section 34 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for the right of every individual to dignity of his/her person. This section further prohibits "all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, and slavery, forced or compulsory labour". In other words, it ensures the child's right to dignity of his/her person. Accordingly, children should not be subjected to any form of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment, forced or compulsory labour. Despite these provisions in the United Nations Convention and the Nigerian Constitution, children in Nigeria suffer cruelty, abuses, inhuman and degrading treatment, child labour and some are forced into prostitution. These saddening experiences have strong emotional impact on the victim. Often times, abused and neglected children are overwhelmed and shattered. This usually results in emotional imbalance which eventually manifest in delinquency and deviance.

In Nigeria, for instance, youth crime and breeding of street children are direct consequences of child abuse and neglect. But a situation where the government ratifies international conventions it cannot enforce locally is intolerable. A situation where the Child Rights Bill is passed and mere lip-service is paid to its implementation amounts to hypocrisy and apathy as

far as issues of child abuse and neglect is concerned. A study observed that “It is common knowledge that children in Nigeria are bludgeoned into child labour and prostitution by highly placed persons under the guise of philanthropy.”

Given these circumstances, the average Nigerian does not seem to be aware of the provisions of the Child Rights Bill needless to say the instruments before it. It is even more worrisome in the light of the fact that most forms of youth violence, unrest, riots are linked with child abuse and neglect. The media are undoubtedly persuasive instruments in man’s struggle for self-liberation and development. In line with this, it was advanced that the mass media select and bring to waiting multitudes a constant flow of detail related to those fruitful dialogues of differences and concordance upon which free societies thrive.

With respect to child rights issue, the media most especially television medium coverage has been used as weapon of awareness creation. In this regard, The United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have produced “I Need to Know” a drama serial which is shown weekly on most TV stations in Nigeria. In Oredo local government area of Edo State for example, the programme is a regular feature on Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Independent Television (ITV). It addresses child rights, abuse, and welfare and issues. Similarly, Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF), at the instance of Mrs Titi Abubakar the wife of the then Vice President bankrolled the production of “Izozo” a drama serial on national television. This programme which shows weekly (NTA network service) is mainly on child labour and its evils.

**14. Public Interest:** The public interest means anything that is relevant to the lives and well-being of all of us, to society and our communities. It concerns the “common good”, meaning matters that affect our health, livelihoods, quality of life, security, and our governance. The public interest does not mean what the public might find interesting. Broadly speaking, the

difference here is between what is relevant to members of the public, as opposed to what might merely entertain, fascinate or titillate some of them <sup>103</sup>.

News journalism is reporting matters of societal relevance. Not gossip and titbits about well-known figures or about personal events and circumstances of others that do not affect broader society, but which merely pander to voyeurism. A journalist with a brief to report news should therefore apply a public interest test before deciding whether to cover a story. In most cases it is clear what is and what is not in the public interest. But in some cases, such as stories concerning the private lives and actions of public figures in positions of power, the distinction is not clear.

The public interest is in having a safe, healthy and functional society. In a democracy, journalism plays a central role in that. It gives people the information they need to take part in the democratic process. If journalists are good at their job, they hold governments and other institutions to account. All serious journalism, then, contains a public service ethic. To fulfil this public service role, journalists must build and retain the trust of their audiences by behaving in an ethical and professional manner. A journalist must have compelling reasons to deviate from standard good practice: if it is the only way to bring an important subject to the public's attention.

For example, journalists should be honest about who and what they are; they should always give their names, and say for which news organisation they work. However, there are times when a journalist might have to go undercover and hide their true identity and the real reason for their actions. Such cases could include the investigation of crime or political wrongdoing. This is an act of deception, which is generally to be avoided, but if it brings justice and an end to criminal activity, it may be justified in the wider public interest.

Journalists should not intrude into people's private lives – but there might be a case for doing so if the person being investigated is a public figure whose private behaviour is at odds with what they advocate in public life, especially when their position can influence legislation. In this case, media intrusion – normally an objectionable practice – could expose hypocrisy and dishonesty. However, such intrusion must be clearly shown and clearly seen to be in the wider public interest. Things become more difficult when the story in question may actually involve a journalist breaking the law, or encouraging someone else to do so. Here you need to have a serious discussion with colleagues about the circumstances, the public interest benefit in covering the story, the risks involved and the likely consequences. Some countries build “the public interest” into their legal systems. So if you want to publish a difficult or controversial item because it is “in the public interest”, you should check whether the legal framework gives you the protection you need in each and every case <sup>104</sup>.

In some countries, those in power might actively oppose journalists revealing information which, although in the public interest, might threaten their control of society. In such cases the public interest test takes on another meaning. How those in power define the public interest might be more about control than freedom of information. Here, extra care is required.

## **15. Violate**

As a profession that serves the interest of the public. Journalist has degree responsibilities in the society. Every day, journalist face challenges that test their ethical values and responsibility to truth telling despite professional code of ethics, journalist may violate the rules by accepting bribes while covering news or features. This in some cases lowers the journalists' credibility and undermines a professional career. Corruption is dangerous to society and can be extremely devastating to media<sup>105</sup>.

Therefore, while acknowledging the attempt by the federal government to fight corruption and economic and stake holder to adopt zero tolerance attitude to corruption in the media and

indeed in the society at large. Some protagonists of African tradition have argued seriously that corruption in its presents would and character is part of our colonial heritage. Gratification is indeed a conkeralorm that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigeria society. It is a most that all sundry blame for the economic woe facing the country. This is because bribery and corruption is seen as one of the major impediments of the economic development of the nation. It is perhaps, the only reason why nothing seems to be working.

Journalist may use the media for their personal ends or for greater social good to serve the public. As human needs are insatiable, there are chances were some may sacrifice the public interest for their selfish motives ignoring the social responsibility. Such miss behaviour damages journalists and the profession's integrity and reputations. A study poised that journalism practice involves the gathering packing and disseminating of news to general public, general in today's society the mass media are seem as veritable instruments of information dissemination, social mobilization and control<sup>106</sup>.

It is one of the means through which the public is educated and sensitized about important issues affecting the lives of people. And as such our ethical pitfalls like "brown envelope" money and favour journalist collect their source to journalists in the hope of attracting or shaping information. Such reporting may colour news content or brighter stories with hidden agenda.

However, journalism practice as noble profession demands for discipline and ethical behaviour to uphold the crucial and dependency of the society on the mass media for survivals. A study poised the ethics should give the journalist a standard by which he can judge action to right or wrong, good or bed, responsible that journalist today needs to know their limitation so as not to abuse the power of the media in coronation of this view.

Regrettably, communication in Nigeria is mainly influence by economic extremism on one hand and government pressure on the other hand, in developing nation like Nigeria, poverty debases human dignity and causes the scale of honour and trust for money through

gratification to influence news as opposed to editors of sense of too poor considering their enormous task they perform in sociality thereby making him or her to compromise.

### **2.1.9 Newspaper Overview**

A newspaper is a serial publication containing news about current events, other informative articles about politics, sports, arts, and so on, and advertising. Newspaper can also be described as printed and unbound paper that has the content of news about current political, economic, socio-cultural, educational, environmental, scientific-cum-technological and sundry affairs, as well as other relevant information.

Newspaper is a print medium of mass communication, which was the first evolution in the global history of the mass media. Although, newspaper is a print medium, there are online versions of newspapers in this modern age. From the earliest times till now, newspapers have played an enormous role in keeping abreast members of the society with news and information of events, happenings and occurrences around the people and their environment. Newspapers have over the years, served as societal and human right activists by developing a platform for substantial advocacy through public opinions and editorials.

Most traditional papers also feature an editorial page containing editorials written by an editor (or by the paper's editorial board) and expressing an opinion on a public issue, opinion articles called —op-eds‖ written by guest writers (which are typically in the same section as the editorial), and columns that express the personal opinions of columnists, usually offering analysis and synthesis that attempts to translate the raw data of the news into information telling the reader —what it all means‖ and persuading them to concur.

Newspapers are circulated according to geographical areas; the ones that have national circulation are called national newspapers. Some newspapers are regionally circulated, while others are local or community based.

### **2.1.9.1 The Societal Role of Newspaper**

Newspaper plays a very significant role in the society by reporting events, happenings, occurrences in the society; serving as an advocacy instrument by providing the platform for opinions (letter to the editors, op-ed, editorials, etc.), as well as performing the watchdog function against the government, authorities and the ills of the society history.

The newspaper has a content that serves different people with different purposes ranging from news, information, entertainment, opinion, advertisements, sports, business, politics, education, and a host of others. It is further affirmed that the newspapers focus on the social and political evils in the society such as drinking, gambling, drug addiction, and a host of others.

Some functions-cum-advantages of newspaper include but not limited to the following:

- i. Providing better interpretation or in-depth developmental stories that place developmental issues and facts in greater perspectives.
- ii. Having advantages of place and time of exposure and flexibility, which ensures easy comprehension and retention of media content.
- iii. Ensuring easier storage and retrieval for limitless repeat exposure any time, any day and anywhere.
- iv. Serving as viable tool for mass education and mass literacy by motivating and encouraging readership habits among illiterates and new literates in the society.

### **2.1.9.2 Newspaper Stories and Sources**

Selection of news sources plays a vital role in the news production process. News sources are essential in the construction of news stories given that journalists in most cases are not able to gather information firsthand as witnesses of news events. They have therefore to rely on people who witnessed the events for relevant information to build their stories. In other cases, the nature of the stories in terms of how complex or how scientific they are will compel the journalists to seek for help in getting explanations of such complex issues. Based on this,

environmental journalists capitalize on credible news sources to be able to produce reliable and trustworthy news for the public. The complexity and the scientific nature of environmental issues make it more prone to use of expert information in writing readable, understandable and relatable environmental stories.

This explains why journalists and news organizations seem to be in an endless symbiotic relationship with sources which enables them to explain facts to their audiences. Erickson et al. believe that the relationship that exists between sources and the press 'leads to a sharing of the core values in the dominant culture as news orientates towards society's governing political and social structures.'

If the above assertion holds true, it then implies that news sourcing is bureaucratically structured as journalists, as it were, have, in what Fishman calls a 'map of relevant knowers' for newsworthy topics. Thus the nature of event or issue covered by journalists will determine the relevant sources needed to be contacted for information given that the journalists are guided by bureaucratic knowers compass. But how true does this map of relevant knowers compass apply in environmental news sources? Does the complexity and scientific nature of environmental news imply that subsidiary news actors should not be sought as news sources?

In gathering, selecting and packaging news stories for public consumption, news sources play an immense role as the information they provide makes or mars the news. The impact of news source's information is underscored by its power to shape the news. In most cases emphasis on news production is usually centered on the journalists as the news agenda setter by the mere fact that they select, news. Little or no attention has been paid to the news sources in regard to the prominent role they play in providing journalists with relevant information which informs what the journalists purveys. Thus it could be said that news contents are not in most cases shaped by journalists, but rather by news sources who provide journalists with information in the first place.

**News as a Commodity vs. News as a Public good**

Tension exists between the need for newspapers to ensure that productivity is kept high and that profits are maintained, on the one hand, and the need to maintain professionalism in the reporting of news given that news is a public good which is needed for democracy on the other. Serving commercial interests primarily over producing news accurately to serve society could impact on news quality given that there may be pressure to publish quicker and publish news stories that sell. In the midst of this, quality checks may be lost thereby undermining the credibility of media as an essential pillar to democracy.

Studies distinguishes between two types of press; one that is strictly dependent on the state and destined to serve it and the other that is constituted on the model of the for-profit commercial enterprise<sup>54</sup>. Newspapers are economic enterprises directly subject to economic laws which often come into conflict with the imperatives of intellectual production; his presents a strong pressure within journalism. It is important to note that although media has the role to serve the state and inform citizens appropriately in a democratic society, profitability tends to impose strong constraints on journalistic production. The state has power of ensuring that media performs its role of informing citizenry and enforces measures to oversee the way media operates, as in the case of the Protection of State Information Bill. Should the Bill become law it will limit information that journalists can expose to the public as the Bill seeks to regulate the classification, protection and distribution of state information. Thus, the state would be able to regulate what state information the media can or cannot bring to the public eye. This notion of state power over the media can be justified by drawing on the Marxist critique of the media as a bourgeois institution which represents the interests of the ruling class in society.

The tension between making profits and maintaining professionalism is therefore a difficult one to resolve given that newspapers' profitability models are under strain from other immediate and freely available news sources. In the end newspapers face a challenge of ensuring professionalism in news reporting while still remaining profitable. As schoars

argues, a major contradiction within the operation of the journalistic field lies in that the journalistic practices that best conform to journalism ethical codes are often not profitable.<sup>107</sup>

### **News as a Commodity**

News is a commodity given that it is produced for consumption by the public and also with the intention of newspapers making profit from its production. News has to sell as newspaper corporations are in business, moreover with the goal of profit making. Newspapers business model has been affected by the decommunitisation of news content as it is offered for free on the internet. This has brought newspapers' profitability model under pressure as they have to strive to still remain in business. As a result, more emphasis has been placed on the need to make profits thereby sacrificing quality in news reporting in some instances.

Researcher defines commercialization of news as any action intended to boost profit that interferes with a journalist's or news organization's best effort to maximize public understanding of those issues and events that shape the community they claim to serve<sup>108</sup>. As competition from other sources of news, primarily the immediacy of news offered freely on the internet, commercial interference has been on the rise. Newspapers thus compete to grab the attention of readers and to sell. As a result of this, more news is becoming sensationalized and made to sound interesting to readers, in the end accuracy is lost. There is a focus on news that can sell to the public which leads to the "dumbing down" trend whereby newspapers report more on what they find appealing to readers such as reporting more on celebrities and an overemphasis on the personal lives of politicians. News organizations may be faced with an additional pressure to avoid negatively reporting on large advertisers that bring in a lot of revenue. This results in a greater possibility of newspapers' accuracy being compromised by the need to continue bringing in revenue to their organizations.

### **News as a Public good**

Journalists play the role of being watchdogs on behalf of citizenry hence public interest has to be kept in mind in the production of news. As is argued by different scholars news has never been an ordinary commodity, news has a special status in facilitating a public sphere by

providing the public with information to participate in a democratic life<sup>109</sup>. High standards of news reporting should be maintained so that the public is accurately informed and can be able to make well informed decisions. It is also argued that the more newspapers prioritize on profit making at the expense of professionalism in news reporting, then the less valuable news becomes as a resource for citizens. News is thus a public good that contributes to the pillars of democracy and it is of importance that it be produced professionally and ethically. News cannot simply be consumed in any form; certain standards have to be observed. News has to be in the public interest, as media plays a crucial role in ensuring that citizens are well informed. The importance lies not just in how news is produced-to sell, but also on how it is received by the audience. Thus, standards of news reporting are set by the South African Press Code upon which newspapers are to adhere to ensure that news is produced in a manner that is reputable. The Press Code is the ethical Code to ensure the practice of responsible journalism in Nigeria. If news is defective, there are serious ethical consequences for newspapers and ultimately implications for democracy. Because print media has enormous influence, it is of vital importance that journalism be practiced in an accountable and responsible way.

Newspapers have built into the process of news production systems to check news stories and verify that news has been reported accurately and that it adheres to the standards that are set by the Nigerian Press Code. News stories go through various checking processes prior to being finalized for print. News editors, editors and subeditors go through the stories written by journalists to verify that the Stories have been written appropriately and accurately. In addition to this process, some newspapers have an accuracy form which is meant to be filled in by every journalist that writes a news story. In this form, journalists check that they have reported news accurately and followed all standards set by the Press Code. To sum up, these checking processes are in place to ensure that news as a public good is produced in the best way possible as is essential in a democratic society.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

Addressing the research problem appropriately, theories that can serve as building blocks for the study on which the study rests, have been identified. The theories are Agenda-setting Theory and Social Responsibility Theory. Below is the discussion on the theories and their relationship to the study.

### **2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory**

Agenda-setting theory describes the “ability [of the news media] to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda<sup>110</sup>. That is, if a news item is covered frequently, the audience will regard the issue as more important. In reality, mass media only shows the audience what it comprehends as an important issue. Print or broadcast news will then take away the audience’s ability to think for themselves. Agenda setting occurs through a cognitive process known as “accessibility.<sup>111</sup>. Accessibility implies that the more frequently and prominently the news media cover an issue, the more instances that issue becomes accessible in the audience’s memories. The agenda-setting effect is not the result of receiving one or a few messages, but is due to the aggregate impact of a very large number of messages all dealing with the same general issue. Mass-media coverage in general and agenda setting in particular also have a powerful impact on what individuals think that other people are thinking, and hence tend to allocate more importance to issues that have been extensively covered by mass media.

The notion of Agenda setting started with Walter Lippmann’s observation that the mass media mediate between the world outside and the picture in our heads Lipmann 1922. Cohen 1963 asserted that the press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. Cohen restated that the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about Cohen 1963. Lippmann and Cohen’s submissions were results of their personal observations which lacked empirical footing. However, McCombs and Shaw established an empirical link between media agenda and public agenda in their studies McCombs and Shaw 1964.

McCombs and Shaw 1964 opined that the mass media have the ability to transfer the salience of items on their news agenda for the public agenda<sup>110</sup>. People judge important what the media judges as important. The media does that by deciding what to place emphasis on in their news pages thereby the media set the agenda of the day. McCombs and Shaw furthered their argument that the mass media set agenda for public discussion using the outcome of their study of an American presidential election to a theory which has generated critical and sustained attention from researchers. Central to the Agenda setting theory is the idea that the media influences the level or importance people attach to what they see, read or hear from the mass media. This suggests that the mass media shapes how the audience construct social reality. For example, through selecting certain events and ignoring others and by determining how the selected events are reported, this influences the perception of social reality by the public.

Agenda setting theory is relevant to this study because if the media set the agenda of public discussion, it is assumed that sustained media coverage of Police brutality will directly influence the level of importance the Nigerian public attaches to the issue. Therefore, the more attention the mass media devote to reporting issues of Police brutality the more likely the public will consider these issues to be important. For instance, it is argued that the world looks different to different people, depending not only on their personal interest, but also on the map that is drawn for them by the writers, editors, and publishers they read.

The agenda setting theory explain how mass media identifies issues of Police brutality such as unwarranted arrest, extrajudicial killing, tortures and other forms of abuse by the Nigerian Police as salient and stress them for public consumption. In this respect, the mass media become agenda setters and the issues of Police misconduct becomes the agenda.

### **2.2.2 Social Responsibility Theory**

Social responsibility is ethics that guide any action, be it in media or other organizations, which put an obligation towards environment, society, culture and economy<sup>112</sup>. The media

like any other sector should not harm, but should promote environment and socio-cultural aspects in relation to the economy of the place.

Social Responsibility theory of mass media is relatively a new concept which started in the mid-20th century and is used mostly by developing and least developed countries. The theory started from Europe and took a shape with the Commission on the Freedom of Press that happened in United States in 1949. The model was designed formally by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm in 1956 in their book. It encourages total freedom to press and no censorship, but it should be regulated according to social responsibilities and external controls. Content is also filtered through public obligation and interference. The theory replaced libertarian theory with the view that libertarianism was outdated. The theory also incorporates some aspects of authoritarian theory. After the emergence of this theory, professionalism in media started to be taken seriously.

The social responsibility theory of mass media changed the way press published news from objective reporting to interpretative reporting. Before this theory, facts were presented without any interpretation. The audience interpreted it the way they wanted to. This caused problems as interpretation was not based on reality and it affected the social order. Interpretative reporting and investigative reporting started to uncover the reality behind every case. In Social Responsibility Theory, the press is taken to be for the people and society. The tasks of the press is to make a code of conduct and follow it, to develop a standard in journalism, to make journalism better, to protect journalists and to have penalties if any journalist violates the code of conduct.

This way, the facts provided by the press are analyzed and interpreted so that the people get true information and understandable news. This helps maintain social harmony by revealing social evils like corruption and discouraging other bad conducts. The media is taken as a place for the voiceless to have a voice and develop public opinions where each and every person has the right to speak, express and publish. . It is considered not an end but a tool for

social development. Therefore, the objectives of media are stated to inform, document, analyze, interpret, mediate and mobilize by creating and finding solutions.

Also, while writing on media surveillance as a social responsibility function, scholars asserts that, “People need to know if the streets are blocked or dangerous, some of those planning to drive or walk through the area of a disturbance may choose another route if they are told what is happening”. They further warned that, “A news blackout sets a dangerous precedent. Word-of-mouth rumours are likely to be even less accurate than the mass media and if serious grievances have festered to the point of a riot, the public has a right to know.”<sup>13</sup> If the Nigerian broadcast media responsibly play their surveillance role of warning the masses including the security agents of an impending/imminent danger, then it will help to initiate proactive steps to forestall such danger in the country, thus, engendering national security.

The theory is relevant to the study as it explain how the mass media reports stories of Police brutality such as tortures, extrajudicial killings, harassment among others. In this respect, the media is expected to be professional by being objective, fair, truthful and accurate in reporting stories that borders on cases of Police brutality. The media is taken as a place for the voiceless to have a voice and develop public opinions where each and every person has the right to speak, express and publish. It is considered not an end, but a tool for social development. Therefore, the objectives of the media are stated to inform, document, analyze, interpret, mediate and mobilize by creating and finding solutions.

The Nigerian media, like media in many developing countries of the world love controversy and indulge in 'statement journalism'. They print or broadcast opposing statements without attempting to investigate and bring out the truth. Statements from various self-styled 'spokespersons' create a smokescreen and confuse media users who do not have the will or the time to sort out all the statements. The main issues are thus forgotten: side issues, unwanted arguments, unimportant sidelights and even trivial appeared centre-stage.

## **2.3 Review of Empirical Studies**

### **2.3.1 Media and Police Brutality**

Crime narratives, like other news items, are, and have always been a prominent part of the content of all mass media. In every society, crime, features prominently in the news presented to the public by the media. Rationalizing why crime coverage has become so important to newspapers, studies submitted that it is news: ‘the best crime stories have drama, conflict, good and evil’, and that for these reasons, newspapers have institutionalised crime coverage<sup>112</sup>. This according to research accounts for why virtually every newspaper has a police reporter that is always there when something ‘news worthy’ happens. Studies also affirmed that media operators, and by extension the media, savour and feed on crime and violence because it makes and sells headlines and news programmes: ‘Crime and violence make news reports juicy; they are sensational, dramatic, and at times colourful’. Since media owners are in business to make profit, and since crime and violence sell newspapers and programmes causing circulation figures and programme ratings to soar, no media operator is likely to spew out a juicy rape, bank robbery, murder or a monumental fraud. To that extent, crime and violence are not only attractive, but they are also tempting to media operators.

Research on the reporting style of crime by Mass Media revealed that, since the media are among the sources of information people count on to mould their opinion of the world around them, it can be safely asserted that the people also form their opinion of the crime situation in the society from what they see and read in the media. Findings confirmed this in a survey that showed that up to ninety-five percent of people rely on the media as the primary source of information on crime. Researchers also advanced that the media are among the most influential sources used by the public to develop opinions about crime and the criminal justice system. It is now common for the public to read on the pages of newspaper celebrated

cases of rape, gang robbery, corruption and so on. But when crime is rampant or in the neighbourhood, it might aggravate concern and fear of crime.

In a study examining how media framing of the use of force by a police officer affects people's attitudes toward the police officer, the suspect, and general impressions of the event<sup>115</sup>. Several scholars, relying on time series public opinion data, have examined the relationship between incidents of police misconduct and attitudes toward law enforcement. These researchers have found that people's confidence in the police decreases significantly following a highly publicized incident of police misconduct; however, the attitudes of Whites tend to rebound much more quickly than the attitudes of minorities.

Another research conducted to examine how exposure to the use of excessive force by police affected people's views of the police. In the experiment, participants viewed a videotape of a violent arrest of an African American suspect by two police officers. The experiment stimulus (i.e., the videotape) remained the same in the experimental conditions, with one exception: the race of the arresting officers. The authors found that participants' assessments of the officers' use of excessive force was linked to the race of the officer. Specifically, both African American and White respondents believed the arresting officers used excessive force when they viewed the videotape with the White police officers.

Finally, studies on media coverage of Police misconduct find that media coverage of high-profile instances of police misconduct significantly influence citizens' evaluations of the guilt of the law enforcement officers involved in the incident. Specifically, the researchers conducted a two-wave public opinion survey before and after an incident of police misconduct in Indianapolis, Indiana, and they discovered that people with more exposure to news coverage of the incident were more likely to view the officers involved as guilty.

### **2.3.2 Reporting Conflicts in Nigeria**

The mass media are principal means through which the public can address social, economic and political development challenges such as corruption, violence, crime, communal strife, public health and related issues which, if not tackled, could result in conflicts. Corroborating the above statement, different studies that these problems form a big part of the daily news agenda, all over the world, as evidenced by topics across different media worldwide like racial violence in urban America; ethnic rivalry and religious intolerance in Africa, Asia and the Middle East; and prejudice and discrimination against national minorities. Bearing this in mind, the Nigerian media adopting conflict-sensitive reporting, as an interventionist strategy for conflict resolution will be a step in the right direction.

The mass media, as an integral part of civil society and the political structure of society needs to re-engineer and reposition itself to discharge its constitutional responsibility in such a way to promote and sustain peace in Nigeria. Thus, any attempt by media aimed at sustaining peace must be taken seriously. The media has been blamed partly for the escalation of Police violence in Nigeria. The Presidency made it clear that the media is to also be blamed for frustrating his effort towards ending the crisis. The media were blamed for negatively framing reports on the conflict between the Police and Citizens. Scholarly works assert that hate speech and other forms of incitement which could lead to violence and threaten the democratic fabric of a society have saturated the Nigeria press reportage of controversial issues.

In a research on the media coverage of Police community violence, it has been shown that the media worsen police-citizen crises through biased, unfair, sensational and irresponsible coverage and Reporting<sup>119</sup>. The reason is that media cannot be separated from conflict, because the nature of crisis and the journalism profession will always attract media report. Traditionally, the press the world over is presumed to perform the function of societal surveillance, by reporting the reality. And crisis is reality which the press is expected to report. This role of shaping the public opinion and attitude has always been subject to

arguments and debates. As scholars have pointed out that, the fact that the Nigerian press have been found to cover crisis with deficiencies. Some have attributed these deficiencies to the ownership interest, political or economic interest or any form of ideology, such as religion or ethnicity. Some have attributed these deficiencies to the ownership interest, political or economic interest or any form of ideology, such as religion or ethnicity. The inadequacy in the coverage pattern has compounded the challenges faced by the federal government in attempting to arrest the incessant crises. For instance, some media reports go to the extent of falsifying conflict story. The press is accused of exaggerating the crisis of Police brutality in terms of the number of people harassed, unlawfully detained and killed.

### **2.3.3 Media and Human Rights Reportage**

Scholarly works observe that during the 1990s, human rights issues became more prominent, both in public policy and public opinion. Many governments officially incorporated human rights principles in their policy frameworks, with legal implications. Many international institutions (notably the United Nations agencies) 'mainstreamed' human rights.

The media reflected this upsurge of interest in its coverage of human rights stories. Today the mass media make reference to human rights in their coverage more often and more systematically. As in all areas of reporting, influence of this process is disproportionately concentrated in Northern countries, where the most powerful governments and the most influential media organisations tend to be located.

This has significant implications on perceptions of human rights reporting, on what stories editors and journalists prioritise and how those stories are written. In general, human rights are perceived in Northern countries, and by international media, to be a 'foreign' matter that concerns principally less powerful countries.

By contrast, for journalists in the latter type of countries, for whom human rights issues are less distant, international reporting of human rights is perceived often to be inadequate, superficial and subject to bias precisely because Northern countries tend not to apply human rights principles to their own societies. Studies maintain that though journalists have expanded coverage of human rights into new areas, many human rights issues are underreported by the media. Much reporting focuses on violations of rights during conflicts.

Research on the coverage of human rights stories by the mass media revealed that human rights issues that are less visible, or slow processes, are rarely covered. Human rights are still taken largely to mean political and civil rights, and the importance of economic, social and cultural rights is largely ignored by the media in their coverage of economic issues, including the international economy, poverty, inequity and social and economic discrimination<sup>124</sup>. In another study on the coverage of human rights by the media, it revealed that, the media do not explain and contextualise human rights information as well as they might. In general, data on human rights violations and on human rights standards are not lacking. However, the impact of this information on the public is not as great as might be expected. The media miss human rights stories because they do not pay attention to the specific legal and policy implications they have<sup>125</sup>.

Often, they do not have adequate knowledge of human rights and its relevance to the material they are covering. The media frequently also miss the context of human rights stories. These shortcomings diminish the professional quality of reporting, and hamper the communication of information that is sometimes essential for understanding. They indicate that the profession should identify or improve reporting and editorial standards in order to enhance the accuracy and consistency of human rights coverage.

Meanwhile, Human Rights Organisations have become increasingly active players in relation to the media. They have always been a key source of information. In recent years, the larger

agencies have responded to the new media environment by developing their media operations. Most have press offices, staffed by professionals.

#### **2.3.4 Persistence of Colonial Orientation in the Nigeria Police Force**

The British conceived the idea of the police as an instrument of oppression and brutal suppression against the quest of the people for independence and self-determination. The police only protected the selfish and economic interest of the colonialists, their actions were hardly people-driven. The police was placed above and not within the society it was meant to serve. Much of the human rights abuses committed by the police during the colonial days were hardly investigated to the extent that people lived in palpable fear and apprehension and often took to their heels at the sight of the colonial police<sup>126</sup>. In contemporary Nigeria, the police has only ended up behaving in the same way and manner (anti people) the colonialists conditioned it. Unfortunately, after over five decades of the formal departure of the colonialists, the Nigeria police have continued to retain and manifest the colonial inherited punitive and expeditionary character instead of a society friendly law enforcement agency of Government. It has remained a sad news that up till the 21st century, the culture of force and high handedness with little regard for human rights instituted by the colonialist have continued to persist in and among the Nigeria police in the discharge of their duties to the civil society. The impression about the Nigeria Police according research show that; The Nigeria police Force is not only a nest of killers, but a sophisticated citadel of corruption, variously manned by cold-blooded murderers. This institution statutorily charged with the maintenance of law and order across the country, embraced a retrogressive metamorphosis, which saw it configuring itself into a notorious synonym for corruption and grotesque incompetence; noted for its arrant desecration of every rational cannon of civilized conduct.

#### **2.3.5 Police Torture and Unlawful Detention**

Torture implies a mild physical pain usually inflicted by the police on a suspect in a bid to secure information or statement from an unwilling or reluctant suspect. On the other hand, detention has to do with the physical confinement of an accused to a lawful custody. In course of their investigations, the Nigeria police often adopt the following method in the torturing of suspect(s) which often result to the death of the victim(s): Shooting on the hips, cigarette burns, insertion of broom sticks or pins into the genitals of a male suspect and broken bottles into the vagina of female suspects, beating with horse whip, electric cables and batons; electric strokes; mock execution, removal of finger nails, denial of food and medication. Similarly, the Human Rights Watch had identified certain forms of torture which the Nigeria police often engage in to include: the flying of arms and legs of the body, suspension by hands and legs from the ceiling, severe beatings and flogging with metal or wooden objects, spraying of tear gas in the eyes, shooting in the foot or leg, raping female detainees, and using pliers or electric shocks on the penis of small suspect.

However, studies assert that the new media such as blogs, content farms, and social networks linked to traditional media outlets influence coverage of insurgency, also opined that this issue is increasingly important as the audiences and “news holes” of traditional media decline in size and as more people rely on new media for news and information<sup>129</sup>.

More so, in another study, videos and pictures of Police torturing citizens are being posted with the use of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and internet forums of which majority of them happens to be fake news, it is also noted that citizens take to social media because social media tools are cheap and accessible, facilitate quick, broad dissemination of messages, and allow for unfettered communication with an audience without the filter or selectivity of mainstream news outlets.

### **2.3.6 Arbitrary Arrest by the Nigeria Police Force**

Arrest implies placing an individual under lawful detention or confinement against the person’s wish, for the purpose of law enforcement. In this process, the police is deemed as

the servant of the state. Arrest could be with or without warrant depending on the gravity of the issue at stake. Section 35 (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria guarantees citizens personal liberty except on the reasonable suspicion that the individual has committed a criminal offence or has the intention of doing so. In certain cases in Nigeria, perpetual tears have remained in the eyes of some families and individuals following the problem of arbitrary arrest by the police even when no serious cases were established against the victims. At the slightest provocation and suspicion therefore, the Nigeria police usually raid and arbitrary arrest persons with no justifiable reasons on the streets, motor parks, bus stops, wharfs, borders, markets and even the neighbourhood on some flimsy excuses. The police often tear gas, and release stray bullets to cause panic and scar the people away. This negative culture among the police has continued up till Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Among several other cases, on Friday 17th August 2018, in Owerri, Imo State, the Nigeria police massively arrested, detained and arraigned for trial some women who organized peaceful protest on the auspices of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) demanding the whereabouts of the leader of the IPOB, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. The charge against the women who were identified as female IPOB members was that their action disrupted public peace.

Study on the role of Journalism in democratic dispensation show that the media have swayed from the concept of journalism in public interest in terms of discharging its proper role in times of crises. The studies noted that to achieve the above objective, the mass media in Nigeria needs to solve its internal problem of cohesion and integration; for there are as many media houses as there are many political interests. There are, therefore, external and internal obstacles in the realization of the positive role of the media in this era of Police brutality. In all, it is argued that the media require a political ideology that guarantees freedom of speech and access to information

### **2.3.7 Extrajudicial Killings by Nigerian Police force**

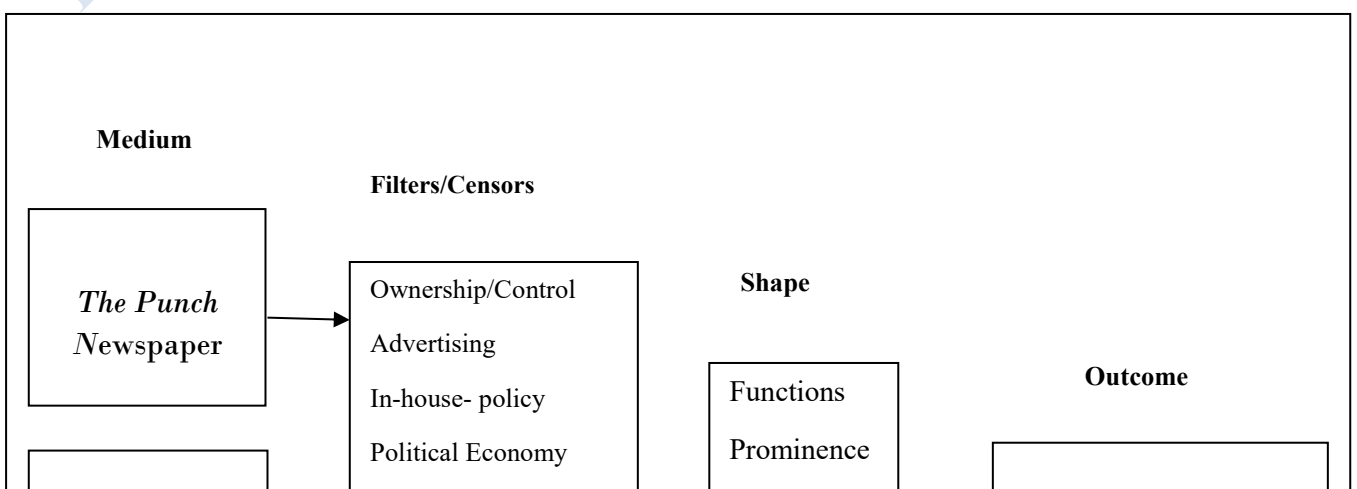
Closely related to police brutality is extra-judicial killings by the Nigeria police. Extra-judicial killing represents the act of depriving a person of his/her life in an unconstitutional manner. Some innocent Nigerians or suspects (whose cases are yet to be established) such as drivers, bus conductors among others who refuse or were reluctant to bribe the police on their self made road blocks or illegal check points have often been sent to their untimely graves by some obnoxious members of the Force on the guise of accidental discharge. This has usually resulted to a chaotic and anarchic situation which has usually led to mass protests, demonstrations and uproar between members of the Nigeria Police on the one hand and the public as well as the civil society group on the other hand. Apart from the rampant cases of extra-judicial killings of some innocent Nigerians witnessed during the era of Nigeria's military juntas, the cases have persisted under the current democratic dispensation. For instance, apart from cases of extra-judicial killings in Anambra State in 2004 as noted by Human rights lawyers and some civil society groups in the state, the Executive Director of Nnewi based Human Justice International Comrade Ifeanyi Onuchukwu who the police arrested and incarcerated recounted his ugly experience while in police cell.

Before the disbandment of FSARS, Nigerians have continued to express worry over the rascality and brutality of some members of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS). Their disrespect to human rights, especially right to life of the citizens has remained burdensome. For instance, one Benjamin Peters, a SARS officer in Abuja fired a shot on a moving vehicle in July, 2018 which led to the death of Miss Angela (a youth corper) who was to pass out the next day on the completion of her compulsory one year national youth service (AIT News, 5/7/2018, 8.00pm). The recklessness of some FSARS operatives on civilian matters in the country led the Acting President, Prof Yemi Osibanjo to direct the overhaul in the composition and functions of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad on August 15th 2018, in order to check mate further recklessness of the security outfit.

In Nigeria, study on the role of media in combating Police-Citizen crisis have shown that the Nigerian media have not fared well in this regard; the study observed that the Nigerian media are yet to effectively play the surveillance function of the media in their reportage of Police extrajudicial killings. It contended that this led to the unabated Police-Citizen crisis. The Nigerian media have not done well in discharging their surveillance role, particularly in the reportage of extrajudicial killings by the Nigerian Police Force. In reporting daily occurrences, including the outbreak of conflicts, the media despite the ownership pattern are generally expected to display a real sense of objectivity<sup>130</sup>. They must ensure balance and fairness in their reports; this implies that their report must be free from bias, to guarantee this, all parties involved must be given equal attention, stories must not be one-sided and facts must be separated from opinions. Nevertheless, the government need to see the media men as unpatriotic and uncommitted to the national interest, peace and stability of the country

## 2.4 Conceptual Model/Framework

**Figure 1: Model on the Police Brutality Reportage in Nigeria by *The Punch*, and *The Nigerian Tribune* Newspapers**



Source: Mizpah, R. A. (2022).

Figure 1 shows the model explaining the performance of the selected Nigerian newspapers on their reportage of Police Brutality between January 2016 and September 2020. There are four variables in the title of the research work: Police Brutality Reportage in Nigeria as the independent variable and two dependent variables, namely: *The Punch* Newspaper and *The Nigerian Tribune* Newspaper. The model shows intervening variables such as ownership/control, advertising, in-house- policy, political economy, technology, ethics, experience and training that influenced their reportage to determine the function, the degree of prominence ascribed to the coverage of the protest and the journalism standards in the reportage.

## **2.5 Summary of Literature Reviewed**

There is an increasing concern among contemporary scholars from various areas of study that the renaissance and frequency of police brutality in the nation is not only affecting the unity but affecting the democratic dispensation and co-existence of the nation. In this study, it was stressed by different scholars that Police brutality is inevitable phenomena in a nation like Nigeria with more of youth population. Literature reviewed in this study stress the fact that

one can look at Police brutality as part of the species of psychological warfare waged through the media, which means that while people know police use of excessive force influences the media, media coverage also influences Police brutality. Literatures reviewed in this study indicate that the causes of recurrent Police brutality in Nigeria in the past decades to this era are due to one factor or the other, showing that the factors are multi-dimensional.

Some of these factors are inadequate training, lack of accountability, corruption, inadequate funding, stress among others. Some scholars also noted that Police use of excessive force started in the colonial era. Other reasons given by scholars include poor working condition and of the Nigerian Police Force, fear of domination and lack of commitment on the part of leaders and government towards resolving these issues <sup>133</sup>.

The literature reviewed in the study, suggests revealed that the only way out of Police misconduct is implementing total reform of the Police. The use of excessive force by Police has led to extrajudicial killings, unlawful arrests, abuse of human rights in general.

Literature reviewed further show that among the core responsibilities of the media is the surveillance function which takes a critical role. The media are expected to bring to the consciousness of the public impending dangers; this function places a demand on the media to cover, analyse and report impending dangers that are threats to lives and properties of a given society. Writing on media surveillance, some scholars have said is a process of collecting and distributing information about local, national and international events and conditions.

It is further revealed that the mass media can contribute to national security, but have failed to maximise such ability for the benefit of Nigerians. And that when the media present security reports such as threats of some possible attacks by some violent groups, the citizens, the security agents and others involved will move to avert the danger. Another study supports the earlier positions which suggest that the Nigerian mass media have not effectively played the surveillance function in their reportage of Police brutality in Nigeria. This is because instead of just waiting to report these attacks, the media should thrive to secure national

security by adopting the investigative approach to uncover and thwart their plans and where it is extremely difficult to abort the plans proper alternative measures could be put in place to minimize the effect on the people and the nation.

The reviewed works, among other things suggested various ways of tackling Police misconduct, but not much has been done on the role of the mass media as an institution in reporting, management and resolution of these violence. An appraisal of these works highlighted so far reveals also methodological “affinity” among most of them in the area of causes and consequences of Police brutality. The main limitations noticed in some of these works, positions, theories and perspectives on police brutality reviewed, are that, most of them only attempted to expose the causes of these crises. Others chronicled the root of Police violence, while some touched on the adverse effects of these protracted crimes. Some of the scholars have tended to lay emphasis on a single factor for explanation.

From the foregoing, one would observe that, not much attention has been given in a comprehensive manner to the reporting style of Police brutality by Nigeria mass media in a democratic dispensation. Also, not much attention is given to the sensitive nature of Police brutality and the need to develop a new approach to the reportage of Police brutality by media practitioners – what is now being referred to as conflict sensitive journalism or peace journalism. There is therefore, the need for research on Police brutality reportage of Nigeria mass media in a democratic dispensation. This work therefore, greatly contributes to the understanding of the relationships between Police brutality, *Nigerian Tribune*, *The Punch* and democratic dispensation.

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## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

This chapter deals with the research method that was adopted by the researcher for this study.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Content analysis research design was employed in the study. Content analysis is a systematic method of analyzing past recorded work. Since the topic of the research is on analyzing Nigerian newspapers, therefore, only content analysis was employed in generating quality results.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population of the study consists of editions of the *Nigerian Tribune and The Punch* between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (to focus on period #EndSars campaign gathered momentum which led to disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad.) The total number of editions in the study period were 3466 editions.

### **3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

The study adopted the census technique. The rationale for the choice of this technique was because it provides a true measurement of the population (no sampling error) from which a benchmark data may be obtained for future studies. Detailed information about this period (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to September, 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020) was purposively acquired. While, the motive to study the total editions (census) was based on the assertion that, if the period for the study is within a short period of time, the entire content could be studied so as to ensure reliability of data.

#### **3.3.1 Unit of Analysis**

The unit varies with the nature of data and the purpose of the research. Thus, it might be a single word, a letter, character, themes items, a symbol, a theme (a single assertion about one subject), a news story, a short story, a character, the theme, article and news contents of the selected newspaper was adopted as units of analysis for the study.

### 3.4 Description of the Research Instrument

The instrument that was used for this study was the Coding Sheet. The coding sheet was adopted to bring the real manifest contents of the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* on Police brutality. The code was constructed based on the unit of analysis and content categories. In addition, the code sheet was filled based on the coding instruction. The coding instructions were properly articulated in the content code sheet below to guide the coder in the coding of the contents of communication.

#### 3.4.1 Content Categories

They are coded as follows;

- a) **Police brutality Report:** It was coded as
  - i. Yes
  - ii. No
- b) **Extent of Police brutality based report:** coded as
  - I. Number of newspaper editions with Police brutality report
  - B. **Location of Police brutality-based report in *Nigerian Tribune and Punch*:** coded as
    - i. Front page
    - ii. Inside page
    - iii. Back page
    - iv. Centre spread
  - C) **Type of Publication:** coded as
    - i. Editorial
    - ii. Hard news
    - iii. Features
    - iv. Cartoons
  - D) Nature of Editions**
    - i. Surveillance
    - ii. Correlation
  - E) **Ethical Standards:** It rated

- i. Editorial Independency
- ii. Accuracy and fairness
- iii. Privilege/Non-disclosure of source
- iv. Abuse of children's rights
- v. Decency
- vi. Violence

**3.4.2 Content Coding Sheet:** Content analysis checklist on Police brutality reportage (CACPBR)

The study assigned numbers to the categories to organise the data according to their homogenous subset as they were being collected. The design of the content code sheet of this research is as follows:

1. Frequency	A
1. Theme of editions (A)	
Tortures	A1
Extrajudicial Killings	A2
Unlawful Arrests	A3
Inhumane and degrading treatments	A4
2. Prominence (b)	
Front page	B1
Back page	B2
Inside page	B3
Centre spread	B4
3. Functions (D)	

Surveillance D1

Correlation D2

#### 4. Ethical standards (E)

Editorial Independence E1

Accuracy and fairness E2

Privilege/Non-disclosure E3

Abuse of Children's rights E4

Decency E5

Violence E6

### 3.5 Validation of the Research Instrument

The Code Sheet instruments was adopted from Anthony Amedu Apeh and Abioye Lukeman Gboyega (2021), Nigerian Tribune's Newspaper Reportage of Ethno-Religious Crimes in Nigeria 2015 – 2019 published Journal of Social sciences Vol 10, No. 3, pp 84 -93.

### 3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The method of data presentation and analysis were descriptive and contextual analysis in essay form.

### **Endnotes**

Amedu A. & L.A. Abioye , *Nigerian Tribune's Newspaper Reportage of Ethno-Religious Crimes in Nigeria 2015 – 2019*, **Journal of Social Sciences**, 10(3), 2021, 84 -93

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results and Discussion of Findings**

#### **4.1 Data Presentation**

In this chapter, the researcher collected data for the study through content analysis. This chapter depicts a descriptive analysis of the information collected in the course of the study. Further, the data obtained from the examined newspapers were discussed by using them to find answers to the research questions.

The researcher visited the morgue in the university library in Lead City University Ibadan and examined copies of the daily newspapers for a period of four years between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The total number of weekly editions for the selected newspapers were 3466. 1446(65.3%) of the editions have Police brutality reportage.

#### 4.1.1 Data Presentation

**Table 4.1 Total Number of Editions for *The Punch* Newspaper**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication used</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication Unused</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2016	366	261	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2017	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2018	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31 <sup>th</sup> December, 2019	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2020 to 30 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	272	194	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>1733</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>498</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016, *The Punch* had 366 Editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017. The newspaper had 365 editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018. It had 365 editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, it had 362 editions and between 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, it had 272 editions

Between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> September, 2016, the researcher examined 261 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017, 260 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018, 260 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, 260 editions while 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, the researcher examined 194 editions.

In the table, it is effected that between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016 there were 105 weekends and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017 there were 105 weekend and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018 there were 105 weekend and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019 there were 105 weekend and unused editions by the researcher, while , 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020, there were 78 weekend and unused editions by the researcher.

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**Table 4.2: Total Number of Editions for *Nigerian Tribune* Newspaper**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Total Number of</b>	<b>Total Number of</b>	<b>Total Number of</b>
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	<b>Publication</b>	<b>Publication used</b>	<b>Publication Unused</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2016	366	261	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2017	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2018	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31 <sup>th</sup> December, 2019	365	260	105
1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2020 to 30 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	272	194	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>1733</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>498</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016, *Nigerian Tribune* had 366 editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017. The newspaper had 365 editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018. It had 365 editions, between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, it had 365 editions and between 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, it had 272 editions

Between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016, the researcher examined 261 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017, 260 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018, 260 editions, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019, 260 editions while 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, the researcher examined 194 editions.

In the table, it is showed that between 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016 there were 105 weekends and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017 there were 105 weekends and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup>

December, 2018 there were 105 weekends and unused editions by the researcher, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019 there were 105 weekends and unused editions by the researcher, while , 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020, there were 78 weekends and unused editions by the researcher.

**Table 4.3: Total number of *The Punch* Newspapers Examined during the Period under Review**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Editions with Police Brutality Reports</b>	<b>Editions without Police Brutality Reports</b>
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	105	124
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2017 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2017	95	133
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2018 to	111	119

December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2018		
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2019 to	121	109
December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2019		
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2020 to	119	72
September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2020		
<b>Total</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>557</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016, *Punch* 105 (45.9%) editions Police brutality stories, while 124 (54.1%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, 95 (41.67%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 113 (49.6%) of editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 111 (48.3%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 119 (51.7%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 *Punch* 121 (52.6%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 109(47.4%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 *Punch* 119 (62.3%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 72(37.7%) editions were without Police brutality stories.

**Table 4.4: Total number of *Nigerian Tribune* Newspapers Examined during the Period under Review**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Editions with Police Brutality Reports</b>	<b>Editions without Police Brutality Reports</b>
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	186	54
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2017 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2017	206	34
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2018 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018	188	52

January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2019 to December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2019	167	71
January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2020 to September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2020	148	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>254</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016, *Tribune* 186 (77.5%) editions Police brutality stories, while 54(22.5%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, 206(85.8%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 34 (14.1%) of editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 188 (78.3%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 52 (21.6%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 *Punch* 167 (70.2%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 71(29.8%) editions were without Police brutality stories. Between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 *Punch* 148 (77.5%) editions carried Police brutality stories, while 43(22.5%) editions were without Police brutality stories.

#### 4.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this section, the five (5) research questions asked in Chapter One of this study were answered. The information were collected from the newspapers editions through the content analysed. These were arranged and analysed simultaneously in line with the research questions. The newspaper content analysis presentation involved a tabular form of analysis as published by the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

#### 4.2.1 Presentation of Research Questions

**Research Question One: Are there stories of Police Brutality in *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020?**

**Table 4.5: Stories of Police brutality in *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016–September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020)**

Sample	The Punch	Nigeria Tribune
Number of Newspapers with Police brutality reports	551(49.7%)	895(77.9%)
Number of newspapers without Police brutality reports	557(50.3%)	254(22.1%)
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>1108(100%)</b>	<b>1149(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that 551 (49.7%) of the editions from *Punch* carried Police brutality stories while 895(77.1%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions carried stories of Police brutality. The table also shows that 557(50.3%) of *Punch* Editions are without Police brutality reports whereas 254(22.1%) of *Nigerian Tribune* editions were without Police brutality reports.

**Research Question Two: What is the extent of reportage of Police Brutality by *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020?**

**Table 4.6: Extent of Editions in *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016–September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020)**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>The Punch</b>	<b>Nigeria Tribune</b>
Number of Newspapers examined	1108(63.9%)	1149(66.3%)
Number of newspapers unexamined	625(36.1%)	584(33.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1733(100%)</b>	<b>1733(100%)</b>

Table shows that 1108 (63.9%) of the *Punch* and 1149(66.3%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions were examined by the researcher as weekdays' editions, while 625(36.3%) of the *Punch* and 584(33.7%) *Nigerian Tribune*'s editions were not examined by the researcher as Saturday and Sunday editions of *Nigerian Tribune*.

**Table 4.7: Number of Editions with and without Police Brutality Reportage in  
*Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

<b>Editions</b>	<b>The Punch</b>	<b>Nigeria Tribune</b>
Number of Newspapers with Police brutality reports	551(49.7%)	895(77.1%)
Number of newspapers without Police brutality reports	557(50.3%)	254(22.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1108(100%)</b>	<b>1149(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.7 shows that 551 (49.7%) of the editions from *Punch* carried Police brutality stories while 895(77.1%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions carried stories of Police brutality. The table also shows that 557(50.3%) of *Punch* Editions are without Police brutality reports whereas 254(22.9%) of *Nigerian Tribune* editions were without Police brutality reports.

**Table 4.8: Frequencies of Police brutality stories in *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* according to themes**

Themes	The Punch	Nigeria Tribune
Extrajudicial Killings	125(22.7%)	313(35.0%)
Unlawful arrest	92(16.7%)	152(17.0%)
Torture	78(14.2%)	193(21.6%)
Inhumane and degrading treatments	256(46.5%)	237(26.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>551(100%)</b>	<b>895(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table shows that *the Punch* had 125 (22.7%) stories on extra-judicial killings while Nigerian Tribune had 313(35.0%) between June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016- 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. *Punch* had 92 (16.7%) unlawful arrest while Nigerian Tribune had 152(17.0%), *Punch* also had 78(14.2%) stories related to torture whereas Nigerian Tribune had 193(21.6%). There were 256(46.5%) stories related to Inhumane and degrading treatments on *Punch* and 237(26.5%) on the Nigerian Tribune.

**Research Question Three: What is the level of prominence given Police Brutality Reportage by *Nigerian Tribune* and *Punch* between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020?**

**Table 4.9: Types of *Nigerian Tribune* and *Punch* reportage**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Editorial</b>	<b>Cartoons</b>	<b>Hard News</b>
The Punch	23(57.5%)	15(57.7%)	27(60%)	486(36.4%)
Nigeria Tribune	17(42.5%)	11(42.3%)	18(40%)	849(63.6%)
<b>Total</b>	40(100%)	26(100%)	45(100%)	1335(100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table indicates that *Punch* published 23 (57.5%) features on Police brutality whereas Nigerian Tribune published 17(42.5%), *Punch* published 15(57.7%) editorials while Nigerian Tribune Published 11(42.3%) within the period under review. The table also showed that *Punch* had 27(60%) cartoons while Nigerian Tribune published 18(40%), 486(36.4%) hard news stories on Police brutality was published on *Punch* and 849(63.6%) on the Nigerian Tribune.

**Table 4.10: Placement of Police Brutality Reportage in *Nigerian Tribune* and the *Punch***

<b>Placement</b>	<b>The Punch</b>	<b>Nigeria Tribune</b>
Front Page	91(16.5%)	411(45.9%)
Inside Page	318(57.7%)	331(37.0%)
Back Page	119(21.6%)	110(12.3%)

Centre Spread	23(4.2%)	43(4.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>551(100%)</b>	<b>895(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The table shows that 91 (16.5%) Police brutality related items were reported on the front pages of the *Punch*, while 411(45.9%) was on the Nigerian Tribune, 318(57.7%) Police brutality related items were reported in the inside pages of *Punch* while 331(37.0%) was reported on the inside pages of Nigerian Tribune, 119 (21.6%) Police brutality related items were reported on the Back Page of the *Punch* while 110(12.3%) was found on the back page of Nigerian Tribune, 23(4.2%) Police brutality related items were reported on centre spread of the *Punch* while 43(4.8%) was found on the central spread of the Nigerian Tribune.

**Research Question Four: What is the function (s) performed by *Nigerian Tribunes* and *Punch* in Police Brutality Reportage in Nigeria between January, 2016 and September, 2020?**

**Table 4.11: Functions performed on Police Brutality Reportage**

<b>Editions</b>	<b>The Punch</b>	<b>Nigeria Tribune</b>
Correlations	106(53.3%)	421(85.6%)
Surveillance	93(46.7%)	71(14.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>199(100%)</b>	<b>492(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table above shows that 106(53.3 %) of the *Punch* editions and 421(85.6) of the Nigerian Tribune editions performed the correlation functions while 93(46.7%) of *Punch* editions and 71(14.4) of the Nigerian Tribune’s editions performed surveillance functions of the media. Both newspapers performed more of correlational function by reporting the news as it breaks without carrying out surveillance function to discover more stories behind the news.

**Research Question Five: What is the level of compliance with ethical standard in Police Brutality Reportage of *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September, 2020?**

**Table 4.12: Accuracy/Fairness of *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* Editions on Police Brutality-Related Items**

<b>Placement</b>	<b>The Punch</b>	<b>Nigerian Tribune</b>
Eye witness	198(31.7%)	228(36.2%)
Police reports	201(32.2%)	109(17.3%)
Relatives of Victims	116(18.6%)	179(28.4%)
Sources	110(17.6%)	114(18.1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>625(100%)</b>	<b>630(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In achieving fairness and accuracy as stated by the code of ethical standard of media practice in Nigeria, 426 editions on Police brutality involved accounts of eye witnesses, 265 editions

included Police reports, 259 editions comprised relatives of the victims on the incidents, and 224 of the editions had sources for their reports. There were however, no report without any of the above parameters.

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**Table 4.13: Editorial Independency of *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

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507 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Punch* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Punch* were written by professional journalists as they all carried by-lines at the top of each of the reports, 15 of the editorials on Police brutality published by *the Punch* and 11 of the editorials published by *Nigerian Tribune* were presented as the viewpoint of the newspapers.

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**Table 4.14: Privilege / Non Disclosure of Sources by *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

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In the 504 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Nigerian Tribune* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Punch*, both newspapers maintained high level of confidentiality of their sources as names of sources were not mentioned in the

editions, the writers used terms like “according to a source”, “an unanimous source” to protect their sources of information.

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**Table 4.15: Decency of Editions by *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

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The 590 editions of *Punch* and 540 editions of *Nigerian Tribune* on Police brutality reviewed were not in any way offensive, abusive, or used vulgar languages.

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**Table 4.16: Abuse of Children Rights by *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

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Reading through the editions as published by *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* on Police brutality in the editions under review, the newspaper did not in any way violate children rights as faces of children involved were not shown on the pages of the newspaper.

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**Table 4.17: Violence Editions by *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune***

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The reports of *Nigerian Tribune* and *the Punch* though captured killings by Nigerian Police but they did not in any way instigate violence among Citizens and the Police. They also present their reports in a balance manner by making enquiries from every party involved in the incidents.

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### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

This research was guided by five objectives from which five research questions were formulated

**Research Question One:** Are there stories of Police brutality in the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020?

From the data obtained, 551 (49.7%) of the editions from *Punch* carried Police brutality stories while 895(77.1%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions carried stories of Police brutality. The table also shows that 557(50.3%) of *Punch* Editions are without Police brutality reports whereas 254(22.1%) of *Nigerian Tribune* editions were without Police brutality reports.

Thus, it can be said that stories of Police brutality were identified on the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* Newspapers within the Period of study. Both newspapers carried different stories related to Police brutality. The findings is in tandem with the literature reviewed in the study which stated that The mass media as agent of expression of public opinion have long been recognized as having social and constitutional responsibilities in monitoring law enforcement agencies such as the Police and exposing their excesses and ensuring that they are accountable for their actions and inactions. The press has a paramount role to play in providing information, discussion, and debate, and act as watchdogs over government institutions<sup>1</sup>. This suggests that the press can strengthen democratic institutions by conscientiously and effectively reporting Police brutality. The media consistently survey the environment and convey salient issues or mediated messages to the audience in order to reduce uncertainties and consequently react to the conflict or change in a responsible manner.

**Research Question Two:** What is the extent of reportage of Police brutality by the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020?

Data gathered showed that 1108 (63.7%) of the *Punch* and 1149(66.3%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions were examined by the researcher as weekdays' editions, while 631(36.3%) of the *Punch* and 583(33.7%) *Nigerian Tribune*'s editions were not examined by the researcher as Saturday and Sunday editions of *Nigerian Tribune*. 551 (49.7%) of the editions from *Punch* carried Police brutality stories while 895(77.1%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions carried stories of Police brutality. It was further gathered that 557(50.3%) of *Punch*

Editions are without Police brutality reports whereas 254(22.9%) of *Nigerian Tribune* editions were without Police brutality reports. Data gathered showed shows that *the Punch* had 125 (22.7%) stories on extra-judicial killings while *Nigerian Tribune* had 313(35.0%) between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. *Punch* had 92 (16.7%) unlawful arrest while *Nigerian Tribune* had 152(17.0%), *Punch* also had 78(14.2%) stories related to torture whereas *Nigerian Tribune* had 193(21.6%). There were 256(46.5%) stories related to Inhumane and degrading treatments on *Punch* and 237(26.5%) on the *Nigerian Tribune*

Thus, it can be said that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* reported cases of Police brutality under the period reviewed. It reported all forms of Police brutality ranging from extra-judicial killings, unlawful arrest, to Inhumane and degrading treatments and torture. The findings are in line with literatures reviewed in the study as it was stated that by drawing attention to the issues of Police brutality, media can raise public awareness and generate outside pressure from the Public against Police brutality. Hence, sustained and continuous coverage of Police brutality related issues will awaken the public to frown at Police brutality in all its manifestation<sup>2</sup>. Although the study also differs from the assertions of literature reviewed which which posit that the mass media in Nigeria often give more coverage to political issues than other pressing issues of national interest.

**Research Question Three:** What is the level of prominence given to Police brutality reportage in Nigeria by *Nigerian Tribune* and *Punch* between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020?

Data from the coding showed that *Punch* published 23 (57.5%) features on Police brutality whereas *Nigerian Tribune* published 17(42.5%), *Punch* published 15(57.7%) editorials while *Nigerian Tribune* Published 11(42.3%) within the period under review. Finding also showed that *Punch* had 27(60%) cartoons while *Nigerian Tribune* published 18(40%), 486(36.4%) hard news stories on Police brutality was published on *Punch* and 849(63.6%) on the *Nigerian Tribune*. Data also showed that 91 (16.5%) Police brutality related items were

reported on the front pages of the *Punch*, while 411(45.9%) was on the *Nigerian Tribune*, 318(57.7%) Police brutality related items were reported in the inside pages of *Punch* while 331(37.0%) was reported on the inside pages of *Nigerian Tribune*, 119 (21.6%) Police brutality related items were reported on the Back Page of the *Punch* while 110(12.3%) was found on the back page of *Nigerian Tribune*, 23(4.2%) Police brutality related items were reported on central spread of the *Punch* while 43(4.8%) was found on the central spread of the *Nigerian Tribune*.

In line with the findings, the Agenda Setting Theory (Agenda Building) shows that the media can give prominence to news stories through layout (front, inside, centre spread and back pages) in the newspapers as it is stated that media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues. According to the agenda setting theory *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* direct their readers' attention to issues of Police brutality for public discussion<sup>3</sup>. This indicates that readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position. In the same vein, the Social Responsibility Theory imposes on them an obligation to be socially responsible in discharging their duties, which were fulfilled by showcasing the incidents and happenings around the nation in the paper's editions.

Therefore, if placement of stories at strategic areas on the newspapers can make them famous than another, it might be right to posit that "The media lack powers to suppress concern. But they can do more than stimulate interest. By directing attention to these concerns they provide, a context that influences how people will talk about these matters... the media more than direct attention to a problem; they influence how people will think about it".

**Research Question Four:** What is the function (s) performed by *Nigerian Tribune* and *Punch* in Police brutality reportage in Nigeria between January, 2016 and September, 2020?

Data from findings showed that 106(53.3%) of the *Punch* editions and 421(85.6) of the Nigerian Tribune editions performed the correlation functions while 93(46.7%) of *Punch* editions and 71(14.4%) of the Nigerian Tribune's editions performed surveillance functions of the media.

The findings are supported with the literature reviewed that stated that the traditional responsibility of the mass media in conscientising the society at every circumstance and situation are enormous, vital and have far-reaching implications<sup>4</sup>. The mass media often plays a key role in today's reporting Police brutality. Also in line with social responsibility function of the media, if the Nigerian media responsibly play their surveillance role of warning the masses including the security agents of an impending/imminent danger, it will help to initiate proactive steps to forestall such danger in the country; thus, engendering national security. The media is often referred to as the fourth estate of the realm and the watchdog of the society or the environment in which it exists. This implies that the media exists as an organ of information (sourcing and disseminating information) educational promotion, surveillance role, social enlightenment and mobilization functions. These functions set the media apart as an important link/factor in the relationship between the government and the governed and make them sine qua non to societal growth and development.

**Research Question Five:** What is the level of compliance with ethical standard in Police brutality reportage of *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers between January, 2016 and September, 2020?

From the coding, 426 editions on Police brutality involved eyewitness accounts, 265 editions included Police reports, 259 editions comprised relatives of the victims on the incidents, and 224 of the editions had sources for their reports. There were however, no report without any of the above parameters.

It was also gathered that 507 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Punch* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Nigerian Tribune* were written by professional journalists as they all carried by-lines at the top of each of the reports,

15 of the editorials on Police brutality published by *the Punch* and 11 of the editorials published by *Nigerian Tribune* were presented as the viewpoint of the newspapers.

Data also showed that In the 504 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Nigerian Tribune* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Punch*, both newspapers maintained high level of confidentiality of their sources as names of sources were not mentioned in the editions, the writers used terms like “according to a source”, “an unanimous source” to protect their sources of information. It was also gathered that 590 editions of *Punch* and 540 editions of *Nigerian Tribune* on Police brutality reviewed were not in any way offensive, abusive, or used vulgar languages. Also, findings showed that *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* newspapers did not in any way violate children rights as faces of children involved were not shown on the pages of the newspaper. It was also revealed that reports of *Nigerian Tribune* and *the Punch* did not in any way instigate violence among Citizens and the Police. They also presented their reports in a balanced manner by making enquiries from every party involved in the incidents.

Hence, it can be said that the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* is fair, balance, accurate in its publication on Police brutality under the period reviewed. It can be further said that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* editions observed the ethical standard by the Nigerian Press Council by not showing faces of children involved. Also, *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* observed editorial independence as all the editions were written by media professionals, both newspapers protect the confidentiality of their sources. *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* editions Police brutality were not in any way offensive, abusive and not use vulgar languages. The findings are in line with **code of ethics for Nigerian journalists by Nigerian Press Council**, which stated that Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and every news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. Also in a study reviewed in the literatures, it is a

journalist's top priority to report and write the truth<sup>5</sup>. This is the reason why truthfulness and accuracy make up one of the most important standards in the code of ethics.

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## Endnotes

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## Chapter Five Conclusion

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings from the study. It subsequently states the contributions to knowledge and suggests areas for further study.

## 5.1 Summary of Findings

Summary of findings from this study are as follows:

Findings revealed that 551 (49.7%) of the editions from *Punch* carried Police brutality stories while 895(77.1%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions carried stories of Police brutality. Findings also show that 557(50.3%) of *Punch* Editions are without Police brutality reports whereas 254(22.1%) of *Nigerian Tribune* editions were without Police brutality reports. 106(53.3%) of the *Punch* editions and 421(85.6%) of the *Nigerian Tribune* editions performed the correlation functions while 93(46.7%) of *Punch* editions and 71(14.4%) of the *Nigerian Tribune*'s editions performed surveillance functions of the media.

Data gathered showed that *the Punch* had 125 (22.7%) stories on extra-judicial killings while *Nigerian Tribune* had 313(35.0%) between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. *Punch* had 92 (16.7%) unlawful arrest while *Nigerian Tribune* had 152(17.0%), *Punch* also had 78(14.2%) stories related to torture whereas *Nigerian Tribune* had 193(21.6%). There were 256(46.5%) stories related to Inhumane and degrading treatments on *Punch* and 237(26.5%) on the *Nigerian Tribune*.

Also, *Punch* published 23 (57.5%) features on Police brutality whereas *Nigerian Tribune* published 17(42.5%), *Punch* published 15(57.7%) editorials while *Nigerian Tribune* Published 11(42.3%) within the period under review. Findings also showed that *Punch* had 27(60%) cartoons while *Nigerian Tribune* published 18(40%), 486(36.4%) hard news stories on Police brutality was published on *Punch* and 849(63.6%) on the *Nigerian Tribune*. Data also showed that 91 (16.5%) Police brutality related items were reported on the front pages of the *Punch*, while 411(45.9%) was on the *Nigerian Tribune*, 318(57.7%) Police brutality related items were reported in the inside pages of *Punch* while 331(37.0%) was reported on

the inside pages of *Nigerian Tribune*, 119 (21.6%) Police brutality related items were reported on the Back Page of the *Punch* while 110(12.3%) was found on the back page of *Nigerian Tribune*, 23(4.2%) Police brutality related items were reported on centre spread of the *Punch* while 43(4.8%) was found on the central spread of the *Nigerian Tribune*.

It was also discovered that 426 editions on Police brutality involved eye witness accounts, 265 editions included Police reports, 259 editions comprised relatives of the victims on the incidents, and 224 of the editions had sources for their reports. There were however, no report without any of the above parameters.

It was also gathered that 507 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Punch* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Nigerian Tribune* were written by professional journalists as they all carried by-lines at the top of each of the reports, 15 of the editorials on Police brutality published by *the Punch* and 11 of the editorials published by *Nigerian Tribune* were presented as the viewpoint of the newspapers. Data also showed that In the 504 hard news and feature news on Police brutality reported by *Nigerian Tribune* and 561 hard news and feature on Police brutality by the *Punch*, both newspapers maintained high level of confidentiality of their sources as names of sources were not mentioned in the editions, the writers used terms like “according to a source”, “an unanimous source” to protect their sources of information. It was also gathered that 590 editions of *Punch* and 540 editions of *Nigerian Tribune* on Police brutality reviewed were not in any way offensive, abusive, or used vulgar languages. Also, findings showed that *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* newspapers did not in any way violate children rights as faces of children involved were not shown on the pages of the newspaper. It was also revealed that reports of *Nigerian Tribune* and *the Punch* did not in any way instigate violence among Citizens and the Police. They also presented their reports in a balanced manner by making enquiries from every party involved in the incidents.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* reported Police brutality under the period of study and their reports ranged from extra-judicial killings, unlawful arrest, torture and inhumane and degrading treatments.

*Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* reported more of hard news followed by cartoons and less of editorials; high number of reports on Police brutality were reported on the inside pages of both newspapers.

Both newspapers performed more of correlational function by reporting the news as it breaks without carrying out surveillance function to discover more stories behind the news.

*Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* were fair, balance, accurate in their editions on Police brutality under the period reviewed. Both editions observed the **Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists by Nigerian Press Council** by being fair and accurate through including police reports, eye witness accounts, not showing faces of children involved, protecting the confidentiality of their sources, none usage of offensive, abusive, or use of vulgar languages.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- i. As the watchdogs of the society, Newspapers should constantly cover and report cases of Police brutality as to inform and educate the society on the dangers caused as a result of Police brutality.
- ii. Newspapers as a matter of Agenda-Setting, should always give importance to issues of Police brutality as the media filter and shape reality and make public to perceive issues as more important than other issues based on media concentration.

iii. Newspapers as watchdogs and the fourth estate of the realm of the society should go beyond just reporting cases of Police brutality as they break, they should carry out surveillance by investigating issues behind such incidents.

iv. Newspapers should constantly bear in mind their professional ethics under the umbrella of **Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists by Nigerian Press Council in covering and reporting Police brutality as this would help accurate and fairness in Police brutality.**

v. **Newspapers should strive to carry out thorough investigations on cases of Police brutality in order to ensure accurate and unbiased reports.**

#### **5.4 Contribution to Knowledge**

**The study evaluate how the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* report Police brutality in a democratic dispensation** between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Editions of the *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* were content-analysed, looking at the extent, prominence, nature of functions. From this study, there are significant contribution to literature, theories, research, practices and policies.

The findings of this study also contributed to Agenda Setting Theory and Social Responsibility Theory. The findings reinforced the assumptions of these theories. The findings from this study shows that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* set agenda as they frequently report issues related to Police brutality and placed importance on Police brutality. In addition, the findings showed that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* performed their duties responsibly in reporting issues of Police brutality.

The findings of this study has given insight into Police brutality reportage. This would help media organisation to do more in reporting Police brutality, in order to perform more surveillance function, since the findings shows that *Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* performed less of surveillance function.

This study will constitute a valuable document and useful data as it will help in formulating and planning appropriate policies that will bring an end to Police brutality in the country.

### **5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies**

It is practically impossible for a study to cover the entire available field in its area or scope.

As such, the following are suggested for further study;

1. Further research can be carried out on Police brutality and media effects on Public perception.
2. Further research can be conducted on Police brutality and it's implication on Police-Citizen relationship.
3. Other research techniques and methodologies can be used to evaluate media reportage of Police brutality.
4. Further research should be carried out on the correlation between media coverage and reportage on Police brutality.

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**Appendix I**

**Coding Sheet**

**Total Number of Editions for *The Punch* Newspaper**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication used</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication Unused</b>
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016</b>			

<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

## Appendix II

### Total Number of Editions for *Nigerian Tribune* Newspaper

<b>Years</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication used</b>	<b>Total Number of Publication Unused</b>
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to</b>			

<b>December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019</b>			
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

### Appendix III

#### Total number of *The Punch* Newspapers Examined during the Period under Review

<b>Years</b>	<b>Editions with Police brutality reports</b>	<b>Editions without Police brutality reports</b>
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019</b>		

<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020</b>		
<b>Total</b>		

**Appendix IV**

**Total number of *Nigerian Tribune* Newspapers Examined during the Period under  
Review**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Editions with Police brutality Reports</b>	<b>Editions without Police brutality Reports</b>
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019</b>		
<b>January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to</b>		

<b>September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020</b>		
<b>Total</b>		

**Appendix V**

**Stories of Police brutality in *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016–September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020)**

<b>Sample</b>	<b><i>The Punch</i></b>	<b><i>Nigeria Tribune</i></b>
Number of Newspapers with Police brutality reports		
Number of Newspapers without Police brutality report		
<b>Total (%)</b>		

## Appendix VI

Frequencies of Police brutality stories in *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* according to themes

<b>Themes</b>	<b><i>The Punch</i></b>	<b><i>Nigeria Tribune</i></b>
Extra-judicial Killings		
Unlawful arrests		
Torture		
Inhumane and degrading treatments		

**Table 9: Types of *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch* reportage**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Editorial</b>	<b>Cartoons</b>	<b>Hard News</b>
The Punch				
Nigeria Tribune				
<b>Total</b>				

## Appendix VII

**Table 10: Placement of Police brutality Reportage in *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch***

<b>Placement</b>	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Nigeria Tribune</i>
Front Page		
Inside Page		
Back Page		
Centre Spread		
<b>Total</b>		

**Table 11: Functions performed by the *The Punch* and *Nigeria Tribune* on Police brutality Reportage**

<b>Editions</b>	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Nigeria Tribune</i>
Correlation		
Surveillance		
<b>Total</b>		

## Appendix VIII

**Table 10: Ethical standards in *The Punch* and *Nigeria Tribune* Reportage of Police brutality**

<b>Ethical standard</b>	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Nigerian Tribune</i>
Editorial Independency		
Accuracy		
Fairness		
Privilege/Non-discourse		
Abuse of Children's rights		
Decency		
Violence		
<b>Total</b>		

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### **Bio-data**

#### **A. Personal Data**

Name: **MIZPAH, Romario Ayibanadei**

Address: No: 5, Ogunwale Crescent, Felele, Ibadan Oyo State

E mail: mizpahmario@gmail.com

Phone No: 09093566141, 08138955020

Date of Birth: November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1994

Place of Birth: Ekeni, Bayelsa State

Nationality: Nigerian

Marital status: Single

Next of Kin: Mr Giftson Mizpah  
No 1, Chief Aluku Street Yenagoa, Bayelsa State  
Tel: 07060804892

Date of Assumption of Duty in current establishment: January 28th, 2022

Status on first appointment in current establishment: Customer Support

Present position: Customer Support

Date of last promotion: Nil

Date of confirmation of appointment: Nil

If not confirmed why: Employment appointment is not yet two  
years

Present Salary: 50,000 naira

## **B. Education Background**

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### **1. Educational Institutions Attended with Date and Qualification**

- (i) Ebi-Favour Nursery and Primary School, Yenezue-Gene, Bayelsa State

First School Leaving Certificate	1999-2006
(ii) Divine Covenant Academy, Bayelsa State	
West African Secondary School Certificate	2007-2012
(iii) Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State.	
BSc. (Frist Class Honours), Mass Communication & Media Technology	2015-2019
(iv) Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State.	
M.Sc. Mass Communication & Media Technology	2020 -
2022	

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**C. Awards and Fellowships:**

- i. Best poise graduating male student, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State  
2019
- ii. Image Maker, Student Representative Council, Lead City University, Oyo State  
2018
- iii. Most Influential student, Lead City Voices  
2019

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**D. Work Experience with Dates:**

- i. Customer Support, Earntra, Ado-Ekiti  
till date  
2021 –
1. Graduate Assistant, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State. (Mass Communication Department),  
2019 –  
2020
- iii. Head Teacher, Julie Group of School, Yenagoa  
2013 –  
2015

**E. Publications**

**1. Thesis**

(i) Effectiveness of SPDC Community Relations Strategies in Niger Delta (B.Sc. Project)

**2. Journal Publications**

(i) **Mizpah R.A** (2020) Newspaper as a weapon in fight against corruption in Nigeria, Journal of Communication and media Technology, Journal of Communication and media Technology vol 3 no: 1. pp 153-169

**F. Major Conferences/Workshop Attended**

1. Commonwealth of Learning (COL) through Regional Training Institute and Research Institute for Distance Learning and Open Learning(RETRIDOL), National Open University of Nigeria on February 10 – 13, 2020, Oye Campus

**Referees**

i. Prof. L.A. Abioye, Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State. Tel: 08023318934

ii. Dr. Busari Bayo, Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State. Tel: 08062226832

iii. Dr. Yemi Oginni, Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State. Tel: 08035738894

.....  
*Date*

.....  
*Signature*

### **University Compliance Certificate**

This is to certify that this thesis by Romario Ayibanadei MIZPAH with Matric no: LCU/PG/001468 in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Lead City University, Ibadan is in full compliance with the University format and style.

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Signature

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Date

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