



The Loss of Confidence Hypothesis and Jungle Justice in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

¹Illah, Obadiah, ²Illah Christiana Clement

¹Department of General Studies and Pre-ND, Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia –Nigeria.

²Department of Mass Communication, Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia, Nasarawa State –Nigeria.

Email: illobed82@gmail.com, illah4real@yahoo.com, christianailah1989@gmail.com

Abstract

The article reviews the loss of confidence hypothesis and jungle justice in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. It basically objectivizes the loss of confidence in the dispensation of justice, the implications of jungle justice for criminal justice administration and what the government can do moving forward. Frustration Aggression theory and the Loss of Confidence theory guided variable explanations. The study triangulated quantitative and qualitative methods to generate data. Using multi-stage sampling technique, 6 out of 13 LGAs of Nasarawa State were randomly selected as sample outlets. Thereafter, 30 electoral wards, five each from the 6 LGAs selected were used and respondents systematically drawn from the household list in Primary Health Care Centres of the wards selected. Quantitative data were analyzed using inferential statistics while content analysis served for qualitative data. In effect, the Yamane formula for sample size determination was used and a sample size of 533 arrived at based on the 2022 National Population Commission projected population of Nasarawa State which stands at 2,886,022. The adult residents of the State constituted the study population whereas, questionnaire, structured and key informant interview guides served as instruments for data collection. The study established that the loss of confidence in criminal justice administration is a suffix to jungle justice in Nasarawa State. In ameliorating the situation, the government should digitalize court procedure to ensure quick dispensation of justice, conduct massive awareness campaigns on due process and establish Anti-Jungle Justice Marshal as quick response intervention against the practice of jungle justice in the State.

Keywords: Criminal Justice; Criminal Justice Administration; Fair hearing; Loss of confidence; Jungle justice

Introduction

Trust and confidence are often critical to the operation of a functional justice system in a constitutional jurisdiction. This becomes more organic when the justice system of a nation underpin its operational order. However, where there is near or total absence of this operational effect in a country or a given constitutional jurisdiction, people easily resort to self-help and begin to do what their leaders or constituted authorities are supposed to do. In other words, an average human being has the tendency to resort to self-help when he or she loses confidence in the collective conscience of society.

Recent studies have shown that the perpetrators of jungle justice have less confidence in the police and the court system and most specifically, the

police's reactive behaviour towards the safety of citizens portends a major escalation to acts of jungle justice (Illah et al, 2024; Maxson, 2003). In a classical example, operatives of the Special Fraud Unit, an arm of the Nigeria Police Force arrested three police officers from Mowe Divisional Police Station, Ogun State for allegedly aiding the forceful take over of a large parcel of land at Orimerunmu village in Mowe. In affront to the law, the arrested police suspects escaped from the Special Fraud Unit operatives on their way to Zone 2 Police Command of Lagos State, Nigeria (Ossai, 2023; Oyeduntan, 2003). In a related instance, Chris (2025) revealed how one Joshua Moses was murdered by a suspect demanding for the payment of Development Levy in a construction site at Gidan Rago Area of Aso



“B” in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. In search for justice, the deceased family was confronted with how the suspect’s sponsors later negotiated and paid off the police for his release after which the police team announced that the suspect had escaped from their custody, pretending not to know about his disappearance or whereabouts. These scenarios raise a serious concern on public confidence in the administration of criminal justice and its continuous patronage in the study area. They also explain the level of distrust or how ruptured is public confidence in the handling of criminal suspects by the criminal justice institutions.

According to Ugwummadu Shodunke (2022) and (2013) cited in Tunasangwitches (2013), at the height of jungle justice lies the loss of confidence in the judicial system. One dimension to this is that when people hear of well-to-do persons who have been charged with criminal cases but hear very little about the punishment and sentences metted on them, whereas they hear that people who steal tubers of yam, goats and wristwatches are instantly convicted and sentenced to years of imprisonment, they do not need to be politically enlightened or schooled in the legal processes before they lose confidence in the system. This is what loss of confidence implies in the practice of jungle justice. Therefore, rather than reporting the persons whom they have caught committing a criminal act to the police, mobs often take the law into their hands, believing that it is the best way to serve justice.

In this study, we try to identify the factors responsible for jungle justice; find out if the loss of confidence is last resort to jungle justice and ascertain its implications in the protection of lives and property in Nasarawa State. The aim is to provide answers to what factors account for the onset of jungle justice? How is jungle justice predicted by the loss of confidence in the criminal justice institutions? And, how has this implicated the protection of lives and property in the study area?

Statement of Problem

Although, the law of the federation specifies that

the criminal justice institutions are to maintain laws and orders in Nigeria as it is elsewhere around the world, in Nasarawa State however, these institutions do not seem to be fulfilling this vital responsibility due to the interruption of jungle justice. A study carried out by the United States Department of Diplomacy in Action reveals that high cost of justice, leadership failure, loss of confidence, illiteracy/ignorance, delayed justice and pre-trial of suspects lead to jungle justice in Nigeria (Esara et-tal 2024; Shodunke, 2022; USDDA, 2010) The studies of Neequaye (2007) and Asare (2007) particularly blamed inconsistency and inefficiency of the judiciary as accounting for jungle justice in Nigeria and Ghana. While these findings are not in doubt, it is not clear if these factors are universal in the practice of jungle justice which makes the study of Nasarawa State a research need. Where applicable, such studies do not reflect the nexus between jungle justice and the loss of confidence hypothesis in Nasarawa State.

Accordingly, Illah et-tal (2024) consider the reality of jungle justice as a gradual retrogression of society to a state of nature where the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes sees social life as being nasty, brutish, solitary and short. This proposition reveals a possibility that people breach societal set rules on daily basis yet the law is not catching up with them. Such situation can debase confidence in the institutions of justice and eventually a bait to self help. These are the issues interrogated in this study.

Literature Review

The findings of Esara et-tal (2024) and Illah et-tal (2017) identified injustice and oppression as critical to criminality in Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and that these elements are major sources of rebellion and other forms of anti-social behaviours. The authors’ revelation was upheld in the strength of this study for reasons that aggrieved persons are increasingly embracing self help in the handling of what they considered as fast justice in society. Lending to this view, Illah et-tal (2024), Asare (2007) and Abdulah (2016) bemoaned regular adjournments and delays in the adjudication of



justice as resulting to jungle justice and calls for concerted effort by the judiciary to stem the trend. The abiding reality of such operation has aggravated the practice of jungle justice over suspects arrest.

As revealed by Stratton (2024), Dada et-tal (2015) and Shodunke (2022), jungle justice occurs when the society is fed up with the administration of criminal justice, and have come to believe that there is little or no difference in the way suspects are processed in the justice system. The police in particular have arguably become corrupt and often collude with offenders to scuttle and sometime frustrate arrest, claiming lack of available personnel or operational equipment. With such operation in place, the entire concept of state, government and the rule of law is far defeated, such that people are conditioned to act in a way that is unregulated and unbridled. An expand on this revelation triggered the use of loss of confidence hypothesis as a theoretical stance in this study. The study of (2016) and Virginus (2022) particularly notes that when suspects are arrested and handed over to the police, they set them free once their “palms are greased”. In reaction to this practice, people are easily flamed up in mob action leading to the loss of lives and property. In Nasarawwa State, for instance, Local Government News (2015) reveals how instead of reporting to the police, a group of youths in Masaka, Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State set ablaze one person alleged to be a motorcycle snatcher due to loss of confidence in the police operation.

Accordingly, Ezebuilo (2023), Nicholas (2015), and Gary (2015) capture how two suspected thieves were apprehended and burnt to death on 18th of September, 2015 for stealing a bike in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Lending to this claim, Joseph (2014), David (2017) and Brunt (2017) opine that a society that allows people to take laws into their own hands and sometimes take human life under the guise of punishment which is unknown to law is a broken and lawless society. The position of these authors were espoused in the review of frustration aggression theory distilled in the study.

Detailing on implications, the study of Illah et-tal (2022) and Olalekan (2017) saw the practice of jungle justice as creating sudden disintegration in the investigation process and the impracticality of arresting accomplices of a suspected crime when closely viewed. Accordingly, the study of Uche (2002) in Illah et-al (2017) submitted that life in Nigeria is a cafeteria of temptation and that conformity to the law only occurs when people have more to gain from it than they have to gain by deviance. In this light, it can be said that jungle justice does not only interrupts criminal investigation but offers penalty which can be ruthless and brutal to human life when compared to punishment allotable through a criminal justice proceeding. Thus, a study of this nature aims to insist on why society should stick to statutory channels in seeking for redress than resorting to conflict.

The Frustration-Aggression Theory

The frustration-aggression theory otherwise known as the frustration–aggression hypothesis has been reviewed in this work. This theory has its root in the work of Dollard John, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears in the text: *Frustration and Aggression* (1939). The basic argument of this theory is that aggression is a product of frustration and frustration is caused as a result of blocked opportunities faced by individuals in the society. Frustration aggression theorists define frustration as what often happens when a goal is interfered with (Ossai, 2023, Lawson, 1965 cited in Joseph, 2014). Thus, this theory indicates that aggressive behaviour is not a product of genuine hostility, but of frustration.

Applying this theory within the context of this work, we considered unlawful tendencies such as mob attacks, riot and revolutions as jungle justice and owing to the frustration encountered in the administration of criminal justice in the study location. In Nigeria, the justice system is operated in such a way that the rich are considered sacred and their wrong deeds rarely punished, whereas wrongs by the deprived group are often punished almost immediately and sometimes when convictions are yet to be secured. In Nasarawa State, those who are at the disadvantaged end



easily lose confidence and get frustrated by such operation and often time resort to self help in the form of jungle justice. Though it provided a useful perspective on the causes and implications of jungle justice, this theory has not given specific explanation on how the loss of confidence in the administration of criminal justice constitutes last resort to the practice of jungle justice. This has propelled the inclusion and use of the loss of confidence theory as a theoretical proposition in the study.

The Loss of Confidence Theory

In this study, a theoretical stance called the ‘Loss of Confidence theory’ was also adopted to conduct variable explanation of jungle justice to criminal justice administration in the study area. As an outcome of a PhD research carried out by Dr. Allah Obadiah in 2023, this theoretical stance considers the loss of confidence in the administration of criminal justice as a suffix or last resort to the practice of jungle justice in the society. The use of this theoretical stance in the explanation of jungle justice to the best of the researchers’ knowledge is only known to this study in Nasarawa State and probably Nigeria and beyond.

The theory basically sees ‘self-help’ as a biological instinct often resorted to when an individual is triggered to react in a violent manner. This violent instinct is a response to the failure of justice order in a state often exhibited in both individual and group form. It advanced the claim that the loss of confidence in the legal order indicates a gradual end to social laws. Theory views individual rationality as key to conformity and that the legal order is easily adhered to when people believe they gain more by it than through illegal means. It further held that where there is just, fair and transparent administration of criminal justice, adherence to state law becomes a natural instinct.

In Nigera, corruption and impunity are arguably deep-seated and have severed the task of a just, fair and transparent administration of criminal justice. This has in effect triggered among adherents the loss of confidence in government and governance order of the Nigerian State. In this

wise, the practice of jungle justice in Nasarawa State in the lens of this theory is an indication of the loss of confidence in the state coercive instruments or a resort to self help as last resort against public security. The theoretical stance provides a lens in explaining what constitutes the suffix of jungle justice hence its adoption and use in the study.

Methodology

The survey design was adopted in this study. This is because survey design enables the collection of primary data in a large sample in order to test hypotheses and answer research questions (Ndiyo, 2005). The study’s sample size was determined by the Yamane formula for sample size determination at 95% confidence level and a margin error of 0.05%. This was based on the 2022 projected population of Nasarawa State which stands at 2,886,022 as released by the National Population Commission (NPC, 2022). In effect, a sample size of 533 was arrived at and adopted for the study.

This outcome has been illustrated below. Population Commission (NPC, 2022). In effect, a sample size of 533 was arrived at and adopted for the study. This outcome has been illustrated below.

$$\text{Formula: } n_1 = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

where: n_1 = Required sample size
N = Population of Nasarawa State
1 = Constant
e = Error tolerance

$$n_1 = \frac{2,886,022}{1 + 2,886,022 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2,886,022}{1 + 2,886,022 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{2,886,022}{1 + 7,215.005}$$

$$n = \frac{2,886,022}{7,216.055}$$

$$n = 399.9 = 400$$

Often times, the possibility of retrieving all questionnaires from the field is not a guarantee. Thus, the study anticipated that only 75% of the



questionnaires distributed may not be correctly filled and returned hence, the number of questionnaires were increased by 25% to compensate the ones that could not be returned. In doing this, a formula developed and used by Areoye (2004) was adopted. Thirty electoral wards were randomly selected in all, five from each of the six LGAs selected.

Formula:
$$N_2 = \frac{N}{R}$$

Where:

- N₂ = Actual sample size
N = Calculated sample size
R = Expected return rates substituting the formula

n2 = 400
75%
N2 = 400 / 0.75
n2 = 533

In generating qualitative data, the study purposively selected and conducted structured interview for 10 participants comprising of a beer parlour owner and one daily user, a motor park chairman and one daily user, mechanic workshop owner and one daily user, a street vulcanizer and one daily user and one market woman leader and a member. The study also had key informant interview with 12 interviewees who were purposively reached at fixed locations including a police Commissioner, two court judges, two ward councilors, two traditional leaders, two school headmasters, a vigilante leader, a woman leader, and a youth leader which when added to the initial sample size of 533, the total sample size became 555. The choice of these participants were for reasons of professional insights and/or their day to day street experiences related to vulnerable locations.

In cultivating quantitative data, multi-stage sampling technique was used for sampling procedure. First, the State was clustered into 3 senatorial zones, namely Nasarawa North, West and South. Thereafter, simple random sampling procedure was used to select six (6) from the (13) Local Government Areas in Nasarawa State by admitting the population proportional to sample size (PPSS) for each LGA selected. That was followed by the selection of 30 electoral wards from the selected LGAs. Sample elements were equally selected systematically based on the

household list at the Primary Health Care Centres in the wards selected. The adult residents of Nasarawa State constituted the study population. Three instruments, that is, questionnaire, structured interview and key informant interview guides were used in the study. The researcher issued out questionnaires directly to the respondents and conducted structured and key informant interviews on the required respondents. Although, 533 questionnaires were issued out, only 513 were duly filled and returned. Data collected were presented and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics for quantitative data and verbatim reporting scheme for qualitative data. That is to say, qualitative data were sieved out and used to support those quantitatively gathered. In this wise, the questionnaires filled and returned were collated, cleaned and coded into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) model to display frequency distribution, simple percentages, mean, standard deviation and cross tabulations. The whole frame involved the summarization and tabularization of the data processed via the SPSS package.

Presentation of Findings

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Socio-Demographic Characteristics

This item presented the descriptive characteristics of respondents in the study.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents, N = 513

Table with 5 columns: Categories, Frequency, Percentage %, Mean, SD. Rows include Age (years), Sex, Marital Status, and Educational qualification.



Occupation		
Unemployed	212	41.5
Self employed	80	15.5
Public/civil servant	75	14.7
Retired	100	19.4
Others	46	8.9
Monthly Income		
<10,000	146	28.5
10,000-20,000	175	34.1
21,001-50,000	95	18.5
51,001-100,000	70	13.6
>100,000	27	5.3

Source: Field Report (2024)

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in the study. The mean age of the respondents was 28.5 with majority of them (76.1%) found within the ages of (21-30 and 31-40years) respectively. Going by the Nigerian Youth Policy of Federal Ministry of Youth and Development (FMYD, 2009) which pegs the age of youths between 18 and 35 years, this result shows that Nasarawa State has a productive population which is capable of ventilating energy in jungle justice when left idle. The sex of the respondents revealed (69.0%) of male participation in the study, implying that the male sex is perceived to be more predisposed to acts of jungle justice, making jungle justice a male folk violence in the study area. In terms of marriage, majority of the respondents (58.4%) were single. This implies that singles are likely prone to acts of jungle justice since they are less occupied with family demands. On educational status, over 70% of the respondents have acquired tertiary education implying that most of the participants are literate and can take informed decision on issues relating to the practice of jungle justice. The turn out on occupation had the participants (41.5%) being unemployed. This was generally high when related with the number of those gainfully employed (14.7%) and self employed (15.5%). This result gives the impression that unemployment is prevalent in Nasarawa State and that such unemployed

persons are likely at the risk of indulging in the practice of jungle justice. Distribution by income shows that the study participants 34.1% earn between N10, 000 and N20, 000 monthly. This result indicates a population with poor monthly income and such population is vulnerable to a life of frustration and despair which can be incidental to the practice of jungle justice.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Factors in Jungle Justice, N = 513

Factors	Yes N %	No N %	Not sure N %	Mean	STD
Delayed justice	374(72.9)	63(12.3)	76(14.8)	2.61	0.69
Substance abuse	332(64.7)	88(17.2)	93(18.1)	2.48	0.77
Ineffective criminal justice administration	334(65.1)	103(20.1)	76(14.8)	2.46	0.77
Corrupt criminal justice system	394(76.8)	83(16.2)	36(7.0)	2.61	0.75
Leadership failure	415(80.9)	61(11.9)	37(7.2)	2.69	0.67
Illiteracy	377(73.5)	102(19.9)	34(6.6)	2.54	0.80
Poor socialization of children	378(73.7)	75(14.6)	60(11.7)	2.59	0.73
Poor human rights awareness	405(78.9)	72(14.0)	36(7.0)	2.65	0.71
Poor police-community partnership	403(78.6)	71(13.8)	39(7.6)	2.65	0.71
Loss of confidence in CJA	374(72.9)	76(14.8)	63(12.3)	2.54	0.77
Peer pressure	336(65.5)	92(17.9)	82(16.0)	2.47	0.78
High cost of justice	218(42.5)	202(39.4)	93(18.1)	2.03	0.90
Poor funding of the security agencies	222(43.3)	139(27.1)	152(29.6)	2.16	0.82

Source: Field Report (2024)

Footnote: Criminal Justice Administration (CJA)

From table 2, respondents were asked to indicate if the factors measured above are responsible for jungle justice in the State. Overall outcome considered leadership failure ($\bar{x} = 2.69$) as having the highest causal tendency since responses that varied were indeed insignificant ($SD = 0.67$). This was followed by poor human rights awareness ($\bar{x} = 2.65$) which had participants differing in position ($SD = 0.71$). Jungle justice was also blamed on poor police-community partnership (\bar{x}



= 2.65 SD = 0.71) while illiteracy and loss of confidence in criminal justice administration (CJA) which had the same mean rating but varied in standard deviations were tipped as having the next significant impacts ($\bar{x}=2.54$ SD = 0.80) ($\bar{x}=2.54$ SD = 0.77) respectively. These results suggest that these variables are prevalent in the practice of jungle justice in the study area. Although, improper socialization of children was also diagnosed with such effect ($\bar{x}=2.59$ SD = 0.732), it became more enhanced as a result of illiteacy in the area ($\bar{x}=2.54$ SD = 0.80). Aside these, the ineffectiveness of criminal justice administration turned out to be magnificent ($\bar{x}=2.46$ SD = 0.772). It can be seen that only few views (SD = 0.772) were at variance with the mean scores, affirming the rate of jungle justice in the study area. Other ratings indicated that corruption within the criminal justice system ($\bar{x}=2.61$ SD = 0.75), delayed justice ($\bar{x}=2.61$ SD = 0.69), peer pressure ($\bar{x}=2.47$ SD = 0.78), substance abuse ($\bar{x}=2.48$ SD = 0.77), poor funding of the security agencies ($\bar{x}=2.16$ SD = 0.82), and high cost of justice ($\bar{x}=2.03$ SD = 0.90) are highly associated with jungle justice.

A close follow of these outcomes show a similar direction in the means of these factors. However, the standard deviations are indicating that the data points notwithstanding the divergences in opinion are coherent to the means of the data set. That is to say, these causal factors are trending and such trend implies a surging propensity of jungle justice in the study location.

In line with these revelations, qualitative data were generated to complement results elicited from the quantitative data which are in line with the objectives of the study.

People believe resorting to jungle justice is a common option because the criminal justice system is not only slow but also ineffective. In

fact, it takes time and all ages before justice is served. Again, it is believed the police is very corrupt; Most suspects particularly those who are well to do bribe the police to manipulate their detention and after some days, they are released and back on the street. Another thing is that justice institutions are not effective as they should. You know, it is either the police is difficult to be contacted or if contacted, they are often belated in arriving at crime scenes. All these make people to lose confidence in the whole process of criminal justice administration (KII- Court Judge, male, age 55, Lafia).

Here, the participant believes that ineffective justice institutions, corruption, loss of confidence and slow justice system are engrossed in the administration of criminal justice and they have made people to consider jungle justice as something fast on suspects. Hence, findings suggest that the right to fair and just trial is in jeopardy when the justice system is choked with such factors.

Below is the view of another participant in that regard:

Sometimes, it is lack of awareness because it is rare for people so educated and enlightened, occupying position of responsibility to indulge in jungle justice. I also think people use jungle justice to victimize other people they have grievances or personal issues with. Since by mere raise of alarm, a suspect is unwarrantedly attacked by the public, people who harbour grievances with other people take advantage of such window and have their targets victimized. Another thing again is joblessness because if people are engaged or engrossed into their work, they will rarely have time for anything like jungle justice (KII- Youth leader, male, age 38, Lafia).

The opinion of this participant was clear on lack of



awareness, joblessness and spaded grievances as factors in jungle justice. In other words, this interviewee is of the opinion that jungle justice can be tackled when the public becomes more enlightened, engaged and informed on the mechanisms of peaceful resolution.

Table 3: The Implications of Jungle Justice

The table below is a vivid representation of respondents’ ratings on what constitutes the implications of jungle justice in the administration of criminal justice as contained in the third objective of this study.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Implications of Jungle Justice, N = 513

Categories	SA (%)		Rating		SD (%)	Mean	STD
	N	N	U (%)	D (%)			
Police abeyance	215(41.9)	192(37.4)	35(6.8)	42(6.2)	29(5.7)	4.01	1.15
Weakens lives, property protection	179(34.9)	204(39.8)	32(6.2)	73(14.2)	25(4.9)	3.86	1.18
Undermines CJA	242(47.2)	196(38.2)	40(7.8)	25(4.9)	10(1.9)	4.24	0.93
Deters innocence	210(40.9)	185(36.1)	52(10.1)	58(11.3)	8(1.6)	4.04	1.05
Loss of lives, property	226(44.1)	145(28.3)	86(16.8)	42(8.2)	14(2.7)	4.03	1.08
Deters investigations	257(50.1)	163(31.8)	23(4.5)	49(9.6)	21(4.1)	4.14	1.13
Corrupts CJS	178(34.7)	157(30.6)	59(11.5)	105(20.5)	14(2.7)	3.74	1.20
Dents confidence in CJA	204(39.8)	202(39.4)	69(13.5)	26(5.1)	12(2.3)	4.09	0.96
Slows CJA	193(37.6)	218(42.5)	61(11.9)	28(5.5)	13(2.5)	4.07	0.96
Failed CJA	275(53.6)	164(32.0)	37(7.2)	31(6.0)	6(1.2)	4.31	0.92

Source: Field Report (2024)

Footnote: Crminal Justice Administration (CJA), Criminal Justice System (CJS)

From the distribution on table 3, the means score revealed failed criminal justice administration (CJA) as the most rated implication of jungle justice in Nasarawa State ($\bar{x} = 4.31$, $SD = 0.92$). The next rating was on how jungle justice is undermining the course of justice in the State ($\bar{x} = 4.24$, $SD = 0.93$). Rather than ensuring order and public safety, it was revealed that the police is aiding and abetting the practice of jungle justice in the study location ($\bar{x} = 4.01$, $SD = 1.15$). By this

outcome, it means the police structure is a co-author of the incidences of jungle justice in the study site. Such police operation will mean great weakness in the protection of lives and property which participants considered a primary role of the criminal justice system ($\bar{x} = 3.86$, $SD = 1.18$).

In the determination of innocence, it was revealed that jungle justice not only obstructs the chances of people proving their innocence ($\bar{x} = 4.04$, $SD = 1.05$), it also severs investigations leading to the arrest of other accomplices ($\bar{x} = 4.14$, $SD = 1.13$). This, in the views of participants, make difficult the protection of lives and property in the study area ($\bar{x} = 4.03$, $SD = 1.08$). The consequence of jungle justice was further highlighted by the loss of confidence in the administration of criminal justice ($\bar{x} = 4.09$, $SD = 0.96$) due to entrenched corruption in the institutions of criminal justice (CJS) as made known by the respondents ($\bar{x} = .74$, $SD = 1.20$). Ratings from respondents also queried jungle justice for slowing the dispensation of justice due to unwarranted lynching of suspects ($\bar{x} = 4.07$, $SD = 0.96$). This, in turn, affects the needed output in criminal justice administration. In light of the foregoing, the standard deviations which ranged from 0.92 to 1.15 is suggesting the existence of wide and divergence opinions among the respondents. These claims were further buttressed by the data uncovered from qualitaive interrogations during the study.

A participant who was contacted beared his mind like this

Yes, jungle justice does not give room for people to express themselves and in some cases, it cheaply takes away life. In other cases, it is meted on innocent people when properly investigated. Sometimes, perpetrators do not care to know what the suspect has done and sometimes the kind of punishment unleashed does not equate by degree



direction of this result, the postulation of objective two was further proven to be empirically valid.

Discussion of Findings

The result on leadership failure as a factor of jungle justice highlights the position of Achebe (1983) when he said the failure of a nation is characteristic of where there is leadership failure. Previous studies by Ndukwe (2023), Neequaye (2007), Asare (2007), USDDA, (2010), and Joseph (2014) elaborated on this when they identified ineffective criminal justice administration, leadership failure, loss of confidence in the law enforcement agencies, and high cost of justice as factors accounting for jungle justice in sub-Saharan Africa. Also agreeing is the submission by Abdulah (2016) when he considered the practice of jungle justice a reaction to abrupt show of injustice and failure of the criminal justice system to apply uniform and equal standards and processes to all. In the view of Frustration Aggression theory, these factors are constituents of blocked opportunities that frustrate societal members and make them resort to aggressive tendencies in addressing their grievances.

On implications, jungle justice has become worrisome in the recent time, particularly that it is consistent with the issue of life and death. Butressing this result, Ezebuilo (2025) and Olalekan (2017) saw jungle justice as being manipulated into a way of fiddling with police investigations and evidence. Thus, when a suspect is killed, further investigation on a matter and evidence which would have been used to apprehend other culprits would be lost. Affirming the above finding, Ossai (2023) and Orabueze et al (2013) opined that the people who killed a suspect are a harm to the society as the family of the victim might have possibly lost a breadwinner, a father, husband, son, brother, mother, sister, daughter, aunt, wife among others. The loss of

confidence theory considers this action as what could make people lose confidence in the administration of criminal justice in a State.

On the other hand, jungle justice was established to have a kind of link with the loss of confidence in the administration of criminal justice in the study location. The regression model shows that the dependent variable (jungle justice) is greatly predicted by the independent variable (loss of confidence) as contained in table four above. This outcome informed the rejection of the null hypothesis stated in the work. Further outcomes tipped in great deal the displeasure of citizens on criminal proceedings and how the administration of criminal justice is no longer reliable. Thus, when an atmosphere of distrust is created in the task of justice delivery, frustration aggression theory envisages a possibility of people getting frustrated and resorting to alternative justice which this study tried to buttressed.

Conclusion

The study concludes that jungle justice indicates the weakness or a rather debased administration of criminal justice in society and people who resort to the use of jungle justice tend to be more dissatisfied, disappointed, and have lost confidence in the formal justice system.

The study also concludes that the role people play in whether or not the law should apply in real time plays a significant role in the task of law enforcement. A number of challenges regarding an ordered justice system seem to be exacerbated by the weakness or rather the decay witnessed in the working of justice institutions.

The study further concludes that the tendency to be law abiding is contingent on the nature of criminal justice arrangement in the society and it can change when the conditions in operation are not in the equality of justice for all.



the offence the suspect has committed (SI- Motor park chairman, male, age 52, Lafia).

This participant actually expressed concern over how life could be cheap and how a person’s right to say his or her side of the story could be unjustly denied on event of jungle justice. This opinion conveys a quick call on the authorities concerned since such implication is directly on the sanctity of human life.

Test of Hypothesis

H 1: The practice of jungle justice is not significantly predicted by the loss of confidence in the administration of criminal justice.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis on the Loss of Confidence and Jungle Justice in Nasarawa State

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R	Std. Error
1	.949a	.900	.899	.234

2	Sources of variance	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	249.195	5	49.839	912.293	.000
	Residual	27.698	507	.055		
	Total	276.893	512			

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-270	.055		-4.905	.000
1 Loss of Confidence	.495	.029	.753	16.973	.000
2 Slow justice	-450	.038	-.593	-11.902	.000
3 Failed CJS	.222	.028	.281	7.968	.000
4 Corrupt justice system	.302	.078	.243	3.880	.000
5 Poor HRA	.305	.078	.290	4.702	.000

Source: Field Report (2024)

- a. Dependent Variable: Practice of jungle justice
- b. Footnote: CJS – Criminal Justice System, HRA – Human Rights Awareness

The findings in table 4 revealed that the two variables (dependent and independent) have positive relationship (r = .949). The (r²) of .900 as determined by the adjusted R suggests that 89.9 percent of variance in the dependent variable (practice of jungle justice) is explained by the

independent variable (loss of confidence). Here, analysis of variance in the respondents’ rating was significant [F (5; 507) = 912.293, p < .05]. The regression model therefore, suggests that the practice of jungle justice is greatly predicted by the loss of confidence in the dispensation of justice. In this light, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that jungle justice is significantly predicted by the loss of confidence in the dispensation of justice.

When the coefficients were subjected to further analysis, all the independent variables exerted significant predictions on the practice of jungle justice but the loss of confidence in criminal justice administration was the most significant of all (β = .753, t = 16.973, p < .05). This implies that a unit increase in the loss of confidence in criminal in criminal justice administration will result in .495 increase in the practice of jungle justice in the State, if other variables in the equation maintained constance. The next variables with similar impact were slow justice (β = -.583, t = -11.902, p < .05), failed criminal justice system (β = .281, t = 7.968, p < .05), corrupt criminal justice system (β = .243, t = 3.880, p < .05) and poor human right awareness (β = .290, t = 4.706, p < .05). Thus, a unit increase in slow justice, failed criminal justice system, corrupt criminal justice system and poor human right awareness will result in .450, .222, .302 and 305 increases in jungle justice respectively, if all other variables in the equation are held constant.

However, a close follow of this result revealed a negative but significant relationship between slow justice and the practice of jungle justice. The implication is that the more slow justice in the study area, the less the practice of jungle justice which sounds a bid awkward and counter intuitive. This outcome could be that as a result of slow justice by constituted agencies, people know that they are easily consumed by the practice of jungle justice where the intervention of the formal order is slow, hence making them to naturally restrain from criminal acts. By the



The study's findings unmasked the lack of confidence in the criminal justice organs as a balance to the onset of jungle justice. This concern is bothered on the corrupt and slow nature of justice which seem to be in favour of the privileged class while overly discriminating against the less privileged group.

Recommendations

In order to address these issues, the following have been recommended for policy action:

- i. Government should digitize criminal justice proceedings in the State. When achieved, it will build public confidence and ensure quick and corrupt free administration of justice.
- ii. Government should carry out deliberate reforms through the enforcement of judicial independence for effective administration of criminal justice in Nasarawa State. When done, it will promote transparent dispensation of justice and enhance the protection of lives and property.
- iii. National Orientation Agency and schools should routinize massive awareness campaign and enlightenment programme to elevate public knowledge on law enforcement as well as promoting patriotic consciousness in the handling of public affairs in the State.
- iv. Government should through a legislative act establish Anti-Jungle Justice Marshal to serve as a quick response intervention mechanism to the practice of jungle justice in the State.
- v. Government should through good governance mechanism create jobs and enhanced welfare scheme provid for the people. Effective control of jungle justice as it were would require a fundamental activation of this approach.

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