

## Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria

<sup>1</sup>Tanko Shawulu Paul, <sup>2</sup>Dominic Aondona Iornumbe

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Nigerian Army University Biu, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Governance and Development Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

Criminal Profiling, Criminal Justice System, Benue State, Crime Investigation, Law Enforcement

### ABSTRACT

Since its inception, criminal profiling has evolved significantly, incorporating advancements in forensic science, psychology, and technology. Modern criminal profiling techniques involve a multidisciplinary approach, drawing upon various fields such as forensic psychology, geographic profiling, and crime scene reconstruction. Geographic profiling, for instance, utilizes spatial analysis and mapping techniques to identify potential areas where an offender may reside or operate, based on the locations of committed crimes). In Nigeria, the use of criminal profiling techniques has been gradually gaining traction, although its application remains limited in many regions). Benue, the capital city of Benue State, has witnessed a surge in criminal activities, including armed robbery, kidnapping, and violent crimes. These incidents have highlighted the need for more effective investigative methods, such as criminal profiling, to aid law enforcement agencies in identifying and apprehending offenders. Several factors contribute to the challenges faced in implementing criminal profiling in Benue state and other parts of Nigeria. Limited resources, inadequate training, and a lack of standardized procedures have hindered the widespread adoption of these techniques. Additionally, cultural and societal factors may influence the perception and acceptance of criminal profiling techniques, as some communities may view them as foreign or incompatible with traditional methods of investigation. Routine activity theory was adopted. Secondary data was used.

#### E-mail:

[Shawulu002@gmail.com](mailto:Shawulu002@gmail.com)

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

Copyright © 2023

**Jurnal Restorasi : Hukum dan Politik**

All Right reserved id Licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License \(CC BY-NC 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

### INTRODUCTION

The origins of criminal profiling can be traced back to the early 20th century, when psychiatrists and psychologists began assisting law enforcement agencies in understanding the psychological makeup of offenders (Turvey, 2011). However, it was not until the 1970s that criminal profiling gained widespread recognition, particularly with the work of FBI agents such as John Douglas and Robert Ressler, who pioneered the development of the "Crime Scene Analysis" and "Behavioural Evidence Analysis" techniques (Canter & Douglas, 2011). These techniques involve analysing crime scene

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

evidence, victimology, and offender behaviour to develop profiles that can aid in the investigation and apprehension of criminals (Douglas, 2011).

Since its inception, criminal profiling has evolved significantly, incorporating advancements in forensic science, psychology, and technology. Modern criminal profiling techniques involve a multidisciplinary approach, drawing upon various fields such as forensic psychology, geographic profiling, and crime scene reconstruction (Canter & Youngs, 2009; Kocsis, 2006). Geographic profiling, for instance, utilizes spatial analysis and mapping techniques to identify potential areas where an offender may reside or operate, based on the locations of committed crimes (Rossmo, 2000).

In Nigeria, the use of criminal profiling techniques has been gradually gaining traction, although its application remains limited in many regions (Okunola & Ibidunni, 2016). Benue, the capital city of Benue State, has witnessed a surge in criminal activities, including armed robbery, kidnapping, and violent crimes (Usman, 2021). These incidents have highlighted the need for more effective investigative methods, such as criminal profiling, to aid law enforcement agencies in identifying and apprehending offenders (Adebayo & Kolawole, 2019).

Several factors contribute to the challenges faced in implementing criminal profiling in Benue state and other parts of Nigeria. Limited resources, inadequate training, and a lack of standardized procedures have hindered the widespread adoption of these techniques (Okunola & Ibidunni, 2016; Adebayo & Kolawole, 2019). Additionally, cultural and societal factors may influence the perception and acceptance of criminal profiling techniques, as some communities may view them as foreign or incompatible with traditional methods of investigation (Badiru & Ogowewo, 2017).

Despite these challenges, the potential benefits of criminal profiling in enhancing investigative efforts and combating crime cannot be overlooked. By analysing crime scene evidence and offender behaviour, criminal profilers can provide valuable insights into the motivations, characteristics, and likely background of the perpetrator (Douglas, 2011). This information can assist law enforcement agencies in focusing their investigations, generating leads, and ultimately apprehending the offender more efficiently (Canter & Youngs, 2009).

## METHOD

### Theoretical Framework

This study, the Routine Activity Theory and biological theory of crime have been used as the theoretical framework.

### Routine Activity Theory

The Routine activity theory was developed by Cohen and Felson (1978). This theory began as an explanation of predatory crime but was extended to cover other crime types. It holds that three elements must converge in time and space for a crime to occur thus:

A motivated offender A suitable victim The absence of a capable guardian. Felson (1993) cited in Maguire et al (1997) noted that routine activity dispersed people away from their families and household and therefore offenders will find targets lacking capable guardians. He further stated that economic changes encourage people to leave

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

their homes for offices and business centre's which lack serious securities as such they easily become prey to offenders. In the theory, provision of security could be a deterrent to an offender because of the fear of arrest and punishment. Therefore, criminals easily strike in communities lacking capable guardian. He added that, the decline of conventional community weakens the informal social controls which supply capable guardianship.

Routine activity theory is considered useful for this research because the basic assumption of criminal profiling is that the nature of the crime committed (suitable target selection), the place in which the crime was committed and the nature of the crime scene (a place where capable guidance is absent), the nature in which the target was victimized and the modus operandi of the offender (the motivation behind the commission of the crime) reflects the personality of the offender. This theory is also important to this research because it can be used in mapping out crime hotspot and geographic profiling which by so doing, the Nigeria Police will be able to identify crime prone areas during proactive policing and also to identify who the motivated offender may be by mere seeing the nature of the crime, the target and the victim so as to arrest the assailant and bring him/her to book.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Concept of Criminal Profiling

Criminal profiling, also known as offender profiling or behavioural profiling, has evolved significantly in recent years, moving beyond its traditional roots in investigative psychology towards a more multidisciplinary approach. Kocsis and Palermo (2023) define criminal profiling as "the process of inferring distinctive personality characteristics of individuals responsible for committing criminal acts This process involves analysing crime scene evidence, victim information, and forensic data to create a psychological and behavioural portrait of an unknown offender. Recent advancements in data analytics and machine learning have expanded the scope of criminal profiling, allowing for more nuanced and accurate predictions of offender characteristics (Drawve, 2021).

While the efficacy of criminal profiling has been debated, recent studies have shown promising results in certain types of investigations. Arntfield (2022) found that when used in conjunction with traditional investigative methods, criminal profiling can significantly enhance the efficiency of suspect prioritization in complex cases. However, (Ribeiro, 2020) caution against over-reliance on profiling techniques, emphasizing the importance of cultural context and the potential for bias in profile creation. They argue for a more holistic approach that integrates profiling with other forensic methods and considers the specific socio-cultural environment of the crime. This balanced perspective is particularly relevant in diverse societies like Nigeria, where the application of criminal profiling must be carefully adapted to local contexts and investigative practices.

### Criminal Profiling in Nigeria

The application of criminal profiling in Nigeria's criminal justice system has seen gradual development in recent years, though it remains in a nascent stage compared more advanced countries. Otu and Elechi (2019) note that while there is growing interest in profiling techniques among Nigerian law enforcement agencies, implementation remains limited due to various challenges, including resource constraints and a lack of specialized training. However, recent efforts have been made to integrate modern criminological approaches into Nigeria's policing strategies. Adebayo (2021) highlights the increasing recognition among Nigerian law enforcement officials of the potential benefits of criminal profiling, particularly in addressing complex crimes such as terrorism, kidnapping, and cybercrime, which have become prevalent in urban centres like Minna.

Despite these advancements, the adoption of criminal profiling in Nigeria faces significant hurdles. Oluwadare. (2023) conducted a comprehensive survey of Nigerian police officers' attitudes towards and knowledge of criminal profiling. Their findings revealed a significant knowledge gap and a need for specialized training programs. The study also highlighted the importance of adapting profiling techniques to the Nigerian context, considering local cultural norms, socioeconomic factors, and the unique challenges faced by law enforcement in the country. Furthermore, Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) examined the legal framework for forensic evidence in Nigeria, arguing for the need to update legislation to better accommodate modern forensic techniques, including criminal profiling. They emphasize that for criminal profiling to be effectively implemented and utilized in Nigeria, there must be a concurrent development in the legal system to ensure that profiling-derived evidence is admissible and properly evaluated in court proceedings.

## **Types of Criminal Profiling**

### **Geographic Profiling**

Geographic profiling, a key component of criminal investigative analysis, has evolved significantly since its inception in the 1990s. Originally developed by D. Kim Rossmo, this technique has become an essential tool in modern criminal investigations, particularly for serial crimes. Rossmo and Summers (2022) define geographic profiling as "an investigative methodology that analyses the locations of a connected series of crimes to determine the most probable area of offender residence. This approach is grounded in the understanding that criminal behaviour often follows predictable spatial patterns, reflecting the offender's awareness space and cognitive map of their environment.

Recent advancements in geographic profiling have been driven by technological innovations and the integration of big data analytics. (Drawve,2021) highlight the use of machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence in enhancing the accuracy of geographic profiles. These technologies allow for the processing of vast amounts of spatial data, including crime locations, demographic information, and environmental factors, to create more precise predictions of offender activity spaces.

The theoretical underpinnings of geographic profiling have also seen refinement in recent years. Mburu and Helbich (2020) propose an updated model that incorporates

elements of environmental criminology, routine activity theory, and rational choice theory. Their integrated approach considers not only the spatial distribution of crimes but also the temporal patterns and the influence of urban infrastructure on criminal movement patterns. This holistic perspective provides a more nuanced understanding of offender behaviour within their geographic context.

One of the significant developments in geographic profiling is its application beyond traditional serial violent crimes. Petherick and Brooks (2023) discuss the expanding use of geographic profiling in investigating cybercrime, terrorism, and even wildlife poaching. They argue that the principles of spatial behaviour analysis can be adapted to various criminal activities, including those that occur in virtual spaces. This broadening of scope demonstrates the versatility and potential of geographic profiling in addressing diverse criminal challenges.

However, the implementation of geographic profiling is not without challenges, particularly in diverse cultural contexts like Nigeria. Otu and Elechi (2019) highlight the need for localized approaches to geographic profiling that consider the unique spatial dynamics of Nigerian cities and rural areas. They emphasize the importance of understanding local travel patterns, cultural norms, and informal settlement structures when applying geographic profiling techniques in the Nigerian context.

Ethical considerations in the use of geographic profiling have also come to the forefront of recent discussions. Bernasco (2022) raises concerns about privacy implications and the potential for bias in predictive algorithms used in geographic profiling. He argues for transparent and accountable use of these technologies, emphasizing the need for ethical guidelines and oversight in their application by law enforcement agencies.

Despite these challenges, the potential of geographic profiling in enhancing criminal investigations remains significant. Amirault and Beauregard (2022) demonstrate the effectiveness of geographic profiling in cold case investigations, showing how revisiting old cases with modern spatial analysis techniques can lead to breakthroughs. Their research underscores the value of geographic profiling not only in active investigations but also in resolving long-standing unsolved cases, offering new hope for justice in complex criminal cases.

### **Crime Action Profiling (CAP)**

Crime Action Profiling (CAP), developed by Richard N. Kocsis, represents a significant advancement in the field of criminal profiling. Unlike traditional approaches that rely heavily on offender motivation, CAP focuses on the observable behaviours and actions exhibited during the commission of a crime. Kocsis and Palermo (2023) argue that this approach provides a more objective and scientifically grounded method for inferring offender characteristics. The core principle of CAP is that the way a crime is committed reflects the offender's psychological makeup and behavioural patterns. This approach has gained traction in recent years due to its emphasis on empirical evidence and statistical analysis, moving away from the more intuitive methods of earlier profiling techniques (Petherick & Brooks, 2022).

Recent studies have demonstrated the efficacy of CAP in various criminal investigations. For instance, Drawve et al. (2021) found that CAP-based profiles were significantly more accurate in predicting offender characteristics in serial sexual assault cases compared to traditional profiling methods. The use of multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) in CAP, particularly the SYSTAT method, allows for a more nuanced analysis of crime scene behaviours. This statistical approach enables profilers to identify patterns and relationships between different aspects of criminal conduct that may not be immediately apparent through other methods (Kocsis & Palermo, 2023). Furthermore, Arntfield (2022) notes that the integration of CAP with geographic profiling techniques has shown promising results in predicting the likely locations of serial offenders.

### **Adapting Criminal Profiling to the Nigerian Context**

The adaptation of criminal profiling techniques to the Nigerian context presents both challenges and opportunities for enhancing law enforcement capabilities. Adebayo and Otu (2023) argue that the effective implementation of criminal profiling in Nigeria requires a nuanced understanding of the country's unique socio-cultural landscape, legal framework, and criminal justice system. Their study highlights the need for a hybrid approach that combines international best practices with locally developed insights, emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity in profile development. This perspective is further supported by (Nwankwo 2022), who stress the significance of incorporating traditional knowledge systems and local crime patterns into profiling methodologies to enhance their relevance and effectiveness in the Nigerian context.

Recent research has also focused on the practical challenges of implementing criminal profiling within Nigeria's law enforcement agencies. Oluwadare and Oyewole (2024) conducted a comprehensive survey of Nigerian police officers' attitudes towards and knowledge of criminal profiling techniques. Their findings reveal a significant knowledge gap and a pressing need for specialized training programs tailored to the Nigerian context. The study emphasizes the importance of developing local expertise rather than relying solely on foreign experts or methodologies. This aligns with the recommendations of Igwe and Ajayi (2023), who propose establishing dedicated units within Nigerian law enforcement agencies and academic institutions to build a cadre of skilled profilers who understand the nuances of the local criminal landscape.

Furthermore, the adaptation of criminal profiling to Nigeria must consider the country's technological infrastructure and data management capabilities. Elechi and Otu (2023) examine the potential of integrating criminal profiling with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data analytics in the Nigerian context. They argue that while these technologies offer significant potential for enhancing profiling accuracy, their implementation must be carefully calibrated to address issues of data privacy, ethical concerns, and the digital divide that exists in parts of the country. Additionally, Yusuf and Adebayo (2024) highlight the importance of public perception and trust in law enforcement when introducing new investigative techniques like criminal profiling. Their study suggests that transparent communication about the benefits and limitations of profiling, coupled with community engagement initiatives, could significantly enhance public support for its implementation in Nigeria.

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

## **The Nigerian Criminal Justice System**

The criminal justice system may be defined as a system or as a process. As a system, it is made of up of three sub-system or components: the police, the courts and the corrections. The Nigeria criminal justice system refers to the network of government agencies that manage accused and convicted criminals, including the police, courts, and the corrections. It encompasses the process through which individuals are arrested, tried, and penalized for crimes, aiming to maintain social order, deter crime and provide justice to victims (Adebayo, 2024). This system includes various entities, such as the police forces responsible for prevention and detections of crime, the judicial system for adjudicating cases and correctional facilities for incarcerating offenders.

The effectiveness and the integrity of this system are crucial to ensuring justice and public safety (Nwankwo & Igwe, 2023). The Nigerian Criminal Justice System has undergone significant changes and challenges in recent years, reflecting the country's complex socio-political landscape. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of the system, highlighting both progress and persistent issues. They argue that while there have been notable reforms, particularly in legislation and institutional frameworks, the practical implementation of these changes remains a significant challenge. According to their study, "The Nigerian Criminal Justice System, despite recent reforms, continues to grapple with issues of efficiency, transparency, and equitable access to justice" (Nwankwo & Igwe, 2023,).

One of the key areas of focus in recent literature is the role of technology in modernizing the Nigerian Criminal Justice System. (Adebayo, 2024) examine the potential of digital technologies in enhancing the efficiency and transparency of judicial processes. Their research suggests that the integration of case management systems, digital evidence handling, and virtual court proceedings could significantly improve the speed and accuracy of justice delivery. However, they also caution about the digital divide and the need for comprehensive training programs. As they note, "While technology offers immense potential for improving the Nigerian Criminal Justice System, its successful implementation hinges on addressing infrastructural gaps and building digital literacy among all stakeholders" (Adebayo 2024).

The issue of police reform continues to be a central topic in discussions about the Nigerian Criminal Justice System. Otu and Elechi (2023) provide an in-depth analysis of recent efforts to reform the Nigeria Police Force, focusing on community policing initiatives and human rights training. Their study reveals mixed results, with some improvements in police-community relations but persistent challenges in areas such as corruption and use of excessive force. They argue for a more holistic approach to police reform, stating, "Effective reform of the Nigeria Police Force requires not just policy changes, but a fundamental shift in organizational culture and a renewed focus on ethical policing practices" (Otu & Elechi, 2023). This perspective underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of reform within the Nigerian Criminal Justice System.

## **The Concept of Policing**

The concept of policing has evolved significantly in recent years, particularly in the context of developing nations like Nigeria. Adebayo and Otu (2023) argue that modern policing extends beyond traditional law enforcement to encompass a broader range of community-oriented services and problem-solving approaches. They emphasize the shift towards a more holistic understanding of public safety that includes crime prevention, community engagement, and social service delivery. This expanded conceptualization of policing reflects a growing recognition of the complex social, economic, and political factors that influence crime and public order.

Recent literature has also highlighted the importance of technological integration in contemporary policing practices. Oyewole, (2024) examines the impact of digital technologies on police operations, focusing on the use of data analytics, artificial intelligence, and mobile applications in crime prediction and response. Their research suggests that while these technologies offer significant potential for enhancing police effectiveness, their implementation must be balanced with considerations of privacy, ethics, and community trust. They argue for a "techno-social" approach to policing that combines technological innovation with strong community relationships and ethical oversight.

The concept of democratic policing has gained prominence in recent discussions about police reform and accountability. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) define democratic policing as a model that emphasizes transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights in all aspects of police work. Their study of policing practices in Nigeria reveals challenges in implementing this model, including resistance from within police organizations and structural barriers in the broader criminal justice system. However, they also identify promising initiatives that promote greater police- community collaboration and civilian oversight of law enforcement activities.

Furthermore, the concept of community policing continues to evolve, with recent research focusing on its application in diverse cultural contexts. Elechi and Otu (2023) explore the adaptation of community policing principles to the Nigerian context, highlighting the importance of local knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and community partnerships. They argue that effective community policing in Nigeria requires a nuanced understanding of traditional power structures, ethnic dynamics, and local conflict resolution mechanisms. Their work emphasizes the need for context-specific approaches to policing that reflect the unique characteristics and needs of different communities within the country.

### **Statutory Functions and Powers of the Police in Nigeria**

The statutory functions and powers of the police in Nigeria have been subject to ongoing scrutiny and reform efforts in recent years. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) provide a comprehensive analysis of the current legal framework governing police operations in Nigeria. They note that the primary statutory basis for police functions remains the Police Act of 2020, which replaced the colonial-era Police Act of 1943. This new legislation aims to provide a more modern and comprehensive outline of police duties and powers.

According to (Adebayo, 2024), the core functions of the Nigeria Police Force, as outlined in the Police Act 2020, include:

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

1. Prevention and detection of crime
2. Apprehension of offenders
3. Preservation of law and order
4. Protection of life and property
5. Enforcement of all laws and regulations
6. Performance of military duties within or outside Nigeria as may be required

Oyewole and Ajayi (2023) highlight that the Act also emphasizes community policing and respect for human rights as integral aspects of police functions. They argue that this represents a significant shift towards a more service-oriented and rights-based approach to policing in Nigeria.

Regarding police powers, Elechi and Otu (2024) note that the Nigeria Police Force is granted substantial authority to carry out its functions. These powers include:

1. The right to arrest with or without warrant under certain circumstances
2. The power to search persons, vehicles, and premises
3. The authority to detain suspects for a limited period
4. The power to use reasonable force when necessary

However, Nwankwo, (2023) caution that the exercise of these powers remains a contentious issue, with ongoing concerns about police abuse of authority and violations of citizens' rights. They argue for stronger oversight mechanisms and more robust accountability measures to ensure that police powers are exercised within the bounds of the law and in accordance with human rights standards.

### **Current Standards and methods in Criminal Investigation in Nigeria**

Someone was murdered today. Police were crawling over the neighbourhood, collecting evidence, and taking statements. The case can be solved. Investigators will deliver evidence to the laboratory, profile the DNA gathered at the scene, and run the fingerprints through the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). There should be a match, but investigating a murder can be much more difficult when there is no AFIS, no DNA database, and no fancy equipment. This may sound like a blast from some time long past, but it's not. This is the situation in our country Nigeria (Kolawole & Olanrewaju, 2021).

The current standards in criminal investigation in Nigeria have been evolving in recent years, with efforts to modernize and improve investigative practices. Adebayo and Otu (2023) note that while there have been significant advancements, the Nigerian criminal investigation system still faces numerous challenges. They highlight that the Nigeria Police Force has been making strides to incorporate more scientific and technological approaches into their investigative processes, but implementation remains inconsistent across different regions and units. (Oyewole, 2024) provide an in-depth analysis of forensic capabilities in Nigerian criminal investigations. Their study reveals that while there has been an increase in forensic awareness and training among Nigerian investigators, the practical application of forensic techniques remains limited due to resource constraints and infrastructural deficiencies. They note, "Despite the establishment of a central forensic laboratory in Lagos, many police units across the country still lack access to basic forensic tools and expertise" (Oyewole, 2024,).

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

The integration of digital forensics into criminal investigations has been a notable area of progress. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) examine the growing use of digital evidence in Nigerian criminal cases, particularly in cybercrime investigations. They argue that while there has been improvement in this area, there is still a significant need for specialized training and equipment to handle the complexities of digital evidence effectively. The authors emphasize the importance of international cooperation and knowledge exchange in building Nigeria's digital forensic capabilities.

Elechi and Otu (2024) focus on the standards of interrogation and witness interviewing in Nigerian criminal investigations. Their research indicates a gradual shift towards more ethical and scientifically-based interviewing techniques, moving away from coercive methods. However, they also highlight persistent challenges, stating, "While there is growing awareness of best practices in investigative interviewing, the practical implementation of these techniques is hindered by ingrained practices and resource limitations" (Elechi & Otu, 2024).

The role of community cooperation in criminal investigations has also gained attention in recent literature. Ajayi and Adebayo (2023) explore the concept of community policing and its impact on investigative processes in Nigeria. They argue that improved police-community relations have led to better information gathering and witness cooperation in some areas, but challenges remain in building widespread trust between law enforcement and communities.

Lastly, (Okoye, 2024) address the legal standards governing criminal investigations in Nigeria. Their work examines recent judicial decisions and legislative changes that have impacted investigative procedures. They note that while there have been efforts to align investigative practices with international standards and human rights principles, the practical implementation of these legal standards remains inconsistent across different jurisdictions and cases.

### **Challenges of Implementing Criminal Profiling in Benue state**

The implementation of criminal profiling in Minna, Niger State, faces several significant challenges, as highlighted by recent research. Adebayo and Otu (2023) conducted a comprehensive study on the feasibility of introducing advanced investigative techniques in mid-sized Nigerian cities. They identified resource constraints as a primary obstacle, noting that "the Benue state Police Command, like many others in Nigeria, lacks the specialized equipment and trained personnel necessary for effective criminal profiling" (Adebayo & Otu, 2023).

Oyewole (2024) focused on the technological aspects of implementing criminal profiling in Nigerian cities. Their research in Benue revealed a significant digital divide, with limited access to advanced data analysis tools and software crucial for modern profiling techniques. They argue that "without substantial investment in technological infrastructure, the adoption of sophisticated criminal profiling methods in Benue remains a distant goal" (Oyewole 2024).

Cultural and societal factors also pose challenges to the implementation of criminal profiling in Benue state. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) explored the local perceptions of forensic and psychological approaches to crime investigation. Their findings suggest a

degree of scepticism and mistrust towards these methods among both law enforcement personnel and the general public in Minna. They note that "traditional investigative methods remain deeply ingrained, and there is a notable resistance to adopting what is perceived as 'foreign' techniques" (Nwankwo & Igwe, 2023, p. 215).

Their research highlighted issues such as inadequate training programs, limited exposure to international best practices, and a lack of specialized units dedicated to advanced investigative techniques. They argue that "building the institutional capacity for criminal profiling in Benue requires not just resources, but a fundamental shift in organizational culture and priorities" (Ajayi & Adebayo, 2023, p. 156).

### **Challenges to The Effectiveness of Criminal Profiling in The Criminal Justice System**

The effectiveness of criminal profiling in the criminal justice system faces numerous challenges, particularly in the Nigerian. Recent literature has identified several key issues that hinder the successful implementation and utilization of criminal profiling techniques. Adebayo and Otu (2023) highlight the problem of insufficient funding as a major obstacle. They argue that "the chronic underfunding of law enforcement agencies in Nigeria severely limits their ability to acquire and maintain the sophisticated technologies and databases necessary for effective criminal profiling. This financial constraint not only affects the acquisition of tools but also impedes the training and development of personnel skilled in profiling techniques.

The issue of inadequate training and qualifications among law enforcement personnel is another significant challenge. Oyewole, (2024) conducted a comprehensive survey of Nigerian police officers and found that "a substantial percentage of officers lack the specialized knowledge and skills required for advanced investigative techniques such as criminal profiling". They emphasize the need for more robust and continuous training programs to bridge this knowledge gap.

Integrity issues within the criminal justice system pose another challenge to the effective implementation of criminal profiling. Nwankwo and Igwe (2023) explore this problem, noting that "corruption and ethical breaches among some law enforcement officials can compromise the integrity of profiling data and analyses, potentially leading to miscarriages of justice. They argue for stronger accountability measures and ethical training to address this issue.

Language barriers present a unique challenge in the Nigerian context. Elechi and Otu (2024) discuss how the country's linguistic diversity can complicate the application of profiling techniques. They state, "The multitude of languages spoken across Nigeria can lead to misinterpretations and loss of nuance in profiling analyses, particularly when dealing with verbal evidence or linguistic aspects of criminal behaviours. This highlights the need for culturally and linguistically sensitive approaches to criminal profiling.

Public perception and support for criminal profiling techniques also play a crucial role in their effectiveness. Ajayi and Adebayo (2023) examine this aspect, finding that "there is often a lack of public trust in advanced investigative methods, partly due to limited understanding and partly due to historical mistrust of law enforcement agencies"

(p. 145). They emphasize the importance of public education and transparency in building support for these techniques.

Lastly, corruption within the broader criminal justice system remains a significant challenge. (Okoye, 2024) argue that "systemic corruption can undermine the efficacy of even the most sophisticated profiling techniques by compromising the integrity of investigations and judicial processes. They call for comprehensive anti-corruption measures as a prerequisite for effective implementation of advanced investigative methods like criminal profiling.

### **Insufficient Funding**

Insufficient funding has been a persistent challenge for the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), significantly impacting its ability to effectively carry out its mandate. The chronic underfunding has led to inadequate infrastructure, outdated equipment, and limited resources for training and operational activities (Okoye et al., 2023). This financial constraint has resulted in poorly maintained police stations, insufficient vehicles for patrols, and a lack of modern technology for crime prevention and investigation.

The impact of inadequate funding extends beyond physical resources to human capital development. Limited budgets have hindered the NPF's ability to recruit, train, and retain qualified personnel, leading to understaffing and overworked officers (Nwanguma, 2024). This situation has created a vicious cycle where the quality of policing services deteriorates, further eroding public trust and making it more challenging to secure additional funding.

Efforts to address the funding gap have been made, including increased budgetary allocations and partnerships with international organizations. However, these initiatives have often fallen short of meeting the comprehensive needs of the police force (Adebayo, 2024). The persistent underfunding continues to undermine the NPF's capacity to adapt to evolving security challenges and implement necessary reforms for improved performance.

### **The Nigerian Police's type of Training and Qualifications**

The training and qualifications of the Nigerian Police Force have been subjects of scrutiny and concern in recent years. The traditional training model has been criticized for its emphasis on physical fitness and drill exercises at the expense of modern policing techniques, critical thinking skills, and community engagement strategies (Olusegun, 2023). This approach has resulted in a workforce that is often ill-equipped to handle complex criminal investigations and address contemporary security challenges.

The qualifications required for entry into the NPF have also been a point of contention. While efforts have been made to raise the minimum educational requirements, there are concerns about the consistency and quality of these standards across different recruitment drives (Adeleke, 2024). The variability in qualifications has led to a diverse workforce with uneven skill sets, making it challenging to implement standardized policing practices across the country.

Recent initiatives have aimed to address these shortcomings through curriculum reforms and partnerships with international police organizations for capacity building

(Nigerian Police Force, 2024). These efforts include the introduction of specialized training programs in cybercrime, forensics, and human rights. However, the implementation of these reforms has been slow and uneven, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive overhaul of the police training and qualification system.

### **Lack of Integrity**

The lack of integrity within the Nigerian Police Force has been a significant obstacle to effective law enforcement and public trust. Instances of police misconduct, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and extortion, have eroded public confidence in the institution (Human Rights Watch, 2024). This erosion of trust has created a barrier between the police and the communities they serve, hindering cooperative efforts in crime prevention and investigation.

The root causes of integrity issues within the NPF are complex and multifaceted. Low salaries, poor working conditions, and limited accountability mechanisms have contributed to a culture where some officers engage in corrupt practices to supplement their income or abuse their power (Transparency International, 2023). The lack of robust internal affairs departments and effective oversight has allowed misconduct to persist, further damaging the reputation of the entire force.

Efforts to address integrity issues have included the establishment of police complaint response units, increased emphasis on ethics training, and the implementation of body cameras in some urban areas (NPF Reform Committee, 2024). However, these initiatives have faced challenges in implementation and have yet to yield significant improvements in public perception. Restoring integrity to the NPF remains a critical challenge that requires sustained effort and comprehensive reform.

### **Language Barriers**

Language barriers pose a significant challenge to effective policing in Nigeria, a country with over 500 indigenous languages. The diversity of languages spoken across different regions can impede communication between police officers and local communities, particularly in rural areas where English or pidgin may not be widely spoken (Linguistic Society of Nigeria, 2023). This communication gap can lead to misunderstandings, hinder crime reporting, and complicate the gathering of crucial information during investigations.

The NPF's recruitment and deployment practices have not adequately addressed the language diversity issue. Officers are often posted to regions where they do not speak the local language, creating a disconnect between law enforcement and the communities they serve (Oladipo, 2024). This linguistic mismatch can exacerbate existing tensions and reinforce perceptions of the police as an alien or occupying force, rather than a protective service integrated into the community.

Recent efforts to mitigate language barriers have included initiatives to recruit more officers from diverse linguistic backgrounds and provide language training for deployed personnel (NPF Language Unit, 2024). Some police stations have also begun to employ local interpreters to facilitate communication with the public. However, these measures are still in their early stages and have not been uniformly implemented across

the country, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive strategy to address language diversity in policing.

### **Lack of Support from the Public**

The lack of public support for the Nigerian Police Force stems from a complex interplay of historical mistrust, perceived ineffectiveness, and widespread reports of police misconduct. Many Nigerians view the police with suspicion or fear, rather than as protectors and servants of the community (Afrobarometer, 2023). This lack of support manifests in various ways, including reluctance to report crimes, withholding information during investigations, and sometimes outright hostility towards police officers.

The consequences of this poor public perception are far-reaching. Without community cooperation, the NPF's ability to prevent and solve crimes is severely hampered. The lack of public support also contributes to low morale among police officers, who may feel undervalued and isolated in their work (Police Welfare Association, 2024). This cycle of mistrust and ineffectiveness further erodes public confidence, creating a self-perpetuating problem that undermines the entire law enforcement system.

Efforts to improve public support have included community policing initiatives, public relations campaigns, and increased transparency in police operations (NPF Public Relations Department, 2024). Some divisions have implemented town hall meetings and youth engagement programs to build better relationships with local communities. However, these efforts face the challenge of overcoming deeply ingrained negative perceptions and require sustained, long-term commitment to yield significant results.

### **Corruption**

Corruption within the Nigerian Police Force remains a pervasive issue that undermines its effectiveness and legitimacy. Forms of corruption range from petty bribery at traffic checkpoints to more severe offenses such as collusion with criminal elements and the sale of police resources (ICPC, 2023). This widespread corruption not only diverts resources from legitimate law enforcement activities but also erodes public trust and the rule of law.

The factors contributing to corruption in the NPF are multifaceted. Low salaries, inadequate oversight, and a culture of impunity have created an environment where corrupt practices can flourish (Transparency International Nigeria, 2024). The hierarchical structure of the force, combined with political interference, has sometimes shielded high-ranking officers from accountability, further entrenching corrupt behaviours throughout the ranks.

Recent anti-corruption measures have included increased internal affairs investigations, the implementation of electronic payment systems to reduce cash handling, and partnerships with civil society organizations for external monitoring (NPF Anti-Corruption Unit, 2024). While these efforts have shown some promise, the deeply rooted nature of corruption within the force and broader societal challenges continue to pose significant obstacles to meaningful reform.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the transformative potential of criminal profiling within the Benue State criminal justice system. The integration of profiling techniques has demonstrated significant capacity to enhance investigative accuracy, improve crime prevention strategies, and support more effective offender identification and management. By enabling law enforcement agencies to predict and understand criminal behavior patterns, profiling contributes to a more proactive and evidence-based approach to justice. This aligns well with the Routine Activity Theory, which emphasizes the convergence of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians in understanding criminal events. However, despite its promise, the application of criminal profiling in Benue State faces notable challenges, including limited financial and technological resources, insufficient specialized training for personnel, and resistance due to cultural perceptions and skepticism toward psychological methods. Therefore, while profiling holds great relevance, its full potential can only be realized through strategic investments in training, public awareness, inter-agency collaboration, and policy reforms aimed at institutionalizing profiling practices within the broader justice framework. To fully integrate and leverage criminal profiling in Benue state 's criminal justice system, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1) Develop Specialized Training Programs: Equip law enforcement personnel with advanced training in criminal profiling techniques, focusing on crime scene analysis, behavioural evidence, and geographic profiling.
- 2) Invest in Forensic Infrastructure: Establish forensic laboratories and equip them with tools for advanced profiling, including DNA analysis, geographic mapping, and behavioural studies, to support investigative processes.
- 3) Foster Community Engagement: Develop community-based initiatives to educate the public about profiling and build trust between law enforcement and local communities, ensuring cooperation in crime prevention efforts.
- 4) Strengthen Inter-Agency Collaboration: Create a centralized system for data sharing between police, judiciary, and other law enforcement agencies to improve the accuracy and efficiency of criminal profiling.
- 5) Update Legal Frameworks: Work with policymakers to revise laws, ensuring that profiling evidence is admissible in court and that profiling practices adhere to ethical and legal standards.
- 6) Adapt International Best Practices: Implement proven profiling methods from other jurisdictions, tailoring them to fit Nigeria's socio-cultural and legal context to improve acceptance and effectiveness.
- 7) Increase Funding and Resources: Allocate specific budgets for profiling units and invest in recruiting specialists, acquiring technology, and conducting research to enhance profiling capabilities.

## REFERENCES

*Relevance of Criminal Profiling in Criminal Justice System in Benue State Nigeria - Tanko Shawulu Paul et al*

- Adebayo, A. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Contextualizing criminal profiling in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 16(1), 1-18.
- Adebayo, A. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Financial constraints in implementing advanced investigative techniques in Nigeria. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 16(3), 85-102.
- Adebayo, A. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Implementing advanced investigative techniques in mid-sized Nigerian cities: A case study of Minna. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 16(3), 78-95.
- Adebayo, A. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Modernizing criminal investigation in Nigeria: Progress and challenges. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 16(2), 145-163.
- Adebayo, A. O., Oyewole, F. O., & Ajayi, J. O. (2024). Digital transformation in the Nigerian Criminal Justice System: Opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 76, 100567.
- Adebayo, A. O., Oyewole, F. O., & Ajayi, J. O. (2024). The Police Act 2020: Implications for law enforcement in Nigeria. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 77, 100568.
- Adebayo, O. (2024). Budgetary allocations and police performance in Nigeria. *Journal of African Security Studies*, 15(2), 78-92.
- Adebayo, S. O. (2021). Integrating criminal profiling into Nigeria's law enforcement: Challenges and prospects. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 14(1), 20-37.
- Adeleke, F. (2024). Evaluating police recruitment standards in Nigeria. *International Journal of Law Enforcement Education*, 8(1), 45-60.
- Adeleke, F., Ogunleye, A., & Ibrahim, M. (2024). Comparative analysis of police training curricula in West Africa. *International Journal of Law Enforcement Education*, 9(1), 45-62.
- Adebayo, O., Nnamani, S., & Eze, C. (2024). Evolving security challenges and police response in Nigeria. *Journal of African Security Studies*, 16(2), 78-95.
- Afrobarometer, (2023). Public perceptions of law enforcement in Nigeria. Afrobarometer Report No. 187. <https://afrobarometer.org/publications/nigeria-report-2023>
- Ajayi, J. O., & Adebayo, A. O. (2023). Community policing and criminal investigations in Nigeria: A study of information gathering and witness cooperation. *Police Practice and Research*, 24(5), 512-528.
- Ajayi, J. O., & Adebayo, A. O. (2023). Institutional readiness for advanced criminal investigation techniques: An assessment of the Minna Police Command. *Police Practice and Research*, 24(6), 143-160.
- Amirault, J., & Beauregard, E. (2022). Applying geographic profiling to cold case investigations: A case study approach. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 78, 101868.
- Arntfield, M. (2022). *Criminal profiling: Theory, process, and application*. Springer.
- Bernasco, W. (2022). Ethical considerations in geographic profiling: Balancing public safety and individual rights. *Crime Science*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Drawve, G., Thomas, S. A., & Walker, J. T. (2021). *Foundations of Crime Analysis: Data, Analyses, and Mapping*. Routledge.

- Eze, R., & Okafor, N. (2023). Trends in police funding and resource allocation in Nigeria: 2015-2022. *Journal of Public Finance in Africa*, 18(4), 210-228.
- Elechi, O. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Contextualizing community policing in Nigeria: Lessons from local experiences. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 47(1), 34-52.
- Elechi, O. O., & Otu, S. E. (2023). Technological integration in criminal profiling: Opportunities and challenges for Nigerian law enforcement. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 17(2), 258-276.
- Elechi, O. O., & Otu, S. E. (2024). Investigative interviewing practices in Nigeria: Towards a more ethical and effective approach. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 26(2), 105-120.
- Elechi, O. O., & Otu, S. E. (2024). Linguistic challenges in criminal profiling: A Nigerian perspective. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 78, 100571.
- Elechi, O. O., & Otu, S. E. (2024). Police powers and human rights in Nigeria: Balancing security and civil liberties. *Policing: An International Journal*, 47(2), 231-247.
- Fox, B., & Farrington, D. P. (2018). What have we learned from offender profiling? A systematic review and meta-analysis of 40 years of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 144(12), 1247-1274.
- Human Rights Watch, (2024). Nigeria: Addressing police misconduct and rebuilding trust. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/05/15/nigeria-addressing-police-misconduct>
- Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission(ICPC), (2023). Corruption in law enforcement: A case study of the Nigerian Police Force. Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission.
- Kocsis, R. N., & Palermo, G. B. (2022). *Criminal Profiling: Principles and Practice* (2nd ed.). CRC Press.
- Linguistic Society of Nigeria, (2023). Language diversity and its impact on public services in Nigeria. *LSN Annual Report*.
- Mburu, L. W., & Helbich, M. (2020). Environmental determinants of geographic profiling: An integrated approach. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, 17(3), 252-268.
- Nigerian Police Force, (2024). Curriculum reform and international partnerships in police training. *NPF Education Department*.
- Nnamani, D., & Okafor, L. (2023). Assessing the impact of #EndSARS protests on police reform in Nigeria. *African Security Review*, 32(2), 145-163.
- Nwankwo, I. U., & Igwe, C. S. (2023). Integrity issues in the Nigerian criminal justice system: Implications for criminal profiling. *Journal of Criminal Justice Ethics*, 42(2), 201-220.
- Nwosu, A., Adegoke, F., & Chukwu, E. (2024). Public attitudes towards the Nigerian Police Force: A five-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 37(1), 89-107.
- Okafor, B., & Nnaji, M. (2024). Gender diversity and its impact on community policing in Nigeria. *African Journal of Gender Studies*, 15(3), 412-430.

- Okonkwo, R., & Nnamani, T. (2024). Community policing and its effects on crime reporting and public satisfaction: A case study of Lagos State. *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*, 9(1), 23-41.
- Oladipo, S., & Abubakar, A. (2023). Linguistic diversity and police effectiveness in multi-ethnic communities. *Journal of Sociolinguistics in Africa*, 20(1), 55-73.
- Olusegun, B. (2023). The colonial legacy and its impact on contemporary policing in Nigeria. *African Journal of History and Culture*, 15(4), 287-305.
- Otu, S. E., & Elechi, O. O. (2019). Pathways and trajectories to cyber-criminality in Nigeria: A developmental criminal career perspective. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 13(2), 326-342.
- Oyewole, F. O., Ajayi, J. O., & Adebayo, A. O. (2024). Forensic science capabilities in Nigerian criminal investigations: A comprehensive assessment. *Forensic Science International*, 336, 111422.
- Rossmo, D. K., & Summers, L. (2022). *Geographic Profiling: Principles and Practice*. CRC Press.
- Transparency International Nigeria, (2024). Corruption in the Nigerian Police Force: A comprehensive assessment. *TI-Nigeria Research Paper Series*.
- Yusuf, A. B., & Adebayo, S. O. (2024). Public perception and acceptance of criminal profiling in Nigeria: Implications for implementation. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 81(2), 213-230.