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**Policing Trends in Nigeria since Independence (1960–2012)**

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**First Published** June 1, 2012 Research Article

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**Abstract**

The quest to maintain law and order and enforce the rules of the government has led to the emergence of different policing styles in Nigeria. Though the people of Nigeria had their unique, informal means of maintaining order embedded in the culture and traditions of their various ethnic groups, contact with the ‘white man’ through colonialisation changed the form and focus of the police in Nigeria.

Changes in operational and training focus of the police in Nigeria have been shaped by the type of government at the centre. This study is divided into three main phases in the sociopolitical transformation of the country: the pre-colonial period, the colonial period and the post-colonial era, each of which have represented various policing realities in Nigeria. Each of the periods captures the unique contemporaneous social relations and perceived crime realities. The study concluded that trends in the Nigerian police show a development from traditional to modern policing styles.

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