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Youths' unemployment and crime in Nigeria: A nexus and implications for national development

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Crime is a phenomenon that is bedeviling various countries across the globe in varying degrees as it affects policies and development. Any nation striving towards development must reduce the frequency of crime to the barest minimum. In recent years in Nigeria, there has been an upsurge in the frequency of crime committed. This has led to palpable fear among the populace as security of lives and properties can no longer be guaranteed. The phenomenon of crime has impacted negatively on the economic, social and political life of the nation over time. The youth population of any nation represents the driving force for development. However, for the youths to become useful resources, they must be gainfully employed. The youths are also the most volatile when their energies are misdirected or channeled into wrong endeavours. Available data show that youth employment is very rampant in Nigeria and this has contributed immensely to their involvement in criminal activities. The paper argues that criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery, militancy and other social vices found among the unemployed and jobless youths have contributed greatly to the slow pace of development in Nigeria. The paper proffers that addressing youths' unemployment will stem the tide of crime and foster rapid development in Nigeria.

Key words: Crime, national development, youths' unemployment, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Every society across the globe has its peculiar problems and challenges. Nigeria is not an exception. As a developing country, she faces her own share of social, political, economic and cultural problems which has in no small measure affected the well-being of the populace. Such problems bedeviling the country include youth's unemployment and the rising wave of crime, which have serious implications for national development.

Unemployment rate in Nigeria has continued to be on the increase despite the abundant human and natural resources available in the country. Chronic youth's unemployment is evident in Nigeria. Every year, thousands of graduates are produced but there are no jobs for majority of them. Nigerian streets are littered with

youth hawkers who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprise (Okafor, 2011). The large number of youths who are unemployed is capable of undermining democratic practice as they constitute a serious threat if engaged by the political class for clandestine and criminal activities (Adepegba, 2011; Ibrahim, 2011; Lartey, 2011; Olatunji and Abioye, 2011; Okafor, 2011).

On the other hand, crime is often perceived to be threatening the fabric of society or as a symptom of a breakdown of the social order. Crime is dysfunctional as it threatens the stability of society and it is therefore, a social problem that requires a concerted effort towards finding a lasting solution to it. It undermines the social

fabric by eroding the sense of safety and security (Onoge, 1988).

The media, both print and electronic is awash daily with reports of crimes committed and the seeming helplessness of the law enforcement agents especially the police, in curbing the ugly and disturbing trend has made it more worrisome. Crime is a universal phenomenon and differs only in degree among the various nations of the world.

The Nigerian crime–problem is multidimensional and is capable of undermining its corporate existence as well as efforts towards sustainable development. The Nigeria corporate existence and development can be undermined by a number of factors among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem (Tanimu, 2006). Security and crime have been deeply rooted in the political history of this country, particularly in recent time, which has emerged as a key concept in Nigeria’s struggle for good governance, sustainable democracy and development.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The relevant theory for this study is the anomie theory as propounded by Emile Durkheim. Durkheim introduced the term in his book, *The Division of Labour in Society* in 1893. He believed that the specialized division of labour and the rapid expansion of industrialized society contained threats to social solidarity. He used the term Anomie to describe the condition of ‘deregulation’ occurring in the society. He posits that the general procedural rules of a society, the rules of how people ought to behave, have broken down. This state of normlessness easily leads to deviant behaviour (Haralambos and Holborn, 2007). Thus, anomie refers to the breakdown of social norms and a condition where those norms no longer control the activities of the members of the society. Without clear rules to guide them, individuals cannot find their place in the society and have difficulty adjusting to the changing conditions of life. This in turn leads to dissatisfaction, frustration, conflict and deviant behaviours.

Tard was one of the earliest writers to establish a relationship between crime and environment. He believes that people learn crime through imitation or contact with criminals in their environment. He holds that unhealthy exposure to certain environments would induce criminality. While agreeing with Tard, Dahrendorf (1976) argues that poverty as a social condition plays a vital role in crime.

The poor are led to crime because of their relative deprivation and acute sense of want. As a result, the social environment of the poor and jobless in Nigeria often leads them to crime. The unemployed in Nigeria experience low self esteem, deprivation, frustration and acute want. This condition may lead the unemployed youths to deviant behaviours like crime in the society.

The concept of crime

Crime is like other concepts in social sciences, which have no generally accepted definition. According to Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2009), “a crime is held to be an offence, which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority... for crime to be known as such, it must come to the notice of, and be processed through, an administrative system or enforcement agency. It must be reported and recorded by the police (or other investigator); it may then become part of criminal statistics; may or may not be investigated; and may or may not result in a court case.” Dambazau (1994) defined crime as an act or omission against public interest and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal. Crime is also seen as a violation of the rules agreed to be respected by all members of the society, and upon which the rest members of the society mete sanction upon those guilty of the violation. It is for the same reason that the legal system views crime as a public and moral wrong.

The prevalence of crime in the world today is a cause for serious concern for all and sundry. It undermines the social fabric by eroding the sense of safety and security. Crime impacts on society in a variety of ways according to the nature and extent of crime committed. It constitutes a problem when its incidence is as rampant in the society as to constitute a threat to the security of persons and property, as well as social order and solidarity (Onoge, 1998).

Crime is a threat to the economic, political and social security of a nation and a major factor associated with underdevelopment; because it discourages both local and foreign investments, reduces the quality of life, destroys human and social capital, damages relationship between citizens and the states, thus undermining democracy, rule of law and the ability of the country to promote development.

The development in societies with particular references to westernization has not helped matters; instead, it has been destructive to the social and cultural values of the society. Reasons for the increase in crime in Nigeria include urbanization which is spreading more widely and rapidly than improvement in the social and economic condition. Crime is a huge threat to public safety. It causes great personal suffering, vast material damage, and place enormous burden on the urban social network. Globally, every five years, 60% of city inhabitants have been victims of one type of crime or another while over half of these crimes have involved personal crime (arson, fraudulence, cheating, 419 syndrome, forgery, etc). It has

been noted that Nigerian cities are conducive areas for criminal activities because they provide the anonymity needed for criminal activities (Okafor, 2011).

Crime in Nigeria

Crime rate in Nigeria has assumed a worrisome dimension. In the light of the worsening crime situation, and the ineffectiveness of the crime control apparatuses, Nigeria can be deemed to have a crime problem. Nigeria is among the developing countries of the world, and is experiencing a prevalence of rising crime waves, criminal intentions and varying degree of delinquencies. Nigeria has been on the global crime map since 1980s (Dambazau, 2007). The nature of these crimes includes armed robbery, murder, rape, car theft, burglary, fraud, bribery and corruption, food and drug adulteration, gambling, smuggling, human trafficking, kidnapping, drug trafficking, money laundering, internet scam, advanced fee fraud (419) and other illegal activities. A report revealed a "training school" for jobless youths as armed robbers at Ajegunle area of Lagos. The said training school according to that report includes planning strategies of co-operation, launching an attack and escaping with loots. Their ages range between eighteen and twenty – eight years. The 'training school' also conducts interview for the recruit. It was also revealed that the training school is where the bandits prepare programmes on which area to raid and plan how to operate different types of fire arms and ammunition. Suspects were nabbed during their morning training session where they were working out modalities on a number of houses to be raided for the week (Daily Sketch, 1990; Aremu and Ahmed, 2011). Sadly, there are reports of crimes committed mostly by the youths at virtually every corner of the country. Criminality has become an integral part of the nation's daily life.

The concept of unemployment

There seems to be a consensus on the definition of unemployment. Simply put, unemployment describes the condition of people who are without jobs (Okafor, 2011). The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as the number of the economically active population who is without work but available and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1993). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2009), the labour force of a country is a set of people or citizens who are willing and are able to make available at any given point in time their efforts for gainful employment, while the unemployed are the individuals with no work, but are looking for work at the time of any study. Various forms of unemployment have been identified by scholars. These

include seasonal, frictional, cyclical, and structural unemployment (Adebayo, 1999; Damachi, 2001; Hollister and Goldstein, 1994; Todaro, 1992).

Unemployment is a global trend but it occurs mostly in the developing countries of the world, with social, economic, political and psychological attendants. Thus massive youth's unemployment in any country is an indication of far more complex problems (Okafor, 2009). The ILO (2007) report showed that the proportion of world unemployment is steadily increasing and that the number of those without jobs remained at an all time high of more than 195 million or 6.3 percent in 2007. For instance, during the period (2007), the Middle East and North Africa were the regions with the highest unemployment rate in the world at 12.2 percent, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa at nearly 10 percent. East Asia's unemployment rate of 3.6 percent remained the lowest. The report affirmed that population growth especially in South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa was putting pressure on job creation.

Unemployment as a global concern is of more dire consequence for youth's employment. Global youth's unemployment rate was projected at 12.7 percent in 2012. This portends immense dangers when understood from the point of view that young people are the next generation of potentially productive economic and social actors. In Africa, youth's unemployment has been a major problem giving rise to other criminal tendencies in the youths and threatens the social-economic peace and stability of the continent (Ajufo, 2013).

Youth's unemployment in Nigeria

According to National Bureau of Statistics (2009, 2010), the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009 showed that the number of unemployed persons constituted 13.1% in 2000; 13.6% in 2001; 12.6% in 2002; 14.8% in 2003; 13.4% in 2004; 11.9% in 2005; 13.7% in 2006; 14.6% in 2007; 14.9% in 2008 and 19.4% in 2009. As regards the age group, the report shows that as at March 2009 in Nigeria, for persons between the 15 and 24 years, 41.6% were unemployed; persons between 25 and 44 years, 17% were unemployed. Furthermore, for those with only primary education, 14.8% were unemployed, and for those with only secondary education, 23.8% were unemployed; while for those with tertiary education, 21.3% were unemployed. For those who never attended school and those below primary education, 21.0 and 22.3% were unemployed respectively.

For Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) and Okafor (2011), the statistics from Manpower Board and National Bureau of Statistics showed that Nigeria has a youth population of 80 million, representing over 60% of the total population of the country. Also 64 million are unemployed, while 1.6 million are under-employed. The

1990-2000 data on youth unemployment showed that the largest group of the unemployed is the secondary school graduates. Also, 40% of the unemployment rate is among the urban youth aged between 20-24 and 31% of the rate is among those aged 15-19. Also, two-thirds of the urban unemployed range from 15-24 years.

For Osalor (2010), despite achieving an inspiring growth rate of 7% per annum since 2001, Nigeria remains crippled with massive unemployment levels that continue to exact a considerable toll on its socio-economic prospects. Credible data on this count is lacking for most of sub-Saharan Africa, but Abuja concedes that 70% of the population was jobless as recently as 2007. The Federal Government has since revised the figure to just below 29% in accordance with new World Bank findings. Although the percentage drop seems incredible, it still translates to more than 40 million jobless in a country of 148 million. The implications have been especially harsh for Nigerian youths, an estimated 95% of whom are without a source of livelihood.

These figures only reconfirm the perception that high growth rates have failed to improve Nigeria's entrenched macro-economic deficiencies, born out of decades of failed governance, mismanagement and conflict. The downstream effects of youth unemployment are fuelling rapid alienation and social unrest across the Nigerian landscape, the immediate symptoms of which are evident in the palpable rise in organised crime, armed insurgency, vandalism and drug trafficking.

Human development indices for Africa's second largest economy continue to be appalling despite the country's bountiful resources, escalating oil fortunes and a vigorous reforms programme initiated after the return of democracy in 1999. A 2007 UNDP survey on poverty and extreme deprivation of 108 countries ranked Nigeria at the 80th position, giving it a Human Poverty Index of 37.3 "among the lowest for the entire continent. For a country that earns an estimated \$2.2 million in daily petrodollar revenue, these figures reflect an impudent malaise that has invaded every aspect of Nigerian life (Osalor, 2010).

It must be noted that though the above figures may not have captured the totality of youth's unemployment in Nigeria, it however points to the reality of youth unemployment, which portends great danger for the country's stability and national development as unemployment has the potential of raising an army of criminals; as it is often said that *an idle hand is the devil's workshop*.

CAUSES OF YOUTH'S UNEMPLOYMENT

Rapid rural-urban migration

The rate at which young people move from the rural areas to the urban centers in Nigeria in search of greener pastures is alarming. Many of these youths are fleeing

from the poverty in the rural areas. This can be explained in the light of the push-pull factors. The push factors include the pressure resulting from man-land ratio in the rural areas and the existence of serious underemployment arising from the seasonal cycle of climate (Okafor, 2011). This is further compounded by the gross lack of infrastructural facilities in the rural areas, which makes the standard of living in the rural areas unattractive. Since the industries and social amenities are concentrated in the urban areas, youths migrate into the urban areas to seek employment in the industries and ministries, as well as enjoy the comfort which the social amenities offer. For Sarr (2000), youth migrants in Africa are three times more in number than other migrants. He argues that the urbanization rate of the youth was 32 percent in 1990, compared to less than 25 percent for the non-youth population. He estimated that by the end of the year 2010, over 50 percent of the youths in Africa will be residing in the urban areas where job opportunities are limited to a few modern sectors and establishments.

Rapid population growth

Nigeria has continued to experience high rate of population growth. The increasing population growth has produced an overwhelming increase in the youth population thereby resulting in an attendant increase in the size of the working age population. With the 2006 population census in Nigeria, the nation's population was estimated to be 140,431,790 and projection for the future indicates that the population could be over 180 million by the year 2020, given an annual rate of 3.2 percent (National Population Commission and ICF Macro, 2009:3). This made Nigeria the most populous nation in Africa. The growth in population rate has resulted in rapid growth of the labour force which is far higher than the rate of jobs supply.

Inappropriate school curricula

Various scholars have argued that as far as the formal sector is concerned, the average Nigerian graduate is unemployable, because of lack of necessary skills needed by the employers of labour for a formal employment. This is attributed to Nigeria's educational system in that the course content of most tertiary institutions in Nigeria lack entrepreneurial contents that would have enabled graduates to become job creators rather than job seekers. Many graduates in Nigeria lack entrepreneurial skills to facilitate self-employment (Akeke and Oladunjoye, 2011). To the policy makers and the youth themselves, employment means a job with salary and working for someone else. It is this perception that has continued to influence the educational institutions in Nigeria that provide skills and training. Based on this

assumption, curricula and training programmes are generally tailored towards preparing young people for formal sector jobs. But since these jobs do not exist, there is often a mismatch between the skills possessed by the job seekers and the available jobs.

Rapid expansion of the educational system

Following the deregulation of education Nigeria, government has been encouraging the opening of private schools and universities. However, the aggressive creation of more private and public-funded institutions has not been followed or matched with a commensurate job absorption strategy for the many graduates from these educational institutions. Whereas tertiary institutions have grown at multiple progression, jobs and employers have grown at arithmetic progression (Ajufu, 2013). This has led to the increase in the supply of educated manpower which outstrips the corresponding demand for them. This has contributed greatly to the problem of youth's unemployment in Nigeria. According to Manning and Junanka (1998), the total number of graduates turned out by higher institutions in Nigeria in 1986/87 was 73,339, which rose to 131,016 in 1996/97. For Musari (2009), about 4.5 million youths enter the labour market every year without any hope of getting employment for life sustenance. Getting jobs for the astronomical increase in the number of graduates produced in Nigeria has been a problem because the economy is too weak to absorb them.

Decline in the manufacturing sector

The capacity of the manufacturing sector to absorb youths into its workforce has been hampered by the continuous decline in the sector. In 2009, over 837 factories have collapsed and closed shops. About half of the remaining operating firms have been classified as "ailing", a situation that poses serious threat to the survival of the manufacturing sector in the country in the next few years (Okafor, 2011). According to a survey carried out as part of its membership operational audit in January 2010 by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), the 837 figure represents the cumulative aggregate of firms that have shut down operations in 2009 across the country. The MAN survey usually covers five manufacturing enclaves into which the country is divided in terms of manufacturing activities. These include the Lagos, northern, southeast, southwest and south-south areas. The report of the survey showed that in 2009, a total number of 176 firms became terminally ill and collapsed in the northern area, comprising the Kano and Kaduna manufacturing axis. In the southeast area, which comprises Anambra, Enugu, Imo and Abia states, a total number of 178 companies closed shops during the

period. While in the south-south area, which comprises Rivers, cross River and Akwa Ibom states, 46 companies shut down operations before December 2009. According to the survey, the southwest area, which comprises Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti, Kogi and Kwara states, lost 225 companies during the year. It said that the Lagos area covering Ikeja, Apapa, Ikorodu and other industrial divisions in the state, followed closely with 214 manufacturing firms closing shop before the end of 2009 (Maiyak, 2010; Okafor, 2008; Oparah, 2011; Usman, 2011; Okafor, 2011).

Corruption

High level of corruption in Nigeria has robbed the country of developing a vibrant economic base in spite of her abundant natural resources. Massive corruption is perpetuated in every sector and has permeated the entire social structure of Nigeria. Funds meant for development projects which could have generated employment have been misappropriated, diverted, or embezzled and stashed away in foreign banks. Endemic corruption has robbed the country of the chance of using more than \$500 billion dollars estimated revenue from the sale of oil in the last 50 years to develop a vibrant economy that would have created jobs for the youths in the various sectors of economy (Okafor, 2005).

Tables 1 and 2 above show that crime is indeed a problem in Nigeria. Various forms of crime are prevalent and on the increase in the country. These data reveal that the majority of perpetrators of the criminal activities are youths. Majority of these youths are likely to be unemployed youths who are finding a way out of the trap of poverty. The frequency of the criminal activities as recorded is a cause for serious concern. It indicates that crime is being committed on daily basis with serious consequences on the polity. The age bracket of the prisoners and the increase in the number of prisoners from year to year also indicates that incarceration has ceased to be a fear factor for those who have the intention of committing crime. This loss of fear factor could be traced to the unemployment situation in the country, as desperate jobless, frustrated and hungry young men and women are ready to go to any length to survive as spite of the possibility of arrest and incarceration.

Youth's Unemployment, Crime and National Development in Nigeria

Unemployment has become a major problem tormenting the lives of Nigerian youths and this poses a serious risk to the Nigerian society. The phenomenon of youth unemployment is devastating to both the individual and the society as a whole both psychologically and

Table 1. Summary of reported crime cases between 1994-2003.

Offence	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Murder	1629	1585	1561	1730	1670	1645	1255	2120	2117	2136
Attempted murder	259	321	307	250	248	220	76	253	267	233
Manslaughter	20	25	21	18	27	14	101	14	13	6
Suicide	200	229	238	272	313	323	146	241	152	191
Attempted suicide	291	120	77	58	43	30	41	27	29	38
Grievous harm	17167	16300	17605	14720	14362	15931	9756	15241	17580	17666
Assault	46924	46543	52747	42815	40764	33881	17909	37531	29329	29125
Child stealing	131	175	146	303	107	147	101	116	55	39
Slave dealing	33	16	7	17	11	21	11	45	17	18
Rape/Indecent	2364	2364	2198	2585	2249	2241	1529	2284	2084	2253
Kidnapping	461	415	373	377	282	342	243	349	337	410
Aberration offence	685	462	419	435	516	456	376	434	277	306
Armed robbery	2044	2109	2419	2181	2286	2291	1877	2809	3889	3497
Demand with menace	777	243	88	128	112	63	133	122	88	80
Theft/Stealing	69341	70542	71338	58095	54506	32974	29127	40796	35231	33124
Burglary	7858	7690	6390	7706	5548	4928	3768	5523	2683	2769
House breaking	10532	10568	9237	8562	7847	5979	3636	6059	5448	4706
Store breaking	6137	5646	4235	4729	4036	3643	2446	3089	2973	2990
False pretence	13546	13524	13057	11950	12037	9996	7927	10234	9134	9508
Coining offence	100	8	10	14	14	7	4	32	6	15
Gambling	1308	319	250	203	158	264	189	263	228	148
Breach of public peace	8052	7926	7097	7100	7519	6765	5395	7532	7324	7298
Perjury	61	22	153	97	20	12	16	455	17	50
Bribery and corruption	224	390	579	100	138	75	48	57	43	36
Escape from custody	672	629	712	543	484	552	294	312	229	272
Total	190816	188171	91264	164988	255297	22800	86404	135938	119550	116915

Source: The Nigeria Police Command, Zone Eleven, Osun State, Nigeria.

economically. The magnitude of the danger which youth unemployment poses to the society is better understood when, according to Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010), that over 64 million youths are unemployed and 1.6 million are under-employed. Unemployment causes frustration, dejection, desperation and dependency on family members and friends who also have their own problems to contend with. This precarious situation has left the

youths in a vicious cycle of poverty that daily erodes their confidence and bright future.

The frustration and desperation that daily torments the unemployed creates a fertile ground for crime to thrive. In recent times, there have been notable adverse social, economic and political developments in Nigeria, a consequence of youth unemployment and under-employment, particularly exemplified by increasing

Table 2. Figures supplied by the Nigerian Prisons Service showing age distribution of prisoners.

Year	16 -20 Years	21 – 25 Years	25 – 50 Years
2004	31,700	39,045	63,100
2005	40,150	34,600	65,140
2006	19,122	28,705	75,491
2007	16,236	57,736	80,134
2008	25,317	28,049	73,071

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2009).

militancy, violent crimes, kidnapping, restiveness and political instability (Ajufo, 2013). The scariest undertone of Nigeria's socio-economic underachievement, by far, is the steady rise in youth crime, nurtured in a climate of increasing national income and the simultaneous failure of employment-generation and poverty alleviation programmes. Armed insurgencies ravaging the oil-rich and volatile Niger Delta region and wanton destruction of lives and property by Boko Haram in the Northern part of the country are now competing for space in international headlines. The season of discontent has special ramifications for a nation with unemployed millions, and the net effect has been a tragic precipitation of violent crimes: assault, burglary, extortion and kidnapping etc. Decades of social and political turmoil has helped turn the strategically located African nation into an established junction for international drug smugglers (Osolor, 2010). Other highlights of Nigeria's prolific crime syndicates are economic fraud usually in the form of innovative internet schemes, money laundering and racketeering. Furthermore, Adejumola and Tayo-Olajubulu (2009) contended that unemployment has been identified as the major cause of social vices like armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, political thuggery, kidnapping and many more. What holds true for Nigeria and most other nations of equivalent human development indicators is the fact that crime is often a means of survival.

The youths are one of the greatest assets a nation could possibly possess. The National Youth Development Policy (2001) asserts that the youths are the foundation of a society; their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pattern of development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour power, a nation makes giant strides. The youths are a particular segment of the national population that is sensitive, energetic, active and the most productive phase of life of citizens. The youths are also the most volatile when their energies are misdirected or channeled into wrong endeavours.

Consequently, youth unemployment poses a great threat to the country's stability and development, and if not checkmated on time, it may lead to disastrous consequences for the nation. Desperation can drive the unemployed youths into living outside the law in order to survive and as a means of expressing dissatisfaction at

the apparent neglect of their very existence. Crime as a result of unemployment has adverse effect on the economy. It increases the cost of doing business for the private sector and providing public services. Resources that would have otherwise been invested in increasing output, fund education, health and other welfare programmes are diverted to crime control and prevention. According to the Nigeria's Finance Minister, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, key allocation of funds in the 2013 budget include: Critical infrastructure (including power, works, transport, aviation, gas pipelines, and Federal Capital Territory) – N497 billion; human capital development (i.e. education and health) – N705 billion; and agriculture/water resources – N175 billion. Also over N950 billion for was allocated for national security purposes, comprised of N320 billion for the Police, N364 billion for the Armed Forces, N115 billion for the Office of the NSA, and N154 billion for the Ministry of the Interior (This Day 2013). A situation where the funds allocated to security alone is almost equal to funds allocated to education, health and critical infrastructure combined in a fiscal year, as is the case with Nigeria, is detrimental to national development. The development of a society largely depends on the rate of crime. If the crime rate is high, it could scare away or discourage investors.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Youth's unemployment and its relationship with attendant crime are part of major social problems affecting the growth and development of this country. Many Nigerians cannot meet the basic needs of life because they have no jobs. There are ways in which government can tackle these social ills affecting the country. One of the ways is that government should invest massively in agriculture and also encourage youths into this direction. Government should make agric-business to be exciting, creative and innovative enough to stir and spur youth interest. Government should engage the teeming youths by establishing farm settlements and employ youths who will contribute their quota to national development.

Furthermore, youths should be creative and learn different vocational skills. By so doing, they will be job-providers and not job seekers. Vocational and technical education should be vigorously pursued. This will go a

long way to reduce youth unemployment. However, at the completion of the vocational training, government should provide soft loans to the trained youths as take-off capital. To reduce youth's unemployment in the nation, entrepreneurship education should be incorporated into the curricula of secondary and tertiary schools. Doing this will also turn the graduates into job-creators and not job-seekers. This will help to curb the trend of graduates seeking the elusive white-collars jobs.

Government at all levels should put in place mechanisms that will encourage financial institutions to grant soft loans to intending youth entrepreneurs to start small scale businesses, that will sustain them and prevent them from indulging in criminal activities.

To combat soaring youth unemployment, government should create an enabling environment for industries to survive. A situation where companies that are supposed to employ the youths are closing down is not good for the country. Government must ensure the survival of industries.

Many of the youths who migrate to the urban centers in search of the elusive greener pastures end up being jobless in the city. Many of them eventually become criminals in order to survive. Consequently, rural-urban migration should be checked through the provision of essential social amenities that will make life in the rural areas attractive to the youths.

Corruption is endemic in Nigeria. It has permeated the entire fabric of the nation. Funds that could have been used to establish employment generation ventures by the government are either embezzled, diverted or misappropriated. Government must be committed to the eradication of corruption in the system in order to effectively deploy funds to employment generating ventures and reduce crime rate in the country.

An uncontrolled population growth is a recipe for disaster, as it would readily create an army of unemployed people, who could turn to crime as survival strategy. Government at all levels, as well as civil society groups should embark on public enlightenment campaigns on the dangers of population explosion, and its adverse effect on national development.

From all indications, the reduction of youth's unemployment will translate into reduction in crime, and engender sustainable national development. The youths are an important part of the society, who should be encouraged to channel their energies to national development by being positively engaged in the system, and discouraged from activities that could be detrimental to the growth of the country. Therefore, every action taking towards youth's employment is an action towards crime reduction as well as promoting national development.

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