



An Audit of the Human Resource of the Nigeria Police Force: Findings from the North Central and North West Geo-Political Zones' Survey



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Abstract: Every year, many intelligent and highly experienced senior Nigerian police officers retire from the service. Many of them are not engaged in any professional activities after retirement. Therefore, their wealth of experience remains untapped and they are rendered redundant after the service. Whereas, such experience can be properly harnessed for the improvement of the operational and strategic efficiency of the organization. This study audits the human resources of the Nigeria Police. Purposive and snow-balling sampling techniques were used to collect data from one hundred and fourteen available retired senior police officers in Nigeria. The findings of the study indicate that the Nigeria Police has several highly experienced retired senior officers well trained within and outside Nigeria that are willing to assist the organization particularly in the areas of training and other operational matters whenever called upon to do so. The paper recommends that future on the job training in the police institutions should include retired officers with the relevant knowledge as facilitators.

Keywords: Audit, Human Resource, Police, Training.

INTRODUCTION

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) as the Nigeria's lead law enforcement organization has historically been at the forefront of the crime prevention and control in the country. It is established by Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) and the Nigeria Police Act, 2020. The Section 4 of the Act provides its primary functions that include: to prevent and detect crimes, and protect the rights and freedom of every person in Nigeria as provided in the Constitution, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, maintain public safety, law and order; protect the lives and properties of all persons in Nigeria among others. These functions are highly indispensable, demanding; and risky. However, the police are expected to effectively and efficiently perform their statutory functions amidst increasing wave of crime and criminality in contemporary Nigeria. This perhaps explains why they are considered essentials service providers (Townsend et al, 2024).

The NPF has a crop of highly skilled and professional officers. Some of these officers were trained in the best training institutions around the world. Also, these officers work hard to tackle the daunting problem of crime and disorder in the country. Some of them have also participated in peace-keeping operations in the West African sub-region and beyond. Equally, some have successfully led various crime control operations and have investigated high profile criminal cases and prosecuted professional criminals and terrorists. Others have held administrative positions at the Force Headquarters, zonal, state, and area commands as well as divisions and other formations.

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Thus, it can be said that with their retirement, these senior police officers possess a wealth of experience in crime prevention and control that is underutilized after their retirement. Police officers' basic training, though determined by the needs of different jurisdiction will typically include training in constitutional law, law of arrest, search and seizure as well as various service request like accident investigation, crisis intervention and the first aid (Wroblewski & Hess, 2003). Although the teaching methods and curricula may differ, all academies teach cadets how to be effective officers and how to develop the sixth sense that is required to achieve the goal of their training (Worrall & Schmalleger, 2016). This training of police officers goes beyond the academy as they receive on the job, management and specialized trainings (Dempsey & Forst, 2008). These officers contribute meaningfully in solving of the countries contemporary security and public safety challenges. It can be concluded that aside occasional invitation to television or radio talks shows, many of these retired officers are not engaged in ways that would allow them share their thoughts on the solutions to Nigeria's emerging security challenges.

It is against this background that this study conducted the phase one of the human resource audit of NPF that would capture officers who retired from service from 2014 to 2023 with a view to creating a database for future training and research.

The officer cadre of the force is populated by well trained personnel who have expertise in different aspects of law enforcement, strategic and tactical. After serving the country meritoriously these officers retired after 35 years of service or at the age of 60 years. The transition from being an officer to a retiree can be emotionally disturbing for some of them. More so, coming to the sudden realization that their knowledge as police officers may become dormant could be disturbing for many officers. According to Brandi et al. (2012) being a police officer is also a way of life, therefore, retirement, more than leaving the job implies leaving a sub-culture that an officer had to be part of for the remaining of his life.

The NPF and other security agencies can tap from the wealth of experience of these retired senior police officers by engaging them as resource persons from time to time in their institutions and formations. To be effectively possible, there is need for a dedicated database of retired senior police officers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to conduct an audit of retired police officers in the north-west and north-central zones. The study focused on the following: (i) The socio-demographic data of retired senior police officers from Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) to Inspector General of Police (IGP) to cover their educational qualifications, local government area, state of origin, place of residence and current contact address; (ii) The places and police departments they served while in service; (iii) The kind of in-service, management and other specialized trainings they received; (iv.) Find out whether or not they would be available whenever they are called upon to contribute; (v) Ask their suggestions on how to improve the operational and strategic efficiency and effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force.

The study is designed to cover the 6 geopolitical zones of the Country. However, this first phase of the study cover two geopolitical zones namely: north-west and north-central.

For the purpose of data collection, one research assistant was recruited for each state and Abuja, totaling 14. The generated data were analyzed using the output of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics was used to present the characteristics of the sample. The process of analyzing the qualitative data began with the transcribing of the raw data.

The study has a limitation. Although, the targeted population of the study was senior retired officers between the rank of Inspector-General of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police who retired between 2014 and 2023 who are not deceased. However, it was difficult to get the original sample size proposed for the study. Thus, retired officers from the Assistant Commissioner of Police to the Inspector General of Police ranks participated in the study

Results

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

S/No	Socio-demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	
1.	Age (last birthday)	Below 60 years	10	8.8
		60-65 years	58	50.9
		66-70 years	40	35.1
		Above 70 years	6	5.3
		Total	114	100
2.	Gender	Male	114	100
		Total	114	100
3.	Marital Status	Single	2	2.4
		Married	109	93.7
		Widowed	2	3.2
4.	Educational Attainment	Total	114	100
		SSCE/GCE/WASC	4	3.5
		NCE/OND	11	9.6
		Bachelor's Degree/HND	67	58.8
		Professional Diploma	5	4.4
		Master's (Academic)	9	7.9
		Master's (Professional)	11	9.6
		PhD	5	4.4
		Others	2	1.8
5.	Rank of Retirement	Total	114	100
		DIG	11	9.6
		AIG	21	18.4
		CP	43	37.7
		DCP	31	27.2
		ACP	8	7.0
6.	Years of Service	Total	114	100
		35 years	63	55.3
		30 - 34 years	51	44.7
Total		114	100	

Field Survey 2025

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Slightly more than half (50.9%) of the sample were from sixty to sixty-five years old, more than one-third of the respondents (35.1%) were from sixty-six and seventy years old, while 8.8 % of the respondents were below sixty years and another 5.3% were above seventy years of age.

The gender of the respondents shows that all the respondents (100%) were males. Also, the marital status indicates that majority of the respondents (95.6%) were married, while only 2.6% of the respondents were single. Very few of the respondents (1.8%) were widowed.

Furthermore, the data on educational attainment of the respondents shows that more than half of the respondents (58.8%) had Bachelor's degree/HND. Also, 17.5% had Master's degree, 9.6% had NCE/OND, 4.4% had PhD, 3.5% had SSCE/GCE/WASC, while 1.8% had other educational qualifications.

The rank of retirement of the respondents shows that 37.7% of the respondents retired as Commissioners of Police, 27.2 as Deputy Commissioners of Police, 7% as Assistant Commissioner of Police, 18.4% as Assistant Inspector General of Police and 9.6% as Deputy Inspector General of Police.

Finally, the years of service of the respondents indicates that over half of the respondents (55.3%) served the Nigeria Police Force for 35 years, while 44.7% for 30 to 34 years.

Table 2: Respondents' Police Departments during Service

³ Police Department Served	Frequency	Percentage
Administration	116	53.5
Operations	101	46.5
Total	217	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 indicates the police departments that respondents served. Administration ranked topmost among the departments that respondents served.

Table 3: Whether Respondents Received Any In-Service Training

Received In-Service Training	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	98	86.0
No	16	14.0
Total	114	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 indicates that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (86.0%) received in-service training at the Nigeria Police Force, only less than one-fifth did not received such training.

Table 4: Whether Respondents Participated in Foreign Assignment or Duty While in Service

Participated in Foreign Training	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	53	46.5
No	61	53.5
Total	114	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that close to half of the respondents (53.5%) participated in foreign assignment or duty while in active service at the Nigeria Police Force, while more than half of the respondents did not have that opportunity.

Table 5: Place of Foreign Assignment While in Service

Place of Foreign Assignment/Duty	Frequency	Percentage
African Mission	35	30.7
Non-African Mission	18	15.8
No Response	61	53.5
Total	114	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 reveals that more than a quarter of the respondents went to an African country for foreign assignment while in active service, while more than one-sixth of the respondents went to other continents for such assignment.

³For the purpose of this study in order to make ordinary understanding clearer, police departments of respondents during service are classified into Administration and Operations.

Table 6: Kind of In-Service Training Received

Training Received	Frequency	Percentage
Local Training	70	61.4
Foreign Training	6	5.3
Both Local & Foreign Training	22	19.3
No Response	16	14.0
Total	114	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents (61.4%) participated in local training during their service with the force, while only 5.3% participated in foreign training. Furthermore, 19.3% participated in both local and foreign training. Another 14% of the respondents did not answer the question.

Table 7: Whether Respondents Would be Available Whenever Called Upon to Serve the NPF or Sister Institutions on Consultancy Basis

Available	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	100	87.7
No	14	12.3
Total	114	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 7 indicates that most of the respondents (87.7%) would be available whenever called upon to serve the Nigeria Police Force or sister institutions in training. Few respondents (12.3%) said that they would not be available.

Table 8: Respondents Suggestions on How to Improve the Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness of the NPF

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Tackle Nepotism/Favoritism	12	6.6
Training	65	35.7
Improve Welfare	53	29.1
Equipment Provision	38	20.9
Reforms	14	7.7
Total	182	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 shows that training, improvement of welfare and provision of adequate equipment ranked topmost among the suggestions made by the respondents on how to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force.

Table 9: Respondents Suggestions on How to Improve the Strategic Efficiency and Effectiveness of the NPF

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Espirite de corps	15	9.4
Digital	24	15.0
Training	47	29.4
Improve welfare	30	18.8
Logistics/Equipment Provision	10	6.3
Reforms	34	21.3
Total	160	100.0

Field Survey, 2025

Table 9 shows that training, Espirite the corps and welfare ranked topmost among the suggestions made by the respondents on how to improve the strategic and effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force.

Table 10: Availability of Respondents by Age

		No	Yes	Not Sure	
Age (last birthday):	Below 60 years	1	9	0	10
	60 – 65 years	7	50	1	58
	66 – 70 years	5	34	1	40
	Above 70 years	1	5	0	6
Total		14	98	2	114

Field Survey, 2025

Table 10 shows the availability of the respondents with respect to age. Majority of the retired police officers who indicated their willingness to favourable respond if called upon to serve, were from 60 to 65 years of age category. This may be because having been out of service for perhaps about 5 years after retirement, they are excited about sharing their expertise with the younger generation of officers.

Table 11: Availability of Respondents by Educational Attainment

		No	Yes	Not Sure	Total
Educational Attainment	SSCE/GCE/WASC	1	3	0	4
	NCE/OND	5	6	0	11
	Bachelor’s Degree/HND	6	59	2	67
	Professional Diploma	0	5	0	5
	Master’s Degree – Academic	1	8	0	9
	Master’s Degree – Professional	1	10	0	11
	PhD	0	5	0	5
	Others (specify)	0	2	0	2
Total		14	98	2	114

Field Survey, 2025

Table 11 shows the availability of the respondents with respect to educational attainment. The Table 11 shows that majority of the respondents that said they would be available to render consultancy service if called upon to do so had bachelor’s degrees and higher national diploma certificates. This finding suggests that such officers may have received some higher training while in service and are eager to transfer such knowledge to the younger generation of officers.

A Discourse on the Audit

The study revealed that majority of the respondents were between sixty to sixty-five years of age. This is understandable given that officers of the Nigeria police are required to retire after thirty-five years of service or sixty years of age depending on whichever comes first. On the places and police departments that respondents served during their service at the Nigeria Police Force, the findings shows that they served across all the departments of the force. However, Administration and Operations topped the list of departments that officers served. Also, the results revealed that many of the respondents had the opportunity of serving overseas.

On the kind of in-service, training that respondents received, the results show that majority of the respondents received in-service training while in service. However, those who received only foreign training and foreign as well as local trainings were relatively fewer. This is expected given the relatively high cost of overseas training. These findings are in harmony with those of Dempsey and Forst (2008) who observed that the training of police officers goes

beyond the training institution as they receive in-service, management and specialized training.

On the availability, majority of the respondents said they would be available for consultancy services whenever they are called upon to do so. It is an act of patriotism for officers who have meritoriously served the country and are retired to be willing to render service if called upon to do so. Therefore, the Nigeria Police Force can still harness their wealth of experience after their active service to train cadets at the police academy and serving officer and other ranks across the country. Towns et al. (2024) see the police as essentials service providers. This underscores why they would be useful to the Force and the larger society even after their retirement. Also, Carney et al. (2019) mentioned pursuing other interests as one of the coping strategies available to retired police officers. Engaging interested retired senior police officers would of course assist them to cope with the anxiety associated with retirement and avail those in service to benefit from them.

The sampled retired police officers made several suggestions on how to improve the operational and strategic efficiency and effectiveness of the Nigeria police force. Training, improvement of welfare and provision of adequate equipment ranked topmost on how to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. Equally, on strategic efficiency and effectiveness, training, improvement of welfare and provision of adequate digital technology were the most mentioned as measures of improvement. The findings of a study by Ndubueze et. al. (2022) identified lack of modern equipment as one of the challenges confronting the Nigeria police.

Finally, the cross-tabulation of age and educational attainment with availability indicates that older retired officers and officers with bachelor's degree and HND were more willing to heed to any call to serve on consultancy basis. These officers apart from having expertise and being highly experienced also have institutional memory. Engaging them in periodic workshops or symposiums in the Police Academy or police colleges would be a value addition to the training of cadets and recruits.

Conclusion

This study provisionally concludes that the Nigeria Police Force have many retired senior officers with higher educational qualifications. Many of the retired senior police officers worked in various operations, finance/administration and intelligence/investigation departments of the force while in active service. Also, many senior officers have opportunity for overseas training while in service and that such trainings served to equip them with the knowledge they required for more effective service delivery. Many of these retired senior police officers are willing to share their wealth of experience with those in service. Logistics/equipment, training and incentives/welfare are the topmost challenges confronting the Nigeria Police Force.

Recommendations

1. There is need for police authorities in Nigeria to harness the expertise of retired senior police officers who are willing and able to serve as resource persons in its academy and colleges across the country.
2. There is need to create a robust database of quality human resources that can be engaged from time to time or as the need may arise for trainings and capacity building in the force and its training institutions.

3. Retired police officers should be encouraged to join their associations in their respective states and periodically update their data with them. This will make it easier for them to be reached whenever their services are required on consultancy.
4. There is need for the Federal Government of Nigeria to provide more funds for continuous training/re-training of police officers, improve welfare packages and provide adequate modern equipment that will enhance the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Nigeria police force.

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