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 POLICE BRUTALITY IN NIGERIA

In this essay I would like to give a better insight on police brutality on the defenseless citizens. The police is meant to protect the citizens from harm but rather they are now the harm to the citizens. Police brutality or police violence is legally defined as a civil rights violation where officers exercise undue or excessive force against a subject. This includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal harassment, physical or mental injury, property damage, and death. This year 2020 has had a lot of ups and downs with a lot of sufferings, sicknesses and also death. Although corona virus has been a tough blow on not only the country but the world in a whole the police who are meant to give us a little hope are instead adding to our grief. Sadly, most police officers have this philosophy of “hit first and ask questions later” which is wrong. Majority of the deaths happening in Nigeria is as a result of police brutality which usually leads to loss of lives or mental instability. I would give some instances of these brutalities which sadly is not all but a little which is able to come to light because they are a lot of these police brutality around Nigeria.

These police brutalities have to be brought to light so we can effect change in our nation and stop unnecessary deaths because the police are causing more harm than the deadly virus. Just a month ago it was over the internet about justice for tina a 16 year old girl who was shot and killed by a police man at a bus stop near her home on May 26th 2020. This was a very tragic story because this young girl was taken from her family and friends. It was a stray bullet that took the life of this innocent and fulfilling girl. A police officer is meant to be very careful with a gun because it is a very dangerous thing that can end the life of anyone with just a bullet.

Also, a journalist by name Alex Ogbu was killed on January 21st 2020 by a police officer while covering a protest till date we are awaiting the justice because nothing further has been said. This is tragic on the family not only because their son Alex was taken from them but it is more disheartening that nothing has been done regarding this it is like the case just became cold meaning the officer is still free and able to brutalize more citizens.

Many times these police brutalities occur the citizens are usually minding their businesses and having a normal day and from nowhere a bullet hits and next it is death. Just like this man having a normal day and watching soccer and he was killed by policemen at Olu Aboderin Street, Onipetisi, Lagos state. It was said by an eye witness that the police came to arrest another person around the area and after the arrest the police opened fire and an innocent citizen was hit and lost his life. This man had nothing to do with the arrest but lost his life to the brutalization of the police. His family had to suffer the loss and probably nothing much would be done about this issue.

These officers might think they are trying to protect the citizens but rather they are using the little power they have to brutalize the harmless citizens. Also in the course of this lockdown a woman sat in front of her house she was questioned by the police for sitting there and because she answered back she was beaten not by only one but a group of officers thankfully she wasn’t harmed but if it was a person with some health issues we don’t know what the news would have been maybe something critical or even death. These police officers are abusing their power and trying to oppress the citizen and I would personally say they are trying to make the citizens fear them.

A group of men blocked a road in Abuja in order to prevent police officers from passing through due to this they were arrested and taken to prison where they were severely tortured and one was left unconscious when he was rushed to the hospital he was declared dead. The police did the right thing by arresting them for blocking the road but they handled the situation wrongly they are not meant to torture those men because they have their rights they were meant to just arrest them and collect a fine because it a minor crime but instead they decided to exert their power on the citizens that were defenseless.

Sadly police brutality is becoming a norm not only in Nigeria but all over the world it is becoming very rampart around the world. Just like the case of George Floyd whose case has been all over due to the disheartening brutalization of the police. He begged for breathe but they the police officers still refused to move the officer remained on his neck till he became unconscious and was declared dead at arrival in the hospital. Thankfully people were able to record this incident and there was justice for Floyd if not this case would have been like many others that were overlooked. This brutalization has no reason nobody is meant to be brutalized no matter the crime. There are still many other people around the world suffering brutalization like this.

Every citizen of any country has his or her rights that should not be violated no matter what happens. When a person commits a crime he or she should be arrested and charged accordingly but not brutalized. It is really sad that some of these police officers go free and are not arrested and some cases do not even get justice because the person involve dies immediately and the police covers everything up probably because there might be no witness and therefore nobody gets to know the real story.

Corona virus might look like the scariest thing but the truth is what is really scary is when the people meant to protect us are the people killing us and putting great fear in our hearts. There should be justice for everybody that is brutalized by the police. Due to the modern day and the gadgets a lot of things can be recorded so therefore no brutalization should go unpunished and serious penalty should be given for any form of brutalization because brutalization causes not only physical but mental issues to the brutalized.

In conclusion, police brutalization is an issue that has to be looked into delicately because a lot of people and dying and we don’t want to lose more. They need to do what they are really here for they need to protect us and not cause more harm to the society or nation at large. Unless severe punishment is given for brutalization they might not stop and that means the citizens can no longer feel save because they people meant to protect them have now become their terror.

Reference: newspapers, news and the internet.