

# Rethinking Police Reform in Liberia: With Focus on Police Brutality

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**Abstract:** From a qualitative approach coupled with firsthand experience view as a form of ethnographic research, this paper rethinks police reform in Liberia with a focus on police brutality. Empirically, it established the veracity of rising police brutality in Liberia.

As its theoretical framework that explained the causes of police brutality, this article through assumption attributes the causes of police brutality in Liberia to the individual-level factors, organizational-level factors, and the public unawareness or lack of knowledge of the rules and procedures that guide police operations.

Under the organizational-level factors, it assumes that the failure of the reform to have infused behavior health training and emotional intelligence into the Basic Recruit curricula and advanced in-service training module that would have helped tackle the individual-level factors and educate the public about rules and procedures that guide police operations give rise to police brutality in Liberia.

It recommends an assessment survey that will inform the Liberia National Police decision to infuse BHT and EI in both BRT and advance in-service training at the Liberia National Police Training Academy and Training School.

**Keywords:** Human rights abuse, Liberia National Police, Police brutality, Police reform,

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a notorious fact, before the reformation and restructuring of the Liberia National Police (LNP) as one of the resolutions of the Comprehensive Peace Accord that ended the 14 years of civil war in 2003 signed in Accra Ghana, police brutality was prevalent. Particularly, the defunct Special Operation Division was one of the subunits conspicuous for brutality against civilians and citizens (GlobalSecurity.org). This not only tainted the image of the LNP but also eroded the public confidence in law enforcement.

To repair the damage so critical to restoring public trust and confidence in the LNP, the reformation and restructuring was under the auspices of the Police component of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was inaugurated on 13 July 2004 (UN, 2004). Police officers notorious for gross human rights abuses and violations were rooted out of the LNP, some that reached the age of retirement were given a special pecuniary package. A new breed of qualified Liberians was vetted and enrolled in Basic Police Recruit Course at the

Liberia National Police Academy and Training School formerly National Police Training Academy.

Given the essence or aims of the reformation and restructuring of the LNP inaugurated, one would have thought of police brutality as an isolated phenomenon. Regrettably, police brutality has become a mounting phenomenon even in the presence of UNMIL and alarming following their departure till now despite punitive measures or actions intended for deterrence.

Unequivocally, the rise or alarming rate of police brutality in Liberia is evidenced by the minister of Justice Cllr's recent dismissal of four police officers. Frank Musa Dean (Peters, 2022) which bordered on police brutality suggests a fundamental flaw in the reformation and restructuring of the LNP. To unmarks this fundamental flaw, this article meticulously advances the arguments surrounding the rethinking of police reform in Liberia with an emphasis or focus on police brutality that from all indications qualifies as one of Liberia's contemporary social problems. To put it differently, this paper seeks to offer a remedy to the growing wave of police brutality in Liberia.

It dives into the topic by structuring the paper into four segments. The first segment reviews police reform and police brutality. The second segment contextualizes police reform in Liberia considering its historicity as well. It also put police brutality into context by cataloging recognizable cases in Liberia. In addition, this segment examines police brutality as a violation of basic human rights and illustrates police brutality as a breach of fiduciary duty in Liberia.

Considered the crux of the paper, the third segment presents the argument surrounding the need to rethink police reform, emphasizing the growing wave of police brutality in Liberia. In other words, it brings out or suggests the main reason(s) behind the rising of police brutality. Finally, the fourth segment advances recommendations and draws logical conclusions.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The nature of the topic restricts this paper to a combination of qualitative methods. It employs a literature review method and observation based on first-hand experience. (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003) a broadly described literature review can as a more or less systematic

way of collecting and synthesizing previous research. An effective and well-conducted review as a research method creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge and facilitating theory development (Webster & Watson, 2002). By integrating findings and perspectives from many empirical findings, a literature review can address research questions with a power that no single study has. A first-hand experience could be a form of ethnographic research in which the researcher observes and/or interact with a study's participants in their real-life environment. In this case, the researcher's observation in this paper is informed by almost 18 years of experience in the LNP.

#### *Review of Police Reform- A Conceptual Framework*

Police reform is certainly one of the concepts of security sector reforms (SSR) that have been copiously intellectualized by gurus, academicians, and notable institutions.

From the perspective of SSR, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Gender and SSR Toolkit manual defined police reform as the transformation or change of a police organization into a professional and accountable police service practicing a style of policing that is responsive to the needs of local communities (Denham, 2008).

Similarly, (Gray, 2017) defined police reform as the attempted transformation of a state's police organization so that it is better able to uphold human rights and provide greater security for its citizens.

The above definitions imply that police reform is about change and is a process that moves a police institution toward being more accountable for its actions and having greater respect for human rights. Inherent in the definitions is the aim of police reform articulated by the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT). Accordingly, it aims to transform the values, culture, policies, and practices of police organizations so that police can perform their duties with respect for democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law (ISSAT, 2022).

The definitions also imply that as a concept, police reform is driven by a context that resonates with the security or law enforcement needs of the general society. Of course, law enforcement needs are broad or general. And so, if police reform seeks to address the needs of local communities, it must be specific in terms of scope and context. To put it differently, there is one size fits all for police reform, and every reform process must reflect its specific context.

#### *Scope of Police Reform*

As a holistic concept, police reform can be approached from the below scope which is designed by the needs of the local communities or general society.

#### *Human-rights Perspective*

This perspective uses the language of 'reform' and 'police conduct'. Its hallmarks

are the exclusion of human-rights violators from the police organization, the revamping of police doctrines and training to emphasize human-rights standards, and the establishment of internal and (especially) external mechanisms for accountability (Call, 2002). In the context of the LNP, this scope of police reform was among the embodiments of the reformation and restructure. For example, during the re-vetting of LNP officers, those notorious for human rights abuses were weed out and denied admission into the reform process.

The establishment of the Professional Standard Division (PSD) exists as an internal mechanism that ensures the promotion and protection of human rights standards by holding officers accountable for their actions. Moreover, the Civilian Complainant Review Board (CCRB) can be equated to the external mechanism that ensures the protection of human rights by investigating compliant dissatisfactions emanating from the PSD investigation. Also, the reform curricula at the Liberia National Police Training Academy and Training School for Basic Recruit Course incorporate human rights with at least 10 credit hours. In summation, this approach or scope of police reform aims to correct human rights abuses perpetrated by the police.

#### *Law-enforcement Perspective*

This approach to police reform focuses on the need to strengthen local/foreign capabilities to immediately control local crime and combat transnational crime and terrorism (Call, 2002). In the SSR context, strengthening law enforcement capacities include logistics and human resource development through relevant training. In the case of the LNP, this scope of police reform also exemplified the reform. For example, the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) was established with a Standard Operation Procedure manual that conferred upon the ERU the right and duty to conduct special police operations in anti-terrorism, hostage rescue, internal security, tactical anticrime, and search-and-rescue situations (GlobalSecurity.org). The US government provided USD\$7 million in support toward the initiative that constructed a first-class training headquarters and command center for the ERU (emansion, 2008). The Police Support Unit (PSU) was also established with a Standard Operation Procedure manual that authorized the PSU to deal with the crowd and riot control (GlobalSecurity.org).

Just like the US, China has been very supportive in terms of training and logistics. In 2016, China provided \$2 million to the Government of Liberia for the supply of equipment to the Liberia National Police (LNP) mainly for the PSU (Global News Network, 2016). Another example can be seen in the Women and Children Protection Section of the Liberia National Police was established by UNICEF in collaboration

with the LNP and the Civilian Police of UNMIL in 2005 (Reliefweb, 2005). Since 2005, UNICEF continues to provide officers with specialized skills for the investigation and handling of rape and sexually related offenses committed against women and children and logistical support as well (Reliefweb, 2005).

#### *Democratization Perspective*

This scope of police reform emphasizes the rule of law and long-term justice and security, rather than short-term order. It encompasses the human-rights view to an extent but goes beyond it with a focus on institutional development (Call, 2002). Inherently, this perspective re-enforces both the human rights perspective and the law enforcement perspective. In other words, it complements the first two perspectives. Just by this, it is safe to infer that the above examples reflect the democratization perspective on police reform.

#### *Structural Perspective*

This approach to police reform seeks to overhaul and transform existing structures within the police irrelevant to the changing needs of the general society. It may also create new structures to meet the law enforcement needs of society, especially in post-conflict settings or societies. The establishment of the LNP Gender Section and Women and Children Protection are some of the classic examples of the structural perspective. Moreover, the LNP Board of inquiry was also transformed into the Professional Standard Division (PSD).

From the above scope briefly discussed, it is safe to make the inference that the LNP reform bears the similitude of the four perspectives of police reform.

#### *The Environment of Police Reform*

In the first place, police operation or law enforcement operates in a highly polarized political environment. This assertion suggests or establishes the fact that police reform takes place in a political environment. In the opinion of Penpoin (2020), the political environment has a broad meaning. It can refer to the central, regional government, government agencies, and independent government institutions operating under a political system. In a similar tone, (MBA Skool Team, 2021) conceptualized the political environment as the state, government and its institutions and legislations, and the public and private stakeholders who operate and interact with or influence the system. In the SSR context that encompasses police reform, law enforcement or policing is considered one of the agencies of government control by the political environment. For example, in most African societies, the police operate under the interior ministry also controlled by the Head of the executive branch (President) and the parliament or legislative committees with oversight responsibility. By these people (President and Parliament Committees), positions, they are politicians with vested interests that may have implications for policy reform. In the case of Liberia, the police are operated by the Ministry

of Justice under the Executive branch of government headed by the President of the Republic of Liberia. By this assertion, it can be inferred that even though police reform was under the auspices of UNMIL with financial support from donor countries and the international community, the government of Liberia played a pivotal role through ownership over the process.

The political environment in which police reform often takes place is categorized into two environments namely, a post-conflict environment and a non-post conflict environment.

#### *Police Reform in Post-Conflict Environment*

In the context of this paper, a post-conflict environment denotes a “conflict situation in which open warfare has come to an end. Such situations remain tense for years or decades and can easily relapse into large-scale violence” (Junné & Verokren, 2005). There is an absence of war in post-conflict areas, but not essentially real peace. Lakhdar Brahimi states that “the end of fighting does propose an opportunity to work towards lasting peace, but that requires the establishment of sustainable institutions, capable of ensuring long-term security”(Brahimi, 2007). In a post-conflict, police reform is driven by context. It is necessitated in a society where the police have often perpetrated serious human rights violations during the conflict (O’Neill, 2005). An example includes Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Liberia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, East Timo, etc. Even though in a post-conflict society police reform is context-driven, however, its generic aim is for the population to have confidence in the police and expects the police to serve the public regardless of political agendas (O’Neill, 2005). Without any doubt, this aim resonates with police reform in Liberia.

#### *Police Reform in Non-Post-Conflict Society*

In the opinion of this paper, a non-post-conflict society connotes the direct opposite of a post-conflict society. In other words, it is conceptualized as a society that has not experienced or witnessed civil war or arm conflict. Like police reform in post-conflict societies with a generic aim, the aim of police reform in non-post-conflict societies is also generic. The below excerpt from Messick (2015) highlights the focus of police reform in a non-post-conflict society.

Ghana: “internal and external accountability reforms have not minimized corruption in the Ghana Police Service (GPS) [There is] widespread public discontent with the operations of the GPS . . . sometimes resulting in mob attacks on police officers and their facilities”

Kenya: “Despite the new policing institutional architecture aimed at transforming the police service and the various reform initiatives undertaken through that new architecture, police corruption and other forms of misconduct still arise in the daily routines of the Kenyan Police”.

Trinidad and Tobago: “[W]hile numerous police reform efforts have been attempted in the post-colonial period, the

police are still perceived to be violent, corrupt, incompetent, and resistant to change.”

Argentina: “The last significant police reform [began in 2010 but] Argentina and its police forces continue to sink in surveys and assessments of corruption.”

The above excerpts show that minimizing corruption has been the prime focus of police reform in these non-post-conflict societies. Added to this list is the US but with a different focus. Amid the earlier losses of Philando Castile, Breonna Taylor, and count-less others, George Floyd’s death served as a catalyst that intensified the calls for systemic police reform, focusing on police brutality mainly against Black Americans or people of color (Subramanian & Arzy, 2021).

#### *Police Reform in Liberia*

Even though police reform gained momentum in the theater of Liberia’s academia in 2004 following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord in Accra, Ghana 2003 that ended the 14 years of civil war. However, the history of police reform in Liberia dates far back to 1947 when President William V. S. Tubman hired the service of a veteran specialist from the Kansas City Police, USA called Sergeant Leone M. Jordan to reform and restructure what was called Constabulary Police Force of Liberia (Nebo, 2021). In 1948 the job was completed with the following recommendations that still resonate with some of the basic tenets of democratic policing.

- Nationalization of police,
- Arranging recruitment procedure,
- Training for all personnel of the police.
- Police organization along military lines,
- Police deployment by time and place,
- Retirement and death benefits for police,
- Maintenance of cooperation between police and public,
- Prevention of crime by police as one of its main functions,
- Impartiality from the side of the police,

The maintenance of cooperation between the police and public derived from one of the nine principles advanced by Sir Robert Peel seen as the father of modern democratic policing (Ottawa Police Service, 2022) remains one of the main emphases of police reform in post-conflict societies. Inarguably, the cooperation between the LNP and the public started to diminish from the 14 April 1979 infamous rice riot (FrontPage Africa, 2016) and got worsened by the 14 years of civil war Restoring this cooperation was one of the main focuses of the reformation and restructuring of the LNP that commenced in 2004.

Under the auspices of the Police Component of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the reformation and restructuring of the LNP took cognizance of the four perspectives of police reform mentioned in this paper. The

main essence was to rebrand the image of the LNP critical to enhancing public confidence in the new LNP. The reform was also intended to address police brutality, minimize widespread police corruption, and enhance professional and democratic policing. To be more specific, the reform produced tangible outcomes that to some extent positively impacted the LNP. Below are some of the outcomes.

- The re-vetting of police officers managed to weed out the “bad apples” notorious for human rights abuses, and deactivated officers that served a minimum of 25 years of service.
- Structurally, the reform revamped the existing structure and established new ones. For example, the Board of Inquiry to the Professional Standard Division, the creation of the Women and Children Protection Unit, Gender Section, Community Policing Service, Civilian Complainant Reviewed Board, Police Support Unit that replaced the Special Task Force and Special Operation Division, creation of the Emergency Response Unit, etc.
- Recruitment of approximately four thousand six hundred qualified Liberians into new LNP
- New training curriculum that incorporated human rights lessons, ethical professional standard lessons, democratic policing, and other lessons designed to professionalize the LNP
- De-militarized the ranks and files of the LNP to reflect sub-regional standard
- Introduced a mechanism of accountability by building the capacity of the Professional Standard Division
- Relatively increment of basic salaries and incentives that would have curbed or minimized corruption.
- Establishment of the Liberia National Police Act, 2015

In summary, reforming the LNP was mainly intended to address police brutality, minimize widespread police corruption, enhance professional and democratic policing, and more importantly foster public confidence in law enforcement.

#### *Police Brutality*

Considered a global social problem evidenced by a copious literature review, police brutality has attracted so much attention in academic theaters.

From a human rights perspective, Amnesty International defines police brutality as the unlawful use of force by police that violates human rights. The rights often violated include but are not limited to the right to live, the right to be free from discrimination, the right to liberty and security, and the right to equal protection under the law only if the unlawful use of force by the police results in these violations. In like tone, Emesowum (2016) defined police brutality as the excessive and unwarranted use of force by law enforcement. It is an extreme form of police misconduct or violence and is a civil

rights violation. It also refers to a situation where officers exercise undue or excessive force against a person.

According to Mitchell (2000), "Police brutality is defined as any act of unmerited excessive and aggressive physical, mental, and/or emotional abuse, above and beyond the law, enacted upon by an individual or groups of individuals in law enforcement". This definition is critical due to its incorporation of not just physical but also mental and emotional abuse that is often unaccounted for.

The main emphasis that embodies the definitions of police brutality is 'excessive or unwarranted use of force'. Excessive use of force that in other words implies unwarranted use of force and describes a situation in which police officers in the course of legal duty use force to exceed the minimum amount necessary to accomplish a given law enforcement operation or task (FindLaw, 2020) such as arresting suspects, riot control, investigation, policing public events, and so on. This implies that under international best practices or standards precisely the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (BPUFF) is the key international instrument that deals with police use of force, police officers are legally allowed to use force in law enforcement. However, the force must resonate or agree with the phrase "proportional force" or "proportional use of force", a force that a police officer is supposed to use on a suspect, that must not be more intense than necessary (The New York Times, 2021). Throughout the trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis officer who has been charged with the death of George Floyd, the phrase was mentioned several times to imply that the officer used more intense force that was not necessary. In this kind of situation, the force qualifies under the definition of police brutality. In simple language, whenever the use of force exceeds the minimum amount of force required for law enforcement purposes, police brutality becomes obvious.

Interestingly, excessive use of force sometimes caused death or serious injuries as aggravated assault is not only the definition of police brutality. Cases or situations where injuries are relatively minor as simple assault resulting from unreasonable use of force also exemplify police brutality. Moreover, can also include but is not limited to physical or verbal harassment, mental injury, and property damage, (Emesowum, 2016).

#### *Theoretical Framework on the causes of Police Brutality*

From a practical standpoint, solving any problem implies understanding the underlying or root causes. So, in the context of understanding the causes of police brutality, this paper employs the psychological lens as the theoretical framework that distinct insights.

In his most recent paper titled "The Psychology Behind Police Brutality", (Cuncic, 2022) theorized two factors that explained the causes of police brutality that deserve attention in this paper.

#### *Individual-Level Factors*

This factor theorized that the causes of police brutality are attributed to the individual police officers due to some reasons. These reasons are:

##### *Mental Health Issues*

Cuncic (2022) argues that the mental health of the offending officer may play a role. A study conducted by (DeVylder, Lalane & Fedina, 2019) found that officers who self-reported engaging in abusive police practices tended to have higher levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. The researchers opined that it is possible for officers with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from job-related stressors and trauma may have an increased startle response, a tendency toward suspicion, and problems with aggression. These traits can make it more likely that they will overreact and use deadly force when not necessary. However, it is also possible that excessive force results in a sense of profound guilt and moral injury that leads to PTSD symptoms (DeVylder et al., 2019 as cited in Cuncic, 2022). Similarly, (Falkenbach et al., 2018 as cited in Cuncic, 2022) theorized that traits of "psychopathy", also called antisocial personality disorder (APD), may be more prevalent in police officers than in the general population. Traits such as "fearless dominance" or "cold-heartedness" can be adaptive in dangerous or emotionally charged situations, but they can also make an individual more likely to engage in excessive use of force or to feel that they do not need to follow the rules.

Cuncic (2022) also advanced the argument that personal problems experienced by police officers may increase the likelihood of them engaging in excessive force, such as relationship problems or other stressful life events. Importantly, it is interesting to know that by itself, the nature of the police job is stressful. So, it is obvious that any addition could cause a problem. Considered a buttress, (Spangenberg et al., 2020) argued that in some cases, acts of police brutality are caused by the stress of the job. If the law enforcement officer or agency as a whole views members of the public as unsympathetic or even hostile to their role, they may act out of stress in a tense situation. This is one of the reasons why at Police Academy or Training College, stress management is taught as an early intervention for police brutality, especially in a crisis situation.

#### *Organizational-Level Factors*

This factor theorized that the organization is responsible for police brutality. The organization contributes to police brutality in so many ways. The compromise on accountability especially in situations where police brutality is not punished or reprimanded, then it sends the message to the rest of the officers that it's an acceptable part of their job description. To put it differently, police brutality becomes legitimized because everyone does it and nobody says anything about it. This would imply that the failure to take punitive actions against police brutality as enshrined in relevant policies, is like

legitimizing the illegitimate. In a similar tone re-enforcing accountability, (Spangenberg et al.,2020) maintained that it is essential for officers who are guilty of misconduct to be held accountable for their actions. Police officers are entitled to and do receive significant deference under the law when they use force, but just as important is the constitutional right to be free from unreasonable uses of force. This important balance can only be maintained if officers who use excessive force in violation of the constitution are held to account.

In addition, the working environment can also explain the cause of police brutality. For instance, a stressful working environment has implications for the individual factor. It has the proclivity to aggravate post-traumatic stress disorder and antisocial personality disorder. So, imagine what might likely happen to police officers suffering from PTSD and APD working in a stressful environment with bully supervisors?

Inadequate institutionalized training is another factor associated with the organizational theory of police brutality. In other words, police brutality is attributed to the organizational inability to provide regular, constant, and adequate training aiming at addressing police brutality. Considered as a complement, (Spangenberg et al.,2020) posit that law enforcement must ensure there are constantly updated training methods to ensure that officers are focused on the safe detainment and using only reasonably necessary force. Without proper training and ongoing changes, many law enforcement officers will maintain the same thought process that results in countless police brutality cases today. As a buttress, research conducted by (Saferspaces, n.d.) revealed the perpetuation of police brutality by the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) is attributed to the lack of comprehensive training to equip members of the SAPS with skills and strategies in dealing with challenges such as suspects' lack of compliance and dealing with them by the Criminal Procedure Act No. 51 of 1977, section 49 (2). As part of the preventive measures, the research recommended training in interviewing skills and a legal approach to restraining a suspect.

Finally, research also points fingers at the culture that characterized police organizations or organizational cultures of some police forces. Brooks (2020) argued that the bulk of the problem with police brutality is not on the individual level or systemic but lies in the organizational cultures of some police departments. Brooks (2020) backed his assertion or claim by citing examples of police organizations with an 'us-versus-the-world' siege mentality. In the ones with the 'we-strap-on-the-armor-and-fight culture', the ones who depersonalize the human beings out on the street. In a simple explanation, Brooks' example implies that this kind of orientation that re-enforce a culture of police brutality comes from the background of training. Moreover, the nature of police training especially on the use of force has the proclivity to give effect to police violence. Police officers are legally permitted to use the kind of force necessary to restrain a suspect. In most instances, police respond to statements from the public such as 'I will not say anything until you show me a

warrant'. 'I am not going anywhere' often erupts in violence. This is not to imply that the use of force by itself justifies police violence.

#### *Public's Ignorance of Police Procedures*

Apart from the psychological theory postulated by Arlin Cuncic, the research attempted to balance the argument by also looking at the public attitude as well. Under the public's ignorance of police procedures, (Harris, 2009, as cited in Saferspaces, n.d.) theorized that the public unawareness or lack of knowledge of the rules and procedures that guide official raids and stop-and-search operations is the main problem that results in police brutality. In other words, the attitude of uncooperative and provocative often made the public become victims of police brutality, as the police are trained to achieve targets and thus do not tolerate any resistance. To achieve this target, the officer is inclined to invoke the use of force doctrine. In this situation, things might get worse. For example, statements or expressions such as 'I am not going anywhere until I see my lawyer', 'I will not say anything until you show me a warrant', 'We will not listen to your instruction until the company pays us our money', 'we will not remove the roadblock until we see the President', are considered defiance to police authority or lawful instruction despite legality if placed under the legal lens. In response to this uncooperative and provocative posture, the police in most cases lose their temper and use force to ensure compliance often resulting in violence. At the end of the day, police brutality becomes a major headline story in both print and electronic media and even on social media. In support, research has found that some police officers use improper force in cases where the civilians defy police authority (Parry, 2009). This has been part of the main issues in most societies notorious for police brutality. The central argument underlying this theory is not to justify police brutality. But to bring out the circumstances that might instigate violence between the public and the police that at the end of the day defined or described as police brutality. This implies that the public awareness of the rules and procedures that guide official law enforcement operations such as raids, arrests, searches and seizures, hot pursuit, invite or notice to appear, and so on. On the flip side of the same coin, this theory falls short in defending police brutality. Careful excerpts from the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics that embodied police training will defeat any argument intended to support this theory. Below are the excerpts:

*maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint, and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others, never employing unnecessary force or violence (Newberg-Dundee Police Department Policy Manual, 2010).*

By interpretation, these excerpts explain that regardless of the public's ignorance of police procedures, the use of improper force that results in police brutality is not justifiable. This is because the uncooperative and provocative posture of the public is not strange to the police. In training police officers

are taught to develop a strong shock absorber mentally or thick skin that will absorb provocations from the public. In short, in the face of provocation that may manifest as ridicule, police officers are to maintain courageous calm. Or no degree of provocations in any form should anger or irritate police officers. This does not imply that police officers are special creatures immune to vexation or anger. Of course, they are human beings just like the public. The only difference is unlike the public, police officers are trained and orientated to professionally handle uncooperative and provocative posture from the public. By this standard, they are also judged for misconduct or police brutality arising from provocation or vexation from the public.

### *Police Brutality in Liberia*

Arguably, police brutality may not qualify as an alarming phenomenon in Liberia. However, the frequency in which it is happening suggests serious public concern. This is because, on occasions, protests against police brutalities were staged in Monrovia. For example, on 12 March 2020, members of the Press Union of Liberia rallied in the capital of Monrovia with posters showing different inscriptions pointing to alleged police brutality against journalists (VOA, 2020). Similarly, on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2021, a group of citizens in huge numbers protested before the Headquarters of the LNP in demand of Justice for a truck driver allegedly brutalized to death by Police officers and a woman, identified as Fatu Karmara, who lost one of her eyes at the hands of the Police because she was not wearing a mask in public. (Koinyeneh, 2021). It can be argued that the two examples seem to be isolated cases. However, be informed that these protests were staged as a response to the wanton police brutalities against peaceful citizens believe to be on increase. What's the proof for this assertion? In the exact words of Abraham Keita, Coordinator, Movement Against Police Brutalities, "*We are protesting for the many victimizations done by the police,*" (Koinyeneh, 2021). On the side of the protest staged by the journalists, the case of Zenu Kobo Miller, a Liberian broadcaster that was allegedly manhandled by the President's bodyguards while covering a football tournament and later died at the hospital was just a trigger factor for the protest. journalist Cyrus Harmon's exact words explain it all. "*This constant aggression against journalists must stop. We are tired of it and can no longer bear it,*" Similarly, the Press Union words re-enforce Harmon's assertion. "*attacks, detention, intimidation and brutality meted against media practitioners have become unprecedented.*" (VOA, 2020).

Another proof of police brutality stems from the 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices on Liberia published by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US State Department. The report highlights serious police brutality such as arbitrary killings by police; cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by police; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention. Moreover, the report mentioned that residents especially in Monrovia and its environs alleged physical abuse by police

officers enforcing COVID-19 restrictions and mask mandates, including beatings with canes, being forced to hold uncomfortable positions, and other harsh treatment.

These proofs are notorious facts that can never be denied in Liberia.

### *Pictorial Images of protests against Police brutalities in Liberia*



Courtesy of AFP (2020)



Courtesy of FrontPage Africa (2021)

### *Catalog of Police Brutalities in post police reform in Liberia*

As a way of buttressing the assertion about the frequency of police brutalities in which protests were staged to draw the attention of the government, the international community, and by extension the general society, it is expedient to catalog some cases of police brutalities in post police reform in Liberia. The main intention is to convince you that police brutality is one of Liberia's major problems.

#### *The Standoff Case between the Students of the Monrovia Consolidated*

##### *School System (MCSS) and LNP (2011)*

On 22 March 2011 Students of G. W. Gibson and Tubman High Schools standoff in a group of PSU and Patrol Division of the LNP were seen on camera forcibly opening classrooms, toilets, and offices and indiscriminately beating as well as terrorizing whoever was seen in the compound, leaving many students with severe head wounds and valuable (largely cell phones) and cash reported stolen. (The Perspective -2011)

*The Case of LNP Commander Roosevelt Dehmie (2018)*

Attempting to resist an arrest at his doorstep in the bustling commercial district of Red-Light, in Paynesville, a 32-year-old man identified as Beyan Lamin, a very popular motorcyclist in his community was shot and killed by Turtle Base Police Depot commander Roosevelt Dehmie in 2018 (Harmon, 2018)

*The Case of Sergeant (Sgt) Joseph L. Abdullah (2019)*

While attempting to arrest a stolen motorbike suspect in Fish Town Community, Greenville Sinoe County, Sgt. Joseph L. Abdullah illegally discharged his firearm which led to the subsequent death of a man identified as Mohammed Kamara on 25 June 2019. (The Analyst News -2019).

*The Case Kingsville Township Number 7, in District #1 Rural Montserrado*

24 June 2019, in an attempt to disperse the angry protestors, the Police allegedly shot three persons with live bullets. Abraham Tumay, a 17-year-old boy died of a bullet wound a day after he was allegedly shot by officers and two others went under critical medical condition (Degleh, 2019).

*The Case of High School Students' Protest (2019)*

On 17 October 2019, the protesting students, mainly from public schools within the city center erected roadblocks in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where the office of the president sits temporarily, thinking that President Weah's convoy would have stopped to allow him to interact with them. Instead, the convoy drove through the crowd of students to the amazement of the protesters and many who had witnessed the situation (The New Dawn, 2019).

This prompted the students to resort to throwing stones, while the police responded by firing tear gas canisters to disperse the protesters. But the police's action did not stop the protesting students, as they soon gathered in front of the Capitol Building and interrupted the free flow of traffic (The New Dawn, 2019).

However, the police continued to fire more tear gas, prompting a running battle between both parties on the main boulevard near the Liberia National Police (LNP) headquarters and the Capitol Building. Angered by the police tear gas, the students ran to a nearby private school owned and operated by the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church, where it is believed most government officials have their children (The New Dawn, 2019).

The public school students justified their engagement with the private school students by saying "if they can't be in school, then the children of state officials should also be out of school as well" (The New Dawn, 2019).

*The Case of enforcing the state of emergency (2020)*

On 4 May 2020, officers of the Police Support Unit (PSU) of the Liberia National Police (LNP) fired tear gas intended to

curtail the spread of the coronavirus across the country (Johnson, 2020). Accordingly, three persons were injured and allegedly brutalized as a result of the incident that occurred on Johnson Street in Central Monrovia. Amie Toure is one of the victims who went unconscious during the incident (Johnson, 2020).

*The Case of Mildred Thomas (2020)*

On 27 June 2020, while Mildred Thomas was trying to intervene in the confusion between Sallematu and an LNP officer, the accused allegedly pressed the trigger of his gun, causing it to discharge fire and burst on the deceased's forehead (Mondaye & Parley, 2020).

*The Case of Augustine Samuel Selleh (2021)*

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021, Samuel Selleh was later pronounced dead after a tussle with Deputy Police Commander Sgt. Sensee Kowo went to respond to a complaint filed by a private security guard about young people who were in the constant habit of consuming illegal drugs in the vicinity of the guest house in Ganta, Nimba County (Smartnews, 2021).

*The Case of Officer Humphrey Khan (2022)*

Officer Humphrey Khan of the LNP was disrobed, dismissed, and subjected to prosecution for acts of brutality against another civilian (a female). The officer reportedly struck his victim with his gun during an incident that occurred in Red Light, Paynesville (Gortor, 2022).

*The Case of Emergency Response Unit General Commander (2022)*

On the premise that the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics provides that police keep their private life unsullied as an example to all, coupled with the LNP duty manual that mandates officers to behave professionally on and off duty, the ERU General Commander though acted off duty. However, his action never went with impunity. The Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police Amos William was dismissed for allegedly flogging Jutur McCarthy with bottles and taking away the amount of US 10400 from his vehicle in Brewerville (Smart News Liberia, 2022)

*The Case of Sgt. George Wleh (2022)*

Sgt. George Wleh was subsequently disrobed, dismissed, and turned over for prosecution for his involvement in an incident that occurred on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 during which he collaborated with an officer of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to brutalize a female civilian in the Johnsonville suburb (Gortor, 2022).

*Category of Police Officers involved in Police Brutalities*

From the above catalog of cases on police brutalities, all of the officers except the ERU General Commander that falls under the category of a middle manager, the rests are frontline officers that directly interact with the general public daily. Interestingly, all these officers including the ERU General



Commander were the product of police reform. In other words, they went through the police reform by recruitment, vetting, and training that emphasized respect for fundamental human rights and professional ethical police conduct. Moreover, they and others that underwent training were also taught stress management. Arguably, this training presupposes preventive measures against police brutality. On the contrary, the frequencies of police brutalities suggest the imperative need to rethink police reform in Liberia.

#### *Causes of Police Brutality in Liberia*

In the context of the Liberian society, the causes of police brutality are linked to the theoretical framework that explained police brutality in this article or paper.

Under the psychological lens articulated by Arlin Cuncic, both the individual-level factors and organizational-level factors resonate with police brutality in Liberia.

Considering the individual-level factors that attribute police brutality to personal problems experienced by police officers, antisocial personality disorder (APD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from job-related stressors, it is practically difficult to disassociate the causes of police brutalities in Liberia from this factor regardless of the absence of empirical evidence. Put it differently, the inability of this paper to cite empirical evidence which is necessary for claim-making does not deny the reality of the individual-level factors for police brutalities in Liberia. However, it is a possible conjecture about the causes of police brutalities in Liberia. Any empirical evidence to establish the claim of individual-level factors in Liberia will not be a surprise. This is one of the main reasons why this paper must captivate the attention of researchers and even the LNP senior management.

Under the organizational-level factors, the only exception would be the issue of lack of accountability that fosters the culture of impunity. This cannot be the case with the LNP. Holding officers accountable is one of the visible outcomes of the reform. The LNP has been on record copiously for holding officers accountable for misconduct or police brutalities. The recent dismissal and prosecution of the four officers alleged to have committed police brutalities are classic examples or evidence that the LNP does not shield against police brutalities (Gortor, 2022). On the aspect of lack of appropriate and regular or constant training that is attributed to the organizational-level factors, the LNP falls under this level. During the time of UNMIL, most of the training was designed to build capacities for young and inexperienced officers. An example includes but is not limited to Sexual and Gender Base Violence Investigation; Criminal Investigation; Advance Human rights training critical to the protection and promotion of human rights; Managerial training for frontline officers, police middle managers, and senior management capture conflict management or crisis management, etc., Among these training, a premium was placed on human rights. At the Basic Recruit level designed for enlistment or entry into the LNP, the curricula then incorporated the human rights lesson, stress

and stress management lesson, professional ethical code or standard lesson, use of force, and community policing, which in the opinion of the framers of the curricula would have helped prevent the repeat of police brutality. Unfortunately, observation enhanced by 14 years of firsthand experience from the author of this article proves that these pieces of training and even the current curricula failed to capture lessons about building officers' emotional intelligence that would have helped address the individual-level factors causing police brutality. Arguably, the lesson on stress and stress management is good. However, it is not potent enough to work on officer emotional intelligence.

Doubtlessly, since the departure of UNMIL, advanced and constant training for active police officers especially for frontline officers remained one of the serious challenges. Few of the training going on by both non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the government are strategic to their scope of operations in Liberia. For example, UNICEF is more concerned about capacity building for the Women and Children Section for the LNP. Moreover, training sponsored by foreign governments such as the China and US is more concerned about building the capacity of the Police Formed Unit (PFU) and the ERU. This training is good for dealing with civil disturbance and armed robbery. However, lessons about building emotional intelligence for frontline officers in these units (FPU and ERU) are yet to be captured in the training module.

It is also interesting to note that aspect of the LNP culture associated with a training is also responsible for police brutality. For example, the first batch of police support units trained in Nigeria was visibly wearing a black T-shirt with the inscription on the back "Fire for Fire". Symbolically, it explains so much that has implications for police brutality. Arguably, it eliminates the ground for police discretion that could be used to prevent the escalation of violence between the police and the public, it connotes a belligerent posture inimical to the basic tenets of democratic policing taught at the Liberia National Police Training Academy and Training School formerly National Police Training Academy. And because this slogan was associated with police brutality evidenced by public outcries, the administration of the LNP ordered and banned the wearing of such T-shirts. However, it can be argued that the banned did not change the mentality of the officers. For example, the case of Kingsville Township Number 7, in District #1 Rural Montserrado in which the PSU officer allegedly shot three persons with live bullets in 2019 was influenced by the notion "Fire for Fire" The aggrieved protesters threw stones at the police. In return, the police fired live rounds or bullets (Degleh, 2019). Similarly, the case of Students of G. W. Gibson and Tubman High Schools standoff in a group of PSU and Patrol Division of the LNP was seen on camera forcibly opening classrooms, toilets, and offices and indiscriminately beating as well as terrorizing whoever was seen in the compound, leaving many students with severe head wounds and valuable (largely cell phones) and cash reported stolen (The Perspective -2011) explains the "Fire for

Fire” mentality. The LNP argued that the students threw stones at them.

In addition to the above causes of police brutality in Liberia, (Harris, 2009, as cited in Saferspaces, n.d.) theory about the public unawareness or lack of knowledge of the rules and procedures that guide official raids and stop-and-search operations as one of the factors responsible for police brutality is also applicable to the context of police brutality in Liberia. Even though, (Harris, 2009, as cited in Saferspaces, n.d.) argument cannot be used as the clutch to justify police brutality. However, it has the propensity to inflame situations that may end with police brutality. For example, in Liberia, statements from the public such as “I am not going anywhere”. “Officer, the man is not going anywhere”, “today you will kill me, or I ready to die for my right because I am not moving an inch”, “you cannot arrest me this time of the day, it is after 6 pm”, are tantalizing and provocative to officers with poor or weak emotional intelligence. Possibly, these statements from the public may have legal grounds. However, in the eyes or interpretation of the police officers are completely challenging or defiance of the authority of police officers. These statements also warrant the use of force proportional to the resistance of the suspect or tantalizing and provocative statements. The suspect usually tried to resist the proportional force that advanced to the next force level. At this point, the likelihood for the situation to escalate into violence becomes obvious.

#### *Police Brutality violates Human Rights in Liberia*

To establish the evidence of how police brutality violates human rights in Liberia, it is prudent to start with a relevant body of laws, provisions, or legal instruments that guaranteed the protection of human rights in Liberia. First and foremost, the 1986 Constitution of the Republic of Liberia guarantees the protection of human rights. Precisely, Chapter III captions “Fundamental rights” clearly covered all aspects of human rights. For example, Articles 11 (a) and 20 warn against the deprivation of the life of a person. Article 21 (e) warns against torture or inhumane treatment. Therefore, any police brutality ranging from torture and inhumane treatment that results in the death of a person is a violation of his/her fundamental right to life. Moreover, Liberia is a member of the United Nations and the African Union. According to the International Justice Resource Center - Country Factsheet Series last updated on 15 September 2017, Liberia has ratified the following human rights instruments:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Interestingly, the Liberian 1986 Constitution captures key human rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). For example, Article 3 in the UDHR and Article 11 (a) in the Liberian Constitution emphasize the Right to life, liberty, and security, Article 5 in the UDHR and Article 21 (e) in the Liberian Constitution emphasize the Prohibition of torture.

As evidenced by its demonstrated commitment, Liberia has also validated its National Human Rights Action Plan of Liberia (NHRAP) in 2013. Primarily, the NHRAP aims to promote and protect human rights by identifying human rights issues and/or concerns in Liberia and subsequently to outline, suggest, and propose strategies for implementation for state actors and civil society to improve the human rights situation throughout the country (NHRAP, 2013).

As an expression of its obligations to promote and protect human rights, Liberia has also created human rights structure. Take, for instance, in 2005 the Liberian legislature repealed the 1997 Act of the Liberian Human Rights Commission to create the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) to promote and protect human rights.

At the international level, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was established in April 2018 following the signing of a six-year host country agreement with the Government of Liberia (OHCHR, 2018).

Despite the Constitution of Liberia, international human rights instruments coupled with regulatory structures, police brutality in Liberia still accounts for human right violation. To prove this claim, all the cases of police brutalities cataloged in this paper present a quantum of evidence of how police brutalities violated the basic human rights of Liberian citizens.

#### *Police Brutality- A breach of Fiduciary Duty in Liberia*

By definition, a fiduciary is an individual who has a legal and ethical responsibility to act in the best interest of another party (Robinhood, 2021). The party that the fiduciary has this duty to is the principal beneficiary or client. Professionals who may have fiduciary obligations include attorneys, corporate board members, trustees, and some financial advisors. There are legal consequences for failing to comply with one’s fiduciary duty. Someone who breaches his or her duty might have to pay damages to the other party (Robinhood, 2021).

Even though, a fiduciary duty applies to attorneys, corporate board members, trustees, etc., however, it can also be likened to the police. Therefore, in the context of law enforcement, a fiduciary duty is equated to the oath that police officers take to

protect life and property during the graduation ceremony. In return, the citizens through taxes compensate and provide logistical support to the police to ably and efficiently perform its obligation.

In view of the above premise, members of the LNP have taken an oath to protect life and property that does not preclude the protection of fundamental human rights. The oath taken is an obligation imposed upon the LNP by the Constitution of Liberia which also guarantees the protection of basic human rights. In other words, the LNP is obligated to the people or citizens of Liberia as their clients. In return, the citizens and people of Liberia through taxes compensate and provide logistical supports for the LNP to efficiently carry on its legal obligation. In the discharge of this obligation, police brutality which results in injuries and death of a citizen is tantamount to breach of fiduciary duty that also attracts punitive measures such as suspension, and dismissal for subsequent prosecution.

#### *Why Rethink Police Reform with a focus on Police Brutality?*

This segment presents the crux of the paper or article. Without being prejudiced against the fact, the frequencies of police brutalities suggest the need to rethink police reform in Liberia. This is because one of the main aims for the reformation and restructuring of the LNP was to prevent the repeat of police brutality that not only stained the image of the LNP but also diminished the public trust and confidence in the custodians of the rule of law and human rights. Moreover, it is a breach of fiduciary duty. It is interesting to note that all the cases of police brutalities cataloged in this paper happened under what could be described as post-police reform in Liberia. Arguably, the cases reflect a fundamental problem believed to have emanated from the reform and restructure of the LNP. Observation proves that the reform was successful with structural changes within the LNP but did little to the psychology of the new recruits. This assertion is evidenced by the establishment of the Gender Section, rebranding of the Board of Inquiry to the Professional Standard Division, Women and Children Unit, Police Formed Unit, Emergency Response Unit, rebranding of the Personnel to Human Resource Division, Policy Management Board, Civilian Complaint Reviewed Board, demilitarized the ranks of the LNP to reflect best practice in Africa.

No doubt, recruits or cadets were vetted for training even though the vetting remains questionable in terms of its toughness. However, the training curricula did not take cognizance of the fact that those vetted came from 14 years of civil conflict in which the possibility of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for some of them could not be ruled out. Possibly, some may have actively participated as a combatant but managed to survive the poor vetting. Though the argument is not based on empirical evidence. However, it is difficult to dismiss or trash the claim of PTSD in any post-conflict society especially marked by severe violence and human rights abuses. In fact, another main essence of the vetting was to deny applicants or candidates with a proven history or records of human rights abuses.

It can be argued that in a post-conflict society, the training curricula for new cadets must take cognizance of the psychological lessons necessary to work on the behavioral health of the new breed of cadets or recruits. In the case of Liberia, on grounds that the vetting was not vigorous which cannot be denied, perhaps the infusion of psychological lessons into the training curricula would have helped tackle recruits with PTSD. As far as this paper is concerned, the only lesson that may be a little closer to psychology or behavioral health training is stress and stress management. However, the contents of this lesson taught at the Liberia National Police Training Academy and Training School formerly National Police Training Academy mainly focused on coping and managing stress generically. To make things worst, this lesson since its introduction till now has never been taught by experts.

In their classic research that seeks to prevent police brutality, (Van Hasselt et al.,2020) proposed or recommended that Behavioral Health Training (BHT) for police officers begin at the academy level, followed by inclusion in ongoing mandatory departmental training. The authors argued that a prevention program like BHT, focused on education and increased awareness, serves as a useful and safe starting point. Moreover, BHT focus on the most significant issues that characterize too many police officers—stress, depression, substance abuse, sleep problems, anxiety and PTSD, and suicide. In the case of the LNP, all these issues except suicide which rarely happens, cannot be taken for granted or overlooked. They are associated with the individual-level factors responsible for police brutality. Again, this claim is informed by assumption.

Similarly, research has flagged the need or relevance for the inclusion of emotional intelligence training for police officers. In the opinion of Civil Service Success (2020), crises that could result in police brutality is due to an officer's inability to control their emotions and a lack of emotional awareness. Moreover, research shows that suppressing human emotions can lead to serious consequences, especially among law enforcement officers who deal with emotionally charged situations daily (Civil Service Success, 2020) popularized by Daniel Goleman in 1995, emotional intelligence (EI) is defined as the ability to perceive, use, understand, manage, and handle emotions (Goleman 1998). From a law enforcement perspective, Civil Service Success (2020) broadly refers to EI as specific emotional and social competencies that are essential for a police officer to effectively do their job. These competencies include:

- ✓ Self-confidence
- ✓ Self-control
- ✓ Self-actualization
- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ Conflict management
- ✓ Stress tolerance
- ✓ Initiative
- ✓ Empathy

- ✓ Social responsibility
- ✓ Interpersonal relationships

According to Civil Service Success (2020), “displaying these competencies and being able to apply them in the right way—and at the appropriate time—is essential for successful policing”. As a buttress, Hale (2021) eloquently posit that every officer should be taught the concept of emotional intelligence. “It is a key component for crisis negotiation and can be used daily by officers in all roles of law enforcement”. For Hale (2021), the benefits include fewer complaints, fewer uses of force, a more satisfied community, and better opinions of law enforcement in general.

In summation, the benefits of EI for effective and efficient policing are enormous and critical to preventing police brutality.

From 2004- to 2015, the LNP with support from UNMIL trained 44 classes with approximately 4,560 officers. Interestingly, the training curricula did not incorporate lessons that would have integrated both BHT and EI into a module. It is also interesting to know that since 2015, the LNP because of no budgetary provision has not conducted Basic Recruit Training (BRT). Moreover, it has been seven years since class 44 completed BRT in which stress management was taught by non-experts. So, imagine the time interval for classes 1-43. As for in-service training, not every officer was privileged to have attended or participated. Even officers that participated did not receive training in BHT or EI.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having assumed that the causes of the rising police brutality in Liberia are attributed to the lack of BHT and EI in the training curricula for BRT and regular and constant advance in-service training, this paper recommends an assessment survey that will inform the LNP decision to infuse BHT and EI in both BRT and advance in-service training at the Liberia National Police Training Academy and Training School.

The paper also recommends the need for LNP to ponder the possibilities through bilateral engagement to develop BHT and EI experts. This is essential for sustainability.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has one way or the other reviewed police reform in Liberia with a particular focus on police brutality. Through empirical data, it has unequivocally established the veracity of the rising police brutality in Liberia.

Although this article by way of empirical evidence did not establish training and individual-level factors to be the main causes of the rising in police brutality in Liberia. However, it assumes training and individual-level factors as the causes. The reason for this assumption stems from the argument that the lack of accountability mechanism or weak, poor, or sluggish system of accountability that has the implications for the culture of impunity under the organization-level factors that encourage police brutality, cannot be applied to the LNP

that is on copious records for holding officers accountable for inflicting brutality on armless citizens or people. So, based on logical reasoning, if this aspect of organizational-level factors does not explain police brutality in Liberia, then it can be assumed or presumed that training and individual-level factors cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, the organizational-level factors cannot be totally exempted from the causes of police brutality. This is because training as explained in this paper is one of the sole responsibilities of the LNP. Moreover, it is also connected to the individual-level factors. That is to say, through relevant and constant training, the LNP to some reasonable extents can tackle or address the individual-level factors. Therefore, any failure is squarely on the organization.

As articulated in this paper, the causes of police brutality suggest a fundamental problem with the reformation and restructuring of the LNP. In other words, it reflects upon police reform. This is simply because one of the main essences of the reform was to address police brutality in Liberia. Therefore, it is concluded that no matter how robust or severity of the LNP system of accountability, the rise in police brutality will not decline. This is because it is not believed to be among the causes of police brutality in Liberia. Had it been so, all of the dismissals and prosecution of officers now incarcerated for police brutalities would have deterred others from doing the same.

Conclusively, it can be argued that every time police brutality surface, it reduces the level of public confidence in the LNP. Public confidence in the police is measured by perception survey in which police brutality is one of the key indicators.

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