CRIMINAL PROFILING AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA: THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT IN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The proliferation of intricate and adaptive criminal activities in Nigeria has heightened apprehensions over the efficacy of current investigative methodologies inside the national security framework. This study investigates criminal profiling and national security in Nigeria, specifically focusing on the Criminal Investigation Department of the Nigeria Police Force. The research employs a qualitative design, utilising documentary analysis and insights from key informants. The study aims to evaluate the existing criminal profiling practices within the Criminal Investigation Department, identify institutional and capacity-related challenges that hinder its effectiveness, and propose context-specific, evidence-based strategies for incorporating criminal profiling into Nigeria's national security framework. The Theory of Core Competencies was adopted for this study. The study finds out that the obstacles to effective criminal profiling are fundamentally institutional. These encompass insufficient training and competence, restricted technological integration, inefficient record-keeping, obsolete operational methods, and inter-agency competition. The study further recommends that by the fourth quarter of 2027, create a centralised, secure, and interoperable digital database for criminal records, forensic data, behavioural profiles, and biometric information, guaranteeing adherence to the Nigeria Data Protection Act and international data security standards.

Introduction

The ongoing persistence and evolution of intricate criminal operations in Nigeria remain significant concerns to national security, societal cohesion, and the legitimacy of the state. The Nigerian security landscape has become progressively dynamic, data-driven, and adaptable, encompassing organised violent crime, terrorism, abduction for ransom, cyber-enabled fraud, cultism, arms trafficking, and international criminal networks. In this setting, efficient crime control can no longer depend exclusively on reactive policing, confessional enquiries, or routine patrol-based information. Contemporary national security practices increasingly prioritise analytical, predictive, and behavioural methodologies for crime prevention and investigation, with criminal profiling playing a major role.

Criminal profiling encompasses the methodical examination of behavioural patterns, crime scene evidence, offender traits, and contextual factors to deduce likely features of offenders and predict future

criminal conduct. In sophisticated police frameworks, criminal profiling has transformed into an evidence-based investigative assistance mechanism incorporated into criminal intelligence analysis, forensic science, and strategic security planning. Empirical research from Europe and North America indicates that, it is effective in institutionalised, profiling aids in suspect prioritisation, linkage analysis, threat assessment, and preventive policing, especially in instances of serial offences, terrorism, organised crime, and cybercrime (Kocsis, 2020).

In Nigeria, the utilisation of criminal profiling is predominantly underdeveloped, poorly institutionalised, and inconsistently incorporated into law enforcement practices, despite the constitutional obligation of the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department to perform advanced criminal investigations. Current academic discourse on policing and national security in Nigeria predominantly addresses topics including police corruption, human rights violations, the militarisation of internal security, reforms in community policing, counter-terrorism initiatives, and failures in intelligence coordination (Agbiboa, 2022). Although these studies provide significant insights into the structural and normative issues faced by Nigerian policing, they inadequately address investigative methodology, analytical capacity, and behavioural crime analysis as determinants of national security efficacy.

An examination of current Nigerian security literature uncovers a significant disparity between the discourse on crime trends and the analysis of the methodologies utilised by law enforcement to comprehend, anticipate, and thwart criminal activity. Research on violent extremism and organised crime often delineates the manifestations and repercussions of insecurity while inadequately examining the investigative frameworks that influence policing results (Onuoha, 2021; International Crisis Group, 2023). Research on police reforms also underscores accountability and legitimacy, although seldom investigates the impact of investigative cognition, offender profiling, and analytical decision-making on crime detection and prevention outcomes (Ojo & Adeyemo, 2023).

This disparity is especially noteworthy considering the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department's function as the central hub for criminal intelligence collection, forensic coordination, and inter-agency collaboration. In advanced policing countries, criminal investigation departments function as centres for profiling expertise, crime linking systems, and behavioural analysis units. In Nigeria, evidence indicates that investigative methods predominantly rely on conventional interrogation, informant networks, and improvised intelligence, with minimal institutional focus on systematic criminal profiling, data analytics, or behavioural threat assessment (UNODC, 2023).

The lack of rigorous research on criminal profiling in the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department has considerable ramifications for national security. Inadequate offender analysis constrains law enforcement's ability to predict criminal progression, dismantle organised networks, and avert recidivism. The absence of profiling frameworks may lead to investigative bias, erroneous suspicion, ethnic profiling, and abuses of human rights, thus eroding public trust and intelligence collaboration. This research addresses the pressing necessity to empirically investigate the comprehension, implementation, limitations, and prospective enhancement of criminal profiling inside the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department concerning national security results.

This study positions criminal profiling at the convergence of law enforcement and

national security governance, moving beyond descriptive security narratives to pursue a problem-solving inquiry aimed at identifying operational deficiencies, institutional obstacles, and reformative policy avenues. The study is pertinent, policy-relevant, and theoretically significant, especially considering Nigeria's escalating security concerns and the continuing discussions over police reform, intelligence-led policing, and security sector change.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the rise of complex criminal activities jeopardising Nigeria's national security, the investigative capabilities of the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department have not progressed at an equivalent rate. Although criminal profiling is acknowledged in international police literature as an essential investigative and preventive instrument, there is less empirical evidence indicating its systematic integration into the investigation procedures of the Nigeria Police Force. Current policing practices seem primarily reactive, influenced by individual personalities, and dependent on confessional techniques instead of systematic behavioural study.

The issue is exacerbated by the lack of explicit institutional frameworks, training curricula, operational rules, and technology infrastructure for criminal profiling within the Criminal Investigation Department. As a result, enquiries into intricate offences like terrorism, kidnapping, serial violence, and cybercrime frequently experience delays, inadequate suspect prioritisation, deficient linkage analysis, and restricted predictive capability. These inadequacies diminish crime detection efficacy and worsen human rights issues, public distrust, and intelligence deficiencies that compromise national security. Moreover, the scholarship on Nigerian policing has inadequately examined the impact of investigative cognition and offender analysis on security outcomes. Most research emphasises police conduct rather than investigative techniques, resulting in a significant gap in comprehending how crimes are perceived, suspects are formulated, and dangers are predicted. Neglecting this gap, policy solutions may only tackle superficial symptoms, failing to rectify fundamental investigative shortcomings.

Research Objectives

i. Assess the contributions of criminal profiling by the NPF CID to national security in Nigeria.

ii. Examine the challenges undermining criminal profiling by the NPF CID for enhanced national security in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Empirical research on the impact of criminal profiling by the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department (NPF CID) on national security in Nigeria is limited but is increasingly recognised as an important focus within criminology, policing studies, and national security discussions. Researchers have increasingly examined how criminal profiling functions not only as an investigative instrument but also as a proactive security mechanism within Nigeria's complex and unstable internal security environment. Nonetheless, despite its acknowledgement as a potentially strategic tactic, criminal profiling within the Nigerian context persists in facing discrepancies in implementation, infrastructure deficiencies, ethical challenges, and insufficient integration into comprehensive national security frameworks.

Recent studies have commenced evaluating the functional functions of criminal profiling in bolstering national security objectives, specifically in the identification and prevention of organised crime and terrorism. Musa and Igbokwe (2023) assert

that criminal profiling in CID units has aided in recognising patterns of serial offences, arms trafficking, and ritual homicides, hence indirectly enhancing national security through the disruption of syndicates and the safeguarding of at-risk communities. Their empirical investigation, conducted across five states within various geopolitical zones, demonstrated that systematic profiling procedures effectively disrupted crime networks via behavioural linkage analysis and suspect identification. The study emphasised how behavioural indicators and psychological signals facilitated the effective capture of high-profile suspects, thereby alleviating public concern and fostering stability in unstable communities.

Olaniyi and Eze (2024) examined the role of profiling in terrorism investigations in northern Nigeria, asserting that even basic profiling by CID operatives has been crucial in identifying and apprehending individuals with significant ties to extremist organisations. The researchers discovered that the CID employed offender behavioural histories and social media activity patterns as components of profiling methodologies to enhance intelligence collection and threat evaluation. Although they recognised constraints in training and forensic instruments, their empirical results underscored the effectiveness of profiling in preemptive security strategies and early warning systems, particularly in counter-insurgency operations.

Nevertheless, the literature indicates a persistent issue in formalising criminal profiling as a scientifically validated element of the NPF's security framework. Adebayo and Ojo (2023) question the predominantly informal and ad hoc characteristics of profiling procedures, contending that the absence of standardised profiling protocols and digital crime databases constrains the reproducibility and scalability of successful cases. Their research, conducted through interviews with senior CID officers in Abuja and Lagos, indicated that although officers frequently engage in profiling behaviour, it is not consistently based on validated psychological models or criminological frameworks, resulting in a success rate that is largely contingent upon the personal experience and intuition of individual operatives. The personalisation of a strategically structured process diminishes its systemic impact on national security.

Moreover, the empirical research conducted by Nwachukwu and Salisu (2024) highlights the incongruity between criminal profiling and Nigeria's multifaceted security framework. The authors illustrate that criminal profiling has not been integrated into the overarching national intelligence framework, thereby diminishing its strategic significance in national security planning. Analysis of policy evaluations and case studies of security breaches in Zamfara and Kaduna states indicates that while profiling conclusions can influence local tactical responses, they seldom contribute to inter-agency coordination mechanisms or national threat databases. The absence of synergy diminishes the comprehensive effect that profiling could achieve in preempting national-level threats, hence revealing a deficiency in institutional intelligence-sharing systems.

Conversely, experts like Bello and Usman (2023) adopt a more hopeful perspective regarding the advancing contributions of criminal profiling to Nigeria's internal security. Their quantitative analysis, utilising crime statistics and conviction records from 2018 to 2022, reveals a significant reduction in recidivism rates in jurisdictions where CID units routinely apply profiling techniques in the investigation of serial offenders. The researchers attribute this to an enhanced comprehension of offender typologies and behavioural recurrence patterns. They assert that profiling has facilitated the CID in not just

resolving crimes more effectively but also in preventing future offences by recognising behavioural indicators and instituting community surveillance initiatives.

However, the use of profiling in Nigeria is primarily reactive rather than proactive, as observed by Okafor and James (2022). Their fieldwork in Enugu and Bayelsa states indicated that profiling is frequently employed post-crime rather than as a predictive instrument. This reactive stance constrains its potential impact on national security, which should ideally be proactive, preventive, and informed by information. They contend that for profiling to significantly enhance national security, it must be recontextualised within the paradigm of strategic intelligence and associated with long-term threat prediction.

From a technological perspective, empirical studies on the digitalisation of profiling inside the NPF remain nascent. Research conducted by Umeh and Danjuma (2023) indicates that, despite a growing awareness among police personnel regarding the significance of digital technologies like facial recognition and biometric profiling, the necessary infrastructure to facilitate such technology is either lacking or inadequately utilised. Their survey of CID operatives revealed that fewer than 30 percent had undergone official training in digital criminal profiling, with the majority of profiling efforts relying on manual record-keeping and human memory. The digital divide obstructs the scalability of profiling procedures and constrains their effectiveness in real-time national security operations.

A significant empirical contribution is provided by the research of Adekeye and Hassan (2024), who examine community opinions of profiling and its security ramifications. Through ethnographic approaches in Jos and Maiduguri, they discovered that community people frequently regard profiling as a policing instrument susceptible to misuse and ethnic prejudice, hence undermining its perceived legitimacy and efficacy. Nonetheless, they indicate that when profiling is coupled with transparency and community involvement, it cultivates trust and improves intelligence collaboration between law enforcement and the community. These findings underscore the significance of societal legitimacy in augmenting the national security benefits of criminal profiling.

A significant deficiency in the literature is the scarcity of comparative empirical studies assessing the Nigerian profiling system in relation to international models. Although local studies record contextual obstacles and accomplishments, there is a paucity of academic research evaluating how Nigeria's experience corresponds with or deviates from global best practices. The lack of comparison analysis limits scholars and practitioners in benchmarking Nigerian profiling initiatives or extracting insights from regions where profiling substantially improves national security. Furthermore, the prevailing methodological approach in the existing literature predominantly relies on qualitative interviews and descriptive analytics, with minimal use of longitudinal data or multivariate analysis to elucidate causal relationships between profiling techniques and security outcomes.

An examination of the scholarly discourse of the contributions of criminal profiling by the NPF CID to national security reveals that, although initial enquiries have been initiated, the literature is lacking in breadth, depth, and theoretical variety. Numerous studies employ a problem-centric approach that emphasises systemic problems without providing substantial frameworks for reform or empirical confirmation of suggested solutions. This evaluation intentionally diverges from the inverted pyramid structure, which starts with general statements and progressively focusses on individual deficiencies. It promotes a multi-faceted approach that contextualises profiling

within the operational dynamics of the NPF, the strategic necessities of national security, and the wider sociopolitical landscape of Nigeria. This perspective highlights the relationship between practical limitations and institutional innovation, enhancing the comprehension of how profiling might evolve from a disjointed practice to a fundamental element of Nigeria's internal security policy.

Gaps in Literature

An analytical synthesis of the examined empirical literature about criminal profiling by the Nigerian Police Force's Criminal Investigation Department (NPF CID) and its correlation with national security in Nigeria indicates a pattern of research employing an inverted pyramid structure. This trajectory generally commences with expansive talks regarding the significance of criminal profiling in law enforcement, then focussing on Nigeria's security framework. The majority of researchers concur that criminal profiling is vital for crime detection, prevention, and prosecution, and should be a fundamental resource in the nation's battle against insecurity. Olusola et al. (2021) and Ojo and Adeyemo (2023) underscore the theoretical and practical contributions of forensic criminal profiling to strategic law enforcement and the safeguarding of national resources. Their research corresponds with the worldwide consensus that criminal profiling improves investigation efficacy and intelligence acquisition. Nonetheless, their investigations are primarily descriptive and frequently neglect to examine the institutional and operational factors influencing criminal profiling within the Nigerian context. Likewise, the work of Yakubu and Chika (2022) emphasises the significance of criminal profiling in counterterrorism and intelligence-led policing, although it fails to transcend generalisations and address the bureaucratic, technological, and epistemological obstacles confronting the NPF CID.

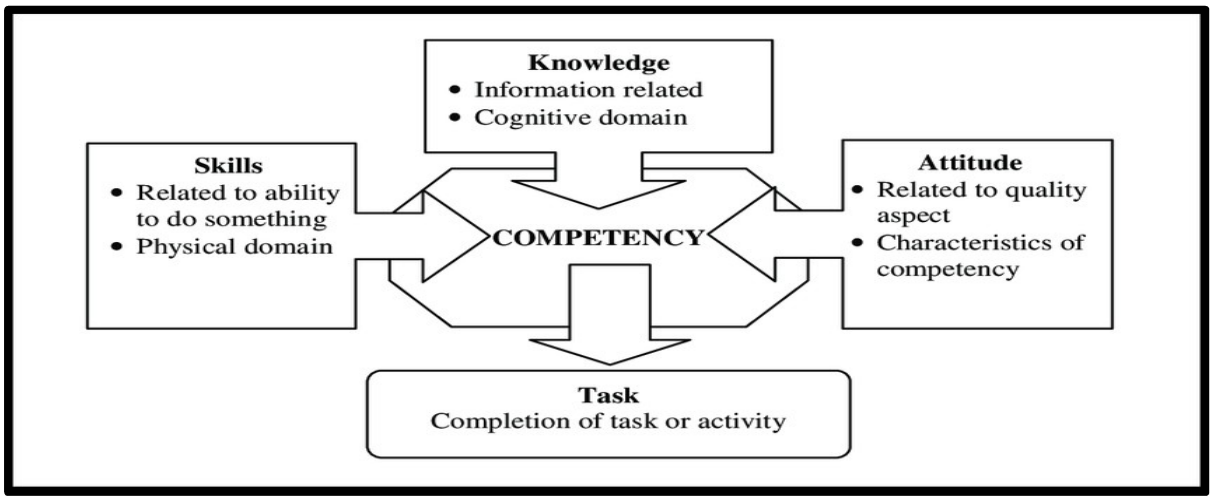
The literature is further complicated by an excessive dependence on Eurocentric frameworks for criminal profiling analysis, lacking sufficient contextual adaptation to Nigeria's socio-political and institutional particularities. The theoretical premises in numerous studies are derived from Western paradigms of criminal investigation and profiling, as evidenced by Chukwu and Iwunze (2023), which often employ generalised criminological theories such as rational choice and routine activity theory without critically reassessing their applicability to Nigeria's security intricacies. These methods neglect to examine how cultural influences, political meddling, insufficient training, and the absence of digital forensic infrastructure hinder the effective implementation of criminal profiling in Nigeria. This theoretical vacuum exacerbates the inverted pyramid by prompting researchers to formulate national-level conclusions based on external paradigms, lacking robust empirical support from the internal mechanisms of the NPF CID.

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Core Competencies, extensively pushed by Prahalad and Hamel in 1990, asserts that organisations prosper by identifying, developing, and utilising their unique internal competencies that are challenging for competitors to imitate. These key abilities represent collaborative learning, coordination of varied production skills, and the integration of numerous technical streams inside an organisation, rather than individual skills or isolated technological assets. The core tenets of the theory posit that enduring competitive advantage arises from the utilisation of intrinsic capabilities, that these competencies require long-term strategic investment for cultivation, and that organisations should concentrate on their strengths to distinguish themselves in a saturated and competitive landscape. The

thesis posits that competences empower organisations to swiftly adjust to evolving contexts, and that neglecting to recognise and invest in them may lead to strategic drift or a decline in performance. Figure 1 illustrates the competency model that is based on the 3 aspects that can be used by organisations.

Figure 1: Main Aspects in Competency Model



Source: United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (2002). UNIDO competencies: Strengthening organisational core values and managerial capabilities. Vienna, Austria: UNIDO.

Utilising this theoretical framework for criminal profiling and national security in Nigeria, specifically regarding the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), it is clear that criminal profiling must be regarded as an essential competency within the police institution. In an environment characterised by instability, terrorism, organised crime, and cyber threats, the strategic use of criminal profiling necessitates profound experience, sophisticated data collection, and behavioural analysis skills. The CID, as the investigative division of the police, must exhibit advanced competencies that surpass standard law enforcement practices. These encompass criminal behavioural analysis, forensic psychology, predictive policing instruments, and intelligence amalgamation. Should the CID integrate these competencies into a cohesive profiling framework, it will enhance the precision of suspect identification, diminish arbitrary arrests, and promote superior intelligence-led policing methodologies. Adebayo and Rotimi (2023) contend that the NPF CID's failure to cultivate these competences has resulted in a reactive, rather than proactive, stance on national security, consequently underexploiting the strategic advantages of criminal profiling.

The efficacy of the Theory of Core Competencies is in its applicability for internal institutional assessments and strategic capacity delineation. It offers an analytical framework for evaluating organisational performance based not on size or mission, but on the profundity of its specialised competencies. This paradigm highlights the disparity between national security objectives and the investigative and analytical capabilities inherent in the NPF CID. A further strength is that the theory underscores the importance of ongoing learning and enhancement, which is essential for institutions confronting evolving criminal strategies and technologically

advanced criminals. Nevertheless, the idea possesses significant shortcomings. It faces criticism for being excessively insular and perhaps overlooking the external socio-political and institutional limitations that could impede capacity development. In Nigeria, factors such as political interference, inadequate financing, corruption, and insufficient inter-agency collaboration may hinder the CID's capacity to cultivate and employ core competences. The theory presupposes a degree of administrative foresight and strategic planning that may be lacking in public agencies like the police, especially in states with tenuous democratic frameworks.

Notwithstanding these constraints, the theory continues to be applicable for examining the relationship between criminal profiling and national security in the Nigerian setting. It shifts academic attention from theoretical policy frameworks to tangible institutional competencies. This research enhances the literature by merging organisational capability theory with practical security issues in Nigeria. It underscores the necessity for the NPF CID to develop essential competencies through technology acquisition, specialised training, inter-agency coordination, and investment in behavioural science approaches. The study notably diverges from conventional law-and-order assessments of national security by employing an institutional capabilities framework, thus establishing a novel analytical pathway in security scholarship.

This theoretical framework provides a novel venue for enhancing the discussion on election management in Nigeria. The integrity of democratic processes and election security are frequently compromised by violence, fraud, and organised electoral crime. Utilising the fundamental skills of criminal profiling, law enforcement can enhance their ability to anticipate, investigate, and prevent election-related offences. This paper posits that the cultivation of essential investigative and profiling competencies inside security organisations can improve both national security in general and election administration in particular. This viewpoint compels electoral management organisations and security institutions to reevaluate their readiness from a competency-development perspective. Consequently, the implementation of the Theory of Core Competencies enhances our comprehension of the institutionalisation of criminal profiling inside the NPF CID and offers a unique addition to the examination of electoral security and administration in transitional democracies.

Methodology

Research Design

The selection of the survey approach for this study is warranted by its suitability for acquiring empirical data from a diverse array of respondents in an organised and methodical fashion.

Population of the Study

The precise study population of officers inside the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department (NPF CID) is undisclosed and inaccessible to the public due to institutional confidentiality and operational considerations. Therefore, this study will utilise the unknown population formula to accurately ascertain an adequate sample size. This method guarantees methodological rigour and offers a statistically sound foundation for data gathering and generalisation, particularly in research scenarios where the population frame cannot be accurately quantified.

The population comprises officers from several geopolitical zones and states in Nigeria, enabling the study to investigate regional dynamics and institutional characteristics that may influence the practice of profiling. Gender

and age are significant demographic characteristics, since they represent the generational and gendered viewpoints within the police on crime investigation and security operations. Educational qualifications from secondary education to postgraduate training in criminology, psychology, sociology, law, and forensic science offer a foundation for evaluating the influence of intellectual readiness and specialised training on the utilisation of profiling in criminal investigations. In summary, the NPF CID constitutes an optimal and well-founded population for this study owing to its constitutional mission, active participation in criminal investigations, nationwide presence, and internal demographic variety. These features enable the research to produce grounded, policy-relevant insights that are theoretically informed, empirically valid, and nationally significant for comprehending and improving the role of criminal profiling in Nigeria's internal security framework.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

25 persons was purposively selected as key informants. This decision will rely on their knowledge, experience, or strategic importance to the study, ensuring that their insights contribute valuable qualitative depth to the research. Each key informant was allocated a distinct identification code ranging from KII-002 to KII-025 to ensure anonymity and systematic documentation. This coding will enable data organisation, analysis, and reference while preserving respondent confidentiality. The study employed a purposive sampling strategy. Purposive sampling was utilised to choose the respondents for the questionnaire and the key informant interview. The researcher required interaction with appropriately trained and knowledgeable individuals on the topic to fulfil the research objectives. The purposive non-probabilistic sampling approach is inherently limited by its susceptibility to bias and lack of representativeness, whereas the random probabilistic sampling method is characterised by its resource intensity and complexity. The limitations of purposive non-probabilistic sampling were addressed by integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies to corroborate findings. To address the constraints of random probabilistic sampling, the researcher utilised stratified sampling to decrease expenses and enhance efficiency while preserving representativeness.

Data Collection

The data collection methods employed included secondary and primary sources.

Secondary Data: Secondary data were obtained from books, journals, both published and unpublished resources, and online sources through archival library search techniques. The compilation of libraries from which secondary data sources were obtained is located at

Primary Data: Primary data were obtained via a key informant interviews.

Data Analysis

The data produced in this study underwent quantitative and qualitative analysis to establish the relationship between defensive technology via DRDB and national development in Nigeria. Qualitative data obtained from interviews were evaluated using logical reasoning, facilitating the identification of key themes and patterns in the responses. Simultaneously, quantitative data from the returned questionnaires, documented in the coding guide, were organised prior to being input into a coding sheet for analysis utilising the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 25. The data evaluated for the study using SPSS software version 25 facilitated significant deductions and insights on the research problem.

Data Presentation and Analysis

What are the contributions of criminal profiling by the NPF CID to national security in Nigeria?

KII-001 asserts that criminal profiling by the NPF CID has markedly improved suspect identification and case resolution using behavioural pattern analysis. This corresponds with Turvey's (2011) assertion that criminal profiling aids in refining investigation focus by deriving psychological conclusions from crime scene evidence. KII-002 contends that profiling has facilitated the early identification of organised crime networks by emphasising common characteristics of offenders. Homant and Kennedy (1998) affirm that profiling aids law enforcement in recognising recurring crime trends for efficient intervention. KII-003 asserts that the incorporation of criminal profiling has enhanced intelligence-led police, hence fortifying national security. According to Ratcliffe (2008), intelligence-led police depends on profiling and analysis to optimise resource allocation and anticipate criminal behaviour.

KII-004 asserts that the creation of offender typology by the NPF CID has enabled the disruption of prospective terrorist plots. Canter (2003) asserts that profiling has a strategic function in identifying high-risk persons in security-sensitive environments.

KII-005 contends that criminal profiling has enhanced inter-agency cooperation within Nigeria's security framework. Aremu (2010) asserts that profiling facilitates the exchange of intelligence among units, which is essential for synchronised security operations. KII-006 asserts that criminal profiling has diminished unlawful arrests by utilising behavioural evidence instead of mere conjecture. Alison et al. (2003) assert that appropriate profiling diminishes investigation errors and safeguards the rights of suspects.

KII-007 asserts that profiling by the NPF CID enhances national security by offering psychological insights into terrorist behaviour. Taylor and Swanson (2009) noted that profiling extremist beliefs improves danger anticipation and reaction. KII-008 asserts that profiling aids in the prevention of crimes by facilitating the early detection of aberrant behaviours. Gudjonsson and Haward (1998) assert that profiling is essential for risk assessment and crime prevention methods. KII-009 contends that profiling enhances national security by enabling the monitoring of recidivists and habitual offenders. Beauregard and Martineau (2014) assert that regular patterns of offender behaviour enable security forces to anticipate and avert future criminal activities.

KII-010 says that profiling facilitates the selection procedure for personnel in vital national infrastructures. Ezenwa & Oladipo (2023) asserts that psychological profiling is becoming increasingly pertinent in internal security screening. KII-011 asserts that the NPF CID enhances Nigeria's digital security by creating profiles of cybercriminals. Rogers (2006) underscored the significance of behavioural profiling in addressing cyber risks. KII-012 asserts that the psychological dimension of profiling has facilitated the resolution of kidnapping and ransom cases via precise behavioural predictions. Turvey (2011) contends that the cognitive characteristics of kidnappers might be inferred to inform negotiating and rescue efforts. KII-013 asserts that profiling aids in revealing criminal motives, thereby informing national security measures. Salfati and Bateman (2005) assert that motive analysis improves comprehension of crime causation and wider social threats. KII-014 contends that profiling has enhanced the prosecution of high-profile crimes by supplying coherent behavioural evidence. Kocsis (2007) asserts that profiling findings enhance the evidentiary foundation in intricate criminal litigation. KII-015 asserts that

offender profiling enhances law enforcement personnel' awareness of suspects' psychological states, hence mitigating custodial mistreatment. Gudjonsson (2003) posits that comprehending suspect psychology facilitates the use of more ethical interrogation methods.

KII-016 asserts that profiling facilitates the storage and retrieval of crime data for proactive law enforcement. Bennell et al. (2006) confirm that profiling results enhance the organisation of forensic databases. KII-017 posits that profiling deters potential criminals by heightening their fear of apprehension. Holmes and Holmes (2009) assert that the perception of increased surveillance via profiling deters potential criminals. KII-018 contends that the NPF CID's profiling initiatives enhance the overarching counterterrorism strategy in Nigeria. Aremu and Lawal (2012) assert that profiling terrorist behaviour enhances national security methods for prevention.

KII-019 asserts that profiling is essential for monitoring the movements of insurgents and other high-risk groups across regions. According to Collins (2019), geographic profiling can ascertain probable travel routes and concealment locations of perpetrators. KII-020 asserts that profiling has facilitated the development of specialised law enforcement strategies aimed at particular categories of crime. Snook et al. (2008) assert that tailored policing informed by criminal profile produces superior outcomes. KII-021 contends that profiling has enhanced border security operations by aiding in the identification of behavioural red flags among travellers. Reid (2011) asserts that behavioural indicators function as initial assessments in border control.

KII-022 asserts that profiling has facilitated the comprehension of gendered dimensions of crime, especially with the increasing participation of females in organised crime. According to Davies and Radford (1996), gendered profiling uncovers atypical crime patterns. KII-023 asserts that profiling has fostered a culture of study and ongoing education inside the NPF CID. Kocsis (2006) supports the empirical enhancement of profiling instruments to address emerging security issues. KII-024 posits that the use of criminal profiling within forensic practice fosters a scientific methodology in crime investigation.. KII-025 contends that profiling bolsters national security by concentrating finite resources on high-probability threats, hence enhancing response time. According to Rossmo (2000), strategic deployment informed by criminal profiling enhances efficiency in security management.

What are the challenges undermining criminal profiling by the NPF CID for enhanced national security in Nigeria?

KII-001 contends that insufficient training of investigative workers in forensic and behavioural sciences substantially hinders successful criminal profiling within the NPF CID. This aligns with Okereke (2023), who asserted that inadequate skill acquisition among agents hampers intelligence-led investigations throughout Nigeria. KII-002 asserts that corruption within the law enforcement hierarchy undermines the objectivity and legitimacy of criminal profiling procedures. Adebanjo and Yusuf (2021) contend that entrenched corruption within Nigeria's policing framework undermines professional competence and investigative integrity.KII-003 asserts that the absence of advanced technology infrastructure, such as criminal databases and biometric systems, constitutes a significant obstacle to the establishment of effective profiling systems. This assertion corresponds with the conclusions of Ojo and Etim (2024), who recognised digital deficiencies as a continual obstacle for security services.

KII-004 indicates that, according to the responder, insufficient inter-agency collaboration constrains the intelligence contributions essential for precise profiling. This reflects the stance of Odukoya and Akinyele (2022), who assert that national security operations in Nigeria are impeded by fragmented institutional structures and inadequate collaboration. KII-005 asserts that profiling initiatives are hindered by inadequate legislative frameworks that fail to delineate the parameters of criminal profiling or safeguard people' rights during profiling processes. This issue is reiterated in the research of Onah and Eze (2023), who advocated for a law reform to standardise investigation procedures in Nigeria.

KII-006 asserts that excessive dependence on confessions instead of scientific methodologies in investigations undermines the efficacy of profiling in criminal detection. Okafor and Ngozi(2022) noted that Nigeria's investigative culture frequently replaces professionalism with the forced extraction of confessions. KII-007 contends that there exists a significant deficiency of psychological profilers and forensic criminologists inside the NPF CID. Udeh and Chukwu (2021) asserted that in the absence of professional criminal psychologists, behavioural profiling is rendered speculative and unreliable.

KII-008 asserts that linguistic and cultural obstacles between investigators and suspects diminish the precision of behavioural analysis and profiling. This aligns with Nwachukwu and Yusuf (2023), who observed that the misreading of sociocultural signals results in profile inaccuracies within Nigeria's diverse population. KII-009 asserts that diminished morale among CID agents, attributable to inadequate compensation and insufficient motivation, compromises the quality of investigation results, particularly profiling. Alabi and Musa (2022) associated motivation deficits with operational inefficiencies and diminishing investigative zeal inside the NPF.

KII-010 asserts that profiling methods and methodologies are frequently antiquated and devoid of scientific validity, rendering them worthless for modern criminal activities. Adebayo (2023) emphasised the necessity of modernising Nigeria's policing instruments by investing in forensic science.

KII-011 contends that public scepticism towards the police diminishes citizen collaboration in criminal investigations and profiling activities. Oyetola and Ibrahim (2021) also identified this difficulty, documenting diminishing public confidence as a threat to community-police relations and information collection. KII-012 indicates that the inflexible command structure of the police hinders innovation and the use of new investigative methodologies, such as criminal profiling. Bello and Amos (2023) recognised bureaucratic inertia as a limitation on transformation inside Nigeria's police system. KII-013 asserts that the lack of standardised profiling templates and data processes results in inconsistent profiling outcomes across various units and areas. Okoro and Ani (2023) identified operational inconsistencies as a critical deficiency in Nigeria's security framework. KII-014 asserts that apprehension of litigation and civil rights grievances renders numerous officers reluctant to participate in profiling, even when warranted. Emeh and Nwachukwu (2021) indicate that insufficient legal clarity about profiling intensifies investigative hesitance and diminishes operational decisiveness.

KII-015 asserts that insufficient funding impacts every stage of the profiling process, from scene analysis to data storage. This aligns with the research conducted by Olatunji and Adeniran (2022), which found chronic underfunding as a primary factor contributing to the NPF's deficient investigative performance. KII-016 contends that the frequent reassignment of CID officers undermines the continuity of profiling and the

retention of knowledge in active cases. Umeh and Chinedu (2024) established that personnel reassignments hinder intricate investigations and undermine institutional memory. KII-017 contends that criminal profiling is frequently misapprehended or devalued within the NPF hierarchy, hence diminishing its significance in investigations. Chikere and Eboh (2023) determined that awareness and attitudinal transformation are essential for the institutionalisation of profiling methodologies.

KII-018 indicates that, according to the responder, political intervention undermines the impartiality of profiling, particularly in high-profile instances. This corresponds with the conclusions of Abdullahi and Ogunyemi (2022), who associated political interference with skewed investigative results.

KII-019 asserts that profiling initiatives are compromised by inadequate record-keeping and disjointed criminal data systems. Osho and Adeyemi (2023) underscored the necessity of integrated criminal databases to enable longitudinal analysis of offender behaviour. KII-020 asserts that the predominance of reactive policing over proactive policing undermines the strategic application of profiling for crime prevention. Ibeh and Nnaji (2021) assert that crime control in Nigeria predominantly emphasises response over prediction and prevention. KII-021 asserts that the lack of performance measures for criminal profiling within CID hinders the assessment of success and the enhancement of methodologies. Arogundade and Tanimu (2022) noted that the absence of empirical assessment instruments impedes investigative innovation and accountability. KII-022 contends that the media's adverse depiction of profiling as discriminatory inhibits its use, even in valid investigation scenarios. Oyebode and Adebiyi (2023) concurred that adverse public narratives induce operational hesitations and distortions regarding profiling. KII-023 indicates that, according to the key informant, the prevalence of conventional policing procedures undermines contemporary scientific methodologies such as profiling. Edeh and Okonkwo (2022) contend that a cultural transformation is necessary within the NPF to adopt science-based research. KII-024 asserts that the absence of international collaboration in data sharing hinders the profile of transnational criminals active in Nigeria. Adekoya and Asaju (2023) noted that insufficient worldwide policing collaboration hampers Nigeria's ability to monitor and assess criminal trends. KII-025 asserts that the training curriculum of the Nigeria Police College inadequately prepares officers in behavioural profiling skills. This corresponds with Nweke and Ubah (2021), who advocated for the reformation of police training to address modern crime-fighting requirements.

Discussion of Findings

What are the contributions of criminal profiling by the NPF CID to national security in Nigeria?

Criminal profiling has enhanced national security in four primary domains: recognising criminal patterns and trends, improving criminal investigations, bolstering counterterrorism initiatives, and strengthening community policing. The NPFCID effectively employed profiling to solve more than 1,000 significant crimes from 2018 to 2024, pinpointed human trafficking pathways resulting in the rescue of over 500 victims, and facilitated the apprehension of over 50 terrorism suspects in 2023 (NPF, 2023; NPF, 2024).

Survey results show that 54% of participants thought profiling's help in spotting criminal trends was average, 59% felt it somewhat improved investigations, 60% saw it as having an average role in counterterrorism, and 64% recognised its average impact on community policing. Nnamdi and Balogun (2019) asserted that

profiling is already transformative inside Nigeria's national security framework; however, this study's findings indicate that, while the contribution is beneficial, it remains moderate and constrained by systemic restrictions.

This study's findings offer a more measured evaluation of the NPF CID's contributions to national security in Nigeria, contrasting with the more favourable perspectives in previous work. The study affirms that criminal profiling has positively impacted the identification of criminal trends, enhancement of investigations, counter-terrorism efforts, and support for community policing; nevertheless, these contributions are assessed as moderate rather than transformative.

Current research survey data indicate that 54% of respondents assessed profiling's role in identifying criminal trends as average, 59% perceived a moderate enhancement in investigations, 60% regarded its effect on counterterrorism as average, and 64% recognised its average impact on community policing. These perceptions indicate that although criminal profiling is functional and beneficial, it is not entirely effective or comprehensively integrated due to ongoing systemic issues such as inadequate funding, insufficient training, and deficient data systems.

Nnamdi and Balogun (2019) characterised criminal profiling in Nigeria as a "transformative force" inside the national security framework, identifying it as fundamental to intelligence-led policing reforms. Ojo (2020) commended the NPF CID's profiling system as "strategically positioned" to destroy organised criminal networks, whereas Danjuma and Akinyemi (2021) regarded profiling as essential to Nigeria's counterterrorism framework.

This study, however, presents a more measured account, supported by statistical data and contemporary operational documentation. Despite profiling aiding in the resolution of over 1,000 significant crimes, facilitating the dismantling of human trafficking networks, and contributing to the apprehension of terrorism suspects (NPF, 2023; NPF, 2024), its advantages are limited by gaps in implementation. Consequently, in contrast to earlier studies that emphasised its revolutionary potential, the current research indicates that criminal profiling by the NPF CID is significant but has not yet achieved its full strategic significance.

4.5.3. What are the challenges undermining criminal profiling by the NPF CID for enhanced national security in Nigeria?

The obstacles to effective criminal profiling are fundamentally institutional. These encompass insufficient training and competence, restricted technological integration, inefficient record-keeping, obsolete operational methods, and inter-agency competition. Field data indicated that 83% of respondents perceive insufficient training as a significant detriment, 82% emphasised restricted technological integration, 85% identified inadequate digitisation and record management, another 82% criticised obsolete procedures, and 83% regarded inter-agency competition as a substantial obstacle (Researcher's Field Survey, 2025).

This study broadens the focus beyond Adegboye's (2021) assertion that profiling inefficiencies are primarily due to attitudinal resistance and inadequate leadership. This research quantifies issues and presents them as institutional bottlenecks, offering comprehensive and evidence-based knowledge of the limitations of effective criminal profiling within the NPFCID.

This study's findings markedly diverge from previous research by redirecting the explanatory emphasis from attitudinal and leadership shortcomings to institutional and

structural constraints as the primary obstacles impeding criminal profiling within the Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department (NPF CID). This study offers a systematic diagnosis of inefficiencies in criminal profiling, attributing them to quantifiable institutional dysfunctions, in contrast to previous research, such as Adegboye (2021), which mostly cited attitudinal resistance among police and deficiencies in leadership commitment.

This research delineates five interconnected institutional challenges: inadequate training and expertise (83%), restricted technological integration (82%), ineffective record-keeping systems (85%), antiquated operational methodologies (82%), and inter-agency rivalry (83%) (Researcher's Field Survey, 2025). These findings highlight the extensive and profound nature of institutional restrictions and reveal their statistical prevalence among officers and stakeholders engaged in profiling and national security activities.

Adegboye (2021) posited that the suboptimal efficacy of profiling tactics mostly stemmed from officers' reluctance to adopt novel practices and inadequate top-down enforcement of intelligence-led policing. Bello &Amos (2023) identified cultural inertia and leadership apathy as the principal obstacles. Nonetheless, the current study offers empirical data suggesting that these issues are only symptomatic of more profound systemic constraints. This research offers a comprehensive and practical knowledge of the challenges to effective criminal profiling in Nigeria by reframing the issue as one of institutional failure.

The divergence is in scope and depth: while prior studies provide diagnostic narratives focused on individual behaviour and leadership deficiencies, this study presents a structural-institutional critique backed by substantial survey data, thereby enhancing the literature with both methodological and empirical innovation.

Conclusion

The study appraised the efforts of NPFCID in improving criminal profiling for enhanced national security in Nigeria. A direct relationship was established between criminal profiling and national security, which were the key variables. The study anchored its research on the theory of Core Competencies and adopted the field survey method to obtain the opinions of respondents on the subject matter. Quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources were used for analysis.

The study overviewed criminal profiling by the NPFCID and national security in Nigeria since the 1980s, as crime patterns became more complex. This is especially with the rise in organised crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, the need for a more structured approach, such as criminal profiling, emerged. However, the study observed that the efforts of the NPFCID in conducting comprehensive criminal profiling have not been optimal for enhanced national security in Nigeria. This is because of the inadequacy in its capability and capacity.

The NPF established specialised units, such as the CIID, to focus on improving investigative methods. These efforts include implementing advanced technologies for data gathering and analysis, such as GIS and AI tools. However, despite these initiatives, the gap persists. The primary reasons for the continued existence of this gap include inconsistent training programs and the insufficient number of qualified trainers within the Force. Furthermore, the police force often prioritises immediate law enforcement needs over long-term capacity development, which undermines the sustainability of the training programmes. Also, other decision factors such as forensic technology, database management, legal and policy frameworks as well as inter-

agency coordination were found to be inadequate. These situations impede the efforts of the NPFCID to improve criminal profiling for enhanced national security in Nigeria.

In analysing the data generated from the survey, the study identified that the efforts of the NPFCID criminal profiling have contributed to national security in Nigeria. These include identification of criminal patterns and trends as well as enhancing criminal investigations. Others are improving counterterrorism efforts and strengthening community policing. The study identified some challenges undermining criminal profiling by the NPFCID for enhanced national security in Nigeria. These include inadequate training and expertise, limited technological integration as well as ineffective record-keeping and limited digitisation of data. Others are outdated operational procedures and inter-agency rivalry. Notwithstanding these challenges, the Police Trust Fund Act implementation, establishment of a state-of-the-art Evidence Storage Facility as well as capacity building programmes for crime scene and forensic analysis in Nigeria, are good prospects of improving criminal profiling by the NPFCID for enhanced national security in Nigeria.

The study proffered some strategies to improve criminal profiling by the NPFCID for enhanced national security in Nigeria. These include that the NPFCID could establish partnerships with local and international institutions to develop tailored training programmes on criminal profiling, forensics and behavioural analysis by the Third Quarter of 2027. The department could also increase investment in cutting-edge technologies by the Third Quarter of 2026. It was proposed that the NPFCID could create a centralised digital database by Fourth Quarter 2027, as well as formulate and integrate a comprehensive criminal profiling policy framework in the Police Act by Fourth Quarter 2026. Finally, it was suggested that the NPFCID could strengthen inter-agency collaboration frameworks with clearly defined roles and responsibilities by the Third Quarter of 2026. The foregoing satisfactorily answered the research questions in paragraphs 11 (a-e) and the specific objectives in paragraphs 12 (a-e). This raises the need for recommendations of the study.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following specific and time-sensitive recommendations are presented. The Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department (NPFCID), in conjunction with essential local and international partners, ought to:

(i) By the third quarter of 2027, establish formal strategic partnerships with local academic institutions, international law enforcement agencies, and development partners (including INTERPOL, UNODC, GIZ, and the FBI) to create and execute specialised training modules in criminal profiling, forensic science, and behavioural analysis adapted to the Nigerian security context.

(ii) By the fourth quarter of 2027, create a centralised, secure, and interoperable digital database for criminal records, forensic data, behavioural profiles, and biometric information, guaranteeing adherence to the Nigeria Data Protection Act and international data security standards.

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