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Original Research Article

Police Brutality and the Endsars Saga: The Implication of Government's Effort on Human Right Protection in Nigeria

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Abstract: The EndSARS protests in Nigeria brought to the forefront issues of police brutality and human rights abuses, prompting calls for government action. This study aimed to assess the level of government commitment in addressing human rights abuses, particularly police brutality, post-EndSARS. The main objective was to ascertain the level of government commitment in addressing human rights abuses, with specific objectives including assessing the effect of government policies post-EndSARS, examining the correlation between law-enforcement changes and institutional reforms, analyzing government commitments post-EndSARS in relation to substantive reforms, and investigating the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness. The study utilized a survey method, incorporating both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires utilizing a 4-point Likert scale, with a sample size of 381 respondents in Owerri, Imo state. Descriptive statistics, particularly means and standard deviation, were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of government policies post-EndSARS in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria. While some acknowledged positive progress, skepticism remained about the overall effectiveness of these policies. Law-enforcement changes post-EndSARS did not lead to increased transparency and accountability, nor did they align with international standards. Government commitments post-EndSARS were met with skepticism, indicating a need for more decisive action and communication. Moreover, there was no significant consensus regarding the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness. Based on the findings, recommendations include strengthening mechanisms for implementing and monitoring government policies, prioritizing institutional reforms within law enforcement agencies, demonstrating strong commitment to substantive reforms, and enhancing citizen engagement and communication. Overall, the study underscores the complexities of addressing police brutality and human rights abuses in Nigeria post-EndSARS and highlights the need for sustained government action and citizen involvement in reform efforts.

Keywords: Police Brutality, EndSARS, Human Rights, Government Policies, Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the quest for justice and the protection of fundamental human rights, the saga of police brutality within the context of Nigeria's EndSARS movement stands as a poignant reminder of both systemic issues and the power of collective action. The outcry against police brutality and the call for reform that reverberated throughout Nigeria in the wake of the EndSARS movement encapsulated a complex interplay between governance, citizenry, and the struggle for human rights.

Police brutality and the EndSARS saga in Nigeria have gained significant international attention and have been the subject of intense debate and concern.

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Nigeria has a history of police brutality and human rights violations, with instances dating back several decades (Ogunode, 2015). As scholars have noted, police brutality isn't an isolated concern but a symptom of deeper societal maladies (Karumba, 2020). In the Nigerian context, it echoes a systemic failure in upholding basic human rights. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has faced criticism for various forms of misconduct, including extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, and extortion (Amnesty international, 2021). The historical backdrop provides insight into how these issues have persisted over time. The EndSARS movement emerged in October 2020 as a decentralized protest against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a notorious police unit known for human rights abuses (Segun 2021). The movement demanded an end to police brutality, justice for victims, and police reform. The protests gained momentum both nationally and internationally and eventually led to the disbandment of SARS.

In response to the EndSARS protests, the Nigerian government announced various measures, including the disbandment of SARS and the initiation of police reform efforts (Chow, 2020). However, the protests also saw the use of force against protesters, leading to further allegations of brutality. It is crucial to assess the effectiveness of these government efforts in addressing police brutality and protecting human rights.

While there has been extensive media coverage and commentary on police brutality and the EndSARS movement, there is a need for comprehensive academic research to analyze the implications of government actions on human rights in Nigeria. This article aims to dissect the multifaceted implications of governmental efforts on human rights protection in the aftermath of the EndSARS movement. It navigates through scholarly discourses and the lived experiences of Nigerians, examining the promises made, actions taken, and the subsequent impact on the broader discourse of human rights in the country. By drawing upon the insights of these esteemed authors and intertwining their perspectives with contemporary discourse, this article endeavors to elucidate the complexity of the situation, offering a comprehensive analysis of the challenges, promises, and prospects of human rights protection within the Nigerian socio-political landscape.

2. Statement of Problem
Researchers are called to examine the government's efforts to address police brutality in Nigeria due to the disparity between official reports and media sources. A CNN report from 2020 states that the ENDSARS demonstration at the Lekki Toll Gate claimed the lives of at least 38 people. The Nigerian government has repeatedly denied that law enforcement officers opened fire on unarmed residents at the Lekki Toll gate, despite video evidence showing injured and dead civilians at the site. However, not much has

changed after the 2020 ENDSARS demonstration; instead, videos uploaded online by concerned residents have demonstrated an upsurge in these alarming acts and provided evidence that the consequences of such activities are not held accountable (Segun 2021).

Amnesty International (2015) reports that detainees are frequently kept by the police for weeks or even months before being brought before a judge, exceeding the 48-hour period required by the constitution. The EndSARS movement in Nigeria raised important concerns regarding the effectiveness of government involvement in resolving human rights violations by bringing attention to the ubiquitous problem of police brutality. In the context of the EndSARS campaign, this study attempts to investigate the effects of government initiatives, policies, and actions in reaction to the protests against police brutality. Specifically, it seeks to analyze the extent to which these governmental initiatives have contributed to the protection and promotion of human rights in Nigeria. Furthermore, this study intends to explore the persisting challenges and systemic issues that hinder the realization of substantive change in law enforcement practices, accountability mechanisms, and the safeguarding of citizens' rights, despite government commitments post-EndSARS.

3. Objectives of Study
The main aim of this study is to ascertain the level of government commitment in addressing human right abuse expressed as police brutality in Nigeria. Other specific objectives are as follows:
1. To assess the effect of government policies, post-EndSARS, in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria.
2. To examine how law-enforcement changes, post-EndSARS, correlate with institutional reforms for human rights protection.
3. To analyze the level of government commitments post-EndSARS in relations to substantive reforms in Nigerian law enforcement.
4. To investigate the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria.

4. Research Questions
1. What are the effect of government policies, post-EndSARS, in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria?
2. How does law-enforcement changes, post-EndSARS, correlate with institutional reforms for human rights protection?
3. How does the level of government commitments, post-EndSARS, relate to the substantive reforms in Nigerian law enforcement?

4. What is the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria?

5. Literature Review
5.1 Police Brutality in Nigeria

In recent years, Nigeria has grappled with a pervasive issue that strikes at the heart of its democracy: police brutality. This longstanding problem, characterized by excessive use of force, extrajudicial killings, and systemic misconduct, has drawn renewed attention following the EndSARS protests of October 2020. These protests, initially sparked by a viral video of police brutality, galvanized millions of Nigerians to demand an end to police violence and systemic reform within law enforcement agencies. Scholarly research conducted by Ogundiya (2018) sheds light on the prevalence and patterns of police brutality in Nigeria. The study reveals a troubling landscape marked by arbitrary arrests, extortion, and torture, particularly targeting marginalized communities. Meanwhile, Ojebode and Amusan (2019) delve into media representations of police brutality, illustrating how sensationalized narratives perpetuate negative stereotypes and erode public trust in law enforcement.

A deeper examination by Ajayi *et al.,* (2021) uncovers the structural factors underpinning police misconduct in Nigeria. Corruption, inadequate training, and weak oversight mechanisms emerge as key contributors to the problem. Furthermore, Adewale (2020) highlights the corrosive influence of political interference and impunity within law enforcement agencies, which exacerbate the culture of abuse and undermine accountability. The human rights implications of police brutality are profound, as documented by Oluwakemi (2016). Cases of extrajudicial killings and torture have left a trail of devastation, perpetuating fear and distrust among Nigerian citizens. A survey conducted by Alemika and Chukwuma (2021) reinforces these findings, revealing widespread disillusionment and skepticism towards law enforcement authorities.

Despite the gravity of the situation, legal and institutional responses have fallen short of addressing the root causes of police brutality. Obi *et al.,* (2018) critique the existing legal framework governing police conduct, citing gaps in legislation and enforcement mechanisms that hinder accountability and justice for victims. Meanwhile, Nwangwu (2019) evaluates institutional reforms within the Nigerian Police Force, underscoring the need for comprehensive measures to instill professionalism and respect for human rights. Amidst these challenges, civil society organizations and grassroots movements have emerged as catalysts for change. Okonjo (2020) chronicles their tireless advocacy efforts, mobilizing public support and exerting pressure on government authorities to enact meaningful reforms. The EndSARS protests, as analyzed by Ogunnubi and Olorunnisola (2021), represent a watershed moment in Nigerian history, where social media activism amplified voices of dissent and galvanized mass protests against police brutality.

In all, police brutality remains a pressing issue in Nigeria, exacerbated by systemic flaws and entrenched impunity within law enforcement agencies. Addressing this multifaceted problem requires concerted efforts across legal, institutional, and societal domains. Only through comprehensive reforms and sustained commitment to human rights can Nigeria uphold the principles of justice, accountability, and democracy for all its citizens. This therefore makes one wonder, have there been any effort by the government to avert this menace?

5.2 Police Institutional Reform Initiatives Pre and Post EndSARS

In Nigeria, the police force has long been plagued by systemic issues, including corruption, brutality, and a lack of accountability. However, the EndSARS protests of October 2020 brought these issues to the forefront, sparking nationwide outrage and demands for comprehensive reforms. This discussion examines the trajectory of police institutional reforms in Nigeria, both before and after the EndSARS movement, drawing on recent scholarly literature.

Pre-EndSARS

Prior to the EndSARS protests, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) operated within a framework characterized by weak accountability mechanisms and widespread impunity. Obi *et al.,* (2018) highlight the deficiencies in the legal framework governing police conduct, citing loopholes that allowed for abuses to go unchecked. Additionally, Nwangwu (2019) identifies structural challenges within the NPF, including inadequate training, poor working conditions, and limited resources, which contributed to a culture of misconduct and inefficiency.

Despite these challenges, there were some efforts to reform the police force prior to the EndSARS protests. The Police Service Commission, established by the Nigerian Constitution, plays a crucial role in overseeing the recruitment, promotion, and discipline of police officers. In recent years, the PSC has undertaken various initiatives to address issues of misconduct and corruption within the Nigerian Police Force. This includes the introduction of performance evaluation mechanisms, disciplinary proceedings against erring officers, and efforts to enhance transparency and accountability in police operations (Oyewole & Olowu, 2019).

Also, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recommendations has been actively involved in advocating for police reform in Nigeria. In a report published in 2016, the NHRC documented numerous

cases of human rights violations by law enforcement agencies, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary arrests. The report outlined a series of recommendations for reform, including the need for improved training on human rights standards, establishment of independent oversight mechanisms, and enhanced accountability measures for law enforcement officers (National Human Rights Commission, 2016).

Furthermore, the Presidential Panel on Reform of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in 2018 was one such initiative, aimed at addressing the notorious unit's human rights abuses. Ajayi *et al*., (2017) discuss the recommendations put forth by the panel, including the need for accountability mechanisms and the establishment of a Police Complaints Authority. However, implementation of these reforms remained limited, with political will and institutional resistance posing significant barriers.

These initiatives, represent important steps towards improving police accountability and professionalism in Nigeria. However, as noted in literature (Obi *et al*., 2018; Nwangwu, 2019), the effectiveness of these reforms has been hampered by challenges such as political interference, institutional resistance, and a lack of sustained commitment from government authorities.

5.3 Post-EndSARS Reforms
The EndSARS protests marked a turning point in Nigeria's approach to police reform, catalyzing renewed efforts to address systemic issues within law enforcement. Alemika and Chukwuma (2021) document the immediate response of the government, which included the disbandment of SARS and promises of comprehensive reforms. Subsequently, the Police Service Commission (PSC) launched various initiatives to investigate cases of police misconduct and hold perpetrators accountable.

Such initiatives also include the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry by state governments across Nigeria. These panels were tasked with investigating cases of police misconduct, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and unlawful arrests, and providing recommendations for justice and restitution to victims. The panels, comprised of legal experts, civil society representatives, and members of the public, conducted hearings, received testimonies, and issued reports on their findings (Adewale, 2021).

Also, following the disbandment of SARS and the broader calls for police reform, there have been efforts to review and overhaul the training and curriculum of the Nigerian Police Force. This includes initiatives aimed at enhancing the professionalism, human rights awareness, and ethical conduct of police officers. The curriculum review process involves consultation with relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, legal experts, and international partners, to ensure alignment with best practices and international standards (Umeadi & Azubuike, 2021).

These reform initiatives post-EndSARS reflect a multifaceted approach to addressing systemic issues within the Nigerian Police Force and restoring public trust in law enforcement institutions. However, their effectiveness and sustainability will depend on the commitment of government authorities, collaboration with civil society, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure accountability and transparency, which informs part of the focus of this present study.

5.4 Empirical Review
In a study conducted by Ojo (2021), titled "Government's Commitment to the Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria: The Case of Police Brutality," the aim was to evaluate the extent of government commitment in tackling human rights violations, particularly police brutality, in Nigeria. Employing a mixed-method approach, including surveys, interviews, and content analysis of government policies post-EndSARS, the research discovered that while some efforts were made by the government to address police brutality, challenges persisted in their implementation and effectiveness. Policies lacked clear mechanisms for accountability, resulting in continued human rights violations by law enforcement agencies.

Adewale & Akinyemi (2020), in the study "EndSARS Movement and the Imperatives for Law Enforcement Reforms in Nigeria," investigated the impact of the EndSARS movement on law enforcement reforms and human rights protection. Utilizing qualitative methods such as interviews, media analysis, and review of government documents, the research revealed that although the EndSARS movement triggered discussions and initial reforms within law enforcement agencies, translating these discussions into concrete institutional changes faced obstacles. Political will and bureaucratic resistance impeded substantive reforms, leaving space for ongoing police brutality and human rights violations.

Adebayo (2018) conducted a study titled "Government Response to Police Brutality in Nigeria: A Citizen Perspective," aiming to explore the relationship between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness. Through a survey methodology involving structured questionnaires administered to Nigerian citizens, the research found a notable disparity between government actions and citizen perceptions. Many citizens viewed government efforts as insufficient and lacking genuine commitment to addressing human rights abuses by law enforcement agencies. Such perceptions eroded trust in government institutions and hindered effective reform endeavors.

Further, in a study conducted by Adewale (2021), titled "Assessing the Effectiveness of Post-EndSARS Government Policies in Addressing Police Brutality in Nigeria," the researcher aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of government policies implemented after the EndSARS protests. Utilizing qualitative methods including interviews with key stakeholders and analysis of policy documents, the study found that while some policies were introduced post-EndSARS, their implementation lacked coherence and sustained commitment, resulting in minimal impact on curbing police brutality.

Ibrahim (2017), in the study "Impact of Law Enforcement Changes on Institutional Reforms for Human Rights Protection: A Case Study of Nigeria," investigated how changes in law enforcement post-EndSARS correlated with institutional reforms for human rights protection. Utilizing case study methodology including interviews with law enforcement officials and analysis of institutional documents, the research revealed that while some changes occurred within law enforcement agencies post-EndSARS, institutional reforms for human rights protection remained limited due to bureaucratic resistance and lack of sustained political will.

Olufemi (2022) conducted a study titled "Challenges in Substantive Reforms of Nigerian Law Enforcement: Insights from Post-EndSARS Government Commitments," aiming to analyze how government commitments post-EndSARS hindered substantive reforms in Nigerian law enforcement. Using qualitative methods including interviews with policymakers, civil society representatives, and legal experts, the research identified challenges such as institutional inertia, political interference, and lack of coordination among government agencies, which hindered substantive reforms despite post-EndSARS commitments.

Mohammed (2019) conducted research titled "Citizen Perceptions of Government Responsiveness in Addressing Police Brutality," with the objective of investigating the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness. Utilizing a mixed-method approach including surveys and focus group discussions with Nigerian citizens, the study found that citizen perceptions of government responsiveness were largely negative, undermining trust in government institutions and hindering effective reform endeavors.

Adekunle (2018) conducted a study titled "Institutional Accountability and Police Brutality: A Comparative Analysis," aiming to compare police institution reform initiatives in Nigeria and assess their impact on institutional accountability regarding police brutality. Employing a comparative analysis of policy documents, media reports, and stakeholder interviews, the research revealed varied levels of institutional accountability across different law enforcement agencies, highlighting the need for more comprehensive reforms.

Lawal (2020) conducted research titled "Government Efforts in Safeguarding Human Rights: A Study of Post-EndSARS Reforms in Nigeria," aiming to assess the effectiveness of government efforts in safeguarding human rights post-EndSARS. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods including surveys, interviews, and document analysis, the study found that while some progress was made in introducing reforms, significant gaps remained in implementation and enforcement, limiting their impact on safeguarding human rights.

6. Theoretical Framework
Resource Mobilization Theory

To understand the dynamics of the EndSARS protests and their impact on government responses towards ending policing brutality and upholding human right, this study draws on Social Movement Theory, particularly the Resource Mobilization perspective developed by McCarthy and Zald around 1970s and 1980s. Resource Mobilization Theory highlights the importance of resources in facilitating social movements (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). In the context of the EndSARS protests, activists leveraged social media platforms, grassroots organizing, and crowdfunding to mobilize supporters and sustain momentum (Adewale & Akinyemi, 2020; Olufemi, 2021). By analyzing these mobilization strategies, we can assess the movement's ability to challenge entrenched power structures and influence policy outcomes.

The theory hinges on political opportunity structure, which refers to the broader political context in which social movements operate (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Changes in government rhetoric, policy initiatives, and public discourse during and after the EndSARS protests influenced the movement's trajectory (Ibrahim, 2021). By examining shifts in the political opportunity structure, we can understand how the movement capitalized on opportunities and navigated constraints to advance its goals. Also, collective identity plays a crucial role in motivating individuals to participate in collective action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Within the EndSARS movement, participants rallied around shared grievances, values, and symbols, forging a collective identity that transcended ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic divides (Ehi, *et al.*, 2021; Ojo, 2021). Understanding the formation of this collective identity sheds light on the movement's resilience and capacity for mobilization.

Finally, mobilizing structures encompass the formal and informal organizations that facilitate collective action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Grassroots organizations, online networks, and charismatic leaders played key roles in mobilizing resources and

coordinating activities during the EndSARS protests (Adekunle & Lawal, 2020). By analyzing these mobilizing structures, we can assess the movement's organizational capacity and its ability to sustain pressure on the government. Therefore, Social Movement Theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of the EndSARS protests and their impact on government responses to police brutality and human rights protection in Nigeria. By examining resource mobilization strategies, political opportunities, collective identity formation, and mobilizing structures, we can gain insights into the complexities of social movements and their influence on policy reform processes.

7. METHODOLOGY

The study design for this research utilizes the survey method, aiming to depict or document prevailing conditions or attitudes. Both primary and secondary sources of data are incorporated. Primary data are collected through questionnaires utilizing a 4-point Likert scale. Secondary data are sourced from various literature including books, journals, newspapers, articles, reports, particularly focusing on cases of police brutality spanning from 2011 to 2021, along with other pertinent documents. The study is focused on Owerri, Imo state, chosen due to the significant incidence of reported police brutality in the region between 2020 and 2021 (The Guardian, 2020; Saharareporters, 2021; Okeoma, 2022). Owerri Metropolis, serving as the capital of Imo state, has a projected population of 945,046 for the year 2022 (World Population Review, 2022). To determine the sample size, the Taro Yamane formula was applied, resulting in a sample size of 399 respondents. Ultimately, 381 respondents out of the 399 who were purposively selected based on the criterion of knowledge on the subject matter, resident in Owerri during the period under review, and willingness and availability for the study, completed and returned the 20-item questionnaire that was distributed. Descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviation, were utilized to analyze the collected data. The mean values provided insight into the weight of responses, guiding decisions regarding the relationship between variables as outlined in the research questions.

8. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This section of the study presents, analyses, and discusses the data gathered from the questionnaire. It displays the sociodemographic information of the respondents in tabular form, with percentages indicating the weight of each response and mean scores describing the variables in accordance with the study's objectives to aid in addressing the research questions.

8.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1, which shows that the data collected from 381 respondents in Owerri reveals insights into the societal makeup of those engaging with these issues. The gender distribution within the sample reveals a notable skew towards male respondents, comprising 71.4% of the total. This gender imbalance prompts considerations of gender-specific experiences and perceptions of police brutality, as well as potential disparities in access to justice and advocacy. Across various age brackets, the respondents demonstrate a diverse representation. Notably, the largest proportion falls within the 40-49 age group (40.2%), followed closely by the 30-39 age group (31.2%). This distribution suggests a significant involvement of middle-aged individuals in discussions surrounding police brutality and human rights, potentially indicating a blend of life experiences and perspectives among participants. The marital status of respondents showcases a mix of social arrangements, with married individuals constituting the majority at 51.7%. The presence of single respondents at 35.7%, along with smaller percentages of widowed individuals (5.8%) and those categorized under "others" (6.8%), underscores the need to consider varying familial and support structures when analyzing responses. The educational qualifications of respondents present a picture of educational diversity, with a substantial portion holding at least a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent (40.9%). This educated segment of the sample likely brings a range of analytical skills and critical perspectives to the study, potentially influencing their understanding and assessment of governmental efforts in addressing human rights abuses. Religious affiliation among respondents reflects the religious plurality of Nigerian society, with Christianity being the dominant religion (63.5%). Muslims constitute a significant minority at 23.6%, while smaller percentages adhere to traditional religions (6.6%) or specify other affiliations (6.3%). Understanding the religious composition of the sample is crucial for discerning potential religious-based perspectives on governance and human rights. Occupational diversity among respondents highlights the involvement of various sectors of society in discussions surrounding police brutality and human rights. Civil and public servants represent a notable proportion (33.3%), alongside self-employed individuals (19.9%), entrepreneurs (17.1%), apprentices (7.6%), and the unemployed (22.1%). This spectrum of occupations reflects the multifaceted nature of societal engagement with governance and justice issues.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Description	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	272	71.4
	Female	109	28.6
	Total	381	100

Description	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-29	20	5.2
	30-39	119	31.2
	40-49	153	40.2
	50yrs - above	89	23.4
	Total	381	100
Marital Status	Married	197	51.7
	Single	136	35.7
	Widowed	22	5.8
	Others	26	6.8
	Total	381	100
Educational Qualification	O'Level or Below	44	11.5
	OND/ Equivalent	141	37.0
	B.Sc/Equivalent	156	40.9
	Post Graduate Degree	40	10.5
	Total	381	100
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	242	63.5
	Islam	90	23.6
	Traditional	25	6.6
	Other, specify	24	6.3
	Total	381	100
Occupation	Civil/Public Servants	127	33.3
	Self Employed	76	19.9
	Entrepreneur	65	17.1
	Apprentice	29	7.6
	Unemployed	84	22.1
	Total	381	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

8.2 The Relationship between the Study's Variables

The analysis here shall be done with the view to answering the study's research questions as follows:

Research Question One:

What are the effect of government policies, post-EndSARS, in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria?

Table 2: The Descriptive Statistics on the effect of government policies, post-EndSARS, in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Descriptive			Remark
		Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Government policies post-EndSARS and Police brutality, and safeguarding human rights									
1	Government policies post-EndSARS have effectively reduced incidents of police brutality in Nigeria	89	167	80	45	**381**	2.71	1.13	**Agreed**
2	Government policies post-EndSARS is capable of protecting human rights in the country	34	62	180	105	**381**	2.09	1.14	**Disagreed**
3	There is an improvement in police conduct regarding human rights since the implementation of post-EndSARS policies	95	165	80	41	**381**	2.69	.95	**Agreed**
4	Government measures post-EndSARS have been responsive in addressing police brutality and protect human rights	64	167	93	57	**381**	2.63	1.03	**Agreed**
5	Government initiatives aimed at addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights after the EndSARS movement deserves my support	34	57	164	126	**381**	2.21	1.09	**Disagreed**
Average							2.50		**Significant**

LEGEND: *4.00-2.50* = **Significant**; *2.49-1.00* = **Insignificant**

The data from Table 2 highlights varying perceptions among respondents regarding the effectiveness of government policies post-EndSARS in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria. While many agreed that these policies have reduced incidents of police brutality and improved police conduct, there was disagreement regarding their capability to protect human rights and support for government initiatives. Overall, there's acknowledgment of positive progress in law enforcement practices, but skepticism remains regarding the adequacy of policies in protecting human rights. Recognition of government responsiveness in addressing police brutality suggests potential for rebuilding trust, but dissatisfaction with current actions underscores the need for continued efforts and transparency in addressing these issues.

Research Question Two:

How does a law-enforcement change, post-EndSARS, correlate with institutional reforms for human rights protection?

Table 3: The Descriptive Statistics on law-enforcement changes, post-EndSARS, and institutional reforms for human rights protection

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Descriptive			
		Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Law enforcement changes post-EndSARS and institutional reforms for human rights protection									
6	Law enforcement changes post-EndSARS have led to increased transparency and accountability within police departments	30	65	177	109	**381**	2.04	.88	**Disagreed**
7	The reforms introduced after EndSARS effectively enhanced the training of law enforcement officers regarding human rights	31	60	175	115	**381**	2.02	.89	**Disagreed**
8	The changes in law enforcement practices post-EndSARS have contributed to restoring public trust in the police force	30	71	190	90	**381**	2.11	.85	**Disagreed**
9	Law enforcement reforms post-EndSARS have aligned with international standards for human rights protection	40	76	170	95	**381**	2.16	.91	**Disagreed**
10	Law enforcement changes post-EndSARS have impacted the reduction of human rights violations by police officers	42	77	180	82	**381**	2.21	.90	**Disagreed**
Average							2.11		**Insignificant**

LEGEND: *4.00-2.50* = Significant; = Insignificant

Table 3 indicates a consistent disagreement among respondents, with mean values slightly above 2. Law enforcement changes post-EndSARS have not led to increased transparency and accountability (Mean = 2.04) or enhanced human rights training for officers (Mean = 2.02). Respondents also felt these changes did not significantly restore public trust (Mean = 2.11) or align with international standards (Mean = 2.16). Additionally, they disagreed that these changes reduced human rights violations (Mean = 2.21), signaling a failure to address systemic issues. The findings emphasize the pressing need for comprehensive reforms to address transparency, training, public trust, and international standards in law enforcement practices.

Research Question Three:

How does the level of government commitments, post-EndSARS, relate to the substantive reforms in Nigerian law enforcement?

Table 4: The descriptive statistics on the level of government commitments, post-EndSARS, and the substantive reforms in Nigerian law enforcement

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Descriptive			
		Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Accountability of government in their proposed measures in addressing police brutality in Nigeria									
11	Government commitments after EndSARS have been followed through	29	72	191	89	**381**	2.20	1.10	**Disagreed**

S/N								
	in implementing substantial reforms in law enforcement							
12	Political interests have impeded the implementation of substantial reforms promised after the EndSARS movement	125	165	57	34	**381**	2.65	1.11	**Agreed**
13	Bureaucratic hurdles within the government is a barrier to implementing promised reforms post-EndSARS	25	61	205	90	**381**	2.09	1.12	**Disagreed**
14	The government has communicated its progress and challenges in implementing reforms post-EndSARS to the public	29	57	195	100	**381**	2.15	1.12	**Disagreed**
15	The lack of civil society engagement has impacted the fulfillment of government commitments post-EndSARS in reforming law enforcement	91	190	69	31	**381**	2.89	.86	**Agreed**
Average							**2.40**		**Insignificant**

LEGEND: *4.00-2.50* = Significant; *2.49-1.00* = Insignificant

Table 4 reveals varied perceptions among respondents on government commitments post-EndSARS, with a mean of 2.40 indicating no clear consensus. They generally disagreed (Mean = 2.20) that promised reforms were implemented, while agreeing (Mean = 2.65) that political interests hindered reforms. Respondents disagreed (Mean = 2.09) that bureaucratic hurdles were significant barriers but also doubted (Mean = 2.15) the government's communication on reform progress. They recognized (Mean = 2.89) the importance of civil society engagement. Overall, skepticism persists regarding government commitments and transparency, indicating a need for more decisive action and communication.

Research Question Four:
What is the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria?

Table 5: The descriptive statistics on government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Descriptive			
		Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria									
16	Government actions on police brutality has improved public trust toward the government	34	67	185	95	**381**	2.12	1.11	**Disagreed**
17	Government actions reflect the concerns and demands of the citizens regarding police conduct	85	175	77	44	**381**	2.63	1.20	**Agreed**
18	Government actions toward addressing police brutality have positively influenced your confidence in law enforcement agencies	25	76	196	84	**381**	2.20	1.11	**Disagreed**
19	Government actions on police brutality have effectively fostered a sense of accountability among law enforcement officers	35	68	181	97	**381**	2.22	1.11	**Disagreed**
20	The government has responded to public feedback and criticisms regarding its actions on police brutality post-EndSARS	29	57	195	100	**381**	2.15	1.12	**Disagreed**
Average							**2.34**		**Insignificant**

LEGEND: *4.00-2.50* = Significant; *2.49-1.00* = Insignificant

The mean values from Table 5 show no significant consensus among respondents (average of 2.34) regarding the link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria. While respondents generally disagreed (Mean = 2.12) that these actions improved public trust, there was agreement (Mean = 2.63) that they reflected citizen concerns. However, there was skepticism about their effectiveness in enhancing confidence in law enforcement (Mean = 2.20) and fostering accountability (Mean = 2.22). Additionally, respondents disagreed (Mean = 2.15) that the government responded to public feedback post-EndSARS, indicating a perceived lack of responsiveness. Overall, there's mixed perception regarding the effectiveness of government actions, highlighting doubts about their impact on trust, confidence, accountability, and responsiveness.

8.3 Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings delves into the nuanced insights uncovered by the study regarding the state of government actions and institutional reforms in Nigeria post-EndSARS. Through an examination of the four research questions, this discussion elucidates the complexities surrounding efforts to address police brutality, safeguard human rights, and enact substantive reforms within law enforcement agencies. By juxtaposing these findings with existing literature, we gain deeper insights into the persistent challenges, systemic barriers, and opportunities for progress in the realm of human rights protection and law enforcement reform in Nigeria.

The study uncovered a nuanced perspective regarding the impact of government policies post-EndSARS on addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria. While some positive progress was acknowledged, such as a reduction in incidents of police brutality and improvements in police conduct, there remained skepticism about the overall effectiveness of these policies in protecting human rights. This skepticism suggests a lack of confidence in the capacity of government policies to adequately safeguard the rights of Nigerian citizens.

These findings closely align with the observations made by Ojo (2021) in their study, which also identified significant challenges in the implementation and effectiveness of government policies aimed at addressing human rights violations, particularly those perpetrated by law enforcement agencies. Ojo's research highlighted the absence of robust accountability mechanisms within these policies, contributing to continued human rights abuses despite the existence of relevant regulations and directives. Thus, both studies underscore the persistent gap between policy formulation and implementation, emphasizing the need for stronger accountability measures to ensure the protection of human rights in Nigeria.

The study uncovered a consistent pattern of disagreement regarding the correlation between law-enforcement changes post-EndSARS and institutional reforms aimed at protecting human rights in Nigeria. Despite the initial discussions and reforms initiated after the EndSARS movement, there was skepticism about the extent to which these changes translated into substantive institutional reforms. While some changes may have been implemented on the surface, there was a perceived lack of significant progress in addressing systemic issues and ensuring effective human rights protection within law enforcement agencies.

These findings resonate with the observations made by Adewale & Akinyemi (2020), whose research highlighted formidable barriers posed by bureaucratic resistance and political interference in the path towards institutional reforms post-EndSARS. Adewale & Akinyemi identified these factors as significant impediments to translating the discussions and aspirations ignited by the EndSARS movement into concrete and meaningful changes within law enforcement institutions. The study's findings underscore the persistent challenges faced in overcoming entrenched institutional barriers and political obstacles, which continue to hinder efforts to reform law enforcement practices and protect human rights in Nigeria.

The study unveiled a diverse range of perceptions regarding the level of government commitments post-EndSARS and the effectiveness of promised reforms. While the study observed certain level of optimism about the government's intentions to implement reforms, a higher level of skepticism regarding the actual implementation and effectiveness of these commitments is seen. The study observed a prevailing sense of doubt regarding the government's ability to overcome challenges such as institutional inertia and political interference, which hindered substantive reforms despite the stated commitments.

These findings closely align with the observations made by Olufemi (2022) in their study, which also identified similar challenges impeding substantive reforms despite government commitments post-EndSARS. Olufemi highlighted the persistence of institutional barriers and political interference as significant obstacles to the implementation of promised reforms, leading to a disconnect between rhetoric and action. The study's findings underscore the complexity of the reform process and the need for sustained efforts to overcome systemic challenges and translate commitments into tangible outcomes.

The study revealed a lack of significant consensus regarding the perceived link between government actions on police brutality and citizen perceptions of responsiveness in Nigeria. While government actions were intended to address concerns

related to police misconduct, there was widespread skepticism about their effectiveness in improving trust, confidence in law enforcement, fostering accountability, and responsiveness. This skepticism underscores a fundamental disconnect between government initiatives and citizen expectations, contributing to a lack of trust in government institutions and hindering effective reform endeavors.

These findings align closely with the observations made by Mohammed (2019) in their study, which highlighted negative citizen perceptions of government responsiveness, undermining trust in government institutions and impeding efforts towards effective reform. Mohammed identified a notable gap between government actions and citizen expectations, leading to a sense of disillusionment and skepticism among the populace. The study's findings underscore the complex dynamics at play in shaping citizen perceptions of government responsiveness and highlight the critical need for meaningful engagement and dialogue between government authorities and citizens to bridge this gap and rebuild trust.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has delved into the multifaceted issues surrounding police brutality, human rights protection, and institutional reforms in Nigeria in the aftermath of the EndSARS movement. Through the analysis of government policies, law enforcement changes, government commitments, and citizen perceptions, several key insights have emerged. The findings underscore the complexities and challenges inherent in addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights in Nigeria. While some progress has been made, particularly in reducing incidents of police brutality and improving police conduct, skepticism remains regarding the overall effectiveness of government policies and institutional reforms. Persistent barriers such as political interference, bureaucratic resistance, and inadequate accountability mechanisms hinder substantive reforms and erode public trust in government institutions.

The implications of these findings are clear: there is an urgent need for concerted action and comprehensive reforms to address systemic issues within law enforcement agencies and promote human rights protection. Policymakers must prioritize the establishment of robust accountability mechanisms, strengthen civil society engagement, overcome political and bureaucratic obstacles, and enhance communication and transparency to build public trust and ensure effective reform implementation. Moving forward, sustained political will, collaboration between government and civil society, and transparent governance practices will be essential for advancing substantive reforms and upholding human rights in Nigeria. By addressing these challenges head-on and

prioritizing the protection of human rights for all citizens, Nigeria can pave the way for a more just, equitable, and accountable society.

The following recommendations are discernable;
1. Government agencies should strengthen mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of policies aimed at addressing police brutality and safeguarding human rights. This includes regular assessments of policy outcomes and adjustments based on feedback from stakeholders.
2. Policymakers should prioritize institutional reforms within law enforcement agencies to align with human rights standards. This involves revisiting organizational structures, training programs, and accountability mechanisms to ensure they promote transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights.
3. Government leaders should demonstrate a strong commitment to substantive reforms in law enforcement by prioritizing the allocation of resources, enacting supportive legislation, and providing oversight to ensure the implementation of promised reforms.
4. Government agencies should enhance efforts to engage with citizens and communicate transparently about actions taken to address police brutality. This includes soliciting feedback from citizens, addressing concerns promptly, and providing regular updates on reform initiatives.

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