

**A STUDY OF POLICE BRUTALITY AND THE ENDSARS PROTEST IN NIGERIA**

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**MARCH, 2025**

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND  
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ART (B.A) HONOURS  
DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND DIPLOMACY, UNIVERSITY OF  
BENIN, BENIN CITY.**

**MARCH, 2025**

## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that to the best of our knowledge this work was carried out by **SANDRA ESEOSA OSAGIE** in the Department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to God, the source of all knowledge and wisdom, who enabled me to bring this vision to life. And to my beloved late father, Dr Harry Festus Osagie, whose spirit I have felt each passing day. May this project honor your memory and continue to inspire future generations.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Almighty God for His unwavering guidance, provision, and love throughout this academic journey.

I am also thankful to my project supervisor, Dr. Daniel Olisa Iweze whose invaluable expertise, meticulous feedback, and encouragement played a pivotal role in shaping this project into a successful and outstanding work. His inspirational guidance, constructive criticism, and unwavering support facilitated my growth and enabled me to complete this research.

On a personal note, I am deeply grateful to my mother, Mrs. Kate Osagie who has been a constant source of encouragement, strength and for her unwavering support always. I also wish to thank my siblings, friends, and Soul sister Iyesogie for their unrelenting love and support throughout this journey. Also To my big mummy Mrs. Helen Omoigui for always being there, her relentless support and constant encouragement has been a beacon of hope in my journey at the University of Benin.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

This study focuses on police brutality in Nigeria using the EndSARS protest as a case study. It evaluates the conflicts between the Nigerian police force youths during the October 2020 End SARS protests that began in Ugheli in Delta State. The act of police brutality in Nigeria had begun before the EndSARS protest erupted. The origin of police brutality could be traced down to the colonial period when the British government established the police force. The British colonial administration established a police force as a means of solely enforcing her will and not to protect its subjects, or the natives, as the case may be. The colonial state was also deemed to be above the law, It had a monopoly of deadly arms and force which it could apply at will and the power to crush and criminalize dissent and dissenters. Any form of resistance to it's violence was regarded as illegitimate and deserving of retribution.<sup>1</sup>

The Nigerian police force grew out of this acrimonious context, in which violence, suppression, duplicity and impunity merged in the bid to maintain colonial power. It was never a force created to protect locals and foster harmonious community relations, instead it had been formed as an occupation force for a narrow and specific reason: to maintain the power of the state and even if the state was illegitimate. Unfortunately, this operational outlook has hardly changed and certainly did not at the dawn of independence, so rather than viewing citizens as deserving of protection, the Nigerian police force views them primarily

as adversaries, as established in the mandates of the colonial state. This lack of transformation in its outlook is almost extraordinary in its grotesqueness, and it became an outlook the infamous SARS took to an even more brutal level.<sup>2</sup>

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was founded in 1992 by former police commissioner Simon Danladi Midenda, The inciting events that spurred SARS' formation were killing of Colonel Ezra Dindam Rimdan (Nigerian Army) by police officers at a checkpoint in Lagos on September 1992, their arrest, a strike by police officers in response, and a subsequent crime wave. When the information about Rimdan's death and police complicity reached the army, soldiers were dispatched into the streets of Lagos in search of any and all police officers, as a result of the fury of the Nigerian army, Nigerian police withdrew from checkpoints, security areas and other points of interests for criminals; some police officers allegedly resigned while others fled for their lives. Due to the absence of police for two weeks, crime rate increased, and in response SARS was formed with an initial force of fifteen men and two Peugeot station wagons. Three police anti-robbery squads (the first of which was established in 1984) were already operating at that time, so Midenda needed to distinguish his squad from the existing teams, Midenda named his team the Special Anti-Robbery. After two week of dialogue, the Nigerian Army and the Nigerian police force came to an understanding, and official police duties resumed in Lagos in November 1992, the SARS unit was officially commissioned in Lagos.

The increased brutality of the police and the violation of human right resulted in the recent agitations by Nigerian youths against SARS extra-judicial killings, which where

recently re-ignited by a video shared via social media showcasing a SARS officer assaulting a young Nigerian in Delta state on October 3, 2020. Subsequently, several other pictures and videos of similar assaults and extortion by officers of SARS resurfaced on social media with an end SARS hash tag created to further amplify the issues in national conventions. This led to uncoordinated protests by youths calling for the dissolution of SARS and metamorphosed into a national protest. It is in this view of the above that, the study examines the police brutality in Nigerian using Endsars as a case study.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to attempt an assessment of police brutality in Nigeria; a case study of the October 2020 End SARS protest. The core objectives of this study are as follows;

1. To examine the history and origin of police brutality in Nigeria.
2. To analyse the emergence of End SARS protest on October 2020.
3. To analyse the impacts of End SARS protest.

### **Sources and Methodology**

This research employs qualitative research methodology, which involves the use of both primary and secondary sources. The study relied on primary materials gotten from oral interviews, eye witness account. The secondary sources comprised articles in journals, chapters in edited books and newspapers reports and online sources.

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study covers the police brutality and EndSARS protest in Nigeria within the period of October 2020. The limitations/problems encountered in the course of

this research work, were the lack of resource materials such as textbooks and published documents, as well as financial challenges and the challenges encountered trying to gather primary information by interviews. However, with patience, focus and perseverance, these challenges were surmounted.

### **Literature Review**

The existing relevant works that have direct bearing on the present study are reviewed as follows: Frederick Ifeanyi Obananya in his article, "A philosophical exploration of the events of January 15, 1970 and the EndSARS protest in Nigeria" looks at the measures adopted by the Federal Governments in putting down the youths protests with use of the military, This was evident in the brutal suppression of a protest in 1966 that led to the Nigerian Civil War, caused by the massacre of civilians by the Nigerian army. The author argues that the same method of suppressing peaceful protests was also used on the EndSARS youth protesters at the Lekki Toll gate massacre in Lagos. The relevance of the work lies on the Nigerian government's use of the state power to suppress protests both in the 1970s that culminated into the civil war and the EndSARS protests that led to the death of many people. The study differs from the present study as it does not cover the events of police brutality that led to the EndSARS protests. It also differs from the present study in terms of focus and period.

Chinemerem Onuorah in his article; "Women, Leadership and EndSARS Protest, the author assesses the role women played in the EndSARS protest, and the most visible role noted was their leadership roles in guiding the protests in various parts of the country, The

author identifies Aisha Yesufu as among the prominent brave and courageous women who were in the forefront in leading the EndSARS protest even though EndSARS was said to have no visible leader or leaders. The relevance of the work lies on the activities of women during the EndSARS protest, but it is different from this present study in focus and scope as it focused only on the roles women played during the EndSARS protest, while the present study focuses on.

Biko Agozino, Emmanuel Onyeozili, Augustine Agu, and Patrick Ibe in their article titled: "Beyond violence and militarism", the authors maintain that the act of recruiting untrained individuals to assist the police in curbing crimes, was a wrong approach adopted by the Nigerian government, because it leaves the security sector with mostly untrained individuals in the security sector. The relevance of the work lies on the wrong approach used by the Nigerian police in recruiting untrained individual. The article is different from this present study due to its focus basically on the failure of government to provide effective training for the police officers. It also differs from the present study in focus.

Sada Malumfashi in his article; End SARS protest and the security sector, he wrote about the history of the establishment of Nigerian Police force, colonial and post colonial era and also the establishment of SARS and some few SARS' brutalities. The relevance of the work lies on the history of the establishment of SARS and some SARS' brutalities, but it is different from this work, because this work examined not only the establishment of SARS and their brutalities, but also covers the End SARS protests.

Temilade Adelaja, in his article on Reuters; Timeline of End SARS protest, he captured the dates of the protests, when the protest started and when it ended. The relevance of the work lies in the tracking of the timeline of the protest, but it is different from this work because covers only timeline of the event and not the events that led to the protest. The above reviewed works indicates the existence of knowledge gaps in the study of Police brutality in Nigeria and End SARS protest, it is these gaps that this present study intends to fill.

### **Chapterization**

This research work comprises of five chapters which are as follows:

#### **Chapter One: Background of the Study**

This chapter lays foundation for the research work, it explains the reasons for the research and explains the entire scope of the study which the research contains, it also includes the reviews of the relevant literatures that relates with the subject of the assessment.

#### **Chapter Two: History of Police Brutality in Nigeria**

This chapter is concerned with the history of the establishment of Nigerian police force and the origin of police brutality in Nigeria.

#### **Chapter Three: The Outbreak of the EndSARS Protest on October 2020.**

This chapter analyses the events that led to the End SARS protest, the timeline of the protest, and the dimension of the protest.

#### **Chapter Four: Impact of the EndSARS Protest**

This chapter enumerates the long term and short term effect of the End SARS protest, both in the society and in the security sector.

#### **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

This chapter examines highlights the findings of the study.

## Endnotes

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## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **HISTORY OF POLICE BRUTALITY IN NIGERIA**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter traces the history of the establishment of the Nigerian Police. It also examines origin of the Nigerian Police brutality that began in the colonial period. The chapter gives some instances of Nigeria policy brutality up to the 2020 EndSars protests organized by the Nigerian youths against police brutality. Police brutality is conceptualized to mean or refers to an unfair and illegal treatment meted by the police on harmless civilians. It involves acts of ultra-vires engaged in by the police force. This means a situation whereby the police acts beyond the powers accrued to them by the constitution and the enabling Acts that tend to engender public interest, security and welfare.<sup>1</sup> Hence all forms of police brutality are simply acts of human rights violation. Police brutality in Nigeria has become an unending nightmare for Nigerians particularly the youths. This is manifested through illegal arrest and torture, detention, extortion, unjustified killing and other forms of human right abuses. Though, some Nigerian police officers conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, working in difficult and often dangerous conditions for national security. However, for many Nigerians the police force has utterly failed to fulfill its constitutional and enabling Acts mandate of providing public security and have continue to engage in all sorts of brutality and human right abuses.

## **A Brief History of the Creation of the Nigeria Police**

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic state where some features of police force existed long before the British arrival and eventual colonization of the country Nigeria.<sup>2</sup> Traditional rulers had able-bodied men attached to them with the aim of guarding them, and in some instances assist in arresting wrong doers. This practice was common amongst the majority of tribes inhabiting the geographical areas now known as Nigeria. The traditional police law enforcement institutions that were in place in most communities during the pre-colonial time discharged their responsibilities creditably in ensuring the existence of a lawful and orderly society.<sup>3</sup> In 1861, British formed a consular guard of thirty men in Lagos Colony. In 1863, the guard became known as the “Hausa Police”. The force was later reorganized in 1879 by an Ordinance creating the constabulary of Lagos.<sup>4</sup>

A similar force for the Niger Coast constabulary was formed in Calabar in 1894 under the newly proclaimed Niger Coast Protectorate in the North. The Royal Niger Company set up the Royal Niger Constabulary in 1888 with headquarters in Lokoja, all these became the forerunner of the Nigeria Police Force which was formally established in 1930.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, we can hold on to the fact that the landmark development in the history of Nigeria police came in 1930, when the northern and southern police were merged to form the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) with Lagos as the Headquarters.<sup>6</sup> However, formal British’s policing policy in colonial Nigeria was designed to protect British interests and those serving that interest (being it local chiefs, educated elite, missionaries and others). The

police institution was formed to be used against the people of Nigeria and thus marked it as dysfunctional security institution.

### **Origin of the Police Brutality in Nigeria**

The origin of Nigeria police brutality is traceable to the British conquest and colonial rule in Nigeria. The issue of brutality started with the British colonial government, the police was only established to protect the British political and economic elites in Nigeria at the detriment of the Nigeria's civilians. Therefore, we can say that the formation of the Nigeria Police was rooted in brutality from the onset. From the foregoing, it is discernible that the foundation, institutional framework and historical context that the Nigeria police was lay was anti-civilian and Nigerians.

In retrospect, it should be noted that the constituent ethnic groups that would later make Nigeria as a political entity or country were conquered at different periods. As a group is conquered, a British colonial presence was secured by establishing a police force for the territory which was meant to be an instrument of subjugation.<sup>7</sup> Violence and fraud were employed in the conquest of the nationalities. For this purpose, police forces under various names were established and employed as instrument of violence and oppression against the indigenous population. Given the character of colonial rule, police were the instrument used to sustain British domination. In all these, police were not accountable to the colonised, but to the British colonial government.

During colonial rule, the excesses of the police against community were not controlled; hence colonial police forces behaved as "army of occupation", killing and

looting. The police was an element or remnant of colonialism, behaved as an occupation force. Consequently, the people saw and still see police as an alien force; as instrument of violence and subjugation; as extortionists and mongers of bad news and trouble. The circumstances under which the colonial police institution was introduced into the Nigerian society and its mode of operation over the years lead one to conclude that the basic norms and values upon which the police institution was established in Nigeria may not be congruent with the cultural values and norms of the Nigerian society.<sup>8</sup>

Since the mentality of the larger numbers of Nigerian Police have not change from colonial mindset, they are generally seen as agents of domination, corrupt and unnecessarily brutality in enforcement of the law. Consequently, members of the public do not trust and cooperate with the Police to ensure that criminals are arrested and prosecuted. In the contemporary time, the Nigeria Police force has not proven different from their nature of operations under the British colonial government. The organisation and training of police personnel in Nigeria are focused almost entirely on apprehension and prosecution of criminals. The peace-keeping and service activities which should consume most of the police time receive little attention. In practice, however, the role of the Police, and the expectations attached to this role have been truncated. The Police have become the foremost violator of the very laws they are employed to protect.<sup>9</sup>

During the colonial rule, the police often make little effort to veil their demand for bribes, brazenly doing so in open corridors and rarely bothering to question those in detention about any alleged crime. Those who fail to pay are often threatened and

unlawfully detained, and at times, sexually assaulted, tortured, or even killed in police custody. The idea of 'bail is free' and yet Nigerian police collecting huge amount of money on bail (an illegal act) has its origin in colonial period and has not change till today. Many of these abuses are perpetrated as a means to further extort money from ordinary citizens or from fearful family members trying to secure the freedom of those illegally detained.<sup>10</sup>

A famous example of colonial Police brutality in Nigeria is the Aba women protest of 1929. It is a historical marked that reflects the grass root origin of the Nigeria police brutality. During the protest, the Police Force and soldiers (under British rule) mayhem and killed harmless women protesting the exploitative tax imposed on them by the default imperial Britain.<sup>11</sup> The protest or the women's war (as Igbo people called it), which began in Oloko (Abia State) was led by women in the provinces of Calabar and Owerri in the southeast Nigeria in November and December of 1929. The protest was triggered by the proposed imposition of exploitative tax policy on women, who were supposed to be tax-exempt in local tradition, the overzealousness or abuse of power by the Warrant Chiefs and the colonial police abuse of the people human right. The plot and outcomes of this event provides one of the many instances and occurrences of police brutality in Nigeria and provide evidence that the police menace, behaviour and mentality towards Nigerians had its origin to colonial legacy. During the protest, about one hundred and fifty (150) women were either killed or wounded including a pregnant woman, and others were subjected to numerous arbitrary arrests and detention, the basic features common to the present Nigerian police force.<sup>12</sup>

Nigeria police cannot deny the accusation of brutality usually levelled against them because there is usually substantial allegation. Foreexample, Human Rights Watch conducted some field research in Nigeria in August and November 2008; April, May, July, and December 2009; and June and July 2010 in three states ascase studies: Lagos, Anambra, and Kaduna, representing three of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria; as well as in the capital, Abuja, and telephone interviews in Rivers State and Ebonyi State. The reports showed that the levels of police brutality in some of these states are among Nigeria’s worst.<sup>13</sup> The Human Rights Watch conducted more than 145 interviews with victims and witnesses of police extortions and corruption-related abuses including market traders, commercial bus drivers and passengers, *Okada* (commercial motorcycle) drivers, sex workers, criminal suspects, and victims of common crimes and with rank-and-file and senior police officers, federal government and anti-corruption officials, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, religious and civil society leaders, journalists, diplomats, and members of an armed vigilante group. Most of the interviews revealed that the Nigeria Police Force cannot be exonerated of the Human brutality levied against them.<sup>14</sup>

In an interview with Mr. Collins Ajaze, father of a 16-year-old boy arrested in Onitsha, Anambra State, the father described the arrest of his son in 19th April, 2009 as a clear example of police misconduct and brutality. He noted that;

The police told me they had arrested my son in a robber, Theybeat him up too much. He had wounds on his back and on his body. My son told me they put a stick between his arms and legs and suspended him. If I did not pay, they would have killed him. He is the only son I have. After I

paid the money they released the boy to me. No bail bond, no statement, nothing.<sup>15</sup>

This statement by Mr. Collins Ajaze goes a long way to show the misconduct of the police and their grave disrespect for the rule of law. Almost every police station has in their office “Police is your Friend” and Bail is Free”, but these inscriptions are never practiced and adhere to. Mr. Collins added that ordinary Nigerians traveling on the country’s roadways, buying or selling at markets, running daily errands, or working within their offices are routinely subjected to police extortion. Those who resist and fail to pay the bribes demanded are often threatened and unlawfully detained, and at times physically and sexually assaulted, tortured, or even killed by the police. Many of these abuses are perpetrated as a means to further extort money from ordinary citizens which constitutes acts of brutality on the Nigerian populace.

An interview with a trader in Lagos described to Human Rights Watch a common perception of the police and their role: She said “When you have a problem, you should expect the police to help you, to safeguard life and property but instead, they go the other way.” She illustrated her opinion in this way:

In October 2008 I was going to the market to buy my jewelry. I saw one policeman harassing people on the road, and then three of them stopped the vehicle I was travelling in. I said to myself, “What kind of country is this?” The policemen said they were on “stop-and-search.” One of them had a gun. They told all 18 of us to get down and line up along the road. They said they were searching for anything illegal and threatened that if they found anything, we would have to settle it there and then or be taken to the station. The one with the gun pushed people around, saying,

“You will all pay us something or we will take you to the station and you will have to pay even more to bail yourself out, so pay up now.” We understood. We asked how much, and they said ₦2,000. We started grumbling and eventually said, ok, whatever. Some people gave them ₦1,000, others ₦1,200. I had only made ₦700 that day, and another lady did not have anything. They told us to look for more. Eventually, they let the others go and took the two of us who could not pay the ₦2,000. As traders we are harassed a lot. When we put our goods on the ground to sell, the police say it is not allowed, that we have to pay them money to sell there. Other times they take our goods and ask us to pay to bail them out. This happens every day.... The police will chase you away until you pay them something. The police are not protecting us; they are fetching money for their own pockets.<sup>16</sup>

In Lagos State, a police constable who drives a police van during surveillance patrols relate to Human Rights Watch how his team randomly arrested people for the purpose of extorting money from them. He narrated thus;

When we would go to their areas, if they were not smoking or fighting, we would pick people for no reason to get money.... We would put them in the van and take them to the station and have their family come to “bail” them ₦2,500, ₦3,000, a negotiable price.... The ones we don’t take to the station, we search them and take money from them and let them go down from the van.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, a Police Corporal in Lagos informed the Human Rights Watch how his team randomly arrested people when their team did not have enough money to make their weekly “returns” to their superior: he explained; “If we don’t have money at the end of the week, we will get money. We will pick someone and arrest them.”<sup>18</sup>

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment found in 2007 that “torture and ill-treatment are widely practiced in police custody” and are “an intrinsic part of the functioning of the police in Nigeria.” Numerous victims of extortion by the police described having been threatened with or subjected to torture as a means of extracting money from them. Family members of other persons held in police custody described being coerced by police officers who threatened to torture or kill the person detained. The police in turn profit from their brutal reputation as fearful family members will pay large sums of money to free their loved one. The police sometimes use the threat of rape and other forms of sexual assault as a means to extort money from women stopped at checkpoints, accosted by the police in public places, or detained in police custody.<sup>19</sup>

In some cases, women are told they have the “option” of providing sex in lieu of payment. In a number of cases documented by Human Rights Watch and Nigerian human rights groups, police officers carried out their threats and subjected their victims to rape and other forms sexual assault, particularly when women who had been detained refused to pay all or part of the demanded sum. Although human rights groups have documented numerous cases of sexual assault, the police officers who commit these crimes are rarely held accountable. A 20-year-old university student described how in October 2008 police officers approached her at a taxi stand in Lagos, sexually assaulted her by touching her breasts and buttocks, and then demanded that she hand over money and her mobile phone. The policemen threatened to rape her if she did not comply with their demands. She said that one

of the policemen justified the extortion by saying, “We’ have not eaten yet; this is the only way to put money in our pockets.” The woman paid ₦10,000, gave the police her mobile phone and, after being held against her will for two hours in an empty lot, was eventually released.<sup>20</sup>

The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions found in 2006 that police “checkpoints provide the occasion for a large number of extrajudicial executions by police.” The vast network of checkpoints that exists in Nigeria leads into numerous confrontations between the police and motorists who refuse to pay the bribes demanded. All too often these confrontations escalate into fatal shootings by the police.<sup>21</sup>

In 2009, Amnesty International published an article entitled, Killings at Will: Extrajudicial Executions and other Unlawful Killings by the Police in Nigeria, which documented 39 cases of security force killings and enforced disappearances based on interviews and research conducted between July 2007 and July 2009. According to this report, “the national police conducted hundreds of extrajudicial executions, other unlawful killings and enforced disappearances each year. The police usually claim that the victims were armed robbers killed in an exchange of gun fire or that the suspects were trying to escape.”<sup>22</sup>

Hundreds of thousands of people have been extra-judicially murdered in the Niger Delta under similar circumstances by the security agents stationed in the area. One of such incidents of police extrajudicial murder is the case of Mr. Victor Emmanuel. On October 16, 2011, in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta region), “following his criticism of the police for extorting money from motorists on the road to his church, Mr. Victor Emmanuel was shot

dead in the presence of his mother who pleaded for his son's life to be spared to no avail.” After he was killed in cold blood, the police removed the Bible he was holding in his hand and planted a pair of scissors in his hand to incriminate the deceased.

The above incident is not an outlier, but a typically recurring event in the Niger Delta communities. In response to this ugly trend of extrajudicial killing, and the growing concern of the international community, “the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on March 27, 2008 stated at the Human Rights Council that Nigeria must end extrajudicial executions by the police”.<sup>23</sup> This among many others have been the response of the public both as individuals or as organization to the violation of Human rights in Nigeria by the police force. These problems of police brutality have compounded the issue of insecurity in the country. The issue is now complicated as the citizen keeps battling with troubles from terrorist groups, armed robbers, cultist as well as the police. The Police which supposed to provide security for the citizens against the aforementioned challenges is now a security threat itself.

## Endnotes

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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE OUTBREAK OF THE ENDSARS PROTEST IN NIGERIA

#### Introduction

The protest, agitation and quest to end the SAR (ENDSARs) may not have begun on October 2022 and some people believe that it began the protest started in Lagos.<sup>1</sup> This chapter explores the events that led to the ENDSARS protest, the timeline of the protest, and the dimension of the protest. The emergence of the ENDSAR protest on October 2020 has its root in the activities of the SARs the protest targeted. SARS is one of the Nigeria Police Force units that are saddled with the responsibility of fighting crime in the society; specifically, robbery and kidnapping. It was founded by Simon Danladi Midena, a Commissioner of the Police. It was one of the fourteen units in the Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, of the Police Force and was established to detain, investigate, and prosecute those involved in violent crimes such as armed robbery and kidnapping. While it was credited with having reduced lawlessness in its initial years, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad was later accused of becoming a criminal enterprise that acts with impunity. Before the establishment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, Anti robbery was the responsibility of the Nigerian Police Force. From 1984, Anti robbery units existed separately as part of different states' criminal investigation departments<sup>2</sup>. The special Anti-Robbery Squad unit of the Nigeria Police Force was founded in 1992 by Simeon Danladi Midena, a retired Commissioner of Police who added the word "special" to the already existing Anti Robbery Squad Department.<sup>2</sup> Its mandate included arrest, investigation and

prosecution of suspected armed robbers, murderers, kidnappers, hired assassins and other suspected violent criminals.<sup>3</sup>

The duties of the Special Anti-robbery Squad (SARS) are includes to reduce armed-robbery that has become so rampant in our today-society, to deal with crimes associated to armed robbery, car snatching, kidnapping, cattle rustling, and crimes associated to fire arms, to secure lives and properties, prevent, detect crimes and apprehend offenders. Not quite lone after their establishment, the SAR turned against Nigerians whom they are supposed to protect.<sup>4</sup> The SARS officers have been alleged to view 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 exotic vehicles and using laptops and iPhones. SARS was controversial for its links to extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, extortion, torture, framing, blackmail, kidnapping, illegal organ trade, armed robbery, home invasions, rape of men and women, child arrests, the invasion of privacy, and polluting bodies of water with the illegal disposal of human remains. SARS was investigated several times in response to protests, but without results; reforms were promised in 2016, 2017 and 2018.<sup>5</sup>

### **Outbreak of the ENDSARS Protest**

All these and many more rights violation by the Special Anti Robbery Squad led to protest and a call to EndSARS. In early July 2015, the IGP ordered a review of police regulations, known as Force Order 237. These regulations permit officers to shoot suspects

and detainees who attempt to escape or avoid arrest, whether or not the detainee poses a threat to life. This is a violation of the right to life, and of international standards on the use of force.<sup>6</sup> In August 2015, in an effort to address persistent complaints about human rights violations by SARS officers, the then IGP announced a major reorganization. Two separate units were to be set up, covering operations and investigations respectively. The Endsars protest is not a sudden movement. It is (was) as a result of prevalent Police brutality cases over the years. I think as a Nigerian, you must've witnessed a case or two where Police unjustly harrass a civilian that have not been proven guilty by any competent court. In some cases, Police officers are paid by people (usually the elites) to beat up, harass or even arrest innocent civilians, in other cases, police.<sup>7</sup>

On 14 August 2018, the Nigerian Vice-President ordered an immediate reform of SARS, citing the widespread public outcry against their conduct, as the basis for the order. He also directed the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to set up a judicial panel to investigate SARS alleged unlawful activities. Hours later, the police authority announced a list of reform measures aimed at increasing SARS' public accountability for its actions. The measures include the change of name from Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) to Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS), the appointment of high-ranking police officer to supervise the operation of FSARS and the restriction of FSARS operations to the prevention of armed robbery and kidnapping. He also directed the IGP to ensure that all operatives in the emerging Unit conduct their operations in strict adherence to the rule of law and with due regard to International Human Rights Law and the constitutionally

guaranteed rights of suspects. The operatives should also bear proper identification anytime they are on duty.<sup>8</sup> Despite these promises of reform and accountability for violations, this report shows that SARS officers continue to subject detainees in their custody to torture and other forms of ill-treatment with total impunity. With the disreputable legacy they have garnered over the years, they are nothing less than the villain they have been asked to fight against. Many Nigerians feel that the unit has deliberately profiled and targeted young people, especially those with tattoos, dreadlocks, and visible possessions such as phones and laptops. Over the years, Nigerian authorities have repeatedly promised to reform SARS and ensure accountability for abuses by its officers, but with few results.

In 2017, Nigerian activists, youth and celebrities across the nation took to the streets in a peaceful protest to spread awareness of SARS brutality and extortions and to demand its disbanding. The protests also moved to social media using the hashtag “EndSARS”. Thus, the EndSARS started as a call for the disbandment of Nigeria’s Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian Police Force that has earned notoriety for its brutality and human rights violations. The End SARS is a decentralized social movement, and series of mass protests against police brutality in Nigeria. The protests which takes its name from the slogan started in 2017 as a Twitter campaign using the hash tag #EndSARS to demand the disbanding of the unit by the Nigerian government. The public responded positively to the hash tag by documenting abuses by SARS officers and demand the end of impunity for those human rights violations. An anti-torture law was adopted which established torture as a criminal act and provided penalties for cruel and inhumane treatment. At the end of that

year, broad reforms of SARS were again proposed to tackle the issue of excessive use of force. However, members of the unit were still enjoying impunity.<sup>8</sup>

The hash tag was to raise awareness of allegations of violence and exploitation by SARS officials<sup>9</sup> many of the protesters were young, aged between 18-24. They are deeply dissatisfied by an education system regularly disrupted by striking lecturers, unstable electricity and poor job prospects.<sup>10</sup> The protesters' demands were; the federal government should abolish SARS, provide justice to victims of police brutality, and reform the police. Youth are demanding more respect for human rights and a deepening of democracy. The protesters are also demanding a revival of the educational and health systems and stronger efforts toward job creation.<sup>10</sup>

In 2018, then Acting President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, ordered the reform of SARS amidst a growing outcry over the abuses of the unit, but its members were never held accountable for their unlawful activities. A Presidential Commission of inquiry was formed to investigate the unit activities and findings were submitted to the government. The public was kept in the dark about the outcome of their findings. In recent years, the Nigerian authorities made promises to take care of the issue and disband SARS. However, the members of SARS continued to extort, rape, torture, and kill Nigerians.<sup>11</sup>

The struck that broke the camel back came on October, 2020 after a SARS police officer shot a young Nigerian man in front of the Wetland Hotel in Ughelli, Delta State. A video of the incident trended on social media, leading to nationwide protests within a few days. The protests quickly expanded from an online hash tag to widespread street protests in

days. Few days later, protests erupted across Nigeria. On Monday 5 October 2020, another report surfaced of SARS officers killing a 20-year-old upcoming musician named Daniel Chibuike, popularly called Sleek in his neighborhood.<sup>12</sup>

On Thursday 8 October 2020, nationwide protests on ENDSARS started after weeks of outrage and anger with videos and pictures showing police brutality, harassment and extortion in Nigeria.<sup>13</sup> The protests were led predominantly by young Nigerians in different cities alongside many activists and celebrities. The End SARS protests were largely decentralized with no actual leaders. In Lagos, protestors marched to the Lagos State House of Assembly to demand an end to SARS. The following morning, an emergency session of the Lagos House of Assembly was held as lawmakers allowed some protestors into the building to observe proceedings.<sup>14</sup> A motion was passed and agreed on by legislators who voted in favour of the protestors to end the rogue police unit SARS. While the protest continued on Saturday 10 October 2020, the Nigerian police started dispersing the youths with tear gas and water.<sup>15</sup>

On 11 October, the Inspector-General of Police Mohammed Adamu announced the disbandment of SARS on live television and said a new tactical team would be unveiled shortly.<sup>16</sup> But it was the 5th time since 2015 that the Nigerian authorities pledged to reform the police and disband SARS. However, protests continued as Nigerians believed the announcement was just "audio talk" (Nigerian slang used to describe something that is said but not implemented). The new hashtags EndSWAT and SARSMUSTEND went

international as protestors called for the new unit to be scrapped as they thought several members of the defunct SARS would be integrated into the new unit.<sup>17</sup>

On Sunday, 11 October 2020, the protestors made a list of five demands to be met by the Federal Government of Nigeria.<sup>18</sup> The demands which were signed by 'A Nigerian Youth' demanded for the immediate release of all arrested during the protests as well as justice and compensation for all who died through police brutality in Nigeria. They also demanded that an independent body be set up within 10 days to investigate and prosecute all reports of police misconduct and the protestors also asked for the psychological evaluation and retraining of SARS operatives before they are deployed to any other police unit. Lastly, they asked for adequate increase in the salaries for officers of the Nigerian police.<sup>19</sup>

As the protests gained more momentum and exposure Plans were then put in place to prosecute some former SARS members for extortion, rape, and murder.<sup>20</sup> Several reports on international news outlets, including BBC Africa and Al-Jazeera, showed federal police tear-gassing protestors, shooting live ammunition, and using water cannons on them. On 20th October, between 6:45 pm and 9:00 pm, the Nigerian army and police reportedly killed at least 12 peaceful protestors and left several injured in Lekki and Alausa in the cosmopolitan city of Lagos.<sup>21</sup> The security forces, without warning, opened fire on thousands of people who were peacefully calling for good governance and an end to police violence as part of the EndSARS movement. On that day alone, 38 people allegedly died across Nigeria.<sup>22</sup>

Authorities did not deny carrying out a crackdown, but refused to claim the deaths as at 21st October 2020. Brutality by the police forces made the protestors angrier intensifying

the scale of the protests. Those considered as financial backers or leaders of the #EndSARS movement by authorities have been targeted. Some had their bank accounts frozen or their passports seized to keep them in the country. Three of the country's prominent news agencies were fined for broadcasting social media footage of the EndSARS protests and security forces shooting protesters.<sup>23</sup> From all indication, the seed that grew to become and Endsar protest was planted on the day the enabling Act that establish SAR as a police unit was pass. Police brutality against civilian has it foundation in the British colonial policing system. It is also rooted in the way brutality was institutionalized and normalizes. That is, the police force was established to protect and serve the British political and business interest and elites. That system of policing was inherited by Nigerian political and business elites and has since then been perceived as a viable means of preserving their position and dominating Nigerians. Because, brutality by the Nigerian Police against the civilians is perceived relatively as normal, which is certain level of force by the police against armless civilians is not perceived by Nigerian political elites as human right violation. Hence, the establishing Act of the SAR Police Unit tacitly allowed the use of force against armless civilian. It is within this tacit institutionalization of abuse and brutality that the grievance that gave birth to Endsars protest was born or Endsars protest germinated. Put simply there would have been no Endsar protest without the enabling or establishing Act of SARs Police Unit.<sup>24</sup>

It was also revealed in this chapter, that the full meaning of SARS is Special Anti Robbery Squad and it was self explanatory name for the squad. Their major Raison d'etre is

to combat robbery. It almost seemed like they did every other thing except to combat robbery. They always manage to show up when an innocent civilian is using an iPhone or dresses well. The same can be said about the other branches of the Police force who are supposed to protect and serve. It's an irony that people who are supposed to protect and serve Nigerians are even more dangerous than some armed assailants. The Endsar emerged gradually from the people reaction to the perceived injustice and human right violation they were experiencing from the SAR.<sup>25</sup>

The protest turned to national protest when some online influencers took it up and made the Hashtag Endsars go viral, then Lagos youth participated which encouraged others to participate. Also, the protest may have also been influence by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest in USA after a black man was brutally killed by a white racist police officer, this motivated Nigerians to demand for their rights. The protest initially began online and later spread gradually to the street of Nigeria.<sup>26</sup>

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **IMPACT OF END SARS PROTEST**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter examines the impact of the End SARS protest in Nigeria. Like many other protests, the Endsars protest turned into violence in certain areas, some were killed and injured, property worth billions of naira were destroyed and security agencies houses across the country were destroyed. Prisons were break in and criminal and prisoners awaiting trials and sentence were set free. The Endsars protest had a devastating impact on the fragile Nigerian economy. While the protest went on, the economic consequences for the people began to mount as the Ngera's economy was grounded. The protest resulted in a drop in consumer spending on non-essential goods. The protest shut down major activities of Nigeria's busiest airport, with major roads blocked and economic activities brought them to a halt.

#### **Impact of the EndSars Protests**

The impact of Endsars movement was glaring. Before, some SARS switched departments but are still in the Police Force. However it is worthy of note to say that the unjust road stops and interrogation of youths have reduced or is rare these days compared to pre endsars protest. It got to a point where the protest turned violent, but it was the work of saboteurs who wanted to dent the message of the protest. You can imagine how Nigerians feel about the present administration so it's not uncommon that some people get in their

feelings and go overboard, but you cannot attribute their demonstrations as part of the Endsars protest.<sup>1</sup>

During the period of Endsars protest, movements were hindered by the large gathering of people who usually blocked gathered at major roads. But this is just a common occurrence during a protest. There were movement restrictions due to the mass gathering of people and this affected business because a lot of people could not navigate their way to their respective work places. It really shocked security personnel as Nigerians are not known for voicing out their displeasure and grievance with government policies. Nigerians often accept them and maintain resilience even if those policies are hard to bear.<sup>2</sup> The protest rocked the boats of security personnel and it affected their patronage. Many police officers and other security went into hiding. Some even pull off their uniform when returning back from duties as the protesters at some points or location to block roads. Some of officers still were able to function effectively as they were invested in protection of lives and properties during the protests, while others had to lay low cost they thought their lives would be in danger as the protest was against them. A positive effect was that people now move about their daily lives without fear of harassment of SARs officers.

One other effect of the Endsars protest is that, the SARS department of the Nigerian Police was disbanded and renamed SWAT, but the people rejected it, hence it was scrapped completely.<sup>3</sup>The Endsars protest disrupted production activities, supply chains, reduced demand for non-essential goods, posed security challenges and reduced revenue across all sectors of the economy.<sup>4</sup> For most businesses, recovery has been sluggish due to the covid19;

for businesses that source their raw materials or products from abroad, the border closure policy and the restriction on foreign exchange made their recovery tougher. The Endsar protest economic cost of the looting spree that engulfed Nigeria in the last week of October as a result of negative consequences of EndSars protest compounded these problems. Food costs, already higher than normal due to government policies, were worsened by the destruction of storage houses and warehouses.<sup>5</sup>

During the protest, cities such as Abuja, Lagos, Benin, Asaba, Onitsha and many other states across the Federation, thugs infiltrated the protest, otherwise the protests were peaceful. One of the impacts of the protest was infiltration of the peaceful gathering by disruptive elements. However, some of these elements were sponsored by their benefactors, Nigerian politicians and cabals (including some business men and women who are direct beneficiaries of corrupt practices in the country) and others does not understand what is meant by protest in real sense of the constitutional provisions.<sup>6</sup> They may have been behind the deliberate blocking of major roads, forceful stopping of moving outgoing and incoming passengers and goods vehicles and trucks and restriction of the movement of travelers.

Remarkably, Endsars protest took a different turn, thugs began to attack peaceful protesters in cities and towns across Nigeria, especially in Abuja, Lagos and Portharcourt. In the country's capital, Abuja for instance, on the 17th October, 2020, government thugs launched a direct and deliberate attacked on protesters at Kubwa in the outskirts of the city.<sup>7</sup> Two days earlier in Lagos, thugs had attacked protesters at the Lagos Government House, Alausa. On the 20th October, 2020,<sup>8</sup> things snowballed into something larger, the looting

and destruction of public buildings and private businesses almost brought the Nigeria to a standstill with police stations and other Para military security vehicles destroyed across the country.<sup>9</sup>

At the backdrop of the destruction of public and private properties and businesses in the wake of the EndSars protests, businesses counted losses. For instance, in Lagos State which, the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry put the estimated economic loss at N700 billion in 12 days, meaning a loss of N58 billion daily. Similarly, toll revenue loss is also estimated at about N234 million in 13 days, showing that N18 million was lost daily to the protest activities.<sup>10</sup> These losses were also accompanied by several lootings and vandalism at several shopping malls in Lagos, including Lekki ShopRite Mall, Circle Mall, Montaigne Mall, Lagos City Mall, the razing of the Lekki Toll Gate, state-owned buildings and facilities, the setting ablaze of several police stations, local government councils, invading traditional institutions, public and private transport and other facilities by some hoodlums who are said to have hijacked the peaceful protests to create chaos and a state of anarchy across the federation. Economic analysts lamented the impact of the aftermath of the protest, which has ravaged the nation's economy as well as raised insurance premium estimated in billions.<sup>11</sup>

On Tuesday 20 October 2020 in Jos, Plateau State, while the protest was on-going, thugs hauled the Jos city biggest market, Terminus, where they burned cars, hauled shops and attacked unarmed EndSars protesters.<sup>12</sup>The EndSars protest is felt across states in Nigeria in all sectors of the economy. With the news that SARS had been disbanded, Nigerians took

the news with against of salt and carried on with pressing their demands for total disengagement of the unit and for wide-ranging reform of the force. The Hashtag on social media changed from #EndSARS to #SARSMustEnd. With the announcement of a new unit Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) by the Nigerian Police to replace SARS, the hashtag for the protests quickly changed to #EndSWAT on Twitter.<sup>13</sup> Police intimidation, oppression and brutality on business men and women is a hindrance to smooth economic operations. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the effect of EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy.<sup>14</sup>

During the protests warehouses, commercial properties such as bank ATMs and restaurants were vandalized, trucks with consumables were stop and looted. The Endsars protest therefore resulted in drop in government revenue and consumer confidence on the financial markets and the already worsening economy. Overcoming the challenges of poverty, fighting corruption, meeting the basic needs of the people in the face of inadequate and inefficient infrastructure are critical social challenges that government is determined to address. However, Endsars protests and increased disenchantment of citizens across different sectors have continued to have negative effects on the economy of the Nigeria.<sup>15</sup>

The effect of the Endsars protests on the Nigerian economy, is enormous. One of it is unattractiveness.<sup>16</sup> It may attract downgrades by rating agencies, as the crisis has potential to roll back gradual progress being made in economic recovery. Still, on the impact on the economy, for instance, Primero Transport Services (PTS) Ltd, owners of BRT buses, said the company lost over N100 million in six days resulting from the protest, which has had the

nation's economic capital ravaged. The grounding and closing of the economic nerve centre (Lagos) for over three days, is a great loss. It's a great loss as this affected all flights take-off and landing, which centres around Lagos, as well as other economic activities that have to be postponed.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, many retail stores across the countries were looted and goods carted away. The long list of destroyed public and private property across Nigeria is numerous. In Lagos for instances, destroyed places include Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government secretariat; Palace of the Oba of Lagos; Lagos High Court, Igbosere; Oyingbo BRT terminus; Ojodu Berger BRT terminus; Vehicle Inspection Office, Ojodu Berger; Lagos State Public Works Corporation, Ojodu Berger; Lagos City Hall and Circle Mall, Lekki; numerous luxury shops in Surulere, the Nation Newspaper, TVC, and Shoprite Lekki. The destroyed BRT vehicles cost \$200,000 each, while 57 of them cost \$100,000 each, all totaling about N3.9 billion. According to the police, the 25 stations were burnt in Lagos alone.<sup>18</sup>

In other affected areas in Kano were Airport Road, SarkinYaki, Court Road, Burma Road, and Zungeru Road, business activities were brought to a standstill. In Edo State Police stations, Secret Service (SSS) detention centres, shops, trucks, houses and other properties were destroyed. In Plateau State, banks and shops were destroyed.<sup>19</sup> Youths participating in the Endsars protest grounded the Enugu State capital motorists were prevented from getting to their destination on time. Thousands of youths protesting called for an end to police brutality and staged multiple protests in different parts of Port Harcourt, Rivers States and others bringing social and economic activities to a standstill.<sup>20</sup>

In Edo State, the Endsars protest was used as a pretense by armed groups to attack Nigerian prisons (Oko Prison at Sapele Road) to release criminals. A release by the Anambra State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, SP Haruna Mohammed showed that 21 police divisions were attacked by hoodlums who disguised as protesters, while seven of them were burnt down. Other government property burnt or destroyed were, the High Court Ogidi, Idemili North local government secretariat, while Zik Statue at DMGS roundabout, Onitsha was vandalized.<sup>21</sup>

In Asaba, the FRSC secretariat was burnt down by hoodlum and some person were killed. Besides the properties damaged during the carnage that greeted the alleged killing of protesters at the Admiralty Toll Plaza, Lekki, it will be hard to quantify the loss suffered by families.<sup>22</sup>The official record showed that about 73 persons died as a result of the violence among who were 22 police officers. These statistics were collated between October 11, 2020, when the #EndSARS protest assumed a national dimension and October 27, 2020, days after the protest but different reports claim over 100 lives were lost to the crisis.<sup>23</sup> After the rampage, 205 critical national security assets, corporate facilities and private property were attacked, burnt or vandalised. An estimated 71 public warehouses and 248 private stores were also looted in 13 states after the largely peaceful protest was hijacked by miscreants. Out of the 36 states in Nigeria, southern states were most hit by the carnage. The states are Lagos, Edo, Delta, Oyo, Kano, Plateau, Osun, Ondo, Ogun, Rivers, Abia, Imo, and Ekiti states, as well as FCT.<sup>24</sup>

It should be noted that Endsars protest was intended to draw attention to police brutality and call on the government to put an end to the menace of the now-disbanded dreaded Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigeria Police Force, but what started as one of the best-organised protests in Nigeria's history went from peaceful to violent after sponsored thugs began attacking protesters in Abuja and later Lagos. The protest took an ugly dimension shortly after when soldiers drafted to stop protesters at the epicentre of the Endsars Rally allegedly shot at unarmed protesters, injuring and killing a yet to be confirmed number. A judicial panel of enquiry is currently sitting to unravel the mystery behind the Lekki shootings and also hear petitions from victims of police brutality. Some state governors have also set up similar panels to address police brutality to find lasting solutions the nation, young Nigerians especially, hope will put an end to all forms of harassment and incessant killings by security operatives.<sup>25</sup>

Another economic impact of the protest was job losses. The protest had caused several people to lose their jobs, and many jobs were put in jeopardy shortly. The protest has worsened the unemployment situation in Nigeria. For instance, businesses that counted loses reduced the numbers of their staffs.<sup>26</sup> an upsurge in unemployment has adverse effects on the economy. For example, when unemployment increases, there is the likelihoods that social vices or criminal activities would increase, and this portends grave danger for the country. Also, an upsurge in unemployment could lead to more hunger and poverty in the country.<sup>27</sup>

The hardest hits are the informal workers and the poor because they live daily. This category includes street vendors or hawkers, petty traders, taxi drivers, motorcycle (i.e.,

"Okada") riders, artisans, hairdressers and garbage collectors and many others. They engage in daily trading activities for their daily bread. The protest lockdown businesses, markets and shopping mall, it threatened their means of livelihoods and subjected them to poverty and hunger. Casual workers that constitute about 60 per cent of the global labour force were not spared, as the protest resulted in business closures. These business outfits were hit by the endsars protest due to their vulnerability and limited resources. Social gatherings in some areas were either closes down or limited. In certain areas where the protest extensively turned violence, it affected their daily operations, sales, and profits. Many SMEs experienced demand and supply chains shocks during this pandemic. Demands for goods reduced drastically due to the major access road blockages.<sup>28</sup>The Endsars affected the production and marketing of agricultural products. It worsened the food insecurity situation in the country as markets were closed. The demand and supply chains of agricultural products and foods both import and export were affected. In some locations, farmers find it difficult to transport their goods and farm implements.

At the end of the Endsars protest, Nigeria faced worsening insecurity. The situation in the country was comparable to the post- Civil War era in the early 1970s when all manner of crimes were committed against the state and its citizens. The state actors, including security agencies, were paying lip service of live and property and exhibiting a ‘wait and see attitude to the problem that sent thousands of Nigerians to their early graves. The security agencies may have deliberately allowed criminals to perpetrate crimes against innocent masses. Unrestrained robberies, ritual killings, kidnapping for ransom and human trafficking,

among other criminal acts, were rampant immediately protest ended making many people wonder if there is still a government in Nigeria and if the police, military, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), among others, are still saddled with the responsibility of securing life and property in the country.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, the absent of Police Officers from duty post across the country make some Nigerians to called on the government to implement a ‘no work, no pay policy’, as the police personnel seem to have gone into recession since the end of the protests. Some Nigerians even were accusing the Inspector General of Police (IGP) of not ordering the personnel to do the work they are paid for. The stakeholders, who also accused the IGP of keeping mum to make a cheap political statement and described the situation as an organised conspiracy among the security operatives in the country to make Nigerians suffers.<sup>30</sup>

It was in the absent of the Police policing the Nigerian street to act as retrained that information regarding warehouses where Covid19 palliative were kept was lick. Many of the warehouses were looted and empty by the hungry and angry Nigerians. Thus the Endsars protest was like a pretense for looting the warehouses. But the fact is what where those foods items melt for Nigerians doing in the warehouses across the country when the people that the people they were melt for are hungry.

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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

The study has investigated the Endsars protest and its impact on Nigerians. The study revealed that the creation SARS was to combat robbery. However, SARs unit of the police force always manage to show up when an innocent civilian is using an iPhone or dress well. The same can be said about the other branches of the Police force who are supposed to protect and serve. It's an irony that people who are supposed to protect and serve Nigerians are even more dangerous than some armed assailants. The Endsars protest emerged gradually from the people's reactions to the perceived injustice and human right violations they were experiencing from the SARs Police Unit.

The protest that began in Ughelli in Delta State later spread and turned to a national protest when some online influencers took it up and made the Hashtag Endsars to go viral. The Lagos youth participated which encouraged others to participate. The protest may have also been influenced by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest in USA after a black man was brutally killed by white racist police officers. This motivated Nigerians to demand for their rights. The protest initially began online and later spread gradually to the streets of may Nigerian cities and towns.

The study has showed that the mandate of the SARS went beyond patrolling and investigating. It also made judgments about guilt and meted out punishment, just as policemen and soldiers had done during the military rule. They are like court if law on their own right. The punishment could entail torture, and even death, SARS officers also

tormented Nigerians with more mundane harassment. They set up checkpoints to search cars and phones for “evidence” to find incriminating things in order to demand bribe and serve penalty to those who do not submit to their request.

The study showed that the impact of the Endsars protest. The study has established that the protest succeeded in putting an end to the SARs Police Unit and the various human right violations that the SARS Police unit was known for. Like many other protests, the Endsars protest turned into violence in certain areas, hence some civilians and police officers were killed, while others injured. Properties worth billions of naira were destroyed and security agencies houses such as State Security Service (SSS) across the country were burnt down. Prisons were break in and criminal and prisoners awaiting trials and sentence were set free. The Endsars protest had a devastating impact on the fragile Nigerian economy. With the exception of Nigeria civil war that lasted for two and a half years, the Endsars protest is the most singular events that have ever shaken Nigeria to it foundation. For the first time since Nigeria came into being as a country the youth across all ages and regions mount out to resist and request for the disbanded of what they perceived to be a threat to their rights and live.

The study finds out that, Police brutality against civilian has it foundation in the British colonial policing system. It is also rooted in the way brutality was institutionized and normalizes. That is, the police force was established to protect and serve the British political and business interest and elites. That system of policing was inherited by Nigerian political and business elites and has since then been perceived as a viable means of preserving their

position and dominating Nigerians. Because, brutality by the Nigerian Police against the civilians is perceived relative as normal, which is certain level of force by the police against armless civilians is not perceived by Nigerian political elites as human right violation. Hence, the establishing act of the SAR Police Unit tacitly allowed the use of force against armless civilian. It is within this tacit institutionalization of abuse and brutality that the grievance that gave birth to Endsars protest was born. Put simply, there would have been no Endsar protest without the enabling or establishing Act of SARs Police Unit.

From the findings, it is recommended that Nigerian government should proactively deinstitutionalize Police brutality in all its forms. It needs to start listening to public opinion, when the governed says we do not want this agency or this agency has outlived its usefulness then get up and do something. In a democracy setting, the rule of law protects the rights of citizens, maintains order and limits the power of government. Institutions are part of what makes a country democratic, the earlier the government begins the reformation of the Police as a whole, the better it will be to gain the confidence of the citizenry and prevent the Endsar recurrent. The law that established these security agencies needs to be revisited.

All the Police Unit operatives should be in their uniform and conform to the guiding rules of fundamental human right rather than their establishing Act that tacitly permit abuse and brutality. The fact is that if Nigeria do not stand up against SARS' brutality and abuse of human rights in, soon it will be an ill wind that is stronger than hurricane and windstorms combined and it could carry you or your family too.

There is the need to address the systemic abuse of civil and political rights by the police and other government agencies. The government needs to commence intensive human rights training for all law enforcement officers. Officers should also be regularly appraised on their human rights compliance and erring officers prosecuted. In order to effectively protect the rights to life and freedom from torture, the government must ensure that it treats reports of violence, torture, and extrajudicial killings with the gravity they deserve. Such reports must be duly investigated through transparent means such as public inquiries and inquests, and victims should be adequately compensated.

On the right to fair trial, the government must also initiate reforms to ensure that suspects are not detained without trial. The right to privacy can also be better protected by the government taking a clear stand on routine stop and search operations which appear to be an avenue for extortion by the police. In view of the EndSAR protest and to prevent such reoccurring again, it is important that Nigeria human rights training of Nigerians should be included in school curriculum as enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its enforcements. There should also be regular medical checks for all Police Unit operatives "to identify those with mental issues, psychological challenges, drug addiction and others, in order to prevent unnecessary provocations, intimidations and oppression as well as killing for money or pleasure.

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2.	Edo Omoregie O.	-	Independent Researcher	Benin City	09/10/2024
3.	Jaja Madiba	29	Business man	Ogun State	09/10/2024
4	Sandra Omone	37	Trader	Lagos	09/10/2024
5	George Osunbor	24	Student	Rivers state	20/10/2024

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