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**An Evaluation of the Challenges of Forensic Investigation and  
Unsolved Murders in Nigeria.**

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**Abstract**

*The work attempts to evaluate the challenges facing forensic investigation capacity of the police and other internal security agencies in Nigeria in the face of high prevalence of unsolved murders in Nigeria in the past three decades. In carrying out this research both primary and secondary data were employed to add to the scientific fervour of the work. Consequently, the work discovered that poor/lack of forensic skills and equipment negatively impacts on the forensic investigation capacity of the police and other security agents. These impediments tend to further complicate the mystery of unsolved murders in a nation where even high profile politicians have been assassinated without any forensic clue. The study therefore advocates that forensic experts in the country needs to improve on their skills and acquire equipment that will enhance the cracking of unsolved murder cases and improve public safety in Nigeria.*

**Key Words:** Forensic Investigation, Unsolved Murders, Nigeria, Police, Security.

**INTRODUCTION**

The foundation of all forensic investigation is based on the ability of the crime scene investigator therefore is to recognize the potential and importance of physical evidence, large and small, at the crime scene (Miller et al 2000). One of the guiding principles in forensic science as postulated by Edmond Locard, an authority in the field of forensic science is that every contact leaves a trace; these traces are usually the physical, biological or trace evidence collected from a crime scene for onward transmission to the laboratory for scientific examination.

Physical evidence refers to any item that comes from a non living origin. The most important kinds of physical evidence are finger prints, fire marks, footprints, fibres, paint and building materials etc. Biological evidence always originates from a living being. It includes blood stains and DNA. Trace evidence found in minute quantities and examples are textile fibres, hair stands also form part of the trace elements. Typically, trace evidence are invisible to the naked eye and are collected by brushing or vacuuming a suspect surface. Since crimes are unique, a victim of crime is also a crime scene. The result of the scientific

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examination usually links the suspect(s), victim and the crime together, thereby making the identification of the suspect possible with or without eye-witnesses. Hence forensic evidence is sometimes referred to as the “silent witness” (Onashile, 2009).

All over the world, there are cases of unsolved murders. According to Associated Press (2011), Rio de Janeiro's public defenders' department says the Brazilian state has accumulated more than 60,000 unsolved murders in the last 10 years. The department investigated the matter for the federal Ministry of Justice as part of a national plan to improve public safety. The survey shows that 24,000 of the victims haven't even been identified. The creation of a special homicide division in the city of Rio de Janeiro did little to improve the solution rate as murders went from 11 percent to 14 percent. Across Brazil, police solved about 8 percent of murders. In the United States and in European countries the rates are reportedly around 70 percent to 80 percent. This seemingly embarrassing criminal justice conundrum continue to hunt all nations of the world and for the developing nations, these challenges are quite daunting.

In Nigeria, over the years, experts have linked the many cases unsolved murders that dot Nigeria criminal justice system to absence of forensic evidence. This forensic gap has rendered justice quite ineffective. Every time someone, is murdered, Nigerians are told that the president and commander – in – chief of the armed forces has ordered the inspector – General of police to fish out the killers. But to the long suffering of citizens, such a statement means nothing. They do not amount to anything because they know nobody will be fished out many know nothing will happen going by the high number of murders, especially political, they have gone unresolved in the nation for almost 30 years ( Oladele, 2006). This nation has degenerated to a level where life is seemingly worthless and where serious crimes such as murder continue to remain unsolved by the criminal justice system. This according to some analysts could be due partly to the complicity of the government and massive cover ups and complete ineptitude by law enforcement officials in resolving most of these heinous crimes.

The Nigerian police force is charged with the responsibility of maintaining law and order and internal security especially as they affect protection of lives and property of the entire populace in addition to other functions that will enhance tranquillity and harmony in the society. But unfortunately, the effort of the police in curbing crime and protecting lives and property has been quite inadequate thereby attenuating the confidence of the public in the Police. This aggravated mistrust between the police and members of the Nigerian public adds to the mystery of unsolved murders.

According to Singh (2001) “so long as crime is kept under control and within limits, it can be said that society is getting good governance”. Unfortunately in Nigeria today, crime and politics are twin brothers. Crime is on rampage ravaging even law and order. Tragically, even though the existing laws are adequate to tackle the menace, the government does not have the political will to investigate

let alone prosecute these politically motivated murders because most of the perpetrators are embedded in the state machinery (Oladele, 2001). The threats of crime enmeshed in the political fabric of the country have further frustrated investigations into assassinations and murders in the country. The result is a serious dent on the forensic investigative ability of the Nigeria police and other such security agencies. The identification of murder suspects is a critical element in forensic investigation. However, it is apparent that finger prints of arrestees and storage of a finger print data bank to deter criminals and repeat offenders appear to be ineffective or even non existent (Onashile, 2009). Onashile further argued, that the police records not based on strong forensic evidence are largely useless as many criminals will escape detection because names and faces change everyday. This situation has created a criminal investigation quagmire in the country. In the light of the foregoing, this study seeks to evaluate the challenges of forensic investigation as it relates to unsolved murders in Nigeria.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The specific objectives of this work are:

- i. To investigate the role of forensic investigation in curbing unsolved murders.
- ii. To examine the relationship between forensic investigation and unsolved murders and its impact on crime control in Nigeria.
- iii. To examine the perception of the public towards unsolved murders.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to achieve the objectives of this research study, the research work will attempt to provide answers to the following research questions.

- i) What is the degree of unsolved murders in Nigeria
- ii) Is forensic investigation relevant in resolving unsolved murders in Nigeria?
- iii) To what extent has forensic investigation reduced unsolved murders in Nigeria
- iv) What is the perception of the public towards unsolved murders in Nigeria?
- v) What impact does an unsolved murder have on the police on crime control?

### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

The following null hypotheses will guide the work and subsequently be tested.

- i) There is no significant relationship between forensic equipment and services in Nigeria and the rate of unsolved murders.
- ii) There is no significant relationship between unsolved murders and National Security in Nigeria.
- iii) There is no significant relationship between forensic investigation skills and unsolved murders in Nigeria.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Much work has not been done on Forensic investigation and unsolved murders in Nigeria. The review would therefore cover relevant studies on Forensic investigation and unsolved murders in Nigeria with a view to helping build up a literature base for this field of study. According to Lambrechts (2002), the purpose of forensic investigation is to collect facts that can serve as evidence before a court of law; through which the associative part of an accused in the commission of a crime can be proved, with the purpose to resolve the crime. He concluded that the effectiveness of accurate forensics is always closely linked to other factors. The forensic investigator should not rely on presumptions, but need to prove a crime by means of evidence.

Gardner (2005) recognized that Forensic investigation, first and foremost, is a search for the truth of what has happened and to establish who were involved. However he affirms that in carrying out forensic investigation is a search for the truth of what has happened and to establish who were involved. He concluded that in carrying out forensic investigation it should be done in such a manner that is lawful and does not violate the rights or liberties of those being investigated. Each of the above research work is an important contribution to the role of Forensic investigation in unsolved murders. However, none of this work directly links forensic investigation to unsolved murders in Nigeria. The study therefore, seeks to fill that void. Consequently the study will attempt to establish the relationship between the challenges of forensic investigation and unsolved murders in Nigeria.

### **Purpose and Objectives of Forensic Investigation**

The main purpose of Forensic investigation, first and foremost, is a search for the truth of what has happened and to establish who were involved, in a manner that is lawful and does not violate the rights or liberties of those being investigated (Gardner, 2005). According to Lambrechts (2002), forensic investigators should not rely on presumptions, but need to prove a crime by means of evidence. The basic of forensic investigation is to call facts that can serve as evidence before a court of law, through which the associative part of an accused in the commission a crime can be prove with the purpose to resolve the crime( Threats et al,1996) . According to Westhuizen (1996), the objectives of investigations are: identification of the crime, arrest of the criminal, recovery of property, evaluation

and involvement in the prosecution. (cf Technikon SA, 1986 Dowling, 1997 and Van Heerden, 1985). (Territo et al, 2003) stressed that the objective of forensic investigation is to establish that a crime has actually been committed, to identify and apprehend the suspect(s) recover stolen property and to assist in the prosecution of the person(s) charged with the crime.

### **Identification of the Crime**

In crime identification, situation identification determines the type of crime committed if any, and what kind of information or clues can possibly be collected. The crime situation therefore is identified by means of set juridical elements and preliminary observations made at the scene of the crime. The information and the facts gathered should confirm that an unlawful deed has taken place and that a specific person(s) is/are responsible (Westhuizen, 1996) . Normally the evidence identifies at a crime scene during interviews with complaints, victims and witnesses can identify the nature of events. The forensic investigator should be able to recognize and identify all relevant information that can shed light in the crime committed before it has been gathered (Byrd, 2004).

### **Gathering Evidence**

Evidence is defined as all information presented to the court in order to enable it settle a factual dispute. This includes the written and oral statements by witnesses as well as objects submitted for inspection. Gathering of information commences at the scene of the crime. A definite distinction regarding the collecting of information can be made between direct and indirect sources of information. Direct information will have victims and complainants, witnesses, persons involved in the events in question and accomplices or suspects. Indirect information would be physical clues, which reveals the circumstances of the events. This information can consist of body material such as hair and semen, prints such as fingerprints, trace elements such as fibers and paint, instruments such as weapons and tools and personal belongings, for example clothing (Westhuizen, 1996).

The gathering of evidence begins at the crime scene, because the crime scene contains visible and hidden information (Byrd, 2004) the investigator should take great care to collect all evidence (Ogle et al, 2004). Each piece of evidence should be identified, collected and preserved as a separate entity (Van Niekerk, 2000; Fisher, 2004) . If the investigator is unable to detect clues, interpret them correctly, place their relative association on record, submit them to the appropriate expert and handle them in such a manner as to maximize the examination results; a situation can arise where months of hard work do not end with the desired results (Marias, 1992; Adams et al, 2004)

In carrying out a forensic investigation, the forensic investigator must know and understand that a clear distinction exists between identification and individualization (Turvey et al, 2000) .the truth however that one process compliment the other (Heerden, 1986) . It is like a bell. If one strikes any part of it, the whole bell sounds. It is important therefore that the forensic investigator understands the meaning, purpose and categories of identification for individualization to take place.

## **Unsolved Murders**

Over the years, experts have linked the many cases of unsolved Murders in Nigeria's criminal justice system to the absence of forensic evidence. These forensic gaps have rendered justice surreal in the country. Every time someone is murdered, Nigerians are told that the president and commander-in-chief of the arm forces has ordered the inspector general of police to fish out the killers, but to the long suffering of Nigerian citizens, such a statement is tantamount to nothing as evidence shows that nothing serious will come out the investigation (Oladele, 2006). In a country where politics, crime, and unsolved politically motivated assassinations have suddenly become a dark reality of our political system and subsequently reduced the level of security and public safety, much needs to be done fast. The situation therefore calls for an over all reformation of the criminal investigation paradigm in Nigeria to guarantee public safety. Singh (2001) had argued that "So long as the crime is kept under control and with limits, it can be said that society is getting good governance". Unfortunately, in Nigeria today, crimes and politics are twin brothers. Crime is on rampage ravaging even law and order. Tragically, even through the existing laws are adequate to tackle the menace, the government seems not to have the political will to investigate let alone prosecute those politically motivated murders because most of the perpetrators are embedded in the state machinery. Unfortunately, the Nigeria Police is ill equipped to effectively investigate crimes including murder cases According to Onashile (2009) an Assistant Commissioner of Police, "As at today, to the best of my knowledge, the Nigeria police do not have anybody that could be rightly called a fingerprints expert, the old hands with little or no science background and adequate training are still in charge," He also maintained that fingerprints technology has advanced so much that it could be developed on the human skin, clothing, porous surfaces, ammunition, fire-arms and so forth. Most car snatchers, kidnappers and armed robbers, leave their fingerprints all over the place including hi-jacked vehicles, bullion vans, and so on. Yet nobody cares to lift these fingerprints for comparison and identification purpose

More so, the country is fast growing into a state where minimum task of a state, being unable to control unruly elements and offers a modicum of security and order. This is why politics because of its unrestrained, corrupt and unprincipled and is dominated by unsolved murder mysteries will continue to witness more

and more violence and dastardly Acts. And because criminals have nothing to fear from the state, it's elements ignore state power and its machinery. In short, under the present political dispensation, there is a gradual collapse of the criminal justice system as the state has demonstrated helplessness even in dealing with political thugs (Oladele, 2006).

Those who commit these Crimes know that the murder of a top politician is not likely to cause more than outrage, pain and some condemnation. In the most spectacular assassination, people would simply pay their tributes, express their honour, make some bonfires on the streets and the government would pledge to "track down" the killers, as they always when one of their numbers is assassinated. However, the reality is nothing would be done because they knew that the assassination of a politician, no matter how high ranking, is unlikely to be more than yet another addition to the list of the country's unsolved murder mysteries. This situation is a serious dent on Nigeria's public safety and national security.

**Below is a table of unsolved murders that has ravaged the country for the past decade.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Political identity</b>
Sunday Ugwu	Sept 9,1999	Killed in mistaken Identity for his elder brother, a member of Enugu State House of Assembly.
Lai Balogun	Dec., 2000	A front line politician and Architect
Dan Kemibagha	Dec. 2001	Counsel to Odi Youths in Bayelsa State
Bola Ige	Dec 23, 2000	Serving Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation; and former Power Minister
Odunayo Olagbaju	Dec 21, 2001	Member, Ogun State House of Assembly
Monday Ndor Tambari	Dec. 18, 2001	Minority Leader, Rivers State House of Assembly.
John. M. Agatutu	Dec. 2002	PDP, Delta Central Senatorial District Aspirant.
Isyaku Mohammed	Dec, 2002	UNPP Party Captain
Janet Olapaole	Aug. 13, 2002	PDP Leader in Odigbo Local Government, Ondo State.
Ade Awonus	Jan 7, 2002	Confidential Secretary to the Chief Justice of the Federation.

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Prof. Chimere Ikoku	Oct. 12 2003	PDP Leader and former Vice Chancellor, University of Nigeria.
Ajibola Olanipekun	June 20, 2003	PDP Chieftain in Ibadan, Oyo State
Joyce M. Fatai	May 3, 2003	Former Commissioner for Women affairs
Young Dimegwu	April 20, 2005	ANPP member, Imo State House of Assembly.
Onyewuchi Iwuchukwu	April 19, 2003.	ANPP Stalwart in Ikeduru, Imo State.
Yemi Oni	March, 2003	AD Stalwart in Ekiti State, Counsellorship candidate and ANPP member in Anambra State.
Anthony Nwodo	March 21, 2003	Secretary to ANPP Ozza North Local Council , Enugu State.
Rasaki Ibrahim	March 5, 2003	PDP Stalwart and South-South Vice Chairman of the part before defecting to the ANPP
Theodore Agbatu	Feb 22, 2003	Principal Secretary to the Imo State Government
Ogbonanya Uche	Feb. 8, 2003	A chieftain of ANPP in Imo State
Ayo Daramola	August 14, 2004	Governorship Aspirant in Ekiti State
Philip Olorinpa	March 7, 2004	Kogi State Electoral Commissioner
Luke Shingaba	March 4, 2004	Chairmanship candidate in Bassa Local Council Kogi State
Andrew Agoma	March 3, 2004	PDP National Board of Trustees Member
Aminasoari Dikibo	Jan. 6, 2004	South – South Chairman of PDP
Anthony Ozioko	July 27, 2005	PDP Assistant National Director of Research and Planning.
Alfred Rewane	Oct. 6, 1995	Nationalist and member of the National Democratic Coalition, (NADECO).
Senator Obi Wali	April 25, 1993	Nationalist and Elder Statesman from Rivers State.
Alhaya Suiliat Adedeji	November 14,	Ibadan Based Politician

	1996	
Barnabas and Abigail Igwe	Sept 1, 2002	Former Chairman, the Nigeria Bar Association, Onitsha Branch.
Dele Giwa	Oct. 19, 1986	Pioneer Editor – in-Chief of Newswatch Magazine.
Lateef Olaniyan	June, 3, 2005	Associate of the Notable Ibadan Politician Lamido Adedibu.
Alabi Olapokun	May 15, 2005	Associate of Rauf Aregbasola of Lagos State.
Sunday Atte	Feb. 5, 2005	Leader of the Legislature General Yagba East Kogi State.
Omololu Falobi	Oct 6, 2000	Founding Executive Director of JAAIDS.
Mohammed Iman	Sept, 2006	ANPP State Chairman, Bornu State
Funsho Williams	July 27, 2006	PDP Governorship Aspirant, Lagos State.
Jesse Anikwu	June 30, 2006	ACD Governorship Spirant
Segun Ananebi	May 30, 2007	Former Chief Security Officer to Olusegun Agagu Governor of Ondo State
Godwin Agboroko	Dec.2006	Editor of This Day Newspaper
Bagauda Kaltho	Feb.26, 1998	Senior Correspondent with the Guardian

**Sources:** Nigeria Police Crime File and Weekly Spectator, Nov. 4, 2007.

An analysis of the above table shows that the bulk of the murders over 95% were politically motivated and virtually all investigations into these murders have reached a dead end without any useful legal result. The list is also not all inclusive as a good number of other assassinations of innocent Nigerians are either not reported or that the victims are usually not regarded as prominent enough to be documented. The reasons are not farfetched. Firstly, the fact that there are several cases of covert obstruction of the investigation process by the political class undermines the collection of criminal intelligence. Secondly, the non independence of the intelligence community to the executive and its subservience further undermines its effectiveness in criminal and intelligence gathering. The bottom line to be drawn here is that politically motivated murders which are quite pervasive in Nigeria have remained challenges to the Internal Security of the Country (Nte, 2011). In the same vein, this list ended in 2007 when a a closely related study was carried out by the author, it must however be

noted that the list is quite embarrassingly becoming longer following the lead up to the 2011 elections and the current breakdown in the security management of the country in the last one year. While it has been quite difficult to have an all inclusive list due to the obstacles indicated above, what is more important to this study however, is the fact that murders have been committed with impunity and that the culprits are hardly found and prosecuted apparently due to our relatively ineffective forensic investigative capacity. The next section of the work will subsequently delve into the methodological thrust of the study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Population and Sample Size**

The sample population of this study is one hundred and thirty (130). For the Nigerian Police only senior officers were identified and selected for the exercise. This is because they form the majority, since schedules for junior staff category haven been outsourced on most occasions. Respondents within the ages of 20 years and above were used on this research population for maturity sake and the ability to understand the rubrics of forensics. The sample population was drawn from three categories using the stratified random sampling technique the categories are:

- i) The Nigerian Police Force (43)
- ii) Students of the Department of Intelligence and Security studies (58)
- iii) Lecturers of the Department of Intelligence and Security studies (29)

### **Research Instrument**

For the purpose of this research work, the research instrument used is a 4-Likert questionnaire arranged on the basis of 1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Strongly Disagree and 4-Disagree .

### **Method of Data Collection**

#### **a) Primary Source of Data**

Primary data consists of information generated first hand by the researcher, which helps to give a better and sound understanding of the subject matter. The primary data for this research work was generated through the use of questionnaires. The source entailed administering of three sets of questionnaires to the different groups drawn from the sample population of study these are the Nigeria Police Force, students of Intelligence and Security studies and the lecturers of the department.

#### **b) Secondary Source of Data**

Secondary source of data refers to information which is from sources or materials which are documented and which bear relevance to the research

topic. The source of secondary data includes textbooks, publications and annual reports from government agencies ministries and departments.

### **Data Collection**

As already stated, a range of instructions were used in the collection of information used in this research work these include questionnaires and reference materials.

### **Measurement of Variables**

All variables that are tested in this study through the use of the questionnaires are measured using SPSS statistical software.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

One of the main purpose of this research is to highlight the important of the effectiveness of forensic investigation in resolving unsolved murders. In the analysis of data collected; the statistical tool employed is the SPSS statistical software.

### **Results**

Questionnaires were distributed to 130 respondents of which 100 of them were retrieved. Table 1 below shows the socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents. More of the respondents 38(38.0%) were students, 29(29.0%) of them were lecturers, while 33(33.0%) were police officers and men.

**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

Variables	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%0
Occupation of respondents.		
Students	38	38.0
Lecturers	29	29.0
Police Officers	33	33.0
Total	100	100
Rank		
Senior officers	8	27.6
Junior officers	21	72.4
Total	29	100

The data for respondents based on their rank in service depicts that 8(27.6%) were junior staff, while 21(72.4%) were of the senior staff cadre.

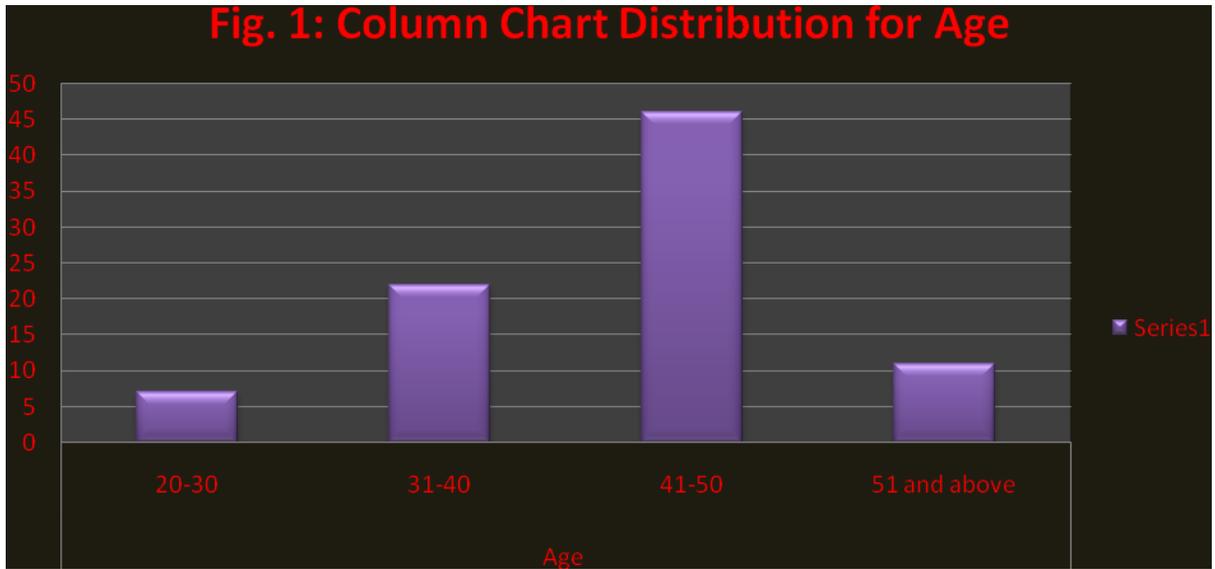


Figure 1 above depicts that 31.0% of the respondents are aged between 20-30, while 26.5% of the respondents are aged between 31-40. The figure further revealed that 37.5% of the respondents are aged between 41-50.

### **Reliability Statistics**

The reliability estimate for this study is

Cronbach's Alpha	of Items
.56	

Table 1: One Sample t-test Analysis of Variables on the Impact of Forensic Investigation on Unsolved Murders in Nigeria.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
item1 strongly agree agree	100	2.6429 2.7308	.90824	53.675	45	.000
item2 strongly agree agree	100	2.7867 2.5800	.47317	82.218	45	.000
item3 strongly agree agree	100	2.8429 2.6708	1.39708	49.377	45	.000
item4 strongly agree agree	100	2.7429 2.8708	1.09497	45.857	45	.000
item5 strongly agree agree	100	2.5867 2.3800	.97443	48.582	45	.000
item6 strongly agree agree	100	2.1350 2.4521	1.81833	8.233	45	.000
item7 strongly agree agree	100	2.7953 2.6301	.96229 .99313	31.260	45	.000
item8 strongly agree agree	100	2.7419 2.7111	1.01827 .81526	22.170	45	.000
item9 strongly agree		2.7432	.99742		45	.000

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agree	100	2.7115	.91473	31.390		
item10 strongly agree agree	100	2.7572 2.5926	.98773 .88835	33.507	45	.000
item11 strongly agree agree	100	2.7947 2.5510	.96828 .98025	29.314	45	.000
item12 strongly agree agree	100	2.7867 2.5800	.97338 .97080	46.716	45	.000

**Key:**

Item 1: strongly agreed that poor/lack of forensic skill, equipment and services significantly affect the rate of unsolved murders in Nigeria’s national

Item 2: shows that absolute forensic equipment and services hinder murder cases in the country

Item 3: There is a wider relationship between unsolved murder cases and forensic investigation skills in Nigeria

Item 4: poor or unsolved murder cases adversely depicts in insecurity in Nigeria’s National security

Item 5: political killings in Nigeria inversely affected public safety and National security

Item 6: the respondents in the study rated unsolved murder cases in the country at above 80%.

Item 7: The forensic investigators has impacted positively in resolving murder cases in Nigeria

Item 8: lack/poor forensic funding is a contributory factor to unsolved murder cases in the nation

Item 9: The forensic experts in the country needs to improved on their skills in other to handled unsolved murder cases appropriately

Item 10: it was strongly disagreed that Nigeria does not have the professional skill of forensic investigation in the country.

To answer the research questions and hypothesis 1, 2, and 3, the results in table 1 above revealed that unsolved murder cases remain a threat to Nigeria’s public safety and national security; and as such, government should channel more funds into the profession in order to provide solution to these unsolved murder cases in the country. The forensic experts on the other hand should improve on services rendered. The respondents in their response to the research objective three claimed that the forensic experts in the country do not have adequate skills to handle unsolved murder cases making it a potent threat to the nations’ public

safety and national security. It is agreed that forensic equipment and services can help resolved the murder cases in the country in significant ways.

### **Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

This work is centred on an in-depth examination and analysis of Forensic Investigation and unsolved murders and the consequences of these threats to our country's public safety and national security, using Nigeria as a case study.

It also describes Forensic Investigation not only as an agent of positive change but also as the major force that can contribute to the total reduction of unsolved murders in Nigeria. This research work also identifies the different issues with associated unsolved murders and the security consequences on Nigeria as a democratising nation. It goes further to stress on the need and ways for providing the state with adequate forensic equipment and services to reduce all manner of unsolved murders which at the end will have catastrophic consequences for our national security.

While Forensic investigation plays a vital in solving unsolved murders, the Nigerian government has not shown enough seriousness in consolidating skills among the security agencies especially the Police force. It is needful that the Nigerian police should be taught and enlightened on the management and efficiency of forensics. This would however only be possible if the necessary resources are available for the security sector in the country.

There is very little doubt that without the use of forensic science in criminal investigation, the most significant resources are simply excluded. There can be no excuse today, for the non-use of the broad range of criminalistics, i.e. the application of various sciences in the gathering of evidence which are the results of examination and comparison of biological evidence. These include Impression evidence, such as fingerprints, footwear impressions and tyre impressions, ballistics, (scientific examination of firearms and ammunition). Forensic DNA Analysis is also quite common place in many jurisdictions. That the Nigeria Police does not have its own laboratories with the capacity of DNA Analysis is regrettable indeed. How about digital forensics? Which deals with the many scientific methods of recovery of data from electronic and digital equipment?, a great deal of these forensic resources are quite affordable and the technology and training are easily accessible today. Fingerprint technology is clearly not rocket science. It is perhaps the oldest of the forensic technologies and had been available in the Nigeria Police force for decades. It however fell into disuse and along with the fact that no database of fingerprints even of suspects or convicts exists. Without such data bases, gathering fingerprint evidence is of limited use since there is little to match what is gathered with. Consequently, the author believes that the following recommendations will significantly improve forensic investigation in Nigeria and by extension help resolve the countless unsolved murders in the country. It is therefore pertinent for the following to be done

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- (1). Prioritize investment in the creation of forensic capabilities for law enforcement in Nigeria. For this purpose, the federal government should identify Nigerian universities with which the government can establish partnership in establishing forensic investigation laboratories to serve the needs of law enforcement in the country.
- (2). Establish and maintain a central, electronically accessible, criminal justice information management system.
- (3). Require the police to maintain adequate documentation and identification of all persons.
- (4). Require the police to maintain a register of all deaths involving its own personnel and to file quarterly reports of all such deaths with the justice of the federation and the federal attorney – general of the federal and state level, with the state chief judges and attorney – general.
- (5). publicly support and commit to the amendment of the constitution to remove the police from the operational autonomy of the police and independence of the inspector –general of the police.
- (6). Adopt measures requiring the inspector – general of the police to report to the national assembly annually on the performance of the Nigerian police.
- (7). Create and sustain through appropriate incentive systems in the Nigerian police force, a career track in forensic investigation.
- (8). Update and reinvigorate the jurisdiction and role of the coroner.
- (9). Support the acquisition of effective forensic investigation capability by the Nigerian police.
- (10). Police should be adequately funded to enable it tackle cases of unsolved murders in Nigeria.

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