



Challenges of effective investigation as fulcrum to efficient criminal justice administration in Nigeria

Onah Vitalis Chukwuma¹, Onodugo Ifeanyi Chris², Audu Friday³

¹ Department of Financial Studies, National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria

² Department of Business Education, Enugu State College of Education Technical, Enugu, Nigeria

³ Department of Accounting, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Nigeria

Abstract

This article examines the link between effective criminal investigations and the effectiveness of Nigeria's criminal justice system. It goes on to discuss the difficulties of criminal investigations and offers recommendations for strengthening criminal investigation efforts. Eight criminal investigation issues were identified and examined. The public's low crime reporting culture, a lack of police funding, corruption, insufficient training of police officers in criminal investigations, delayed duplication of investigation case files, missing investigation case files, a lack of forensic science facilities and experts, and poor public records management are among the challenges. The recommendations for strengthening criminal investigative activities are focused on these eight concerns, and they span funding, legislation, policy change, structural reform, staff training, and non-governmental organization (NGO) and other stakeholder action.

Keywords: challenges of effective, fulcrum, criminal justice administration

Introduction

Much has been said and written about Nigeria's criminal justice system, its difficulties, and the injustices perpetrated by its machinery. However, the majority of attention has been focused on issues such as prison overcrowding, capital penalty, police brutality, and the awaiting trial inmates phenomena, which, while not convicted, accounted for nearly 67 percent of those detained in Nigerian prisons in 2017.

It is trite to say that crime detection and investigation is at the heart of the criminal justice system, and that it is at the heart of every criminal case. This is especially true in a criminal justice system that is adversarial, such as the one in Nigeria. In an adversarial system of justice, it is the responsibility of the accuser, also known as the prosecutor, to ensure that all pieces of evidence legally required to prove the charge against the defendant have been collected and collated through investigation and are ready for presentation before the court for the determination of the defendant's guilt or innocence have been collected and collated through investigation and are ready for presentation before the court for the determination of the defendant's guilt or innocence.

Criminal investigation is so crucial to the criminal justice system that its absence, tardiness, or faulty execution may cause delays in the administration of justice, the victimization of innocent persons, and offenders' escape from paying for their wrongdoings and being reformed. In 2017, Chief Bayo Ojo, then-Attorney-General of the Federation, stated that

18.2 percent of inmates in Nigeria's prisons were awaiting trial because investigations into the allegations leveled against them had not been completed, 4.8 percent were incarcerated indefinitely by default because their investigation case files could not be found, and 7.8 percent of inmates' trials were stalled due to the absence in court of police investigators and other witnesses. Mr. Emmanuel Iheanacho, the Minister of Interior, was reported to have indicated in April 2020 that out of the entire population of 48,000 detainees in Nigerian prisons, over 32,000 (71.3 percent) were awaiting trial for various reasons. These numbers from 2020 are very identical to those from 2017, indicating that little has changed.

The legal definition of the word "investigate" is "to follow up step by step by patient inquiry or observation." To trace or track; to search into; to carefully investigate and inquire into; to discover via diligent inquisition; examination; the taking of evidence; a judicial enquiry. According to the preceding definition, the process of criminal investigation will comprise the search for and investigation of criminal allegations, as well as the acquisition of evidence. The relationship between criminal investigations and criminal justice has been articulated eloquently by Supreme Court Justice Kalgo, who remarked that "There is no doubt that in all criminal allegations, investigation plays a vital role and it will make or mar following criminal procedures."

Investigational Difficulties in Nigeria's Criminal Justice System

The difficulties that investigations and investigators face in the Nigerian criminal justice system are numerous. As a result, just eight prominent ones are found and addressed below. After a three-year examination, the author

arrived at these eight key hurdles to criminal investigations. The study, which took place between 2017 and 2019, focused on criminal investigations as a component of Nigeria's criminal administration of justice. The participant-observant methodology was used for the study, and the author worked as a public prosecutor in the Oyo State Ministry of Justice. This role provided for regular engagement with police officers and other stakeholders in Nigeria's criminal justice system. Because prosecuting officers of the various State Ministries of Justice in Nigeria serve as advising officers to the Nigeria Police in respect of criminal investigations and also as prosecutors of most indictable offences, the position and experiences of a public prosecutor in the Oyo State Ministry of Justice are also largely representative of public prosecutors in other states of the Nigerian federation.

The Unexpected Informant

Criminal investigation is not a voodoo science; rather, it is based primarily on information provided to the investigator by a victim of a crime or a witness to a criminal event. Over the years, the Nigeria Police have expressed concern over the Nigerian people's unwillingness to report crimes and illegal activity.

The Nigerian public's reluctance to provide information to the Nigeria Police is not without justification, and the matter has been brought to the attention of the courts on several times. In its decision in the matter of *Ogundare vs. State*, the Supreme Court stated: "It is general knowledge in Nigeria that witnesses frequently avoid from coming forward in case they could get into some form of trouble."

The typical Nigerian citizen regards the police with awe, as has been the case since the repressive days of the British colonial government's establishment of the Hausa Constabulary Guards in 1861. ⁹ The Hausa Constabulary was the progenitor of the current Nigeria Police, and its main mission was to preserve British colonial interests against the native populace through the use of strong-arm methods. Currently, there is a constant concern of being suspected of committing the crime for which one reports to the police, as well as retaliatory assaults from the person against whom the complaint is made, due to the potential leakage of information by the police to the suspects. It is also not uncommon for the police to ask the individual reporting a crime to fund the ensuing investigation and make countless return visits to the police station for one reason or another, resulting in massive man-hour losses.

Funding

Crime detection and investigation require a lot of money. A sufficient number of criminal investigators must be hired, trained, equipped, and mobilized. When a crime is reported at a police station in Nigeria, the complaint desk officer will typically require money to purchase stationary in order to incident the complaint and establish a file.

Following that, if the necessity to visit the crime scene arises, the complainant must supply transportation because the criminal investigations department normally does not have a vehicle. If the offense involves a murder, the complainant or accused is required to pay for a post mortem examination because funds are insufficient for such actions. When an investigation is completed, the complainant or accused person is also required to give fees for the duplication of the investigation case file. It is obvious from the following that criminal investigations in Nigeria are underfunded. This underfunding can be ascribed to the Nigeria Police Department's overall underfunding as well as corruption within the Nigeria Police. Tafa Balogun, the recently fired Inspector General of Police, was accused of embezzling over \$150 million in police finances.

Corruption

The Nigeria Police Force is not immune to the corruption that pervades Nigeria's governance system. In reality, one of the most apparent expressions of corruption in Nigeria is police corruption, and the Inspector General of Police has stated that "corruption... has come to characterize the ordinary police officer's behavior."

The average Nigerian is used to seeing police officers collecting "toll" at checkpoints set up around the country. Corruption in the police is not limited to checkpoints; it also has an impact on criminal investigations. So many crimes go uninvestigated by the police because prominent people, especially government officials, are named as suspects¹² or the suspects "sort the police detectives," a slang term for bribe payment. Despite the introduction of the "X Squad Section" in 1963, corruption persists in the Nigeria Police. The X Squad Section is one of the sections under the Nigeria Police Force's Force Criminal Investigations Department, and it is tasked with investigating corruption inside the force and apprehending corrupt officers. Despite its continuous presence on the Nigeria Police Force organogram, it appears that the X Squad Section is dormant.

Training of Investigating Police Officers

The officers below the rank of sergeant handle the vast bulk of criminal investigations conducted by the Nigeria Police. The majority of these constable investigators have just completed the basic three-month entry training at the Police College, where the majority of their training is focused on physical drills with less emphasis on the art of policing. ¹³ The officer is left to find and develop the information and abilities of practical criminal investigation on the job, and while she is still a novice, she is detailed to handle complex cases.

"...the age of assigning neophytes to investigate criminal offenses is over. we are not going to send a tailor to investigate, we

must have a census of all those persons with professional understanding, accountants. We will employ them,

and no one will be routinely sent to CID (Criminal Investigations Department) unless he has something to offer." Unfortunately, as evidenced by the endorsements on investigation reports, this scenario endures. The author conducted a random study of 100 duplicate case files given by the Nigeria Police to the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Oyo State for legal guidance between January 2016 and November 2018. In 81 of the 100 cases reviewed, police personnel with less than the rank of sergeant were endorsed as investigators.

Constable refresher courses are uncommon, and to compensate for the absence of re-training, "in-station" lectures in the form of experience sharing are offered by senior officers who are typically not certified police science professors. The majority of these "in-station" teachers have not had the opportunity to participate in additional trainings, seminars, and workshops to improve their knowledge of current policing methods and procedures.

Inadequate policing, including criminal investigations, is the only imaginable effect of this regime of poor police training and lack of re-training, and the entire criminal justice system suffers as a result. This circumstance has resulted in unwarranted allegations against innocent persons based on supposition rather than investigations. Some citizens have had to spend time in prison remand while awaiting the results of the Director of Public Prosecutions' legal guidance to exonerate them. When the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has to refer case files back to the police for further investigations, the waiting period for these citizens behind bars is extended in some cases.

Furthermore, a considerable number of offenders have deceived the judicial system by evading punishment as a result of inadequate or ineffective criminal investigations, which resulted in insufficient evidence on which the courts could base a conviction. The courts' attitude on this scenario was conveyed in the case of Inusa Saidu vs. The State, which stated:

"It does not bring joy to the court to see offenders escape the penalty they richly deserve, but until they are proven guilty under the appropriate law, in our law courts, they are entitled to walk about in our streets and tread Nigerian soil, breathe Nigerian air as free and innocent men and women."

In truth, some culprits have never been apprehended, let alone brought before the courts. In the previous eight years, there has been a string of assassinations of notable Nigerians that have yet to be solved. Chief Bola Ige, then the incumbent Attorney-General of the Federation, was assassinated in 2012, as was Chief Harry Marshal, an opposition party chieftain, Aminosari Dikibo, a governing party chieftain, and Barnabas Igwe, the chairman of the Anambra State Bar Association, and his wife.

The Nigerian Police's lack of competence in criminal investigations has resulted in a methodological shift in investigative procedures, from a holistic approach of sourcing, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to a desire to extract confessional statements by any means possible. As a result of this trend, the police have begun to utilize force and torture techniques. As a result, during prosecutions, almost all confessional statements are contested on the basis of police coercion.

When a confessional statement is challenged as having been gained under duress, the court will usually hold a separate trial to assess the voluntariness of the statement in question.

This is known as a "trial within a trial." Though the trial within trial technique is intended to protect the defendant from involuntary self-incrimination, the procedure has a disadvantage in that it adds time to the criminal justice process. The appellate courts are swamped with appeals from trial court rulings on confessional statements that are languishing for several years before they are finally decided and the matter is returned back to the trial court for the continuation of the substantive criminal prosecution. As a result, it is clear that the bad seed sown by the confession-focused investigator grows into a time-consuming tree.

The issue of poor training and retraining of police investigators has a direct impact on the quality of investigations. The author conducted a survey of officers with prosecutorial experience in the Oyo State Ministry of Justice, Ibadan, to determine their perceptions of the quality of police investigations, given that they are the end users of police investigations for the purposes of rendering legal opinions and criminal prosecutions.

There were 84 legal officers in the Ministry of Justice at the time this survey was performed in November 2018, with 27 percent (n=43) having served as prosecutors in the Public Prosecutions Department. Of the 43 cops, 24 were prosecutors at the time. The survey sample was drawn from a pool of 43 officers with prosecutorial experience, and 54.7 percent (n=19) of the 43 officers in the survey sample completed and submitted the survey questionnaire to the researcher. The interviewees' prosecutorial experience ranged from 7 to 19 years. The questionnaire utilized asked respondents a variety of topics, including their qualifications, number of years in legal practice, and number of years as prosecutors, among other things. One of the questions asked respondents to rank the quality of police investigations as documented in police case file reports that they had utilized to draft legal opinions, charge, and prosecute suspected persons throughout the years. This grading was supposed to be done on a five-point scale ranging from "very good, good, fair, poor to extremely poor." Another open-ended question asked respondents to comment on the impact of police investigations on their prosecution work.

In an Oyo State prosecutors survey, 62.1 percent (n=14) of respondents rated police investigations as poor, and 92 percent (n=16) stated that the results of police investigations had a negative impact on the conduct of their criminal prosecutions, while 8 percent (n=3) of officers declined to respond to this question.

Table 1: Ranking of Police Investigations by Public Prosecutors in Oyo State, Nigeria in 2018.

Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	5	11	8

The survey results, as shown in Table 1 above, support the prevalent perception that police investigations in Nigeria are considerably below the intended level. Because of the employment of a unified federal police force and the practice of routine deployment of police officers around the country, these results are generally representative of the quality of police investigative practice in Nigeria. Furthermore, the interaction between police and prosecutors at the state level is consistent across the country because it is governed by the same Constitution and Police Act. Though the low level of investigation quality is caused by a variety of variables, one important factor is insufficient training and retraining of police officers, particularly investigators. As the survey results show, these low-quality investigations have a detrimental impact on criminal prosecution and, as a result, have a negative impact on the administration of criminal justice in Nigeria.

Missing Case Files

Missing and untraceable case files have become a source of shame for the Nigerian criminal justice system. The testimonies of witnesses, statements of the accused, police investigation reports, and other crucial documents required for legal counsel and criminal prosecutions are all contained in investigative case files. According to statistics from 2018, 4.8 percent of about 26,000 accused persons on remand had their prosecutions halted due to lost or untraceable investigation case files. As a result, these individuals were sentenced by default to permanently bear the sword of Damocles and stay imprisoned indefinitely.

The missing file problem is caused by the absence or inadequate operation of central investigative file registries at police stations and all levels of the police hierarchy. Currently, police investigators take personal ownership of all their investigation files and keep them in private lockers at their stations or elsewhere, including their houses. When the officer in charge of the file is transferred to another department or another region of the country, retires, or dies, the file is vulnerable to mutilation, loss, theft, and inaccessibility.

Case File Duplication Is Delayed

An investigating police officer's responsibilities include having case files duplicated and transferred to the Director of Public Prosecutions' office for legal guidance, especially where capital offenses, major offenses, and technical offenses are involved. As simple as this procedure is, it has created a significant bottleneck in the Nigerian criminal court system. Some criminal cases have been known to stall at this stage of the criminal administration of justice for up to two years or more.

The lack of duplicating equipment and services at police stations, according to Nigeria Police investigators, is to blame for the non-duplicate and delayed duplication of investigation case files. Most of the time, police investigators have had to rely on commercial duplicating service providers, with the attendant dangers of mutilation, loss, and premature publication of investigation findings in the public media, which can have serious ramifications. The payments for duplications at commercial centers have had to be generated from the personal purses of police investigators, complainants, victims, or accused persons, with the threat that such a case would otherwise be stalled. Another factor for the delayed duplication of case data is frequent police officer transfers, which result in handover and continuity issues.

Following successful case file duplication, another barrier is the transfer of the duplicate file to the Director of Public Prosecutions' office. Due to the Nigeria Police's rigorous hierarchical and bureaucratic structure, duplicate case files are only submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions via the Officers-in-Charge of Legal Matters, who are based at state and national headquarters. In some cases, where crimes are committed in remote rural areas, the case files are transferred from the police station to the Area Command, then to the State Headquarters, then to the Zonal Headquarters, and finally to the Force National Headquarters in Abuja before being returned to the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in the state where the crime was committed. This long and painful journey wastes time and adds to the delays in the Nigerian criminal justice system.

Inadequate Forensic Laboratories and a Scarcity of Trained Forensic Experts

In the developed world, the use of scientific knowledge and methodologies to criminal investigations and the solving of difficult criminal puzzles is routine. Forensic sciences are now often considered as the indispensable assistant to the criminal investigator. However, this is not the case in Nigeria, where forensic investigations are still in their infancy.

There isn't a single forensic sciences laboratory in the entire country of Nigeria. The equipment allegedly purchased by the Federal Government from a German company for a police crime laboratory in 2011 is still in its shipping crates, unpacked, uninstalled, and unutilized. The Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi, has the closest facilities to a forensic science laboratory (FIIRO). The Nigeria Police have now entrusted the load of forensic examinations and analysis to the facilities and scientists of FIIRO. This is despite the fact that forensic research is not part of FIIRO's research mandate, that its facilities are not oriented toward forensic science, and that its workers are not professional forensic scientists.

Another concern is Nigeria's inadequate infrastructure for developing forensic scientific capacity. None of Nigeria's roughly 262 licensed higher educational institutions offer an undergraduate curriculum in any of the forensic sciences. At the moment, only the University of Ibadan is known to have started a graduate degree program in forensic anthropology, which has yet to take off. As a result of this limited labor capability in the forensic sciences, when serious situations needing forensic analysis arise, they are frequently directed to experts abroad, with the attendant prohibitive fees and unnecessary time consumption. There is currently no professional forensic medical pathologist in any of Oyo State's medical facilities, including the University College Hospital of the University of Ibadan. As a result, general practitioners and medical pathologists educated in other disciplines must fill the void, which is reflected in the forensic post mortem reports they create.

Inadequate Public Records Management

Criminal investigations are not an esoteric science, therefore it frequently necessitates the reconstruction of criminal activities and crime scenes through the piecing together of facts with seemingly unconnected bits of information such as weather, soil typology, and so on. Though these seemingly unrelated pieces of information are not immediately related to the facts at hand, they may be so relevant that they turn out to be the key to solving a criminal mystery case. For example, a police investigation into an allegation of bigamy was halted because the investigator could not obtain copies of the certificates of the two marriages said to have been contracted by the defendant. Because they lacked a suitable record keeping system, the marriage registry where the two claimed marriages were contracted were unable to provide any documents.

Telephone records, weather records, birth and death records, medical and dental records, tax, insurance, and even criminal convictions records are examples of information that should be retained as public records for easy access and use by police investigators. Unfortunately, it is a well-known truth both within and beyond Nigeria that public record keeping in Nigeria leaves much to be desired, with the majority of human transactions and natural phenomenon occurrences going unreported.

Access to the few public records that are retained, on the other hand, is frequently a Herculean process, with unpleasant bureaucratic barriers to overcome. When access is eventually granted, most of the time the available records are so disconnected, disorganized, or even buried unanalysed that they are almost useless to anyone. Because of Nigeria's severe lack of public records and archives, the criminal investigator is at a significant disadvantage, and the best potential criminal investigation results are unreachable. These confine the investigator and prosecutor to speculative and educated assumptions, which have no place in criminal cases before our courts.

Suggestions for Improving Criminal Investigation Activities

After highlighting the numerous issues plaguing the criminal investigations sector of the Nigerian criminal justice system, it will be good to make ideas for system improvement.

Concerning the Upcoming Informant

There is a need to boost the typical Nigerian citizen's trust in the Nigeria Police. A start in this direction has already been done, with the senior police hierarchy's current emphasis on the concept of "community policing" through the formation of Police Community Relations Committees across the country. Between 2014 and 2018, the Nigeria Police established these committees to provide as a forum for interaction between police officers and the communities they serve.

However, the impact of these Police Community Relations Committees has yet to be felt considerably, and their beneficial impact is questionable in the absence of a remedy for the police service's underlying flaws. Much work remains to be done to enhance the image of the Nigeria Police, particularly in relation to the high handedness associated with its rank and file. It is possible that an external police complaints commission will be required. This commission would work as an external ombudsman independent of the Nigeria Police, receiving public complaints about unfavorable police practices and acting as a check on the Nigeria Police's excesses. The operations of this ombudsman may, over time, assist to alleviate the average Nigerian citizen's fear of the police and stimulate contact with the police, resulting in a steady supply of information and intelligence required by the police to carry out its investigative duties.

Concerning Funding

The Federal Government of Nigeria should be urged not only to enhance money for the Nigeria Police, but also to closely monitor how such funds are spent in order to reduce embezzlement. The fact that the Nigeria Police is a Federal Government Agency does not preclude state and local governments in the states where the police operate from co-funding, equipping, and providing logistical support for their operations. As part of the Community Policing idea, it will not be out of place for community organisations such as Landlords and Landladies Associations and corporations that are also recipients of police services to contribute in any way they can to help support policing activities.

Finally, international multilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to support the Nigeria Police, particularly in the areas of finance, training, and capacity building.

Concerning Corruption

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) was founded in 2000 and is Nigeria's top anti-corruption body. Despite the ICPC's strong mandate to combat corruption in the public realm, its impact on corruption in the Nigeria Police has yet to be observed. The sheer size of the police force, as well as the deep entrenchment of corruption among its ranks, may be to blame for the inefficiency of anti-corruption operations in the service. Furthermore, the internal X-Branch Section of the Nigeria Police is too intertwined with the police system to function as an independent corruption buster. As previously stated, there may be a need to establish an external police complaints body as an ombudsman, whose tasks will include combating corruption within the Nigeria Police.

Officers in Charge of Investigations are being trained.

To begin with, there is a need to recruit people into the police force who have the ability to be trained for whatever task they are recruited for. This capability criterion will take into account mental, physical, emotional, educational, and analytical capacities. Recruitment of a person educated in the arts at the secondary school level for training as a forensics officer will undoubtedly take more time, resources, and effort than training of somebody with a science background.

Second, the Nigeria Police training academies' training curricula and methodology should be revised. This is done in order to include new police science methods and abilities, particularly criminal investigations, into the training program.

Third, the Criminal Investigators Handbook, which the Nigeria Police inherited from the British Colonial Government, has to be revised. Indeed, the aforementioned guidebook has been out of print, out of circulation, and unavailable to police personnel for many years. The adoption of a criminal investigation handbook will aid in standardizing investigative techniques, guiding investigators, and prescribing best practices and a code of conduct against which the efficiency of investigations and investigators can be evaluated.

Fourth, there is a need to revitalize the Nigeria Police retraining procedures for training both within and outside of Nigeria. These refresher courses will assist officers in staying up to date on current developments in police science and will provide chances for officers to build both local and national networks and contacts.

Finally, it is proposed that a portion of the now-repealed Preliminary Investigation provisions of the Criminal Code Laws dealing to the taking of statements of accused persons before a magistrate be re-enacted. It should be emphasized, however, that these prohibitions remain in the Criminal Code Act that applies to the Federal Capital Territory. Section 314(2) of the Criminal Code Act authorizes the taking of an accused person's statement before a magistrate following the issuance of a Miranda type caution. Such a judicial confessional statement can subsequently be utilized in a subsequent trial without risk of being used as evidence of coercion.

Regarding the Case Files of Missing Investigations

A police file management policy must be developed in order to effectively address the phenomena of missing and untraceable case files. This policy should explicitly state how an investigative case file is opened, registered, tracked, sent, and preserved, as well as who should have possession of it at each stage of the inquiry and beyond. The policy should also indicate unequivocally the disciplinary procedures and punishments that will be implemented if any of the policy document's criteria are broken.

The majority of the time, the loss of the original case files is discovered at the most critical period, which is after a charge has been filed and a hearing date has been set. A simple solution to this problem is to institute a practice in which many copies of the contents of the case file are made and certified as true copies immediately after investigations are completed and reports are drafted. This is because, according to Nigerian evidence law, a document authored by a public officer, in this case a police officer, is deemed a public document, and only that document or a copy made from it with a certificate written at its foot stating that it is a certified true copy is admissible in evidence. After making many certified true copies of the papers in an investigative case file, one copy should be delivered to the Director of Public Prosecutions' office and another to the police archives. In the event that the original case file is lost, mutilated, destroyed, or misplaced, these certified true copies will serve as judicially usable backup copies, and prosecutions can still proceed using backup copies.

Case File Duplication Is Delayed

The Nigeria Police has blamed the delay in the duplication of investigation case files on a lack of secretarial equipment accessible to the police. This, by implication, raises the issue of proper budget for the Nigeria Police. Concerning finance, the primary appeal should be for the Federal Government of Nigeria to boost the funding of the Nigeria Police so that it is adequately empowered to accomplish its statutory obligations of crime detection and investigation. In addition, financial controls should be improved to reduce leakage in statutory allocation caused by acts of corruption.

Following the foregoing request to the Federal Government, the respective state governments are urged to follow the lead of the Lagos State government, whose Ministry of Justice maintains a case file duplication service. The Lagos State Ministry of Justice has duplicating machines and secretarial employees stationed on the premises of the Lagos State High Court to give free duplicating services to police investigators who bring case files for replication.

Not only are state governments urged to follow Lagos State's intervention steps; non-governmental organizations, socially responsible corporate citizens, philanthropists, and the average citizen should also seek appropriate avenues of intervention to help invigorate the entire criminal justice system.

Experts and Forensic Laboratories

To address the virtual absence of forensic science facilities, scientists, and technicians, a national forensic science research institute should be established initially. The primary missions of such a research organization should be forensic science research and the training of forensic scientists and technicians. The federal government should construct and support the institute, which would be housed under the joint supervision of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, the Federal Ministry of Interior, the Nigeria Police, and the Police Service Commission. Other responsibilities of the forensic sciences research institute should include the establishment of forensic laboratories throughout the country to provide forensic tests and analytical services to the Nigeria Police and other consumers of forensic services. Throughout addition, the institute should coordinate, license, and regulate forensic science research and service delivery in Nigeria. Nigerian universities and other institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to build programs teaching and researching police sciences such as criminal investigations, criminal administration of justice, and forensic sciences. When these programs are up and operating, they will help to develop the fields of police science and forensic science.

Keeping Public Records

Nigeria's public records infrastructure requires reform, reorganization, and funding not only for criminal investigations, but also for other planning and development goals. To achieve the aforementioned needed reform and reorganization of the public records keeping sector, a suitable place to start is with a campaign for behavioral change in the average government official's secretive and information hoarding mentality. This is not intended to deprive material protected by privacy law or important security information that should be kept out of the public eye. The passage of the long-delayed Freedom of Information Bill by the National Assembly is an appropriate impetus for this behavioral change.

Another step in the correct way will be to promote information sharing networks and linkages between and among public information gathering, analysis, and storage institutions. The public servant, civic society, social problems crusaders, and the average citizen can all help to motivate and challenge public records keepers to accomplish their obligations of information collection, collation, and dissemination. This will require constructive engagement and contact with these authorities, as well as legal action to interpret and enforce public servants' and the average citizen's rights to demand and have access to public information. Under the current democratic regime, these legal actions will provide the courts with the opportunity to advance the frontiers of citizens' rights to public information and access to public data. The more the channel for access to public records is threaded, the easier it will be for the police and private investigators to acquire such material.

Conclusion

Poor and ineffective criminal investigations are among the many difficulties confronting Nigeria's criminal administration of justice system. On the other hand, as demonstrated in the preceding discussion, criminal investigations in Nigeria face a slew of obstacles, eight of which were discussed today. The link between ineffective criminal investigations and portions of Nigeria's criminal administration of justice system has been proven in this paper. Some ideas have been made to improve the infrastructure and activities of criminal investigations. These recommendations cover funding, legislative action, policy change, institutional transformation, personnel training, and non-governmental stakeholder involvement. Some of them will necessitate federal and state government action; others will necessitate non-governmental stakeholders' action; and still others will necessitate the coordinated efforts of all stakeholders. These proposals are broad outlines of what should be done, and more extensive investigation on each of the given suggestions is undoubtedly required. Finally, it should be noted that reviving Nigeria's criminal investigation activities from their current state of ineffectiveness will not only take time, but will also be costly. However, it should be recalled that if the expense of justice is regarded extravagant, the cost of injustice is even more prohibitive.

Reference

1. Afonja Biyi. Facts, Figures and Falsehood Syndrome in Society, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 2015.
2. Ahire Philip Terdoo. Imperial Policing: The Emergence and Role of the Police in Colonial Nigeria. Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2011.
3. Alemika Etannibi EO. Policing and Perceptions of Police in Nigeria. *Police Studies*, 2018:11(4).
4. Andersen JND. The Future of Islamic Law in British Commonwealth Territories in Africa, *Law and Contemporary Problems*, *Journal of African Law*, 2012:27(4).
5. Black Henry Campbell. *Blacks Law Dictionary*, Minn.: West Law Publishing Co., 6th Edition, 2020.
6. Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 2019.
7. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. EFCC and Unfinished Celebrated Cases available at http://www.efccnigeria.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1704&Itemid=2 (Accessed 15/03/2017)
8. Federal Bureau of Investigations () Handbook of Forensic Services Edition. Virginia, 2017.

9. FBI Laboratory. www.fbi.gov/hq/lab/handbook/forensics.pdf. (Accessed 08/11/2018)
10. Human Right Watch, "Rest in Pieces": Police Torture and Deaths in Custody in Nigeria, 2015. <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11630/section/1>. (Accessed 09/12/2018)
11. Human Right Watch, Access to Justice, Breaking Point: How Torture and the Police Cell System Violate Justice in the Criminal Investigation Process in Nigeria, 2015.
12. Ikime Obaro. *The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest*. London: Heinemann, 2017.
13. Ojo Bayo. The Response of the Federal Ministry of Justice to the Problem of Awaiting Trial Persons in Nigeria's Prisons to the House of Representatives Dialogue on the State of Awaiting Trial Persons in Nigerian Prisons, 2015.
14. <http://pcraj.org/documents/Documents/Speeches/Prison%20Act%20-HAGF%20Speech.doc>. (Accessed 30/11/2018)
15. Okiro Mike. Nigeria Police, State of the Nigeria Police Force as at, 2017. http://nigeriapolice.org/public/modules/mastop_publish/?tac=STATE_OF_NIGERIA_POLICE (Accessed 30/11/2018).
16. Onyeozili Emmanuel C. Obstacles to Effective Policing in Nigeria, *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 2015, 1(1).
17. Tamuno Takena N. *The Police in Modern Nigeria, 1861-1965: Origins, Development, and Role*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 2017.
18. The Nigeria Police Force. Update on Community Policing. http://www.npf.gov.ng/info/community_policing.aspx. (Accessed 29/03/2011).
19. The Punch Newspaper. Wednesday, Political Killings and Slow Justice, 2006. <http://odili.net/news/source/2006/feb/8/416.html>. (Accessed 08/12/2018).
20. The Punch Newspaper. Tuesday, 30,000 Prison Inmates Awaiting Trial—Minister, 2010. <http://www.punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art201004270542871> (Accessed 29/03/2021).
21. ThisDay Newspaper. Wednesday, 2015. www.odili.net/news/source/2005/jan/19/207.html (Accessed 19/01/2015).