HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL SECURITY: LINKING RECRUITMENT TO ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN NIGERIA POLICE FORCE

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ABSTRACT
This theoretical paper looks into the essential relationship between Human Resource Development (HRD) and internal security in Nigeria, with a focus on how recruitment practices in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) influence officers' ethical behavior. Drawing on Systems Theory, the study develops an integrative model that links strategic recruitment and continuing HRD interventions to the formation of an ethical, accountable police force capable of strengthening national security. In light of widespread police misconduct, cases of brutality, extortion, harassment and the 2020 EndSARS protests, the paper advises that recruitment go beyond basic skills and incorporate assessments of integrity, emotional intelligence, and social responsibility. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of continual ethical development to maintain the moral standards of police personnel. This approach offers a comprehensive framework for reforming recruitment and HRD practices to build a more professional and ethically grounded police force in Nigeria.

1.1 Background and context

Internal security is a crucial foundation of national stability and socioeconomic progress particularly in countries dealing with institutional inefficiencies, rising crime rates, and public mistrust of state security agencies. According to Nigeria's constitution, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is tasked with upholding public order, enforcing the law, and protecting people and property. However, ongoing claims of serious human rights violations, corruption, and systemic wrongdoing have put the Force's performance under close examination (Amnesty International, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2020). In addition to undermining public trust, reports of police violence, extortion, wrongful detention, and arbitrary killings have also sparked serious questions about the Force's moral underpinnings.

The influence of hiring and human resource development (HRD) on police conduct is a crucial but frequently overlooked aspect of Nigeria's internal security dilemma. According to empirical data, the Nigeria Police Force's (NPF) declining ethical standards are partly attributable to poor hiring practices marked by bribery, nepotism, and political meddling (Alemika, 2013; Okereke, 2018). The Force runs the risk of institutionalizing unethical behavior and admitting people who lack the professional competence and moral integrity necessary to preserve public trust and the rule of law if it does not have a meritocratic and value-driven recruitment framework (Iwuoha & Aniche, 2020; Chukwuma, 2021).

Human resource development, according to Swanson and Holton (2009), is a purposeful, ongoing activity meant to improve employees' behavior, knowledge, and abilities. When it comes to policing, HRD is essential to developing a disciplined, professional, and morally upright police force. HRD may change organizational culture, inculcate integrity, and improve internal security when it is strategically integrated with ethical standards, accountability principles, and ongoing capacity-building. However, ignoring HRD initiatives weakens operational performance, promotes a culture of impunity, and erodes public trust in the police, all of which contribute to the Force's eventual decline in legitimacy and authority.

The effects of these systemic flaws were made glaringly evident by the 2020 #EndSARS initiative. Decades of unrestrained abuse, poor training, and the moral decline of a force designed to combat violent crime were the catalysts for the widespread protests that ultimately resulted in the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) (BBC News, 2020). The incident made it clear that ethical policing, HRD frameworks, and recruitment integrity must all be reexamined as crucial components of internal security.

Even though the Nigeria Police Force is essential to internal security, the continued unethical behavior, power abuse, and public mistrust indicate serious problems with the force's human resource management. In particular, a reactive, abusive, and disengaged security architecture has been a result of the failure to institutionalize ethical hiring and development procedures. This begs the urgent question: how do HRD procedures and recruiting quality affect police officers' moral conduct and, consequently, the efficiency of internal security in Nigeria? Resolving this issue is essential to creating a police force that is both operationally capable and morally responsible.

This theoretical paper explores this intersection by employing systems theory to argue that recruitment and HR development are not mere administrative tasks but strategic levers that shape ethical behavior and national security outcomes. It contends that without reforming these human resource functions, efforts to achieve ethical policing and sustainable internal security will remain elusive.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this paper is to develop a theoretical model that links Human Resource Development specifically recruitment practices to ethical behavior within the Nigeria Police Force, and how this relationship impacts internal security.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the conceptual relationship between recruitment practices and ethical behavior in public security institutions.

2. Critically evaluate the human resource development strategies employed by the Nigeria Police Force, particularly in the areas of recruitment and ethics training.

3. Analyze how unethical recruitment processes contribute to police misconduct and internal insecurity in Nigeria.

4. Develop a theoretical model that explains the interaction between HRD, recruitment integrity, ethical behavior, and internal security outcomes.

1.3 Justification for the Study

This paper contributes to academic debate by bridging the gap between human resource development theory and internal security policy. While many studies focus on operational reform in police agencies, few investigate the fundamental impact of recruiting ethics on systemic behavior. This study offers a theoretical analysis founded on present Nigerian reality, providing insights for policy reformers, HR practitioners in public security, scholars in public administration and criminology.

2.0 Methodology

This paper uses a qualitative research design, drawing on secondary data from journal publications, government papers, and reputable web sources. Data were arranged thematically to investigate the relationship between human resource development, recruitment, and ethical behavior in the Nigerian police force. A mix of text analysis and the Multiple Perspective Approach (MPA) was utilized to investigate various perspectives on recruitment practices and ethical issues. A critical analytical perspective assisted in identifying HRD gaps that impacted internal security and ethical conduct inside the police.

3.0 Conceptual Review

3.1 Human Resource Development (HRD)

Swanson and Holton (2009) describe human resource development (HRD) as the process of building and unleashing human expertise through organizational development and personnel training in order to increase performance. In the context of public security agencies such as the police, HRD entails not just skill acquisition but also value orientation, leadership development, and ethical behavioral alignment. Human resource development is the systematic and ongoing process of developing individuals' capacities inside businesses through education, training, career development, and organizational learning. In poor nations such as Nigeria, human resource development in police has been mostly reactive, underfunded, and un-strategic, with a concentration on technical training rather than character or ethical development. This disparity erodes professionalism and responsibility, particularly in vital frontline posts.

3.2 Recruitment in Public Security Institutions

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), recruiting is a strategic HR function that seeks to discover and attract individuals who possess the traits required for effective job performance and ethical fit within the firm. Recruitment is the first point of contact between a potential employee and the business, and it plays a critical role in building institutional culture. In the Nigeria Police Force, however, recruiting processes have frequently been tainted by irregularities such as political meddling, favoritism, and bribery (Alemika, 2019). Such flawed recruitment procedures admit not only underqualified persons into the police, but also individuals lacking the ethical and psychological disposition required for service in a high-stakes, public-facing institution.

3.3 Ethical Behavior in Policing

Ethical behavior in police is defined as activities guided by ideals of justice, fairness, accountability, and human rights. According to Punch (2009), police ethics are essential for public trust and the legitimacy of the force. Ethical behavior governs how police officers use discretion, enforce the law, and interact with the public. Ethical lapses among Nigerian police officers, as indicated by examples of bribery, torture, and extrajudicial killings, point to not only human failings but also systemic deficiencies in recruitment, training, and oversight. Ethics must be instilled in both the

organization and culture of the police, beginning with recruiting and continuing through ongoing professional development.

3.4 Internal Security: Concept and Context

Internal security refers to the protection of persons, institutions, and territory against threats that arise within national borders, such as crime, insurgency, terrorism, and civil disturbance. It is a state in which the law is followed, lives and property are protected, and public order is upheld. Ajayi (2012) underlines that the effectiveness of internal security systems is directly proportional to the strength and integrity of policing institutions. In Nigeria, insufficient internal security is frequently caused by institutional inefficiencies in the police force, such as bad human resource policies that encourage unethical and ineffective policing. Therefore, improving HRD in the police is crucial for ensuring internal stability.

3.5 Causality Between Human Resource Development (HRD) and Security Outcomes

A growing body of academic and policy-oriented literature confirms the causal relationship between human resource development (HRD) practices, particularly recruitment, training, ethical orientation, and career development, and broader outcomes in public security, institutional governance, and state legitimacy (Storey, 2007; McCourt and Eldridge, 2003; Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). In this way, HRD goes beyond administrative functions and represents a strategic pillar in increasing the integrity, responsiveness, and capability of public sector institutions.

HRD takes on a greater importance in policing due to law enforcement personnel' dual role as agents of governmental authority and arbiters of public trust. The quality of recruiting, the style of training (both initial and ongoing), and the ethical norms established via professional development have a substantial impact on how officers interact with the public, enforce laws, and preserve democratic ideals (Bayley & Shearing, 2001). Where HR policies are merit-based, open, and founded in ethics, police personnel are more likely to display responsibility, procedural fairness, and respect for human rights, which are critical components for effective internal security.

According to research, recruitment systems that fail to screen for integrity, temperament, and civic orientation frequently introduce individuals predisposed to abuse of authority, corruption, and misconduct into the police force (Miller & Hess, 2005). In Nigeria, systemic disregard for HRD principles in police recruitment, such as appointment politicization, inadequate vetting procedures, and a lack of psychological profiling, has contributed to the spread of unethical behavior, ranging from extortion and brutality to collusion with criminal networks (Olonisakin, 2009; CLEEN Foundation, 2021).

Training, too, is a significant causal factor. Continuous, scenario-based, values-driven training has been found to improve officers' decision-making abilities, crisis management, emotional intelligence, and cultural competence. In contrast, antiquated, strict, or militarized training regimens found in many Nigerian police academies have failed to create officers capable of adapting to democratic policing principles or community involvement models (Chukwuma, 2018). This divergence adds to ongoing internal security issues like youth-police conflicts, low crime reporting rates, and urban violence.

The relationship between HRD and security results is also evident in career advancement schemes. Promotions based on merit, competence, and ethical record encourage professionalism. However, in environments like Nigeria, where career development is frequently impacted by favoritism or bribery, officers have little incentive to maintain high ethical standards (Ibrahim, 2014). Such dysfunctions undermine public trust and encourage impunity, eroding the broader architecture of internal security. Furthermore, there is a feedback loop at play. Poor HRD undermines internal security by enabling unprofessional conduct; weakened security, in turn, reduces public cooperation, thereby increasing the difficulty of effective policing. This cycle not only diminishes operational efficiency but also undermines the legitimacy of the state itself (Fukuyama, 2011).

Therefore, the integration of robust HRD policies especially in recruitment, ethical training, and performance evaluation is not merely a human resource concern but a strategic imperative for national security. In the case of Nigeria, reforming the Nigeria Police Force through HRD-centered interventions is essential for reversing internal instability, restoring public confidence, and aligning security operations with democratic governance.

3.6 Theoretical framework

Systems Theory

Ludwig von Bertalanffy's Systems Theory (1968) provides a comprehensive framework for comprehending complex organizational structures. According to the theory, organizations are made up of interdependent and interacting subsystems, and the interactions between these elements affect the overall behavior.

When applied to the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Systems Theory indicates that recruitment, training, supervision, and ethical standards are not separate roles, but rather interconnected components of a larger human resource system. If recruitment is poor or unethical, it lowers the quality of workers entering the system, hurting other HRD subsystems such as training and performance appraisal. The end outcome is a systemic failure manifested in unethical behavior, poor service delivery, and, eventually, internal security breakdown.

Model of system theory

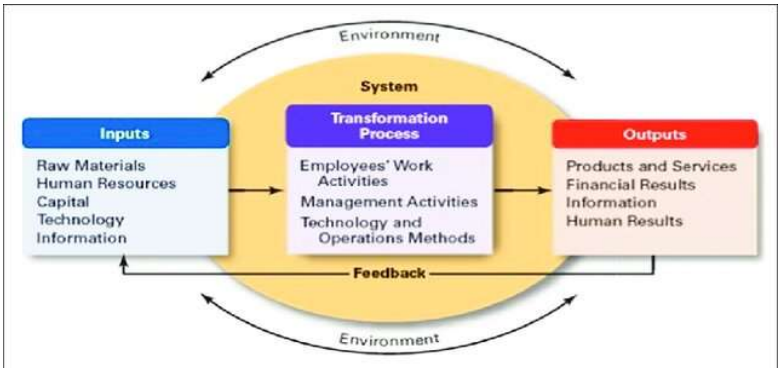


Figure 1: Organizational system theory model
Source: Hayajneh (2007)

Input → Process → Output → Feedback loop. If the recruitment process (input) is defective, it has an impact on training (process), which leads to unethical policing (output), resulting in public backlash. To enhance police officers' ethical behavior, reform initiatives must begin with the recruitment process, which sets the tone for all other HR and security-related results. According to Banerjee (2016), ethical outcomes in public sector institutions are typically the consequence of structural and procedural inputs such as HR recruitment and training, rather than individual morality.

3.7 Historical Overview of Recruitment and Ethical Failures in the Nigeria Police Force

The evolution of recruitment processes in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is inextricably linked to the country's colonial past and the complicated political dynamics of post-independence government. The NPF was founded in 1861, with the primary goal of serving colonial interests rather than providing public safety or maintaining democratic civil order.

According to Ahire (1991), the colonial police force was designed specifically to implement colonial administrators' orders, repress indigenous resistance, and retain authoritarian control over the populace. This foundation produced a coercive institutional culture defined by impunity, brutality, and the repression of fundamental rights, which has endured in the present Nigerian police system.

Post-independence changes were supposed to reorient the police towards professional, democratic policing. These attempts, however, were greatly hampered by political meddling, extended periods of military administration, and widespread systemic corruption (Alemika, 1993; Rotimi, 2001). Instead of becoming a meritocratic institution, police recruitment became extremely political, with nepotism, ethnic bias, and a patronage-based selection system (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004). These actions not only degraded professional standards, but also undermined the force's ethical base.

Rather than ranking candidates based on their character, talent, and dedication to service, recruiting has frequently become a transactional process affected by personal ties and political affiliations. This eroded morale, professional discipline, and ethical accountability at all levels of the force (Hills, 2012). Inadequate screening methods, as well as a lack of psychiatric and background investigations, contributed to the recruitment of unqualified and morally unfit persons.

Several government investigations and reform initiatives have identified the recruitment process as a major contributor to the NPF's operational and ethical difficulties. For example, both the 2006 M.D. Yusuf Presidential Committee on Police Reform and the 2008 Uwais Electoral Reform Committee emphasized that defective recruitment was key to the problem of police inefficiency, malfeasance, and public trust erosion (CLEEN Foundation, 2008). These assessments indicated that without addressing recruitment and training shortcomings, additional reform attempts would have a limited impact.

Furthermore, the 2010 Parry Osayande Panel on Police Reform reiterated the urgent need to institutionalize fair, merit-based recruiting systems that are free of political involvement and based on ethical principles. The panel argued for a centralized recruitment system that includes standardized testing, integrity assessments, and community input to ensure that those admitted to the force have not only the physical and intellectual abilities, but also the moral character required for ethical policing (Osayande Report, 2012). Despite these recommendations, implementation has remained uneven, often hindered by a lack of political will, institutional resistance, and inconsistent policy frameworks. Consequently, the Nigeria Police Force continues to grapple with a reputation marred by corruption, rights abuses, and public distrust issues that trace their roots back to an ethically compromised recruitment tradition.

Finally, the historical trajectory of recruitment in the Nigeria Police Force demonstrates a consistent failure to emphasize talent, integrity, and professionalism. These flaws have entrenched unethical behaviors and institutional inefficiencies, consequently weakening both internal discipline and the overall purpose of protecting public safety and internal security in Nigeria.

3.8 Recruitment and Human Resource Development in Security Organizations

Recruitment is the foundational pillar of human resource development in any firm. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), recruitment is more than just a personnel function; it is a strategic process that influences job performance, corporate culture, and long-term efficacy. This is especially true in security organizations like the police, where recruits are given legal authority, weaponry, and significant discretionary control over citizens' rights and liberties.

In the context of policing, recruiters must look beyond academic credentials to assess psychological fitness, ethical temperament, civic responsibility, and comprehension of community values. These characteristics are crucial in ensuring that officers carry out their responsibilities with professionalism, integrity, and respect for human rights.

Empirical research conducted across Africa have shown the risks of ineffective recruitment methods. Mubangizi (2015) and Tankebe (2013) contend that low standards have resulted in the registration of people with criminal records, limited educational backgrounds, and a fundamental misunderstanding of justice and rights. Such individuals frequently demonstrate tendencies toward corruption, ruthlessness, and abuse of power behaviors, which undermine public trust and promote instability.

Nigeria's police recruitment procedure has drawn severe criticism for its lack of transparency and meritocracy. Numerous studies have shown that recruiting slots were auctioned to the highest bidders or given based on political patronage rather than competence and fitness (Adebayo & Odukoya, 2020). This has drastically reduced professionalism and discipline within the army, hindering efforts to maintain internal security. To solve these systemic issues, incorporating digital process technologies into tactical operations is a potential approach. These systems use digital tools, software, and algorithms to organize, automate, and manage operational activities. According to Ikaka et al. (2025), digital workflow systems improve communication, streamline activities, and optimize information processing, hence boosting overall efficiency and operational performance. Nonetheless, several persistent challenges continue to hinder the development of an effective police force in Nigeria, including:

1. Corrupt Recruitment Practices: Recruitment based on nepotism, bribery, or political influence compromises the integrity and effectiveness of the force.

2. Lack of Psychological and Ethical Screening: Insufficient attention to mental health, moral integrity, and ethical orientation leads to the inclusion of unsuitable individuals.

3. Inadequate Training and Development: Many officers receive minimal or outdated training, which limits their ability to handle modern security challenges effectively.

4. Low Remuneration and Welfare: Poor salaries and working conditions demoralize officers and expose them to corrupt practices.

5. Political Interference: The politicization of policing undermines independence and objectivity, especially during elections or civil unrest.

6. Weak Accountability Mechanisms: A lack of effective internal control and oversight leads to impunity among officers.

7. Poor Infrastructure and Equipment: Inadequate tools and logistics impair operational efficiency and responsiveness.

8. Cultural and Ethnic Bias: Favoritism and ethnic balancing in recruitment and promotion create divisions and lower moral.

3.9 HRD, Ethics, and Internal Security Nexus

There is a growing scholarly consensus that the foundation of effective internal security is not just advanced weaponry, intelligence infrastructure, or surveillance technology, but also the human element, particularly the ethical and professional competence of frontline security officers (Bayley & Shearing, 2001; Davis & Henderson, 2003; Osaghae, 2015). In this setting, human resource development (HRD) becomes an important pillar in influencing the attitudes, abilities, and behaviors of security professionals tasked with protecting the public and upholding the law.

A well-structured HRD framework focuses on ethical recruitment, value-driven training, ongoing professional development, and merit-based advancement. These characteristics are essential for developing a police force that is not just technically proficient but also morally grounded, emotionally intelligent, and attentive to the needs of a varied civilian population (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). In contrast, the absence of these systems promotes poorly trained, uninspired, and ethically compromised

police, which results in widespread insecurity, abuse of authority, and degradation of state legitimacy.

The Nigerian police experience provides a vivid case study of this connection. The EndSARS protests in October 2020, sparked by years of documented police brutality, extrajudicial killings, and unchecked abuse by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), exposed the Nigeria Police Force's deep institutional and ethical crisis (Iwuoha & Ibe, 2020; Amnesty International, 2020). These systemic abuses were not isolated events, but rather the result of structural HR shortcomings such as flawed recruitment processes, inadequate training regimes, poor supervision, and a culture of impunity (Chukwuma 2018).

Empirical research has demonstrated that when security organizations fail to establish ethical norms throughout the recruitment and training stages, officers are more likely to commit misbehavior, violate people' rights, and damage public trust. In Nigeria, the situation is exacerbated by political intervention in police administration, inadequate welfare packages, and a lack of appropriate performance evaluation mechanisms. These flaws encourage unethical behavior and undermine internal security by making residents less willing to collaborate with law enforcement or report crimes.

Furthermore, the implications of failing to prioritize human resource development and ethical orientation in security services are far-reaching. Public dread of the police grows, civic spaces decrease, and the legitimacy of the state is steadily eroded, particularly among young people who feel targeted or mistreated. In fragile democracies like Nigeria, this generates dissatisfaction with state institutions and encourages instability, putting further strain on already overburdened security services (Osah & Ayandiji, 2021). The implication is clear: reforming HRD policies in the Nigeria Police Force, starting with transparent recruitment, embedding ethics into every level of training, and promoting accountability is not just a matter of internal police reform, but a strategic necessity for ensuring long-term internal security and democratic consolidation.



Fig 2: A Structural Model of HRD and Internal Security in Nigeria's Policing System
Source: Authors configuration (2025).

The researchers' model above provides a conceptual framework for understanding how strategic human resource development (HRD) approaches might influence internal security results by molding police officers' ethical behavior. The model's cornerstone is human resource development, which comprises recruiting and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and welfare and motivation. These policies are intended to ensure that only competent, ethically sound, and professionally trained persons are recruited into the Nigeria Police Force and get ongoing support throughout their tenure. When properly implemented, these HR practices encourage critical ethical behaviors among officers, including accountability, integrity, respect for human rights, and professional conduct. These characteristics are essential for creating trust and legitimacy in policing. As a result, higher ethical behavior leads to beneficial internal security outcomes such as fewer instances of police brutality, increased public trust in the police, adherence to the rule of law, and the formation of a stable civil order. However, the model recognizes the importance of moderating variables such as political meddling, institutional supervision, and civil society pressure, which can either promote

or impede the effectiveness of HRD programs. To guarantee that HRD changes result in significant advances in ethical policing and internal security, these external forces must be effectively managed.

4.0 Empirical Review

Adindu (2023) examined the effect of human capital development on the Nigeria Police Force's performance in Abuja between 1999 and 2019. Using a descriptive survey and questionnaires, the study sampled 234 officers from the Police Headquarters, selected through stratified sampling. Data analysis with SPSS revealed that training significantly improved police performance, although existing training policies were ineffective. The study highlighted the need for better training programs, recommending increased human capital investment, creation of an endowment fund, adoption of international policing standards, and the eradication of corruption to build a more professional and effective police force.

Manneh and Adesopo (2022) examined the impact of recruitment and selection methods on employee performance in The Gambia's public service, focusing on core and non-core civil service institutions. The study surveyed all 272 officers at the Cadre level and above, using questionnaires, interviews, and secondary sources. Data analyzed with STATA 14 showed a negligible and statistically insignificant negative correlation between recruitment methods and performance ($r = -0.002$, $p = 0.98$), while selection methods had a positive but also insignificant correlation ($r = 0.07$, $p = 0.28$). The authors concluded that improving recruitment processes could boost employee performance by over 50%, highlighting the need for public institutions to review and enhance their hiring practices.

Iwuoha and Ibe (2020) conducted a qualitative case study on Nigeria's now-defunct SARS unit, exploring how recruitment flaws contributed to police brutality. Using documentary analysis of secondary sources like human rights reports and media records from 2010 to 2020, they found misconduct such as torture and extrajudicial killings was linked to inadequate HR practices, including lack of background checks and ethical vetting. Applying institutional failure and human security frameworks, the study concluded that poor recruitment allowed violent individuals into the force, leading to ethical collapse. The 2020 #EndSARS protests were seen as a public reaction to these systemic failures. This research highlights the critical importance of recruitment standards in promoting ethical law enforcement.

Table 1:

HRM Strategies for Enhancing Ethical Conduct in the Nigeria Police Force

S/N	Strategic Focus of HRM Practices	Strategies
1.	Ethical Recruitment and Selection	Implement transparent, merit-based recruitment processes- Use psychological and integrity testing- Include community vetting mechanisms to ensure alignment with ethical standards
2.	Competency-Based Training and Development	Conduct continuous training on ethics, human rights, and technical skills- Incorporate leadership and crisis management modules- Use scenario-based and experiential learning techniques
3.	Performance Management with Ethical Metrics	Develop KPIs that integrate operational efficiency and ethical behavior- Implement regular appraisals with 360-degree feedback- Enforce accountability through disciplinary measures for misconduct

4.	Incentive Systems Linked to Ethical Behavior	Align promotions and rewards with demonstrated ethical conduct and performance- Offer competitive salaries and benefits to reduce corruption incentives
5.	Leadership Development Focused on Ethics	Train leaders on ethical decision-making and transformational leadership- Promote ethical role modeling by senior officers
6.	Organizational Culture Transformation	Promote integrity and transparency campaigns- Engage police personnel in change management and ethical awareness programs

Source: Authors computation (2025)

Table 2

Comparative Best Practices in Police Recruitment and HRD

Country	Recruitment Focus	HRD Approach	Ethics Emphasis	Source
Finland	Psychological screening and integrity testing	Continuous ethics training and professional development	Strong emphasis on human rights	OECD (2018)
Singapore	Rigorous background checks and merit-based hiring	Regular ethics refresher courses	Zero tolerance for corruption	OECD (2018)
South Africa	Incorporates community vetting and psychological assessment	Ethics modules integrated in police academies	Mixed success; ongoing reforms	Transparency Intl (2021)
Nigeria (NPF)	Quota system, weak psychological screening	Sporadic and poorly funded training	Limited ethics focus; high corruption rates	Multiple reports

Source: Authors computation (2025)

5.0 Conclusion

This theoretical research paper critically explored the intricate relationship between Human Resource Development (HRD) and internal security in Nigeria, with an emphasis on how recruiting processes in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) impact officers' ethical behavior. Drawing on well-established ideas like Human Capital Theory and System Theory. The study developed an integrative model to describe how strategic recruitment, along with continuous HRD interventions, can result in an ethically sound police force capable of supporting internal security.

The Nigeria Police Force can only regain public trust and function as a guardian of domestic security if it starts recruiting for values,

training for character, and evaluating for ethics. Nigeria may create a safer, more fair society by reimagining HRD, specifically recruitment, as a strategic weapon for ethical policing. The time for action is now, for the quality of security in any society is only as strong as the character of those hired to police it.

In Nigeria, where citizen-police relations have been strained by incidents of abuse, extortion, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial executions, reform efforts must begin from the point of recruitment. The #EndSARS protests in 2020, prompted by police violence, showed systemic flaws in the NPF's ethical behavior and accountability processes. These occurrences highlight the need of adopting a systems-based HRD approach where recruiting is not simply about completing quotas, but about discovering persons who possess the psychological, moral, and civic dispositions required for ethical policing.

This paper's central claim is that recruitment is more than just an administrative activity; it is a strategic HR function that serves as the moral underpinning for public security organizations. As a result, recruitment processes must include integrity testing, emotional intelligence assessments, and civic responsibility orientation in addition to physical strength and intellectual skills. Furthermore, without a continuous development framework based on fairness, justice, and ethical climate building, initial good recruits may be corrupted by institutional culture.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings and theoretical reflections of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. New hires should undertake independent psychiatric and background investigations to examine emotional stability, ethical principles, and any history of violence or wrongdoing.

2. Community Involvement in Vetting: Non-partisan character assessments for applicants should be provided by local community leaders and civil society actors.

3. Structured Ethics Training and emotional intelligence should be integral parts of both initial and continuous in-service training.

4. To promote and reward officers, consider behavioral reports, community comments, and respect for citizens' rights, in addition to arrests and physical bravery.

5. The PSC should be empowered to monitor recruitment, training, and ethical compliance without political interference.

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