

# THE INTEGRATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE, MILITARY OPERATIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATIONS AS A UNIFIED MEANS OF COMBATING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

PRESENTED

BY

LIEUTENANT AYODEJI OWOYOMI  
INVESTIGATOR  
NIGERIAN ARMY CORPS OF MILITARY POLICE



DATE: 11 August, 2021

## OUTLINE

- ❖ **INTRODUCTION**
- ❖ **NIGERIA**
- ❖ **FORENSIC SCIENCE**
- ❖ **LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**
- ❖ **INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE AND MILITARY OPERATIONS**
- ❖ **INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATION**
- ❖ **THE INTEGRATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE, MILITARY OPERATIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATION AS A UNIFIED MEANS OF COMBATING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA.**
- ❖ **CONCLUSION**
- ❖ **RECOMMENDATION**
- ❖ **REFERENCES**

# INTRODUCTION

According to the report of UN Secretary General to the Security Council on the causes of conflicts and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSC) 2396 (2017) and 2322 (2016) obligates the Member States to investigate foreign terrorist fighters and requires a closer alignment between military operations and law enforcement investigations. This has called for forensic science to be employed beyond its traditional support to military operations and law enforcement investigations. However, there is no unified approach to forensic science support to meet Nigeria's security objectives and challenges.

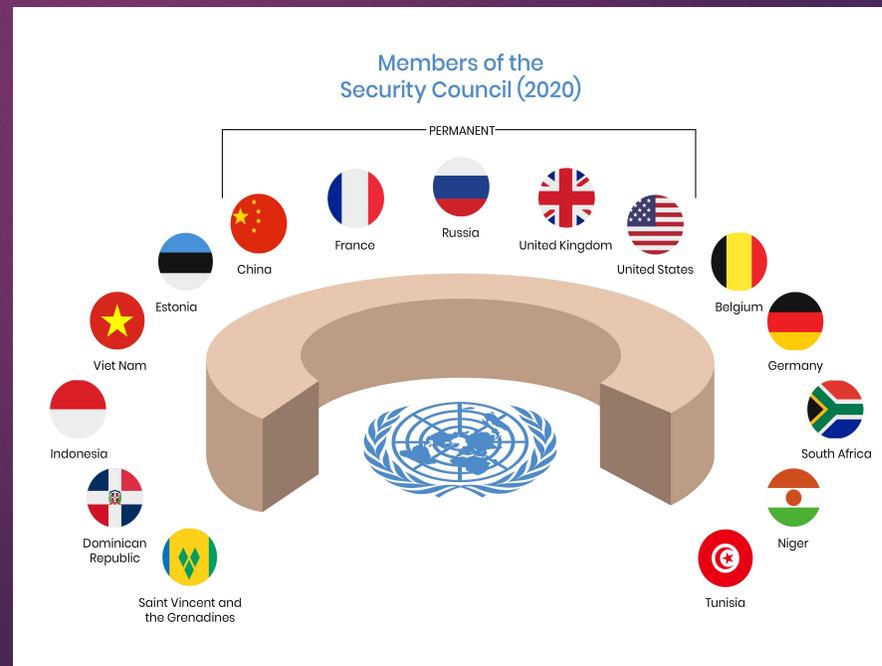


Figure 1: (Adopted from google images, 2020)

# INTRODUCTION cont

One of the most prominent challenges that the twenty-first century Nigeria state is facing is insecurity. Amongst the arms of the federal security system, the Army and Police have been the most taunted. These bodies or organizations play important roles in the execution of national laws made by the government in the pursuit of national interest and the protection of the national image of Nigeria.



Figure 2: Boko Haram fighters (Adopted from google images, 2020)



Figure 3: Attack on church (Adopted from google images, 2001)

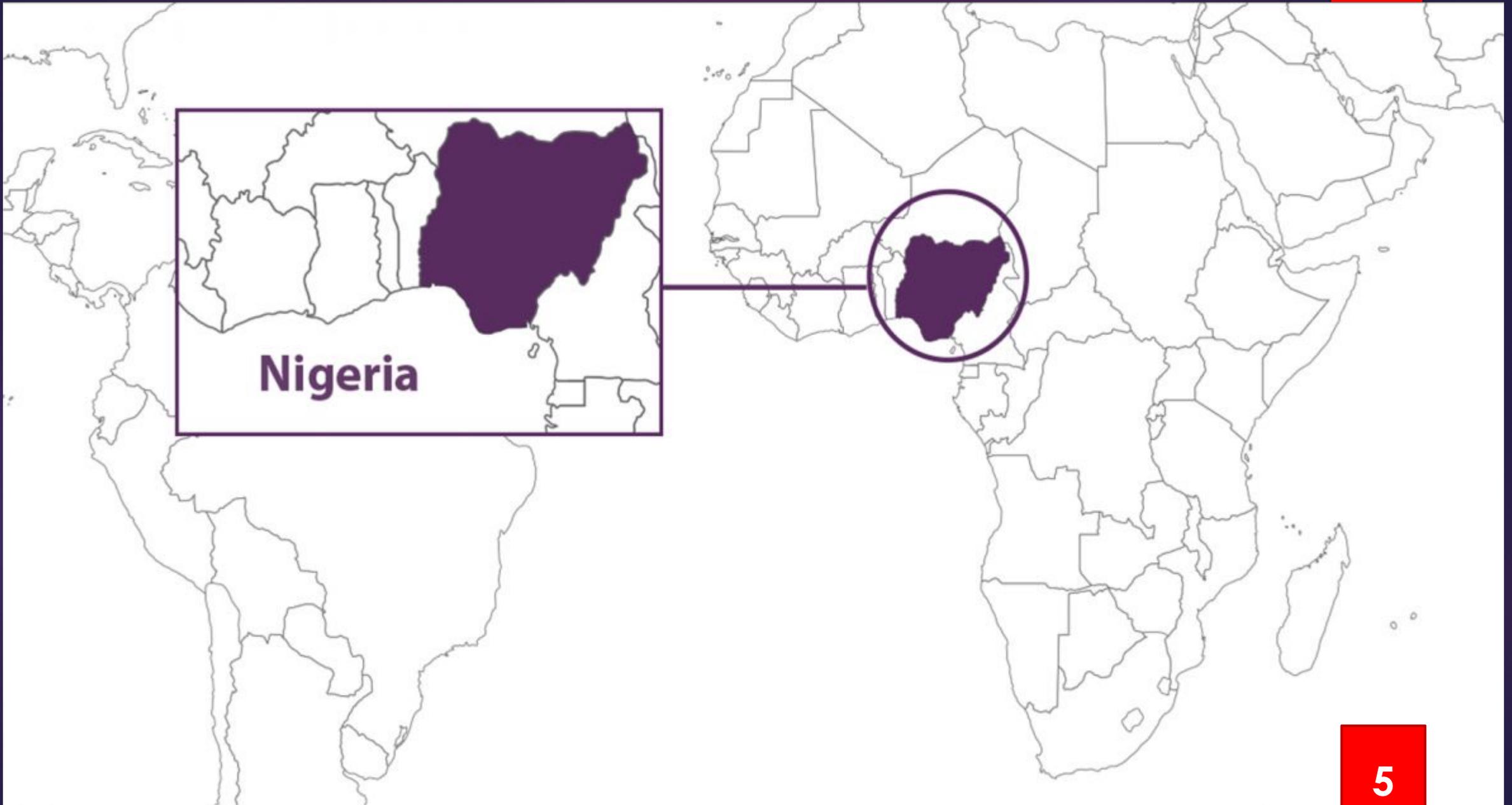


Figure 4: Map of Nigeria and Africa (Adopted from google images, 2020)

# NIGERIA cont

The North East region, which shares international boundaries with Cameroon, Chad, Benin and Niger Republic, is potentially rich in solid mineral and water resources, especially around the Lake Chad. However, the Lake is shrinking, thus constituting a theatre of conflict due to the scramble for the diminishing water resources (Ogundiya S, 2010).



Figure 5: Map of Nigeria (Adopted from google images, 2020)

# Insecurity in Nigeria

Nigeria which is perceived as the giant of Africa has witnessed unprecedented incidences of insecurity and it faces a rapidly changing world with a diverse range of threats. These challenges have made security a pivotal issue that has culminated in the allocation of the country's huge resources to the protection of lives and properties. It has also made government to divert resources meant for developmental purposes to security. These challenges can be grouped under the following security threats: terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy and separatist agitations, pastoralists- farmers conflicts, transnational organized crime, piracy and sea robbery, porous borders, cybercrimes and technological challenges. Others are socio-political threats, fake news and hate speeches, environmental threats, public health challenges, economic challenges, regional and global security challenges (Albinus C, 2012).

# Nigeria Military

- ▶ The Nigerian Military also referred to as the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) is composed of the Nigerian Army (the land branch of the AFN and the largest among the armed forces), the Nigerian Air Force (the air branch of the AFN) and the Nigerian Navy (the sea branch of the AFN).
- ▶ Since its creation, the Nigerian military has fought in a civil war – the conflict with Biafra in 1967–70 and sent peacekeeping forces abroad both with the United Nations and as the backbone of the Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia and Sierra Leone.



Figure 6: Nigerian Army Hilux (Adopted from google images, 2020)



Figure 7: Nigeria Navy Ship(Adopted from google images, 2020)



Figure 8: Nigeria Airforce Helicopter(Adopted from google images, 2020)

# FORENSIC SCIENCE

- ▶ The word forensic comes from the Latin term forensis, meaning "of or before the forum. The term originates from Roman times, during which a criminal charge, meant presenting the case before a group of public individuals in the forum.
- ▶ This origin is the source of the two modern usages of the word forensic – as a form of legal evidence and as a category of public presentation. In modern use, the term forensics in the place of forensic science can be considered correct, as the term forensic is effectively a synonym for legal or related to courts. However, the term is now so closely associated with the scientific field that many dictionaries include the meaning that equates the word forensics with forensic science (Olayiwola O, 2020).
- ▶ Consequently, forensic science evidence is necessary where there is a crime and the scene of crime, physical and trace evidence, accident where deceased persons are to be identified in a destroyed vehicle. Also, decomposed body that is beyond recognition under the physical eyes, a plane crash, petroleum tanker explosion and even ordinary home fire outbreak, earthquake or flood outbreaks, murder case identification and the list is endless.

# History of Forensic Science in Nigeria

Computer Forensic Institute of Nigeria (CFIN) was approved by the Federal Ministry of Education and the Federal Ministry of Justice to commence training and certification in Forensics in 2008 and the first induction ceremony of professional members was held in 2010 at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Conference Centre, Abuja.

# BRANCHES OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

In the investigation of crimes, other types of forensic science services can come into play. These include but are not limited to:

1. Digital forensics
2. Forensic Document Examination (FDE) or Questioned Document Examination (QDE)
3. Forensic Law
4. Forensic DNA Analysis
5. Ear Print Analysis
6. Forensic Intelligence
7. Forensic Accounting
8. Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
9. Art Forensics
10. Forensic Linguistics
11. Forensic Pathology
12. Forensic Psychology
13. Forensic Odontology
14. Forensic Toxicology
15. Forensic Video Analysis
16. Mobile Device Forensics
17. Trace Evidence Analysis
18. Computational Forensics
19. Criminalistics
20. Forensic Aerial Photography
21. Forensic Anthropology
22. Forensic Archaeology
23. Forensic Astronomy
24. Forensic Botany
25. Forensic Chemistry
26. Forensic Dactyloscopy
27. Forensic Engineering
28. Forensic Entomology
29. Forensic Geology
30. Forensic Geomorphology
31. Forensic Geophysics
32. Forensic Interviews
33. Forensic Limnology
33. Forensic Meteorology
34. Forensic Microbiology
35. Forensic Nursing
36. Forensic Serology
37. Forensic Optometry
38. Forensic Podiatry
39. Forensic Psychiatry
40. Forensic Seismology
41. Forensic Social Work
42. Wildlife Forensic Science

# LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

- ▶ Austin (1966), the English Philosopher, defines law as a rule laid down for the guidance of an intelligent being by another intelligent being with power over him.
- ▶ Law enforcement is the task of ensuring the provision of security for citizens going about their daily lives, in accordance with a nation's legal framework, mainly through deterrence and prevention, but also by appropriate interventions to stop violations of the law. Law enforcement is defined as a civil force responsible for prevention and detection of crime and maintenance of public order.

# Types of Law Enforcement Agencies

▶ There are various agencies in Nigeria which are put in place to ensure the safety of lives and properties at all times. These agencies can be classified into two which are the Law enforcement agencies and the Intelligence agencies.

1. Law enforcement Agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Nigeria Prisons Service (NPS), Nigerian Custom Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC).

2. Intelligence Agencies such as the State Security Service (SSS), National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).

# Law Enforcement Investigation

- ▶ Law enforcement investigations close cases and can prevent new crimes from occurring. It focuses on the principles, procedures, techniques, legal concerns and problems associated with a criminal investigation.
- ▶ Law enforcement Investigation is key in criminal investigations. It the eyes and ears on the ground and integral in preventing and responding to crimes and maintaining public safety.

# INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE AND MILITARY OPERATIONS

- ▶ The Armed Forces of Nigeria have been involved in series of security operations to counter myriads of existing and emerging security challenges in different parts of the country. Notable among these security challenges are the Boko Haram and Islamic States of West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgents' activities in the north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe as well as Banditry and kidnapping in the northwestern part of the country such as in Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara. There have also been cases of farmer/herders and communal clashes in Benue, Nasarawa and Taraba, kidnapping and armed robbery in the south-eastern part as well as the cases of crude oil theft, illegal bunkering, militancy, kidnapping and cultism in the south-south and south-west region.
- ▶ In response to this, the military have launched different operations and exercises as well as deployed troops to all the affected states to contain these threats in the last couple of years. Some of the military led operations include Operation Lafiya Dole fighting insurgency in the North East, Operation Hadarin Daji against banditry and kidnapping in North West, Operations Safe Haven, Whirl Stroke, Whirl Punch, Thunder Strike against farmer-herder/communal clashes, kidnapping and banditry in the North Central. Others are Operations Delta Safe and AWATSE to tackle economic sabotage such as crude oil theft, pipeline vandalism and kidnapping, among other criminal activities in the South-South and South-West zones of the country.

## INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE AND MILITARY OPERATIONS cont.

- ▶ The changing nature of insecurity in relation to terrorism, banditry, kidnapping etc and the length at which they are sustained has resulted in the transformation of the approach used by the military in tackling these vices. This has called for forensic science to be employed to support military operations beyond its traditional support to law enforcement investigations and the criminal justice system.
- ▶ Forensic support to the military and in extension military police investigations has a long history. In 2003 during the Iraq conflict, forensic science was employed beyond its traditional law enforcement objectives and applied to counter the increased threat from Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). In 2006, US Department of Defense (DOD) further expanded its use of expeditionary forensics by establishing the joint expeditionary forensic facilities to analyze materials, such as ammunition and clothing items collected on the battlefield, to help identify enemy combatants through latent prints and DNA analysis, among other things. In 2012, the DOD provided forensic support to about 120 Afghan court cases linking latent fingerprints and DNA evidence to enemy combatants, resulting in a 97 percent conviction rate.

# Benefits of integrating Forensic Science to Military Operations

Some of the benefits of integrating forensic science to military operations are highlighted below:

- ▶ Latent fingerprints and DNA can be used to link known enemy combatants to captured enemy material such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).
- ▶ It can be used by the military to identify human remains for record purposes.
- ▶ By integrating forensic science, the measurement and analysis of an individual's unique physical or behavioral characteristics can be used to verify personal identity.
- ▶ It can provide technical intelligence on IEDs and other combustible materials, by forensically analyzing to obtain, among other things, latent fingerprints of the individuals responsible for manufacturing and placing the devices.
- ▶ Digital and multimedia forensic applications support military operations such as counterintelligence to process, analyze and translate data collected from electronic devices.
- ▶ Forensic science is flexible and scalable to meet the changing external environment and it articulates the redundancies in the system to help address the failures.

## INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATIONS

- ▶ Studies have shown that a significant number of offenders have cheated the justice system by escaping punishment due to incomplete or incompetent criminal investigations based on insufficient evidence upon which the courts can base a conviction. It does not give the court joy to see offenders escape the penalty they richly deserve, but until they are proven guilty under the appropriate law, in the law courts, they are entitled to walk about in the streets and tread the Nigerian soil, breathe Nigerian air as free and innocent men and women (Ladapo, 2011).
- ▶ Two of the most significant advances in criminal investigation has been the development of fingerprinting and DNA profiling. While this has been working perfectly in advance countries like the US and Britain, to arrest and convict millions of criminal suspects, the Nigerian case is pathetic.

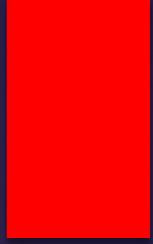
# Benefits of integrating Forensic Science to Law Enforcement Investigation

Forensic science should be absorbed in Nigeria as part of policing and investigation, as it helps in:

- ▶ Investigating almost all kinds of crimes, disasters and suspected behavior of individuals.
- ▶ Providing multiple options that would help in tracking and apprehending perpetrators of such dastardly acts by the security agents.
- ▶ Providing additional option that could be better than witness testimonies and confessions (forced or otherwise). The reason being that forced confessions are obtainable from suspects following the application of extreme torture and false witnesses are procurable in impoverished societies. These would eventually lead to a miscarriage of justice. But it can be ameliorated by the provision of empirical forensic evidence, a sub-set of forensic science.
- ▶ Gathering intelligence to enable the judge take credible and logical decisions in court by means of scientific approach through evaluation of evidence for the administration of justice.

# FORENSIC INVESTIGATION AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

- ▶ Forensic investigation refers to the use of science or technology in the investigation and establishment of facts or evidence to be used in criminal justice or other proceedings. The forensic process is composed of the following phases; a collection of data from the crime scene, the examination of all collected data both manually and automatedly, analysis of the results of the examined data and the last phase is the reporting of the analyzed results. (Kent, 2006).
- ▶ Forensic investigations involve intelligence and information gathering, crime scene investigation, laboratory analysis, interpretation of tests and results and reporting and communication with members of law-enforcement and the judicial system. Evidence recovery and interpretation at the crime scene is the essential first step in forensic investigations.
- ▶ A criminal investigation is the total police effort to collect facts leading to the identification, apprehension and arrest of an offender and organize these facts to present the evidence of guilt in such a way that successful prosecution may occur. However, the truth-finding view of criminal investigation is criticized for being unrealistic. Empirical studies of a criminal investigation showed that instead of trying to uncover truth by focusing on the crime scene of each offense, detectives usually pursue a suspect-centered approach in which they try to construct a case against the suspects known by the police (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2006).

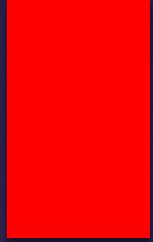


## CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE IN NIGERIA

- ▶ There are presently about 250 higher institutions in Nigeria, only a few offers forensic science. The few offering forensic science lack the required expertise and equipment. Even with the glaring necessity of forensic science, Nigeria still lacks professionally trained forensic experts. Most investigations that require the aid of forensic scientists normally end up not being investigated at all or if investigated, then it will require the payment of exorbitant professional fees for inviting foreign-based professionals.
- ▶ Law enforcement agents in Nigeria lack modern investigative tools, proper and requisite training, especially the police prosecutors who constantly exhibit arrant ineptitude while handling criminal cases at the lower courts. They exhibit unprofessionalism when handling evidence necessary to prove a case, thereby either stalling the case or allowing a guilty person to be acquitted.
- ▶ Nigeria government has only three forensic labs; the old one situated at Oshodi, Lagos, the one located at Abuja and the new one recently inaugurated by the Lagos State Government. However, these facilities are being underutilized. The labs are still not well equipped with modern equipment for crime detecting and investigation. There is a severe shortage of relevant chemicals and reagents and poorly motivated staff.
- ▶ The military and other law enforcement agencies lack funding for research and development as it relates to forensic science in this 21st century. The only obvious funding associated with the criminal justice sector is the provision of money for the purchase of new vehicles, renovation of offices and increment of salaries. There is really a need for continuous research and development in the areas of forensic science.

## CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING FORENSIC SCIENCE IN NIGERIA cont.

- ▶ Although the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as amended, made provision for forensic evidence but unfortunately, the legislative has not been able to draft any bill with regards to forensic science.
- ▶ Inefficient power supply is also a significant factor responsible for the continued poor integration of forensic evidence in the process of criminal investigation.
- ▶ The majority of criminal investigations which could have been resolved is often inhibited by political, ethnic and religious interference. This is a critical factor responsible for the poor utilization of forensic evidence within the Nigerian criminal investigation phase.
- ▶ Studies have also reviewed that the lack of forensic laboratories, equipment, and expertise has limited the military and law enforcement agencies to the traditional ways eyewitnesses' accounts and confession investigation gathering.
- ▶ The lack of adequate database for record keeping on crime reporting is a major challenge of crime investigation in Nigeria. Information which ought to be kept as public records for easy access and use by police investigators include telephone records, meteorological records, birth and death records, medical and dental records, tax and insurance and even criminal conviction records among many others. Sadly, however, it is a well-known fact within and outside Nigeria, that public record-keeping in Nigeria leaves a lot to be desired, as the majority of human transactions and natural phenomena occurrences go undocumented (Afonja, 2015).



# RECOMMENDATION

# WAYS OF IMPROVING FORENSIC INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES IN NIGERIA

In a densely populated country like Nigeria which is ranked the 4th highest crime rate country in Africa, presently one of the most terrorized countries in the world and constantly plagued with all forms of sophisticated crimes and attacks (Numbeo, 2020), it is important to put methods that will help in investigating and combating these crimes in place.

- ▶ There is a need for adequate training of forensic scientist and crime investigators in Nigeria. Introduction of forensic science into Nigeria higher institutions will enhance the training of experts in the field of forensic science, create awareness, spur interest and also lead to specialization and expertise in the field of forensics.
- ▶ It is important that Forensic Science and crime scene investigation courses are incorporated in the training modules at the Police Academy, Military Academy and other Law enforcement recruit training to ensure they start their career with this important knowledge and skill. Also, the Nigerian Bar Association should also include modules on Forensics in their law school curriculum, to educate lawyers. Experts can then educate the public through awareness. This way, Forensic science can truly work.
- ▶ There should be the enactment of laws by the government so as to cater for forensic science and also its admissibility in court. In a country like Nigeria, there is no law regulating forensic science application and enforcement. Even the Evidence Act, Penal Code, and Criminal Code make no provision for forensic-based analogy in criminal or general law. For us to move ahead, we need to create laws to guide forensic science and forensic evidence admissibility in the Nigerian court, create awareness through the education of Judges, magistrates, lawyers and all law enforcement agents in Forensic science. The country should borrow a leaf from its African counterpart; South Africa or from other developed countries such as Australia and the United State of America. These countries have a law that fundamentally caters for Forensic Science.

## WAYS OF IMPROVING FORENSIC INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES IN NIGERIA cont.

- ▶ There is an urgent need for the establishment of well-funded forensic laboratories in Nigeria as the existing few lack the basic required equipment, chemicals and manpower. Forensic laboratories should be established in at least one location in each of the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. This would tremendously help in terms of ascertaining and preserving evidence necessary for forensic investigation and criminal justice.
- ▶ The Ministry of Defense should also make regulations concerning forensic science procedures and enforcement considering the fact that it is urgently needed in order to curb crime and fast track trials. This is necessary because of the length of time associated with the enactment of laws by the National Assembly.
- ▶ The government should ensure that it funds the criminal justice sector with research grants on forensic science so as to ensure that the society is not constantly threatened by new trends of crimes especially those that are forensically inclined. A country like the USA provides sufficient funding for the FBI, CIA, BJS, and NIJ and this is obviously the reason why America is developing rapidly because crime is being monitored, controlled and eliminated as a result of the alertness and up-to-datedness of the law enforcement agencies.
- ▶ The criminal justice sector in partnership with the Ministry of Information should ensure that proper awareness is given to society in relation to how crime scenes can be managed. People are to be told how to stay clear of crime scenes. The investigators should also ensure that they do not loiter about the scene.
- ▶ Introduction of forensic database including the biometrics of every person in Nigeria especially the ones with criminal background for proper tracing.
- ▶ Collaboration among the military and all the law enforcement agencies i.e sharing of information, can greatly improve the fight against insecurity and crime.

**THANK  
YOU**

# REFERENCES

- ❖ Status and Needs of Forensic Science Service Providers. Rep. National Criminal Justice Reference Services. Web. 7 June 2012.  
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/213420.pdf>
- ❖ The book of Xi Yuan Lu (translated as Washing Away of Wrongs, written in China in 1248 by Song Ci(宋慈, 1186–1249), a director of justice, jail and supervision, during the Song dynasty.
- ❖ A Treatise on Forensic Medicine and Public Health by the French physician Francois Immanuele Fodéré.
- ❖ The Complete System of Police Medicine by the German medical expert Johann Peter Frank.
- ❖ Forensic science: evidence received after 31 July 1993 Select Committee on Science and Technology; Lord Dainton chaired the Forensic Science Sub-Committee (1993) Records on Copac

# REFERENCES cont.

- ❖ Medico-legal aspects of the Ruxton case by John Glaister and James Couper Brash (1937). "Lucid and scrupulously detailed ... a classic", Colin Evans Records on Copac
- ❖ Notebooks of medical case histories compiled by Thomas Scattergood (1846-1897) Records on Copac
- ❖ The toxicology of Robert Christison: European influences and British practice in the early nineteenth century" by Anne Crowther, in Jose Ramon Bertomeu-Sanchez and Agusti Nieto-Galan (editors) Chemistry, Medicine, and Crime: Mateu J.B. Orfila (1787-1853) and his times (2006) Records on Copac
- ❖ Berghaus, G., (1991) DNA-Technology and its Forensic Application, Springer-Verlag, New York
- ❖ Swanson C.R., C. Chamelin and T. Leonard (1996) Criminal Investigation, McGraw-Hill, Toronto.