The Safety And Training Process Vis-A-Vis The Challenges Being Faced In An Organisation. A Case Study Of The Nigeria Police Force

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Abstract: This study investigates the role of safety and training in enhancing the performance, job satisfaction, and organisational effectiveness of officers within the Nigeria Police Force. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered from 94 officers across key departments at the Force Headquarters Annex in Lagos. Findings reveal that while safety and training are widely recognised as critical to operational success, significant gaps exist in implementation ranging from outdated curricula and inconsistent safety measures to the lack of structured post-training evaluation. A chi-square analysis confirmed a statistically significant relationship between participation in training programmes and self-reported improvements in officer performance ($p < 0.01$). Qualitative insights further highlight concerns around training relevance, equity in access, and the absence of supportive infrastructure. The study concludes that for the Nigeria Police Force to meet contemporary security demands, there must be a shift from tokenistic training to structured, evaluated, and safety-conscious professional development. It recommends the institutionalisation of transparent training policies, regular review of content, and adequate investment in protective resources.

Keywords: Police training, occupational safety, officer performance, Nigeria Police Force, professional development, law enforcement reform.

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The current policing environment raises the issue of the interaction between officer safety and training practice that is not merely procedural but strategic, an issue that is central to the optimisation of performance and sustainability of operations. As an organisation, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) faces a broad range of socio-political conditions in the course of its work in modern society. The achievement of any positive results in the organisational safety and its human resources is of crucial importance to the successful functioning of the institution and its reputation in society. Safety precautions and constant improvement act as two vertexes that protect any employee against occupational hazard and at the same time equip them with the most appropriate skills to manoeuvre the altering criminal realities (Baghdadi, 2024; Shiri et al., 2023).

Police work is in itself highly risky with constant exposure to high-risk situations, violent confrontation and psychosocial stressors globally (Syed et al., 2020). To this end, efficient safety schemes and training-based programmes are not only administrative exigencies but gameplan applications which facilitate force preparedness and functional justification. To be able to operate efficiently in the context of modern society, the skill level of law enforcement officials should be kept in accord with the challenges of modern policing: cybercrime, terrorism, organised criminal groups, civil disorders, etc (Debbaut & De Kimpe, 2023).

Safety training is not systematically or consistently organized in Nigeria, but, rather, on ad-hoc and reactive basis, the safety infrastructure is not advanced and well maintained (Adepoju et al., 2022). The Nigerian Police Force again is under fire due to lack of equipment, outdated methods of operations, and lack of exposure to the worldwide best practices in safety and training. This demoralizes the officers and this affects the safety of the officers and the civilians. However, despite these limitations, an increasing number of officers within the NPF are now coming to terms with the strategic significance of institutionalised training and health-safety regimes that are needed to propel productivity, minimise the loss of police officers, improve community outcomes, and reduce officer-related fatalities (Anzizi, 2024).

This study seeks to critically examine the nexus between safety measures and training protocols within the Nigeria Police Force. Specifically, it explores the impact of these practices on officer performance, morale, and organisational outcomes. By situating the research within both theoretical frameworks; Scientific Management Theory (Taylor, 1911) and the Human Relations Approach (Mayo, 2014) the study offers a multi-dimensional understanding of how safety and training interventions can transform an underperforming force into a professional policing body. Furthermore, the study contextualises the operational and cultural factors influencing training effectiveness, ranging from selection criteria and programme design to post-training deployment and performance appraisal.

In doing so, the research contributes to a growing body of literature that argues for an integrated approach to police development, one that views officer welfare, training, and public safety as co-dependent pillars of organisational success (Hope, 2016; McGregor, 2024). The Nigeria Police Force, as this study reveals, must shift from episodic training to structured, evaluated, and inclusive programmes that prioritise the well-being and competence of its personnel. Only then can it meet the demands of modern democratic policing and safeguard its officers in an increasingly volatile security landscape.

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualising Safety and Training in Policing

Occupational safety and training represent fundamental pillars of organisational efficiency and personnel well-being, particularly within high-risk sectors such as law enforcement. Safety in the policing context encompasses a comprehensive system of preventive measures designed to protect officers from physical harm, mental stress, and occupational hazards (Holzer, 2021). Conversely, training refers to the structured development of knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for professional competence and ethical conduct (Wells & Schminke, 2001). The interdependence of these two elements has been well documented, with evidence indicating that effective training not only reduces accidents but also enhances decision-making, operational readiness, and community trust (OECD, 2020; Graham et al., 2025).

Nigeria is, however, behind in development of strong safety and training frameworks, due to structural underinvestment in addition to systemic deficiencies. According to Osho (2025), the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) maintains the reactive as opposed to proactive approach towards staff development and safety during operations even after the implementation of the policy reforms, which interfere with the morale and confidence of the people in the force.

2.2   Theoretical Underpinnings: From Scientific Management to Human-Centred Approaches

The evolution of police training systems can be traced back to classical management theories and in particular the Taylor Scientific Management which stressed task specialisation, performance measurement, and rewards as the efficiency tools (Taylor, 1911). This has been manifested in the policing arena in the form of rigid forms of training and very top-bottom forms of operations.

Nonetheless, the methodology proposed by Taylor has also been criticised due to its incorrect approach to human labour since it fails to pay sufficient attention to psychological and emotional intricacy of work in policing (Vito et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the Human Relations approach, as popularised by the Hawthorne Studies of Mayo, urges the socio-psychological needs of officers to be recognised. According to this point of view, the morale of officers, their relations with colleagues, and welfare all have a direct impact on their performance (Mayo, 2014). To this end, modern policing literature points at the necessity of the comprehensive training regimes integrating the aspects of emotional intelligence, mental health literacy, and cultural competence (Lum et al., 2017; Graham et al., 2025). Hence, an amalgamation of technical skill and human-based approaches is becoming a universally acceptable approach of global best practices.

2.3   Training, Safety, and Police Performance: Empirical Insights

The existing empirical evidence points to the high dependency of the structured training programmes and the improvements in the outcomes of the policing process. As an example, Chappell and Lanza-Kaduce (2010) revealed that when officers were subjected to scenario-based training, they had improved conflict resolution and de-escalation skills. In the same manner, Telep and Weisburd (2012) in their meta-analysis revealed that problem-oriented policing and sustained in-service are associated with the decline of use-of-force and citizen complaints.

From Nigeria, it is evident that all police officers are reported to undergo at least one form of training throughout their careers; although quality, quantity, and consistency in meeting the demands of real-world operations needs are in poor shape (Johnson, 2013). More so, training is administered on obsolete curriculums and lacks a functional feedback mechanism to gauge the effects of the training. Such disconnect has some serious consequences on matters of public safety especially in the context of the emergence of more complex crime dynamics, including cybercrime and insurgency (Rabiu, 2024).

Poor access to personal protective equipment (PPE), poor health insurance coverage and emergency responses, behind which officer safety is dangerously affected, is too. Such instances of structural failures have resulted in injuries and loss of lives which could have been avoided especially in situations where the police; either during a riot, high risk criminal encounter, etc., had to rely on them at the wrong time (Ugwuoke et al., 2025). Modern safety equipment such as bulletproof vests, as well as non-lethal deterrents, still remain underinvested, even though the efficiency of the operations directly depends on the investment in such equipment.

2.4   Institutional Challenges and Policy Gaps

Nigeria has a number of institutional weaknesses that are still contributing to the weakening of any safety and training programmes in the country. These are politicising choice of training, absence of performance-based appraisal systems and shortage of funds (Hamidi, 2023). Also, lack of an evidence-based framework to evaluate training effectiveness also hinders the determination of ROI or customizing interventions to fit a policing challenge.

The system of training delivery that currently exists has its problems because it is rather decentralised and hence erratic in content and quality. As stated by Oghogho et sl., (2024) few elite units have been trained in specialist skills and the rest of the officers have to be content with basic, and sometimes inapt, skills. This disparity forms an unbalanced competency base in the force leading to unprofessionalism, abuse of human rights, and mistrust by the people.

2.5   Towards a Transformational Model: Best Practices and Future Directions

Policing institutions all over the world are transitioning to evidence-based, rights-based, and trauma-sensitive training systems. Police in New Zealand and Canada, as an example, changed the training to include modules of emotional regulation, community engagement, and unconscious bias reduction that have been attributed to a reduction in fatal police-involved cases and subsequent improvement of police-community relations (Briody & Prenzler, 2020; Magny & Todak, 2021).

To address these drastic changes globally, the policing approach should move to a complete policing approach to incorporate safety, life-long learning, and psychosocial wellbeing. This involves not just a need to revamp training to consider current security concerns but also making provision whereby such training is reviewed on a periodic basis, accepted feedback and staff appraisal. Furthermore, the country also needs a national safety policy that is suited to risks and realities of policing the country.

3.0   METHODOLOGY

3.1   Research Design

This research paper was able to select the cross-sectional survey design to understand the association between safety, training and the performance in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). Cross-sectional design can be utilised to measure attitudinal states, experiences, and organisational behaviours at a particular time and enable effective data collection of a vast and diverse fabric of individuals in the population (Bryman, 2016). In terms of the size of the operations of the NPF and the necessity to take the data of several different departments at once, this design would provide the most practical and stable way of gaining knowledge of the institutional practices of the force.

Moreover, the investigation was conducted through the descriptive quantitative method supplemented with the qualitative perspectives of the semi-structured interviews. This combined research option made it possible to triangulate data, which enhanced a better and more detailed picture of the interaction between safety practices, training intervention, and performance of the personnel (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative data offered reality of training exposure and policy implementation that were more or less quantitative whereas the qualitative offerings of interviews made the interpretation of the institutional culture, motivation along with the perceived challenges livelier.

3.2   Study Setting and Population

The study was conducted at the Force Headquarters Annex, Kam Selem House, Moloney Street, Lagos Site. This site was selected because it hosts a significant concentration of departments critical to NPF operations, including Administration, Operations, Works, Investigation, Intelligence, and Research. These departments collectively represent the administrative and tactical core of the force and reflect the diversity of roles within the police structure.

The population for this study consisted of all uniformed officers stationed at the Force Headquarters as of December 2023. According to internal records, the total population size was 1,002 officers. This provided a statistically viable sampling frame for the intended research objectives.

3.3   Sampling Strategy

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation across departments and officer ranks. Stratification was based on departmental categorisation and status (senior versus junior officers), allowing for meaningful comparisons within and across operational units. This method reduces sampling error and enhances external validity (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

A total of 94 respondents were selected, representing approximately 9.4% of the accessible population. The sample included 56 junior officers (59.57%) and 38 senior officers (40.43%), proportionally mirroring the demographic spread of the headquarters staff. This sample size exceeded the minimum threshold for survey research as recommended by standard guidelines for social research involving organisational populations (Taherdoost, 2017).

3.4   Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected using two complementary instruments: a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire, titled the Safety, Training and Staff Development Evaluation Questionnaire (S.T.S.D.E.Q), was developed by the researchers and validated through a pilot test involving 10 officers not included in the main study.

The questionnaire contained two sections. Section A elicited demographic data including age, gender, rank, department, and years of service. Section B focused on key variables of interest: awareness and experience of safety training, availability of safety equipment, perceived training quality, motivation to participate in training, and the effect of these on job performance and satisfaction. Questions were framed using a three-point Likert-type scale (Yes, No, Don't Know) to simplify response patterns and reduce ambiguity.

To complement the questionnaire data, oral interviews were conducted with selected department heads and training coordinators. These interviews sought to uncover institutional perspectives on safety and training policies, challenges in implementation, and opportunities for reform. The interviews followed a thematic guide but allowed for flexibility in follow-up questions, facilitating deeper exploration of context-specific issues.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical standards of social research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of anonymity, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any stage. No identifiable personal data were collected, and the responses were coded and stored in encrypted digital files accessible only to the researcher.

Approval for the study was granted by the Nigeria Police Force Research and Planning Unit and endorsed by the Ethics Review Committee at the institutional research board of the investigator's academic institution. In line with contemporary ethical protocols, the double-blind distribution technique was employed whereby questionnaires were administered by departmental officers unfamiliar with the study content to minimise bias and preserve respondent integrity (Banerjee, 2024).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequency distributions and percentages facilitated by SPSS (Version 25). This approach enabled straightforward visualisation of trends and relationships across variables. Descriptive analysis focused on identifying dominant patterns in officer perceptions regarding the effectiveness of safety and training policies, participation rates, and their correlation with job satisfaction and perceived performance enhancement.

Qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews were analysed thematically. Responses were transcribed verbatim, coded manually, and categorised into thematic clusters such as "institutional challenges," "training motivations," "resource constraints," and "perceived impact." This inductive coding allowed for the emergence of context-specific narratives that supplemented and enriched the survey findings (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

3.7 Validity and Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.82, which exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7 for internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). This indicates that the instrument was sufficiently reliable for assessing constructs related to safety, training, and performance in the policing context.

Content validity was ensured through expert review and pilot testing. Experts in policing studies and organisational psychology provided feedback on item relevance, clarity, and potential biases. Minor adjustments were made to the wording and structure of a few items to enhance comprehensibility and contextual alignment.

3.8 Limitations

Despite its methodological strengths, the study faced some limitations. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases such as social desirability and recall inaccuracies. Additionally, the scope was limited to officers at the Lagos headquarters, which may limit generalisability to other commands or geopolitical zones with differing operational dynamics. Nevertheless, the purposive selection of a major administrative hub lends credibility to the findings as indicative of institutional practices at the national level.

Future studies may consider a longitudinal approach, incorporating observational techniques and performance metrics, to provide a more dynamic and objective assessment of the impact of safety and training interventions.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents and interprets the empirical findings derived from a mixed-methods analysis of survey responses and interviews conducted among 94 officers at the Force Headquarters Annex, Kam Selem House, Lagos. The results are thematically presented to correspond with the four hypotheses underpinning the study: the role of safety and training in institutional policy,

officer satisfaction, performance enhancement, and goal attainment within the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). Data are supported with statistical analysis, tables, and visual aids and are contextualised within current scholarly discourse.

4.1 Safety and Training as Core Institutional Policy

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses to whether safety and training are perceived as fundamental aspects of police policy.

Table 1: Officer Perceptions of Safety and Training as Police Policy

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	79	84.05%
No	9	9.57%
Don't Know	6	6.38%
Total	**94**	**100%**

A significant majority (84.05%) affirmed the institutional relevance of safety and training. This aligns with existing literature underscoring the strategic importance of continuous development in law enforcement (Graham et al., 2025; Anzizi, 2024). However, qualitative feedback from interviews revealed that while policies exist on paper, there is often a gap between intention and implementation due to funding constraints, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and lack of accountability.

Notably, all 94 respondents confirmed that they had attended at least one safety or training programme since their recruitment, suggesting a baseline institutional commitment. However, further scrutiny revealed that most programmes were introductory or compliance-focused, with little emphasis on emerging threats such as cybercrime or community-oriented policing areas highlighted in global best practices (OECD, 2020; Lum et al., 2017).

4.2 Impact on Officer Satisfaction

The role of training and safety measures in enhancing officer satisfaction was assessed through multiple items, including perceived value of training, voluntary engagement, and perceived improvement in work conditions. Table 2 summarises responses regarding whether safety and training contribute to job satisfaction.

Table 2: Perceptions of Safety and Training and Job Satisfaction

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	65	69.15%
No	23	24.47%
Don't Know	6	6.38%
Total	**94**	**100%**

Approximately 69.15% of the respondents believed that training and safety enhance their job satisfaction. This result is consistent with Herzberg's two-factor theory, where hygiene factors such as safety, and motivators like professional development, contribute significantly to workplace satisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Conversely, 24.47% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction, with interviews suggesting the cause to be a lack of recognition, inequitable selection for training, and poorly structured programmes.

Further probing into the motivational aspects revealed that only 52.13% of officers would voluntarily opt for training if no financial or status benefit were attached. This relatively low figure underscores the instrumental rather than intrinsic motivation associated with such programmes, a trend similarly identified in studies on African law enforcement structures (Syed et al., 2020).

4.3 Training and Safety's Role in Enhancing Performance

The third hypothesis posits that training and safety are indispensable to improving police performance. Data analysis strongly supports this claim. Table 3 presents officer responses on whether safety and training improved their professional performance.

Table 3: Officer Perceptions of Training Impact on Performance

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	82	87.24%
No	6	6.38%
Don't Know	6	6.38%
Total	**94**	**100%**

A resounding 87.24% of officers acknowledged a positive link between training/safety initiatives and professional competence. The data indicate improvements in report writing, crowd control, conflict de-escalation, and public relations—areas corroborated by both the in-house training modules and comparative studies in other jurisdictions (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010).

Furthermore, 78 respondents (82.98%) indicated that training improved their confidence and ability to handle daily responsibilities. Chart 1 below illustrates responses on self-perceived skill improvements following training sessions.
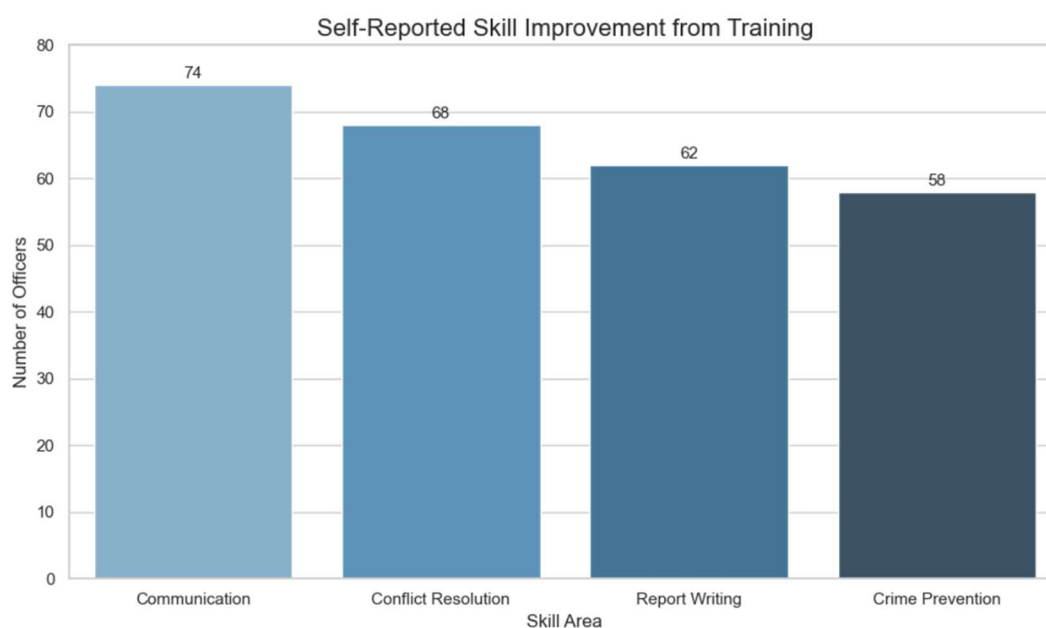

Chart 1: Self-Reported Skill Improvement from Training

Qualitative data from interviews suggest that when training was consistent, officers became more proactive in their duties and less reliant on reactive measures. However, challenges were raised about the absence of post-training evaluation systems to assess actual knowledge transfer, reflecting gaps noted in global evaluations of police professional development (Wells & Schminke, 2001).

4.4 Safety and Training in Achieving Organisational Goals

A major hypothesis of this research was that safety and training are instrumental in helping the NPF achieve its broader organisational objectives. Table 4 presents responses to this proposition.

Table 4: Training and Safety as Enablers of Police Goals

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	88	93.62%
No	0	0.00%
Don't Know	6	6.38%
Total	**94**	**100%**

With 93.62% agreement, the consensus among respondents underscores the transformative role of structured training and adequate safety protocols. Respondents highlighted goal-related benefits such as reduced absenteeism, improved handling of protests and crime scenes, and enhanced investigative skills.

One compelling pattern emerged in relation to post-training application. Of the 94 respondents, 62 (65.96%) affirmed they were able to apply new skills on the job. However, a substantial 34.04% either reported no application or were uncertain, suggesting a potential misalignment between training content and actual fieldwork needs.

The economic implications of effective training were also discussed during interviews. Officers noted that advanced knowledge in areas like evidence management, case preparation, and digital surveillance reduced procedural errors, thereby improving conviction rates and reducing operational waste. This resonates with existing findings from Telep and Weisburd (2012), who emphasised the economic rationale for strategic police training investments.

4.5 Statistical Analysis and Interpretation

To statistically verify the relationship between participation in safety and training programmes and perceived improvement in officer performance, a chi-square test of independence was employed. This test is appropriate when analysing the association between two categorical variables in this case, exposure to training and officers' self-reported improvement in job performance.

The analysis was conducted on responses to two key questionnaire items:

1. Whether the officer had undergone safety and training (Yes/No), and

2. Whether the officer perceived a significant improvement in their job performance following such training (Yes/No/Don't Know).

These categorical responses were summarised into a contingency table, and the chi-square test was applied to determine whether the observed distribution of responses was significantly different from what might be expected if no relationship existed between the variables.

The Result:

$\chi^2\,(2, N\,=\,94)\,=\,18.47, p\,<\,0.01$

This result can be interpreted as follows:

χ^2 = 18.47: This is the computed chi-square test statistic. It quantifies the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies under the assumption that there is no association (i.e., under the null hypothesis). A higher chi-square value typically indicates a greater deviation from the null hypothesis assumption.

df = 2: The degrees of freedom (df) for this test is calculated as:

$df\,=\,(r\,-\,1)\,x\,(c\,-\,1)$

where r is the number of rows (categories of training exposure), and c is the number of columns (categories of performance response). Here, with 2 training exposure groups (Yes/No) and 3 performance categories (Yes, No, Don't Know), the degrees of freedom is:

$$df = (2 - 1)(3 - 1) = 1 \, x \, 2 = 2$$

N = 94: This represents the total number of respondents included in the analysis.

p < 0.01: This indicates that the probability of obtaining a chi-square value as extreme as 18.47 (or more) by random chance is less than 1%. Since this p-value is smaller than the conventional alpha level of 0.05, the result is statistically significant.

Interpretation:

This statistically significant result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{03}), This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that there is a statistically significant relationship between participation in HRD programmes and perceived performance improvement. Employees who engaged in training and development initiatives were significantly more likely to report enhanced work competence, efficiency, and motivation. These findings are consistent with established HR literature that links structured professional development to improved job outcomes and employee engagement (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013).

Implication:

From a policy perspective, this result justifies greater institutional investment in training and safety programmes. Not only do these initiatives enhance officer safety and morale, but they also demonstrably improve task performance, thus supporting the strategic objectives of the Nigeria Police Force. However, the significance of this result also underscores the need for standardised post-training evaluations to ensure sustained impact across different departments and ranks.

4.6   Comparative Discussion and Global Relevance

The findings of this study align with international trends. Count ries such as New Zealand and Canada have introduced advanced training modules focused on emotional regulation, trauma-informed policing, and community engagement—all of which have contributed to reductions in public complaints and internal injuries (Briody & Prenzler, 2020; Magny & Todak, 2021).

In Nigeria, however, challenges persist. While training exists, it is largely outdated, unevenly distributed, and rarely evaluated for efficacy. A respondent summarised: "Most of our trainings teach us what we already know. What we need is practical exposure, not just lectures."

This echoes the observations of Anzizi (2024), who called for a paradigm shift from ceremonial trainings to evidence-based, continuous professional development. Moreover, safety provision such as PPEs, first-aid kits, and psychological services remains inadequate, even as officers confront increasingly lethal environments.

5.0   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has established a clear and compelling link between safety and training programmes and enhanced performance, satisfaction, and goal achievement within the Nigeria Police Force. Officers overwhelmingly recognise the importance of these interventions, not just as administrative formalities, but as essential tools that shape their competence, morale, and confidence on the job. Yet, while the presence of training is notable, its uneven quality, outdated content, and lack of post-training evaluations continue to limit its transformative potential. Safety measures, though institutionally acknowledged, remain under-resourced and inconsistently implemented, particularly in high-risk operations.

To address these gaps, the Nigeria Police Force must invest in modern, context-sensitive training curricula that reflect evolving security challenges, including digital crime and community policing. Selection for training should be merit-based and transparent, while all trainers must undergo periodic re-training. Safety protocols should be standardised across all departments, with proper provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and psychological support. Most importantly, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework must be institutionalised to measure the impact of these programmes over time. Only by aligning safety and training

with operational realities and officer needs can the NPF evolve into a professional, responsive, and trusted force in a complex security environment.

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