

Blood on the Dance Floor: Police Brutality, #EndSARS Protest Movement and Responses in Lagos, Nigeria

Olasupo O. Thompson^{1*}, Isiaka. A. Adams², Pheobe D. Awange³, Sikiru O. Adekoya⁴, Olugbenga S. Aina⁵, Olise Lawrence Chijindu⁶, and Adebisi, A. A⁷

^{1,5,7} History and International Studies Unit, CGNS, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State

² Department of Political Science, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos State

^{3,4,6} Graduate Student, Political Science Dept., University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos State

Corresponding Author: thompsonoo@funaab.edu.ng

Abstract

The article examined the causes, dynamics, and responses to the #EndSARS protest in Lagos, Nigeria, on October 20, 2020. Employing a qualitative research approach, data were collected from diverse sources such as eyewitness accounts, reports from international organizations, scholarly publications, working papers, newspapers, government white papers, social media comments, and video footage. Fifteen key informants were selected using purposive sampling. The study utilized the frustration-aggression theory and social injustice framework to analyze the protest. Findings revealed that while the protests were initially fueled by misinformation, they were further exacerbated by youth unemployment, police brutality, poor governance, ineffective government communication and leadership, inadequate crowd control, and the failure to protect peaceful demonstrators. The government's violent response garnered both local and international support for the protesters, resulting in the creation of panels of inquiry. However, the politicization of these panels' findings and the inability to address the root causes of the protests left the nation in a state of continued dysfunction. The article stresses the importance of strong institutions, good governance, the rule of law, and justice, recommending meaningful reforms, social justice, economic improvement, and stricter discipline for law enforcement.

Key words: Human rights, conflict, SARS, violence, Repressive State, Protests

INTRODUCTION

Received: 1 August 2024

Accepted: 1 September 2024

Published: 31 October 2024

There is a widespread condemnation of police brutality worldwide. Often times these actions are taken at the behest of the State. Citizens frequently respond through civil disobedience and protests. However, the results of these peaceful demonstrations often fall short of expectations. Governments have made efforts to reform law enforcement to align with international standards. The results vary across places, time and space. Nigeria serves as a notable example.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and the world's largest Black population, has around 200 million people and is rich in both natural and human resources.

However, paradoxically, a significant portion of Nigerians live on less than US\$2.15 per day (World Bank, 2022). In addition, state institutions consistently fail to meet public expectations, with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) standing out as one such example. The NPF, which includes specialized units like the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), established in 1992 (Amnesty International, 2020; Thompson, Afolabi, & Onifade, 2020), is widely recognized as one of the most corrupt public institutions both domestically and internationally (NBS/UNODC, 2019; Amnesty International, 2020). It is also seen as a repressive arm of the state, shaped by the nature and evolution of the government itself. This repression has historically sparked protests and civil disobedience (Atela, Ojebode, Aina et al., 2021). Protests against oppression are not new; they date back to pre-colonial and colonial times. For instance, in Yoruba culture, when a protest was directed at a king (Oba), it signified that he must abdicate, symbolized by the opening of a forbidden calabash (Johnson, 1921; Akintoye, 2014).

Protests have persisted beyond the colonial era into post-colonial Nigeria, with ongoing demonstrations reflecting strong connections between economic and political reforms and public dissent (Bienen & Herbst, 1996; Bratton & Van de Walle, 1992). Despite these efforts, many protests have not achieved the desired outcomes due to ongoing socio-political and economic issues (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2003). For example, protests erupted over the involvement of some Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) members in the 2016 gubernatorial election and the 2019 general elections, demanding reforms and justice (Uwazuruike, 2020). The #EndSARS protests in October 2020, particularly the incident at the Lekki Toll Gate, are another significant case. Research into police brutality, protests, and responses is increasingly being studied both within Africa and internationally (UNODC, 2011; Obasogie & Newman, 2017; Godwin et al., 2018). However, the October 2020 protests, especially the Lekki Toll Gate incident, have not received sufficient attention (Husted, 2020; Chinedu et al., 2021; Iwuoha and Aniche, 2021). Odin and Mark (2021) argue that while the abuse by the SARS unit triggered the #EndSARS protests, the misuse of social media worsened the situation, negatively impacting Nigeria's economy, particularly in Lagos, which accounts for nearly half of the country's commercial revenue. They advocate for genuine reforms and job creation for the youth. Umar and Baba-Isa (2021) explore the #EndSARS movement and youth mobilization, finding that the government's failure to implement necessary police reforms significantly contributed to youth unrest. Uwazuruike (2021) confirms the human rights abuses during the protests and observes that the movement evolved

from a protest against police brutality to a broader demand for social justice and government reform.

Using the metaphor "blood on the dance floor," this article explores how what began as peaceful, carnival-like protests can escalate into violence. It examines the factors behind the October #EndSARS protests in Lagos, Nigeria, with a particular emphasis on the Lekki Toll Gate incident. Lagos, a city of over nine million people and a symbol of urban wealth, saw a highly organized protest that stands out. The key research questions are: What were the causes and characteristics of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in Lagos? How did the government respond to these protests? How did the public react to the state's response on October 20, 2020? What effects did these reactions have on the state's subsequent actions, and what changes have occurred in the government's response since then? Documenting these events, the origins of the protests, and the state's reactions is crucial for understanding protests, conflicts, governance, and reform.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The article employs both the frustration-aggression theory and the social justice framework to analyze the #EndSARS protests and broader civil unrest in Nigeria. The frustration-aggression hypothesis, proposed by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939), posits that frustration inevitably leads to aggressive behavior, and aggression often results from frustration. This theory has profoundly influenced Western views on aggression, suggesting that the most intense aggressive responses are typically directed at the sources of frustration, although aggression can sometimes be misdirected toward unrelated individuals or groups (Geen, 1968).

Berkowitz (1989) argues that while frustration is one cause of aggression, it is not the only one. In the case of the #EndSARS protests, the frustration-aggression theory helps clarify why young people and other segments of society reacted so strongly against the police and government. The widespread police brutality, corruption, and lack of accountability fueled a sense of frustration that erupted in aggressive protests and calls for reform. According to Breuer and Elson (2017), aggressive tendencies are both affective and cognitive responses to frustration, which can lead to violence against property and individuals not directly connected to the original sources of frustration.

The social justice framework complements the frustration-aggression theory by addressing the systemic inequities and human rights abuses that fuel frustration and lead to aggressive behavior. Rawls (1972) posits that justice is the core principle of all social institutions, advocating that political and legislative decisions should be driven by justice. While social justice aims to create an egalitarian society, its absence can lead to severe issues such as insecurity, violence, and social problems. For example, the apartheid system in South Africa epitomized social injustice (Benatar, 1997). Rawls (1972) defined injustice as inequalities that do not benefit everyone, essentially framing it as the absence of justice. Thus, tackling social justice is crucial for addressing fundamental societal issues (Ujomu, 2002; Aluko et al., 2022). This framework explores how limited access to justice, economic inequalities, and the state's failure to uphold citizens' rights contribute to feelings of injustice and frustration. It underscores the need for fair treatment, accountability, and equitable distribution of resources to address the root causes of unrest. By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the article provides a comprehensive analysis of the civil protests in Nigeria, highlighting the urgent need for substantial reforms to alleviate sources of frustration and foster a more just and equitable society.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the case study and field study design focusing on Lagos, Nigeria. A qualitative method of data gathering was embarked on for data collection. This method is appropriate for the study as it allows the researcher to understand a new phenomenon (Dunwoodie, Macauley and Newman, 2023). Data for the study is collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were elicited from key informant interviews (KIIs) and observations. The study recruited 15 key informants who were selected through purposive and snowball sampling technique. The selection was based on their participation in the protests in Lagos and Lekki in particular. Lagos was selected because it was the rallying point for the protests. The interviews took place from November 2021 to January 2022. The interviews were held at the convenience of the participants through the recording gadget and WhatsApp voice notes. The recordings were transcribed and translated, and analysed for their content and themes using the predetermined variables guide (Morrow, Rodriguez and King, 2015). Related and cross-cutting themes were identified and highlighted, based on coding and grouping, and were then content analysed (Morrow, Rodriguez and King, 2015).

The primary sources was complemented with other secondary sources such as government white paper report of the panel which sat on the incident, social media pages such as twitter handles of the actors, videos, newspapers and journal articles. The study was analysed using content analysis and interpreted using thematic and descriptive narrative.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Causes and Nature of October 2020 #EndSARS Protests in Lagos, Nigeria

In early October 2020, a man named Prince Nicholas Makoloni recorded a video of a boy who was allegedly pushed out of a moving police vehicle in Ughelli, Delta State. He quickly shared the footage on Facebook, writing in pidgin English, “They have killed the boy. Safe Delta Ughelli. The boy is dead,” (The Union Nigeria, 2021). Upon discovering that the boy had survived, Makoloni removed the video. However, a Twitter user who had already copied the video reposted it, stating, “SARS just shot a young boy dead in Ughelli, Delta state, right in front of Wetland Hotels. They abandoned him on the roadside and drove off in his Lexus jeep.... I have videos” (The Union Nigeria, 2021). The following day, numerous protest hashtags such as #WarOnSars, #EndSars, and #SarsAlert emerged, with #EndSARS gaining popularity and eventually adopted.

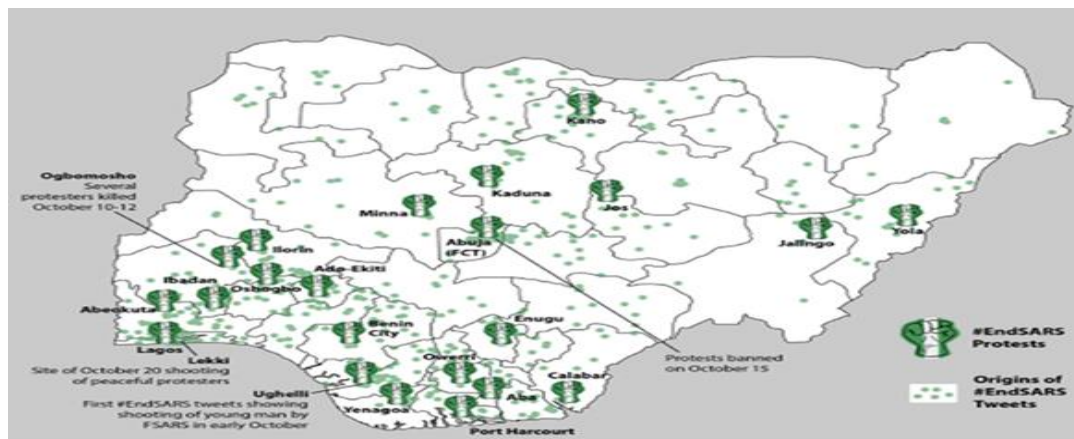


Figure 1: Places where the EndSARS protest Movement occurred in Nigeria
Source: Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2020)

The misconduct of SARS was particularly noticeable in the southern part of the country. From Delta State, the protests spread to other parts of Nigeria. The protesters represented a diverse mix of genders, social statuses, ages, ethnicities, and professions, although the majority were youths aged between 18 and 30 years. Several factors intensified the protests: firstly, most students were at home due to a seven-month strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) that began in March 2020; secondly, many workers, particularly those in junior positions, were required to work from home; and thirdly, the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns left many Nigerians either confined at home or without jobs. Some individuals who participated in protests at Ojodu, the international airport in Ikeja, and the Lekki toll gate reported that they joined because they were at home and felt it was important to make their mark in history (personal communication, 20/11/2021–30/1/2022).

The protests mainly took place in major cities in southern Nigeria, with fewer demonstrations in some northern states and the federal capital territory, Abuja. The northern protests did not receive as much attention as those in the south, where the activities and abuses of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) were more widespread. Beginning on October 8th, the protest movements shifted from online platforms to physical gatherings nationwide, a trend observed across most regions. The demonstrations were held in 25 states across the federation (Lagos State Government, 2021a; ACLED, 2021).

The protesters' demands were focused on the dissolution of the SARS unit, which they accused of brutality, oppression, extortion, molestation, harassment, and extra-judicial killings (KII, Phi, a quality and assessment officer, 27/1/2022, KII [Mos], 26/1/2022; KII, Lecturer, LASU, 17/11/2021; KII [Big Joe], KII [EbenPraise], 19/11/2021). The protesters initially presented five demands to the federal government. These included: the immediate release of all arrested protesters, justice for all victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families, the establishment of an independent body to investigate and prosecute all reports of police misconduct within ten days in accordance with the new Police Act, psychological evaluation and retraining of all former SARS officers (with verification by an independent body) before they can be redeployed, and an increase in police salaries to ensure they are adequately

compensated for safeguarding the lives and property of citizens (Lagos State Government, 2021b).

However, Lagos State received the most attention. In Lagos, protesters occupied several key locations including the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, the international airport, Ikorodu, Ojota, the government house in Alausa, and the Lekki toll gate, causing significant disruption to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The protests at the Lekki Toll Gate became the cynosure because of its uniqueness, organisation and nature of participants who were celebrities. Protesters would arrive early in the morning and start playing music. Celebrities would take turns speaking to the crowd from the stage. At noon, lunch was provided, and during prayer times, Muslims would organize themselves for worship, with Friday prayers (Jumaat) being observed. Anytime the protest fell on a Sunday, Christians held their services with the Muslims ensuring their safety during their worship. The protests at the Lekki toll gate were particularly well-organized, setting a model for other protests. According to a respondent, “I trekked from Yaba to Lekki everyday because it was not only amazing but also organised and I would eat breakfast and lunch there” (KII, Tor Yaba, 3/11/2021).

At first, the State utilized state-sponsored agencies, law enforcement bodies, and even non-state actors especially armed thugs to destabilise the peaceful protesters (Akinkuotu, 2020). In Lagos, viral videos showed thugs being transported in a government bus, known as the Blue Bus, from Oshodi to the protest grounds on October 17, 2020 (LAGS, 2021a: 128-129), specifically targeting the Ojota protest site. This pattern of infiltration was observed across the country, including in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Allegedly, some of these thugs, also known as "agberos," who were linked to the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), infiltrated the protests to harass, brutalize, and disperse the demonstrators. They complained that the protests threatened traffic flow and disrupted their livelihood, which involved collecting multiple fees from commercial motorists. The activities of these thugs have been extensively documented (Agbiboa, 2018).

Government (Federal and State) Responses to Protesters Demands

Though only the federal government has the authority to declare a state of insurrection or disband any federal law enforcement agency however, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mohammed Adamu, officially announced the dissolution of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) through the force's public relations

officer, Deputy Commissioner of Police Frank Mba (Olatunji, Olabulo, and Akinselure, 2020). Mba further stated that “The command further noted that: “No personnel of the Force is authorized to embark on patrols or tactical assignments in mufti. They must always appear in their police uniforms or approved tactical gear (Olatunji, Olabulo and Akinselure, 2020).

To confirm this action, the presidency posted on Twitter at 1:48 PM on October 11, 2020, stating that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) had been disbanded with immediate effect, and that the Inspector General of Police (IGP) would provide further updates (Presidency Nigeria, 2020). Despite this announcement, the protesters continued their demonstrations across the country, refusing to be placated. The protests led to violent crackdowns by law enforcement, resulting in the deaths of peaceful protesters, particularly in locations such as Ogbomosho, Surulere, Lagos, Ibadan, and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (Akanbi, 2020).

In response, some protesters and miscreants took advantage of the chaos to engage in violent activities, including daylight robbery, orchestrated attacks on public and private properties, attempted and successful prison breaks, arson, and even cannibalism. A protester in Ojota mentioned that he stopped participating due to the unruly behavior of some protesters and the infiltration by hoodlums (KII, Chief Ade, 19/11/2021). Another respondent reported being robbed of N100, 000 (approximately US\$200) (KII, Willy, Lekki, 19/11/2021). A lecturer (KII) noted that “the protest descended into chaos, arson, and carnage, creating fear in the political climate” (KII, 19/11/2021). According to KII Omowe, “the widespread fear was a result of the police's failure to protect the protesters from the beginning” (KII, 19/11/2021).

On October 13, 2020, the Federal Government announced the formation of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team to replace the disbanded Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS). The government emphasized that the selection process for SWAT members was stringent and distinct from the former FSARS. Key criteria for selecting SWAT members included undergoing psychological and medical evaluations to ensure their fitness and suitability for the new role. Additionally, it noted that the team would consist of young, intelligent, and energetic officers with at least seven years of experience and clean service records, with no pending disciplinary issues, no history of human rights violations, or misuse of firearms. It further stated that the officers also had to be physically capable of enduring the demands of SWAT training and operations

(Sobowale, 2020). Despite these assurances, protesters were not convinced and they thus converged at the National Assembly to reject the new SWAT, viewing it as simply a rebranded version of the defunct SARS (TVC News, 2020)). In other states, including Lagos, protesters marched to their respective State Houses of Assembly to voice their opposition to SWAT, insisting that the Federal Government meet their seven new demands (Lagos State Government, 2021a: 4-5).

In various states, politicians associated with either the federal or state governments reportedly deployed thugs to infiltrate the protests in order to cause disruptions and tag the peaceful protesters as bad. KII Big Joe noted that “the violence was largely orchestrated to justify imposing a curfew and forcing everyone indoors” (KII, 1/12/2021). Evidence of these actions can be found in numerous videos that circulated on the social media. Though some governors took the protesters demands to the Federal Government. For example, on October 13th, Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu visited the president to present the protesters' demands. He acknowledged the legitimacy of the demands, stating that although some could not be met immediately, plans were already in place to address them (Agbakwuru, 2020).

Following these submissions by State governors, the Federal Government conveyed a National Economic Council (NEC) meeting headed by the Vice President on October 14, 2020. The Vice President Yemi Osinbajo announced that the federal government had directed all states to establish panels of inquiry to investigate the #EndSARS protests nationwide. The terms of reference for the Judicial Panel included receiving and investigating complaints of police brutality or related extra-judicial killings, evaluating the evidence and circumstances, assessing the validity of the complaints, and recommending compensation and other remedial measures where appropriate. By October 16, 2020, the protesters had expanded their demands from five to seven to now include calls for institutional reforms, reducing the cost of governance, constitutional reforms, educational reforms, healthcare reforms, youth affairs, and public office reforms (Television Continental, 2020). He further emphasized that the administration's commitment to continually inform and involve the public in future policy decisions to promote transparency and accountability, with the hope of regaining public trust (Osinbajo, 2020). In line with the NEC's recommendations, the Lagos State government established the Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry into Victims of Police Brutality and Other Related Matters on October 19, 2020. The panel's main responsibilities were to investigate cases of police brutality and related issues and to

provide compensation to those with legitimate claims (Lagos State Government Report, 2021). The panel included members such as Justice Doris Okuwobi (Chairperson), Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (representing civil society), retired Deputy Inspector General of Police Fredrick Taiwo Lakanu, Ms. Patience Patrick Udoh (civil society representative), Mr. Segun Awosanya (Human Rights Activist), Mrs. Oluwatoyin Odusanya (Director of Citizens' Rights, Ministry of Justice, Lagos State), Mr. Lucas Koyejo Esq. (representative of the National Human Rights Commission), and Mr. Majekodunmi Temitope Oluwaseun (Youth representative).

On October 19, the Lagos State government further announced the creation of a N200 million (\$476,000) fund to compensate families and victims of police brutality, along with the initiation of disciplinary trials for offending police officers, which could lead to dismissals, demotions, and severe penalties for human rights violations. Governor Sanwo-Olu reaffirmed his support for the youth (Sanwo-Olu, 2020a). He appealed to the protesting youths to suspend their protests, to create a conducive environment for addressing their demands, and encouraged past victims of the disbanded SARS and the families of deceased victims to come forward to the panel. However, the youths remained skeptical and continued their protests, believing that the government's statements were merely empty promises, given past instances of unfulfilled reforms, poor governance, and corruption (KIIS, Omowe, 19/11/2021; KII, Baba Sege, 19/11/2021; Big Joe, 19/11/2021; KII, Moses, 26/1/2022).

State Responses: Blood on the Dance Floor

On 20 October, the Lagos state government imposed a 24hour curfew (Lagos State Government, 2021a). Governor Sanwoolu on his twitter page at 11.45am on October 20, 2020 noted:

I have watched with shock how what began as a peaceful #EndSARS protest has degenerated into a monster that is threatening the well-being of our society. Lives and limbs have been lost as criminals and miscreants are now hiding under the umbrella of these protests to unleash mayhem on our State. As a government that is alive to its responsibility and has shown a commitment to the movement #ENDSARS, we will not watch and allow anarchy in our dear state. I, therefore, hereby impose a 24-hour curfew on all parts of the State as from 4pm today, 20th October, 2020. Nobody, except essential service providers and first responders must be found on the streets (Sanwo-Olu, 2020).

Subsequently, the curfew was extended to 9.00PM due to the heavy traffic in Lagos (LASG, 2021a:21). To ensure compliance with these directives, the then Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, ordered a nationwide deployment of anti-riot police.

Meanwhile, the protesters did not envisage that what was to come as they not only were enjoyed the music on the dance floor but also believed that they were in an enclosed area with no threat to the State. A reporter captures the aura before the dance floor turned bloody:

With music playing and food being passed around, a festive atmosphere hung over the protest encampment on Tuesday night, despite the anger over police brutality that in recent weeks had driven youthful demonstrations that were the biggest Nigeria had seen in a generation (Lawal and Mark, 2020: Section A, Page 9)



Figure 2: Locating Lekki Toll gate, Lagos Nigeria
Source: Elbagir, Polglase, Mezzofiore, Busari and Hansler, 2020

At the Lekki toll gate in Lagos State, Nigeria, armed forces from the 81 Division of the Nigerian Army, stationed at Bonny Camp, Victoria Island, arrived around 6:45

PM. The exact individual who ordered the deployment of the soldiers is still unknown, although it is generally the president who has such authority. However, due to the intricate federal structure, prebendal practices, and the ambiguous hierarchy within the government, other influential figures might have been involved. In Lagos State, most of the protesters remained steadfast, and around 6 PM on October 20, military vehicles appeared at the protest site. At the same time, officials from the Lekki Concession Company reportedly dismantled CCTV cameras from the toll gates, and around 7 PM, the floodlights and display boards that usually illuminated the area were turned off by an unknown entity (CNN, 2020).

Subsequently, gunfire, presumably from the soldiers, was heard (CNN, 2020). Initially, the shots seemed to be from blank rounds, but as the night went on, it became apparent that live ammunition was also used, as the military later confirmed that both blank and live rounds were fired at the scene (LASG, 2021a: 23-24). Many protesters sat down, waving Nigerian flags and singing the national anthem. According to an eyewitness, “90 percent of the protesters had their flags” (KII, Phil, 27/1/2022). It was widely believed that displaying national flags and singing the anthem were part of the rules of engagement during conflicts (LASG, 2021a: 186). Following the departure of the armed forces, another bout of gunfire, suspected to be from a special unit of the Nigerian police, continued (Elbagir, Polglase, Mezzofiore, Busari, and Hansler, 2020). A well-known Nigerian female celebrity live-streamed the incident, showing a few individuals lying still on the ground. Alarming, efforts to help the injured were obstructed by the soldiers and police present at the scene (LASG, 2021:188). According to Amnesty International (2020):

These shootings clearly amount to extrajudicial executions. There must be an immediate investigation and suspected perpetrators must be held accountable through fair trials. Authorities must ensure access to justice and effective remedies for the victims and their families (AI, 2020).

After the shooting ceased, there were conflicting reports regarding the number of casualties at Lekki, with figures varying from 15 corpses, 10 corpses, 12 corpses, to as few as two or one, according to Sanwo-Olu (BBC, 2020; Channels Television, 2020; Amnesty International, 2020; Elbagir et al.). Nonetheless, it is certain that lives were lost, whether due to the stampede or directly from the gunfire aimed at the crowd. Initially, the Nigerian Armed Forces denied deploying their personnel to the location but later conceded that they had been deployed with only blank ammunition. In its remark,

Acting Deputy Director, 81 Division Army Public Relations, Major Osoba Olaniyi, stated that:

The situation was fast degenerating into anarchy. It was at this point that Lagos State Government requested the Military to intervene, in order to restore normalcy. The intervention of the Military followed all laid down procedures for internal security operations. And all the soldiers involved acted within the confines of the Rules of Engagement, ROE for internal security operations (Sunday, 2020)

The governor denied ever inviting the Armed Forces. He further noted that the state governor does not have such power as he succinctly puts it:

For clarity, it is imperative to explain that no sitting governor controls the rules of engagement of the military. I have, nonetheless, ordered an investigation into the rules of engagement adopted by men of the Nigerian Army that were deployed to the Lekki toll gate last night. This is with a view to take this up with higher commands of the Nigerian Army and to seek the intervention of Mr President in his capacity to as the Commander-In-Chief to unravel the sequence of events that happened yesterday (Tuesday) night (Oyero, 2020).

Amnesty International (2020) reported that at least 56 people had died across the country since the protests began, with approximately 38 fatalities occurring on Tuesday, October 20th alone. The victims included both protesters and thugs who were reportedly hired by the authorities to confront the demonstrators. According to ACLED (2021), over 180 protests linked to the #EndSARS movement were documented, with 86 percent of these being peaceful and that 10 percent of these peaceful demonstrations were met with excessive force, a higher rate than other protests during the same period.

Public and International Reactions to the October 20, 2020 State Repression

In a swift reaction to the state repression the previous day, miscreants which had infiltrated peaceful protesters took to the streets to further cause havoc across the country where there were protests on 21st October 2020. Warehouses where COVID-19 palliatives donated by coalition against covid-19 (CACOVID) were kept were looted across the country (KII, Omowe, 19/12/2021). This led to violent attacks on police officers, individuals, and both private and public properties, including the Nigerian Ports Authority building, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) offices, leading to the postponement of the Lagos East Senatorial bye-election, the Lagos High Court, Igbosere, buses, the Television Continental (TVC) news building, and the Lagos

Oriental Hotel, which is allegedly owned by former Lagos governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Even traditional authorities were not spared; hoodlums attacked the palace of the Oba of Lagos State, Rilwan Akiolu, where properties were destroyed, and \$2 million, N17 million, and the staff of office were stolen. Additionally, three new generation banks were attacked on October 20 and 21, 2020, where an unspecified amount of money was looted and parts of the banks were set ablaze. Police stations were also burnt, and ammunition was stolen (Usman, 2020; LASG, 2021a: 21). Overall, in Lagos State, both human and capital resources suffered significant losses. A report noted that "27 of the burnt Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles in the Oyingbo and Ojodu Berger areas of the state cost \$200,000 each, while 57 of them cost \$100,000 each, totaling N3.9 billion" (Adebisi, 2021). It is widely believed that it may take a long time for Lagos to recover from these attacks (KII, Philips, 27/1/2022). Some other states also witnessed cases of cannibalism and arson (LASG, 2021a: 21).

The #EndSARS movement gained both national and international appeal as a result of the heterogeneity of its participants. It was among the first time that the masses and the some elite particularly from the south would jointly agree on a national issue. However, it was a different case up north. This was partly because some northern states did not experience the #EndSARS protests, and those that did often attributed them to the actions of political adversaries and detractors. Many youths and elites in the north viewed the protests as an attempt to undermine President Muhammadu Buhari, who is both a northerner and a Muslim. For instance, Ukkasha Hamza Rahuma, the speaker of the Northern Youth Assembly of Nigeria (NYAN), led a group of nearly 100 youths to express their disapproval of the protests. He stated that while the group supports the reform of the existing FSARS, known for its harassment and mistreatment of citizens, they do not support the ban on the special unit (Oyewole, 2020). The Northern Governors' Forum, led by Plateau State Governor Simon Lalong, expressed opposition to the #EndSARS protesters, stating that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was essential in combating insecurity in the country. They suggested that the protest was a southern initiative aimed at overthrowing the current northern political administration outside the electoral process (Olufemi, 2020; ACLED, 2021). Additionally, the Federal Government began to crack down on individuals suspected of participating in or leading the protests by freezing their bank accounts, arresting and detaining them, and even confiscating their travel documents.

The October 2020 Lekki showdown drew the attention of international acts such as Beyoncé, Anthony Joshua, Estelle Fanta Swaray, Big Sean, Trey Songz, John Boyega, and U.S. President-elect Joe Biden. They showed support by tweeting and retweeting about the cause. The #EndSARS protests were mirrored in several major cities across the United States and Europe, echoing the Black Lives Matter protests.

Impact of the Public and International Reactions

In response to the widespread calls from both local and international actors, the Lagos State government expanded the scope of the panel's investigation to include the Lekki Toll Gate (LTG) incident (Lagos State Government, 2021). Governor Sanwo-Olu also ordered the release of all protesters held in police custody. Supporters of the #EndSARS movement held further demonstrations in November and December 2020, including several at panels of inquiry set up to investigate the violence, expressing skepticism about the panel's outcomes. An international political analyst, John Campbell (2020), had earlier cautioned that, "the brutal killings and injuries at the Lekki Toll Gate, once thoroughly investigated, should not be dismissed with superficial reforms. Such gestures are no longer sufficient."

President Muhammadu Buhari in a nation-wide address to the nation on 22nd October, 2020 noted among other things that the government had heard the cries of the youth and ready to start a genuine reform in the police and in governance (Buhari, 2020). He further pleaded with the youths and protesters to sheathe their swords and tap into the various government palliative measures introduced to address poverty and unemployment in the country (Buhari, 2020).

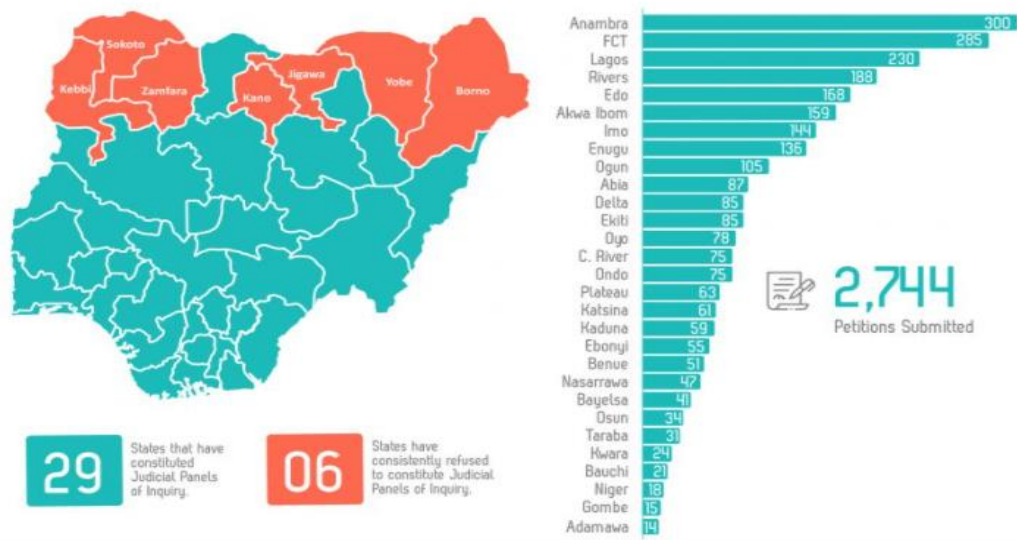


Figure 3: Judicial Panel Constitution by State as at August 2021
Source: Ogunyale (2021)

Figure 3 illustrates the states that established panels for assessing the #EndSARS movement.

What Changed? Assessment of Government Interventions

After more than a year, the judicial panel set up by the Lagos state government released its findings on 15th November, 2021. An excerpt of the report notes among other things that:

1. The Nigerian Army was invited for intervention in the state. That Nigerian Army shot, injured and killed unarmed helpless and defenseless protesters without provocation or justification. That the death was further exacerbated by the soldiers' refusal to allow ambulances render medical assistance to wounded victims. The army was also found not to have adhered to its own rules of engagement
2. The Nigeria Police Force also deployed its officers to the toll gate after the Armed Forces must have left where its officers also shot, assaulted and battered unarmed protesters which led to injuries and deaths.
3. The LCC hampered the panel's investigation by refusing to give its own account or send in its officials. The LCC also manipulated the CCTV cameras and footage of the night of 20 October 2020.

4. The Lagos state governor invited the Nigeria Army before the hierarchy of the Nigeria Army deployed its forces to the toll gate on the night of October 20, 2020
5. There were attempts to cover up the incident of October 20, 2020 through cleaning of the Lekki Toll gate and the failure to preserve the scene ahead of potential investigation (Lagos State Government, 2021a)

The panel made several recommendations, including improving the welfare of the police, taking disciplinary actions against certain Army and Police officers involved in the killings, prosecuting the DPO at Maroko Police Station, renaming the Tollgate in honor of #EndSARS, and preserving the memory of the lives lost on October 20, 2020, as well as the #EndSARS movement (Lagos State Government, 2021a; Falana, 2021). Additionally, the Lagos State government noted that the panel handled 235 petitions, awarding around 70 victims of police brutality a total compensation of N410 million (approximately \$1 million) (Lagos State Government, 2021a). The U.S. Embassy in Nigeria praised Lagos State's response through the report of the Judicial Panel of Inquiry. The U.S. Mission in Nigeria highlighted that the Lekki Tollgate incident involved serious allegations of the use of live bullets and human rights abuses by some security forces, and they urged both the state and federal governments to take appropriate measures to address the grievances of the victims and their families (U.S. Mission Nigeria, 2021).

However, the federal government questioned the credibility of the report, stating it was premature to conclude that live bullets had been used and criticizing it as a waste of taxpayers' money. On 23 November, 2021, the Minister of information and culture, Lai Mohammed contended that nobody was killed at the Lekki Toll gate and the JPI report was full of inconsistencies and errors. In his words:

Without mincing words, let me say that never in the history of any Judicial Panel in this country has its report been riddled with so many errors, inconsistencies, discrepancies, speculations, innuendoes, omissions and conclusions that are not supported by evidence. What is circulating in public space is simply a rehash of the unverified fake news that has been playing on social media since the incident of October (Channels Television, 2021).

Shortly thereafter, the Lagos State government announced plans to produce a white paper on the judicial panel of inquiry's (JPI) findings, which would be released within two weeks (Akinrefon, Nnochiri, Ojelu, and Jannamike, 2021). True to their word, Governor Sanwo-Olu, at a press conference on November 30, 2021, confirmed that the white paper was ready. He mentioned that the government would establish a

mechanism to compensate those who lost their homes, businesses, and livelihoods due to the violent events of October 2020. Furthermore, the government would create a detailed process for fairly compensating citizens with verified claims of police brutality during the protests (Akinrefon et al., 2021). Sanwo-Olu also announced that he would lead a peaceful walk in December 2021, inviting youths and protesters to join him. However, many youths, including some celebrities, rejected the governor's invitation, responding that without justice being served, he would have to walk alone. In contrast to the judicial panel report, the federal government commended the white paper and promised to conduct further investigations into the incident (Akinrefon et al., 2021). This showed that the federal government was only interested in protecting its image over facts and truth or getting to the root cause of the issue so that it could prevent such scenario in the future.

Discussion of the Findings

The study's findings indicate that the #EndSARS protest was greatly intensified by the rapid spread of fake news, which originated in Ughelli, Delta State, and quickly spread to other parts of Nigeria through online platforms. This underscores the significant impact of social media and misinformation, highlighting how they can either support or undermine peace and security (Thompson et al., 2019; Mathur, n.d.). The rapid spread and escalation of the protest suggest that many, particularly youths affected by police brutality and poor governance, took the opportunity to voice their discontent with the government and police. However, the nature of the protest shifted from peaceful to violent due to the involvement of thugs and non-state actors, allegedly sponsored by the government and its allies. The study also notes that both Federal and State governments responded to the unrest. The Federal Government initially attempted to address the issue by disbanding the controversial SARS unit. However, the formation of a new unit, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), which was met with public rejection, further revealed the deep mistrust towards government decisions and reforms. This mistrust exacerbated the already volatile situation, leading to further chaos as opportunists and thugs exploited the turmoil.

The federal government's questionable response led protesters to intensify their demands, reflecting widespread frustration with official actions. In an attempt to address the situation, the Federal Government required all state governments to set up judicial panels of inquiry to investigate human rights abuses and provide compensation to

victims. However, the Lagos State panel, like others, appeared to be politicized, causing protesters to feel unfairly treated. The government's perceived insincerity became glaringly evident on October 20, 2020, when soldiers violently confronted protesters, raising numerous unresolved questions about the authorization of military involvement and the use of real versus rubber bullets. The public's frustration was fueled by the government's apparent insensitivity in deploying state agencies and non-state actors against peaceful demonstrators. Some protesters, in response, resorted to self-defense, escalating the situation into chaos. Breuer and Elson (2017) highlight that aggressive tendencies are both affective and cognitive responses to frustration, emphasizing the need to manage crises effectively before they descend into anarchy. The ensuing retaliation resulted in widespread violence, including killings, arson, and the destruction of both private and public property, with public property suffering significantly. Tragically, many victims were defenseless citizens, prompting international responses from governments, NGOs, and individuals. These pressures compelled the State government to broaden the scope of the inquiry panel and release most detained protesters. Despite these actions, dissatisfaction remained among protesters, who felt justice had not been adequately served.

The findings reveal that despite responses from the federal government, the international community, and the State government, the core demands of the protesters remained unmet. This has fueled the perception that injustice persists in the country and that the government fails to protect the rights of ordinary citizens. Addressing social justice is crucial for addressing fundamental societal issues (Ujomu, 2002; Aluko et al., 2022). Additionally, some factions in the country accused the protesters of attempting to stage a coup against the northern region, given that the protests were more successful in the south than in the north.

Moreover, many of the recommendations made by the panel of inquiry have not been implemented, and the police, along with special units, continue to exhibit a lack of professionalism even years after the protests. This situation highlights deep-seated issues of ethnicity, religiosity, and parochialism within Nigeria, underscoring the urgent need for good governance and justice. There has been minimal change from both federal and state governments, with recommendations from the reports remaining either unimplemented or partially implemented. Contributing factors include skewed federalism, a lack of political will, prebendalism, influential power brokers, and the political complexities surrounding the 2023 elections.

The significant influence of 'big politics,' including the ambitions of powerful individuals seeking favor with Abuja's key decision-makers, further complicates the acceptance and implementation of the Judicial Panel of Inquiry's (JPI) recommendations. The reforms, demands from protesters, and the sacrifices made on October 20, 2020, have eroded trust among the youth and citizens in public officials, policies, politics, and the political process. The white paper, which many hoped would address the findings of the JPI's initial report, instead downplayed these findings, leading to greater disillusionment with the government. Uwazuruike (2021) argues that without systematic and genuine reforms to address the root causes of unrest, the cycle of protests and government repression is likely to continue.

CONCLUSION

The study underscores the dangers of misinformation and how peaceful protests can escalate into violence due to the state's repressive tendencies. The protests turned violent primarily because the government failed to provide sufficient security for demonstrators and allowed the situation to be politicized, with some political figures hiring thugs to disrupt peaceful protesters. International pressure prompted both state and federal governments to address the public and establish a judicial panel. However, the outcomes of the Judicial Panel of Inquiry (JPI) and the failure to prosecute those responsible for the violence highlight the deep-rooted social injustices in Nigeria. The response from northern elites and governors, who accused southern political elites of using the protests as an attempted coup to unseat the president, exposed entrenched ethnic divisions, religious tensions, self-interest, and the persistent north-south divide. The white paper revealed a lack of political will, prebendalism, and weak leadership in Lagos State. Ultimately, the government's failure to hold law enforcement accountable for the violence, coupled with the report's findings, has eroded public trust and further diminished national morale.

The article recommends the responsible use of social media and advocates for capacity building among civil and public servants, including law enforcement. It calls for stronger institutions, better governance, economic development, and increased discipline and professionalism within law enforcement. It also suggests restructuring Nigeria's flawed federal system to empower state governments, promoting youth empowerment, and adhering strictly to constitutional principles to safeguard human rights. Furthermore, the article urges the international community to continue pressuring

autocratic governments masquerading as democracies to act responsibly and be held accountable. Above all, it emphasizes the need for social justice to build a free, equal, and just society.

Acknowledgements

The authors expressed their heartiest gratitude to the anonymous people for helping the paper to be successfully completed.

Funding

This paper did not receive any funding from any agency. It was self-funded. *Author contributions:* All authors contributed as a corresponding and co-corresponding in this article

Conflict of interest

Not applicable

DOI

References

- ACLED (2021, February 9). “Lessons from the #EndSARS Movement in Nigeria.” <https://acleddata.com/2021/02/09/lessons-from-the-endsars-movement-in-nigeria/>
- Adebisi, (2021, July 2). “Rebuilding Lagos after #EndSARS Violence” Nigerian Tribune.<https://tribuneonlineng.com/rebuilding-lagos-after-endsars-violence/>
- Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2020 November). #EndSARS Demands Nigerian Police Reform” Washington: ACSS. <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/endsars-demands-nigerian-police-reform/>

- Agbakwuru, J. (2020, October 13). “#EndSARS: GovSanwo-Olu delivers letter from youths to Buhari” *Vanguard*. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/10/endsars-gov-sanwo-olu-delivers-letter-from-youths-to-buhari/>
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2018). “Informal Urban Governance and Predatory Politics in Africa: The Role of Motor-Park Touts in Lagos” *African Affairs*, 117/466, 62–82. doi: 10.1093/afraf/adx052
- Akanbi, B. (2020, October 13). “#EndSARS: Three more people killed during protests in Ogbomoso” *Premium Times*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/420389-endsars-three-more-people-killed-during-protests-in-ogbomoso.html>
- Akinkuotu, E. (2020, October, 23). “Senator’s aides conveyed thugs in SUVs to attack #EndSARS protesters —Ex-DSS director” *Punch*. <https://punchng.com/senators-aides-conveyed-thugs-in-suvs-to-attack-endsars-protesters-ex-dss-director/>
- Akinrefon, D., Nnochiri, I., Ojelu, H., & Jannamike, I. (2021, December 2) “Endsars: Fg Backs Lagos White Paper” *Vanguard*. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/12/endsars-fg-backs-lagos-white-paper/>
- Akintoye, S. A. (2014). *A History of the Yoruba people*. Dakar, Senegal: Amalion Publishing
- Aluko, A., Aluko, H. & Ogunjimi, F. (2022). “Democracy and Administration of Social Justice in Nigeria: A Critical Assessment of the Fourth Republic” *Open Journal of Political Science*, 12, 181-194.
- Amnesty International (2020, October 21). Nigeria: Killing of #EndSARS protesters by the military must be investigated” USA: AI. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/10/killing-of-endsars-protesters-by-the-military-must-be-investigated/>

- Amnesty International (2002). "Nigeria Security Forces: Serving to protect and respect human rights?" Abuja: AI. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/afr440232002en.pdf> accessed 8/12/2021
- Amnesty International (2020). "Nigeria Time to end Impunity: Torture and Other Violations by Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) Abuja: AI. https://www.policinglaw.info/assets/downloads/Amnesty_International_Report_on_Special_Robbery_Squad.pdf
- Atela, M., Ojebode, A., Aina, T., Agbonifo, J., Oosterom, M., Makokha, R., Oluwajulugbe O., & Okoyomoh, O. (2021). *Demanding Power: Struggles over Fuel Access in Nigeria*. IDS Working Paper 554, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.054
- BBC (2020, October 21). "End Sars protests: People 'shot dead' in Lagos, Nigeria" <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54624611>
- Benatar, S. R. (1997). "Towards social justice in a new South Africa" *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 13,3: 229-239
- Berkowitz, L. (1989). Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: examination and Reformulation" *Psychological Bulletin*, 106(1), 59-73
- Bienen, H. & Herbst, J. (1996). "The Relationship between Political and Economic Reform in Africa". *Comparative Politics*, 29(1), 23-42
- Bratton, M. & Nicolas van de Walle, N. (1992). "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa". *Comparative Politics*, 24(4), 419-442.
- Breuer, J. & Elson, M. (2017). Frustration-Aggression Theory. In P. Sturme (Ed.), *The Wiley Handbook of Violence and Aggression* (pp. 1-12). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119057574.whbva040>
- Buhari, M. (2020, October 22). Address to The Nation by His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of The Federal Republic Of Nigeria On The EndSARS Protests, 22nd October, 2020" Press release. <https://fmic.gov.ng/address-to-the->

nation-by-his-excellency-muhammadu-buhari-president-of-the-federal-republic-of-nigeria-on-the-endsars-protests-22nd-october-2020/

Campbell, J. (2020, October 26). “Will the Lekki Toll Gate Atrocity Change Nigeria?” *Council On Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/will-lekki-toll-gate-atrocity-change-nigeria>

Channels Television (2020, October 20). Several Dead, Others Injured As Security Operatives Shoot At Lekki #EndSARS Protesters – Witnesses. <https://www.channelstv.com/2020/10/20/>

Channels Television (2021, November 23). Lagos #EndSARS Report Riddled with Errors, Inconsistencies – Lai Mohammed” <https://www.channelstv.com/2021/11/23/nobody-was-killed-during-lekki-endsars-protest-lai-mohammed-insists/>

Chinedu, A. K., Edeh, H. C., Ajah, A. C., Omeh, P. H., Asadu, M. I., Chimezie, O. D., & Ngwu, E. C., (2021). “The State, End SARS Protests and Human Rights Violation in Nigeria” *Ikenga: Journal of Institute of African Studies*, 22(2), 58-81.

CNN (2020, November 24). CNN #ENDSARS investigation: CNN releases second report on the Lekki shootings. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4DNdY7NVnI>.

Dollard, J., Miller, N. E., Doob, L. W., Mowrer, O. H., & Sears, R. R. (1939). *Frustration and aggression*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dunwoodie, K., Macaulay, L., & Newman, A. (2023). Qualitative interviewing in the field of work and organisational psychology: Benefits, challenges and guidelines for researchers and reviewers. *Applied Psychology*, 72(2), 863–889. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12414>

Elbagir, N., Polglase, K., Mezzofiore, G., Busari, S. and Hansler, J. (2020, November 21). “Nigerian army admits to having live rounds at Lekki Toll Gate protests, despite previous denials.” *CNN*.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/11/21/africa/nigeria-shooting-lekki-toll-gate-intl/index.html>

- Falana, F. (2021, November 23). “Who is Afraid of the Lekki Judicial Panel of Inquiry Report?” *This Day*. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/11/23/who-is-afraid-of-the-lekki-judicial-panel-of-inquiry-report/>
- Geen, R. G. (1968). Effects of frustration, attack, and prior training in aggressiveness upon aggressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9(4), 316–321.
- Godwin, A., Shepard, W., & Sloan, C. (2018). “Police Brutality Bonds: How Wall Street Profits from Police Violence” US: ACRE. <http://nathancummings.org/wp-content/uploads/PoliceBrutalityBonds-Jun2018-1.pdf>
- Husted, T. F. (2020, October 27). “Nigeria: #EndSARS Protests Against Police Brutality”. Congressional Research Service.
- Iwuoha, V. C. & Aniche, E. T. (2021). “Protests and blood on the streets: repressive state, police brutality and #EndSARS protest in Nigeria” *Security Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-021-00316-z>
- Johnson, S. (1921). *The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*. Lagos: CMS (Nigeria) Bookshops
- Kayizzi-Mugerwa, S. (2003). “Introduction” In Kayizzi-Mugerwa, ed. *Reforming Africa’s Institutions: Ownership, Incentives, and Capabilities*. New York and Tokyo: UNU. pg. 1-15.
- LASG (2021a, November). Report of Lekki Incident investigation of 20th October 2020. Lagos.
- LASG (2021b, November). “Government White paper on the Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry on the Report of Lekki Incident Investigation on 20th October 2020.” Lagos

- Lawal, R. A. & Ibrahim, K. (2021, May) *Beyond #ENDSARS: Effecting Positive Change in Governance in Nigeria*. YAGSOM Policy Brief. Lagos: YAGSOM
- Lawal, S. & Mark, M. (2020, October 21) "A Dozen Protesters in Nigeria Reported Killed by Security Forces" *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/world/africa/nigeria-shooting-protesters-SARS-Lekki.html>
- Mailafia, Obadiah (2019) "Poverty capital of the world" *Business Day*, 15 November. At <https://businessday.ng/columnist/article/poverty-capital-of-the-world/amp/>
- Mathur, P. (nd). *Fake News and Real Violence: Why Building Social Media Literacy Is A National Security Imperative*. Strategic Communication. 109-111. Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore. https://www.mha.gov.sg/docs/hta_libraries/publications/04-strategic-communications.pdf
- Morrow, R., Rodriguez, A. & King, N. (2015). "Colaizzi's Descriptive Phenomenological Method", *The Psychologist*, 28 (8): 643–44.
- Obasogie, O. K. & Newman, (2017). "Police Violence, Use of Force Policies and Public Health" *American Journal of Law & Medicine*, 43: 279-295.
- Ochi, I. B. & Mark, K. C. (2021). Effect of the Endsars Protest On the Nigerian Economy Global. *Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9(3), 1-15.
- Ogunyale, K. (2021, August 9). "States' Judicial Panel Submit #EndSARS Reports" *20ten daily*. <https://twentytendaily.com/states-judicial-panel-submit-endsars-reports/>
- Olatunji, J. S., Olabulo, O. & Akinselure, W. (2020, October 5). "For Fourth Time in 4 Years, IGPs Ban SARS" *Tribune*. <https://tribuneonlineng.com/for-fourth-time-in-4-years-igps-ban-sars/>
- Olufemi, A. (2020, October, 16). "Why we're not in support of #EndSARS protests – Northern Governors" *Premium Times*.

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/421173-why-were-not-in-support-of-endsars-protests-northern-governors.html> accessed 16/12/2021

Osinbajo, Y. @ProfOsinbajo (2020, October 16) Dear Nigerians, I know that many of you are angry, and understandably so. We could've moved faster and for this we are. Twitter. sorry<https://twitter.com/profosinbajo/status/1317225271922184192>

Oyero, K. (2020, October 21) "Sanwo-Olu counters Army, says soldiers were deployed to Lekki toll gate" *Punch*. <https://punchng.com/sanwo-olu-counters-army-says-soldiers-were-deployed-to-lekki-toll-gate/>

Oyewole, R. (2020, October 11). Northern youths oppose #EndSARS protest" *The Guardian*. <https://guardian.ng/news/northern-youths-oppose-endsars-protest/> accessed 16/12/2021

Presidency Nigeria, @NGRPresidency (2020, October 11) PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE: The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigeria Police Force @PoliceNG has been dissolved WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT. Tweet. <https://twitter.com/ngrpresident/status/1315273093221318656>

Rawls, J. (1972) *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sanwo-Olu B. @jidesanwoolu (2020, October 19) As we move to end police brutality, by virtue of Section 5 of Tribunals of Inquiry Law, Laws of Lagos State, 2015, I inaugurated an 8-man Judicial Panel of Inquiry and Restitution which will receive and investigate complaints of police brutality in Lagos.. Twitter. <https://x.com/jidesanwoolu/status/1318179566012293121>

Sanwo-OLu, B. @jidesanwoolu ((2020b, October 20). Dear Lagosians, I have watched with shock how what began as a peaceful #EndSARS protest has degenerated into a monster that is threatening the well-being of our society. Lives and limbs have been lost as criminals and miscreants are now hiding under the umbrella. Twitter. <https://x.com/jidesanwoolu/status/1318504576937578497>

- Sobowale, R. (2020, October 19). #EndSARS: IGP reveals criteria used in selecting SWAT team” Vanguard. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/10/endsars-igp-reveals-criteria-used-in-selecting-swat-team/>
- Sunday, O. (2020, October 27). “Lagos government invited military to Lekki Toll gate, says Army” *The Guardian*. <https://guardian.ng/news/lagos-government-invited-military-to-lekki-toll-gate-says-army/>
- Television Continental (2020, October 19). “Analysis: #EndSARS: 7 For 7 Agenda” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBzUcmwOu44>
- The Union Nigeria (2021, October 4). “One Year After, Do You Know How The #EndSARS Protest Began? Read It...” <https://www.theunionnigeria.com/news/national/one-year-after-do-you-know-how-the-endsars-protest-began-read-it/> accessed 14/12/2021.
- Thompson, O. O., Afolabi, A. S. & Onifade, C. A. (2020). “Na Name We Go Chop? Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), Human Rights Abuses and Government Reforms in Nigeria.” *UNIUYO Journal of Humanities*, 24(1), 247-268.
- Thompson, O. O., Nwaorgu, O. G. F., Afolabi, A. S., Aduradola, R. R., Odozor, U. S. & Ademola, E. O. (2019). The Implication of Fake News, Hate Speech and Government Responses in Nigeria, 2015-2019. *Journal of Communication and Media Research*, 11(2),159-171.
- TVC (2020, October 16). #SWAT Replaces #SARS: #EndSARS Protests Continue. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdUiWge5UoE>
- Ujomu, P. O. (2002). Social Conflicts, Resource Distribution and Social Justice in Nigeria. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 63,197-228.
- Umar, L. Y., & Baba Isa, S. B., (2021). Youths Movement: An Examination of End Special Anti-Robbery Squad (EndSARS) Protests and Challenges Facing the Nigerian Youths. *International Journal of Scientific and Research*, 11(2), 379-386.

UN (2006). *Social Justice in an Open World: The Role of the United Nations*. New York: UNDESA.

UNODC (2011). *Handbook on police accountability, oversight and integrity* Vienna: UN Publications.

UNODC-NBC (2019, December). *Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends, Second survey on corruption as experienced by the population*. Vienna/Abuja: UNODC Research

US Mission Nigeria, (2021, November 16). “Statement on the Lagos Judicial Panel of Inquiry Report” <https://ng.usembassy.gov/statement-on-the-lagos-judicial-panel-of-inquiry-report/> accessed 25 January, 2022.

Usman, E. (2020, October 24). Over 30 lives perish, 25 police stations, 60 cars burnt as hoodlums overrun Lagos. *Vanguard*. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/10/over-30-lives-perish-25-police-stations-60-cars-burnt-as-hoodlums-overrun-lagos/>

Uwazuruike, A. R. (2020). #EndSARS: The Movement Against Police Brutality in Nigeria. *Harvard Human Rights*, Vol. 34. No 1: 1-6. <https://harvardhrj.com/2020/11/endsars-the-movement-against-police-brutality-in-nigeria/>

World Bank. 2022. “Fact sheet: An adjustment to global poverty lines”. www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2022/05/02/fact-sheet-an-adjustment-to-global-povertylines, accessed 2.2.2023.