

Combating Youth Restiveness in Nigeria: Proferring Workable Solutions

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ABSTRACT: Youth restiveness is a social problem that has grave consequences on the overall national development in Nigeria. This problem has occupied a place of pride in political and academic discourses in the last few years and calls for proactive approach to overcome it. Adopting the Desktop Research model as well as evidences from personal experiences, we examined the causes and consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria. Our findings show that youth restiveness is caused by high rate of unemployment, poverty, exclusion of the youth from mainstream political participation, corruption, bad governance, inequitable distribution of goods and services among youths. Youth restiveness engenders political instability, creates general insecurity and militates against investment by local and foreign investors. We recommend job creation through entrepreneurship education, equity and social justices in the distribution of the gains and pains of development among others.

KEYWORDS: Youth restiveness, militancy, insurgency, national development, poverty, corruption, Boko Haram, Indigenous People of Biafra, Niger Delta Avengers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is currently experiencing unprecedented challenges that are adversely affecting national development. One of these challenges to national development is high rate of insecurity to lives and property occasioned by youth restiveness. Indeed, the social phenomenon of youth restiveness in the country has been at the front-burner of political and academic discussions since the dawn of the new millennium (Nwagbara, 2008; Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010). Nigerian youths are involved and most times are at the vanguard of violent crises that erupted in various parts of the country. Socioeconomically, politically or ethno-religiously motivated youth restiveness in Nigeria is not a recent thing. In the recent past it was the economically motivated Niger Delta militants in the south, the politically motivated Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the east – a restiveness that culminated in the nation's 30-month civil war between 1967 and 1970, O'odua People's Congress (OPC) in the West, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) and the Matatsine violence in the north, the Tiv Youth Organization (TYO) in the north central region, area boys and girls syndrome in major cities particularly in Lagos, and so on. Today it is the Boko Haram insurgency in northeastern Nigeria, the neo-Biafra movement – Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) – in southeastern Nigeria, Niger Delta Avengers in the Niger Delta region of southern Nigeria, Fulani Herdsmen crisis in the Middle Belt region, and cultism in Lagos, Ogun, Calabar, and Edo just to mention a few.

Many lives and properties of immense and unquantifiable value are lost as a result of youth restiveness. This social problem has reached a crisis stage and no meaningful development can occur in the midst of these crises. Development is about people and no society can be said to be developed or developing when the greater majority of its citizenry are restive or where the human security (an index of total national security) of its people have been threatened by violently armed agitators. The situation is worsened considering the fact that the youth constitute over 60% of the entire population. Social critics and political analysts are of the view that Nigeria is tilting toward a failed state as a result of its inability to successfully manage social upheavals (Ekwueme, 2014).

To that extent therefore, this study examines the phenomenon, youth restiveness with a view to ascertaining its meaning while simultaneously deciphering the meanings of the two terms that constitute the concept – 'youth' and 'restiveness.' Also, the study discusses the causes and consequences of youth restiveness on the national security, economy, and social framework of Nigeria as well as making a number of recommendations on how youth restiveness can be tackled in the nation.

II. METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This paper examines the challenges of youth restiveness in Nigeria with the aim of proffering lasting solution to its occurrence. We utilized the desktop method as well as our personal experiences as youths. To guide our thoughts, we made the following assumptions:

- i. There is a strong relationship between the high rate of youth unemployment and youth restiveness in Nigeria.
- ii. There is a high correlation between high level of poverty and youth restiveness in Nigeria.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between systemic corruption and youth restiveness in Nigeria.
- iv. There is a significant relationship between inequity (inequitable distribution of the gains and pains of development) and youth restiveness in Nigeria.
- v. There is a correlation between exclusion of youths from mainstream politics and youth restiveness in Nigeria.

III. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To come to terms with the main gist of the study, attempts must be made to conceptually understand the main term of the study, 'youth restiveness.' Youth restiveness is a conglomeration of two different words – 'youth', and 'restiveness.' The word 'Youth' is considered in certain arguable quarters as fluid in terminology. Youth according to Uriah, Egbezor and Ololube (2014) can be seen as young men and women who are no longer children, but not yet adults. Similarly, but in a more elaborate manner, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017), defines youth as being best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence, and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community.

To give these definitions more precision, some quarters have gone to ascribe definitive age classifications to the understanding of youth. However, it must be understood that the term youth is fluid, and as such it transcends any fixed age group. This nonetheless, we tend to agree with the UNESCO as it writes that age is still the easiest way to define youth, particularly vis-à-vis education and employment. To that extent, therefore, the UNESCO (2017) further defines youth as "... often indicated as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age where he/she finds his/her first job." According to Nwanna-Nzewunwa, Girigiri and Okoh (in Uriah et al, 2014:106), a youth "is a person that is over twelve (12) years but no more than forty (40) years." The United Nations Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly (A/36/215, 1981) (in UNESCO, 2017), for statistical purposes, defines those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. The definition of youth by the African Union Commission (2006:11) in the developed and adopted 'African Youth Charter' describes 'youth' or 'young people' as "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years." The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004) officially placed the age bracket of youths between 16 and 30 years. For the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2017) Nigeria's youth population comprise persons aged between 15 and 34.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the term youth is not fixed to any particular age group chronologically, legally, psychologically, and physiologically because most people in their respective fields of human endeavors still view themselves in that pejorative term as belonging to the youthful age grade. In fact, as Uriah et al (2014) writes, and rightly too, in some cultures in Nigeria, it may not be out of place to see people (especially men) of even 40-45 years of age claiming youth membership. To corroborate this assertion, in 2012, one of Nigeria's biggest political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) elected, as National Youth Leader, Malam Umar Garba Chiza who was 60 years old at that time (Saharareporters, 2012).

In vein of the above, youth is a fluid or relative category of human being as it can be found in all educational levels (primary, secondary and tertiary levels), and it can be attached to anyone who believes he or she is so. Little wonder, the saying 'youth at heart' gained it currency. In this write up the definition of the youth given by National Bureau Statistics will serve as our guide.

On the other hand, 'restiveness' lacks a universally accepted definition since different scholars define it differently. For instance, restiveness, according to the Soannes and Steveson (2010), is an inability to stay still, or a desire not to be controlled, especially because you feel bored or not satisfied. It can also mean situation of stubborn resistance to control, or being marked by impatience or uneasiness (Restive, n.d.) Unlike the prior definitions which did not focus on any being (man nor animals), Agina-Obu (2008) defined restiveness within the purview of human action (or inaction). For Agina-Obu (2008) restiveness can be defined as a kind of human behavior geared towards the realization of individuals or groups' needs. It emanates from individuals or group failures or inability to meet their needs through institutional provisions or arrangements that results in youth restiveness.

When we move from restiveness to youth restiveness, we find a more vexed definitional disparity amongst scholars. The definitional divergences, nevertheless, the definitions all have some crosscutting elements which aid us in grasping the meaning of the concept.

For instance, according to Elegbeleye (2005) restiveness can be defined as a sustained protest embarked upon to enforce desired outcome from a constituted authority by an organized body of youth. It is marked by violence and disruption of lawful activities anywhere it occurs. In the view of Igho and Ikpa (2013:131), youth restiveness involves the combination of actions, conducts and behavior which constitutes unwholesome, socially unacceptable behavior exhibited by youths in the society.”

For Epelle (in Uriah et al, 2014:106), though looking more at the activities of aggrieved and largely dissatisfied youths especially in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria than on the conceptual meaning of youth restiveness, saw the social phenomenon as referring “to the plethora of activities expressed in the form of hostage taking of foreign nationals, local oil workers and citizens for ransom; oil pipeline blow ups; illegal bunkering; peaceful or violent demonstration; bombing of public places, etc...” More so, according to Abdultabil Umar (in Oromareghake, Arisi, & Igho, 2013:49), youth restiveness can be defined as:

...a symbolic parricide in which the young generation tries to humiliate and overthrow the instauration of the parents regardless of issues or consequences. He (Umar) maintained that in most developing countries and Africa in particular, government represent the older generation and in many cases, provides an obstacle to ambitious youths seeking advancement. This inadvertently leads to a tendency towards activism.

Youth restiveness has been a device used by youth to get what they want from the relevant authorities. In this vein, youth restiveness can be said to be a determined disposition by a group of youths to use violent force or threat of force to agitate for their needs and dissatisfactions to be met by the appropriate authorities. They see these need as sacrosanct and very important to meet, as such, they adopt every measure necessary and available to make their requests.

While identifying three forms of restiveness, Ogbeifun (2007) believes youth restiveness exhibits different characteristics since the restive group’s motivation and idiosyncratic disposition and orientation of the leader(s) and actors are disparate. Therefore, for Ogbeifun (2007), the three forms of restiveness based on motivation, actors and interests involves: youths engaging in genuine agitation for their rights and restoration of the dignity of their group or race; youths engaging in self-seeking and criminal activities such as kidnapping or hostage taking in exchange of levied ransom; and youths seeking revenge for oppression or the ‘use and dump’ attitudes from members of the elite class or a manner of responding to a repressive regime.

Scholars have pointed out the causes of youth restiveness in Nigeria to include poverty, unemployment, lack of education, ethnic cleavages, corruption, lack of governance, inequity and unfairness in the distribution of the gains and pains of development, to mention a few (Chukwuezi, 2009, Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010). Some other scholars have attempted to explain the problem of youth restiveness from the perspective of ‘relative deprivation’ (Nwagbara, 2008). According to J. W. Ryan (cited in Duke, Agbaji and Bassey, 2017:6), this relative deprivation theory:

... was articulated by Samuel Stouffer and his colleagues – Edward Suchman, Leland DeVinney, Shirley Star, and Robin Williams—in their 1949 book, “*Studies in Social Psychology in World War II: The American Soldier*”, while studying the social psychology of soldiers during the Second World War to explain series of unexpected relationships between feelings of satisfaction and status (based on comparison with others) and one’s position in the army

The theory of relative deprivation assumes that individuals or groups feel relatively deprived when there exists a discrepancy between their expectations and outcome. The individuals or groups are able to identify the discrepancy due to the existence of a reference point for comparison. In that, there are some persons who have what they (the restive group) requires, and they know getting what they want is realistic, but it can only be taken by force through violence. This is also reflected in Walter Runciman’s (cited in Duke et al, 2017) four preconditions of relative deprivation (of object X by person A). These preconditions includes:

- i. Person A does not have X
- ii. Person A knows of other persons who have X
- iii. Person A wants to have X
- iv. Person A believes obtaining X is realistic.

Consequently, they experience cognitive dissonance and apply all the resources they can muster to remove everything that is a blockade to their expectation (Offiong, 1980). These resources they muster are their youthful energy and the use of dangerous weapons to perpetrate violence, kidnapping, vandalization of oil pipelines, armed robbery, indiscriminate bombing and killing of innocent Nigerian, terrorism, to mention a few.

We synthesized the existing literature and came up with the following summaries of the causes and consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria as well as the necessary steps to avert its future occurrence as presented below.

IV. CAUSES OF YOUTH RESTIVENESS IN NIGERIA

A number of studies have identified the factors that are responsible for youth restiveness. For Ogbeifun (2007) youth restiveness often centers on such issues as total disconnection between people and the State in terms of poor infrastructural development, poverty, unemployment, economic banditry and sabotage on the part of the government; unfaithful implementation of life affecting programs; ethnic marginalization and insensitivity to the plights of the people suffering the multiple negative effects of the destruction (and non-rehabilitation) of their environment through oil exploration, gas flaring and oil spillage which dilapidates farmlands and kill aquatic lives to the point of adversely affecting the people's source of livelihood; poor educational provisions and illiteracy; and so on.

For Elegbeleye (2005) there are three major factors of youth restiveness, and these are: the peer motivated excitement of being a student; the perceived victimization arising from economic exploitation; and the jingoistic pursuit of patriotic ideas. For N. I. Ofem and A. R. Ajayi (in Anasi, 2010) the factors range from lack of humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, unemployment, lack of quality education, inadequate training programs, to inadequate recreational facilities, and so on.

In the view of Ken Saro-Wiwa (in Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010), the root causes of restiveness in the Niger Delta are inequitable distribution of revenue, uneven development among the Niger Delta region – a region which is ideal supposed to be one of Nigeria's most developed areas since it is like 'the goose that lays the golden egg.' For Saro-Wiwa, other factors include the poor economic conditions and infrastructural facilities like roads, hospitals, schools, and power, the dilapidation of farmlands and contamination of rivers by the oil consortia within the Niger Delta region, the reduction of the Federal allocation, politics of neo-patrimonialism and favoritism at the center without regards for development at the periphery, and the discrimination against subordinate groups in the Niger Delta region (Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010).

For Nduka-Ozo and Igba (2017), the perverted values which precipitate youth restiveness and which youths have to live with may be seen through the following: poor leadership styles; the economic problem of resource control and poverty (the later which prompts some youths to pursue and attain wealth by all means available including perpetrating violence); and frustrating and ill conducive educational or learning facilities and processes like leaking classrooms, overcrowded hostels, and 'sorting' (paying money to) lecturers for grades, just to mention a few.

In view of the foregoing, we will discuss a number of causes of youth restiveness, some of which have not been mentioned above. These causes include the following:

1. **High Rate of Youth Unemployment and Underemployment**

There is a high rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria. The high and increasing incidence of youth unemployment within the Nigerian society could be described as one of the root causes of youth restiveness in the country. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2017:7) report of unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria,

“[the] combined unemployment and underemployment rate for the entire youth labour force (15-35 years) was 52.65% or 22.64 million (10.96 million unemployed and another 11.68 million underemployed), compared to 45.65% in Q3 2016, 47.41% in Q4 2016, and 49.70% in Q3 2017”.

According to Zakaria (2006), the rising tide of unemployment and the fear of a bleak future among youths in Nigeria have made them vulnerable to the manipulations of agents' provocateurs. These jobless youths, when showered with some cash with promise for more, are more prone to be used as political thugs and political assassins by aggrieved politicians, insurgent fighters and suicide bombers by religiously motivated terrorist groups and their religious demagogues, and saboteurs by greedy multinationals. For instance, Duke, Agbaji and Etim (2016) believe that Mohammed Yusuf while alive went recruiting his members, most of whom were largely unemployed and uneducated youths, from mosque to mosque and from one Almajiri school to the other. The disillusionment and impoverishment of these jobless youths and the Almajirai, Duke et al (2017) asserts, made them easy prey in the hands of demagogues like the late Yusuf. Little wonder they were more sympathetic to the ideals of Boko Haram because they saw it as a way to rid themselves off a system which is responsible for their sufferings and less concerned to bring them out of the abyss of their misery (Duke et al, 2016).

2. **High Level of Poverty**

According to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (cited in Ahiuma-Young, 2016) about 112 million Nigerians (representing 67.1%) of the country's total population now live below poverty level. Inequality is a common sight as wealth is concentrated in the hands of very few Nigerians while the majority of the people are languishing in penury. In other words, there is a yawning gap between the rich and the poor in Nigeria. Anasi (2010) purports that this figure includes a vast number of youths in rural and urban areas in Nigeria who struggle to eke out a living by hawking chewing sticks, bottled water and drinks like Coke and Pepsi,

hankerchiefs, sausage roll, etc. Anasi adds that the “sales-per-day and the profit margin on such goods are so small that they can hardly live above the poverty line” (Anasi, 2010:3). Confronted with this reality and the inability to properly cater for their needs, the impoverished youths become a ready reservoir of recruits to perpetrate violence against the nation-state and its well-to-do citizenry.

3. *Corrupt and Bad Leadership*

Good governance is required to set a nation on course towards national socioeconomic and political growth and development. Unfortunately, the Nigerian state is encapsulated within bad governance where pervasive corruption thrives. The issue of corruption in Nigeria, Duke and Agbaji (2017) writes, believed to be systemic, endemic, pervasive, and a significant contributor to increased inequality, sluggish economic growth, and an upsurging wave of youth restiveness in the nation, has attracted national, regional, and international concerns. Corruption, as Duke and Agbaji (2018) writes, involving the manipulation and politicization of the nation’s domestic institutions, resources and primordial features such as ethnicity and religion by political actors and elite usually for their selfish private gains, increases the spate of youth restiveness. Nigerian governments over time have given little or no attention to the needs and development of youths. Instead they aggrandize resources meant for the youths. Thus, these youths become restive and take up arms when they perceive that resources allocated for their development are embezzled and squandered by those in power and those in the corridors of power. Dodeye Williams (in Duke & Agbaji, 2018:7) aptly captures this factor as they write that:

Competition for resources and exploitation typically lies at the core of ... conflict, and determines the sources and extent of conflicts. Little wonder conflicts arise as local politicians and elite compete and struggle for state power and resources, often by recruiting militia and private armies from their ethnonational constituencies to challenge, unseat and replace the ‘prebendal state’ but not necessarily to improve or transform it.

4. *Lopsided Distribution of Resources*

The mono-cultural, extractive structure, and rentier nature of the Nigerian economy has been a bane in the peace of the nation. In that, the fragility this comes with precipitates the occurrence of violent conflicts in Nigeria. For instance, in Nigeria, resource control has been an unending issue in the polity. Different quarters fight for the ability to control the resources derived from their geographical locations since the center has been less considerate to favor them in the revenue sharing formula owing to the plights of the people and the destruction of their sources of livelihood (farmlands and rivers) because of resource exploration and extraction. Individuals and communities are satisfied when they are treated equally as their contemporaries. The main role of government is to ensure that the resources of a country are equitably distributed among the various elements that make up the country. This is hardly the case as injustice, discrimination, prejudice, nepotism, ethnicity, and favoritism hold sway. The youths are always conscious of social injustice and tend to agitate against perceived injustice with their youthful energy and drive. The tensions that this creates tend to throw the polity into a state of comatose or disarray. As Duke and Agbaji (2018:7) writes, the Niger Delta youths,

Confronted with a ravaged environment and a desire to reclaim domestic control over resources, factions with continental African states take up arms against the multinationals. The Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) conflicts in oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria is a quintessence.

5. *Lack of Youth Participation in Nigerian Politics*

It is obvious that most appointive and elective positions within the Nigeria society are not occupied by youths. Adequate attention has not been given to the youths by the successive political leadership with respect to this key factor of political participation by the youth. The youths are mainly used as pawns and thugs by the politicians and their godfathers.

6. *Poor Attitudinal Disposition / Wrong Mind-set in Youths.*

Most Nigerian youths are characterized by the mentality of total dependence on the government. Hence, they are upset and tend to resort to restiveness when government aid is delayed or not forthcoming. This dependency syndrome still governs the psyche of many youths.

7. *Peer Pressure*

Some youths are negatively influenced by their friends into the notion that restiveness is the answer to myriads of problems facing Nigerian youths. This trend is common among cultists, school drop-outs and those from poor family backgrounds.

V. CONSEQUENCES OF YOUTH RESTIVENESS

There are grave consequences of youth restiveness to economic and social development in Nigeria. Following Nlerum (2012), consequences of youth restiveness in this paper can be broadly categorized under security, social and economic consequences.

1. *Security consequences*

Restiveness disconnects the youth from their expected role as leaders of tomorrow; innocent lives are lost and citizens are displaced from their homes, and the restiveness may degenerate to a full blown war that may engender the disintegration of the country. A quintessence is the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970 where over 1 million Nigerians lost their lives. The figures of amount of person that have lost their lives and are displaced, and the amount of property lost as a consequence of youth restiveness in Nigeria is frightening. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) (2016) it is estimated that there are almost 2,152,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigerian as of 31 December, 2015. This figure is believed to increase. Also, according to Gov. Kashim Shettima of Borno state, insurgency particularly in the Northeastern region of Nigeria perpetrated by Boko Haram has led to the death of almost 100,000 persons (Tukur, 2017). Youth restiveness creates national insecurity and political instability. The insecurity has aggravated incessant cases of kidnapping, restriction of movement and proliferation of arms and explosives (Nlerum, 2012). Added to this is the fact that it creates room for human right abuses. According to Amnesty International (AI) (2015), the Nigerian military extra judicially executed more than 1200 people; they have arbitrarily arrested at least 20000 people; and at least 7000 people have died in military detention in the course of security operations against Boko Haram. Also, the Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report shows that there exists little or no respect for the integrity of the human persons as Nigerians are being arbitrarily deprived of life and freedom. For instance, on February 9, 2016, police and military personnel reportedly used live ammunition to disperse protesting members or supporters of the IPOB movement at a school in Aba, Abia State, killing at least nine (United States Department of State, 2016).

2. *Economic consequences*

Youth restiveness affects the development of the country negatively as demonstrated in low industrial productivity and low human capital development. The amount of infrastructure and other resources destroyed as well as oil pipelines vandalized can hardly be quantified, this materializes in the dwindling of our economy. Youth restiveness exacerbated poverty in Nigeria since it, to borrow from Duke and Agbaji (2018), ravages the requisite human capital for producing the nation's economic fortunes and "it leads to the disruption of the economic activities of production, distribution and consumption which are a sine-qua-non for generating wealth for the state" (p. 14). For instance, it can be argued that restiveness in the Niger Delta region and the Fulani Herdsmen crisis in the Middle Belt region are factors which facilitated the Nigerian economy entry into recession since the nation experienced a sharp drop in oil production and sale, and in the production and sale of food stuff respectively. To show the economic consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria, Duke et al (2016:223) purports that:

...the Nigerian economy lost a whopping N1.33 trillion Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) owing to Boko Haram's activities. FDI flows to Nigeria have been depleting over the years... FDI flows fell to 4693.83 million USD in 2014 from 5608.45 million USD in 2013, and further fell to 3064.17 million USD in 2015. These statistics are quite similar to the World Bank's where FDI flows fell from 8841.11 million USD in 2011 to 7069.93 million USD in 2012, 5562.87million USD in 2013, and to \$4655.85 million USD in 2014 ... Thus, a downward slope in the FDI flows is the only available reality. Also, businesses have been closed, abandoned or destroyed in affected states. Former Minister of Information, Mr. Labaran Maku, purported that Boko Haram's attack on Kano State especially is so significant because it affected the multi-billion naira Kano Textile Market, otherwise called the Kanti-Kwari Market, regarded to be the oldest and biggest textile markets in sub-Saharan Africa, and as such it affected the foundation of economic and social well-being of the northern region...

3. *Social consequences*

Youth restiveness disrupts social order and breeds normlessness. With youth restiveness there is increase in social vices and crimes like cultism, gangsterism and hooliganism, rape, kidnapping armed robbery, delinquency, and so on. In the light of this, it can be seen as Chukwuemeka and Aghara (2010) writes that the invasion of the multinational oil consortia by restive youths of the Niger Delta region and the concomitant backwashes of the invasion like the abduction and kidnapping of foreign nationals working in the oil companies, the gruesome killings in the northeast by Boko Haram and the North central by the Fulani Herdsmen, and the armed robbery and cultist clashes in cities like Lagos and Calabar, are quintessential social consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria.

In a nutshell, the following are the potential and actual consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria:

- i. Destruction of lives and property.
- ii. It creates a fertile ground for the human right abuses to thrive.
- iii. Deepening tribal or ethnic and cultural differences.
- iv. Restiveness may degenerate to a full blown war that may engender the disintegration of the country.

- v. Youth restiveness negatively affects the development of the country as demonstrated in low industrial productivity and low human capital development.
- vi. It also increases the rate of poverty and unemployment owing to the fact that business facilities and business activities would be disrupted.
- vii. It discourages local and foreign investors.
- viii. Also youth restiveness leads to cases of kidnapping, restriction of movement and proliferation of arms and explosives.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The greatest resource any society can boast of is its human resources. Nigeria is endowed with this resource in abundance. The youth in Nigeria constitute the bulk of this human endowment and should not be taken for granted if we are to achieve sustainability and be among the league of developed nations as envisaged in the Vision 20:20. Youth restiveness is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the social fabric of the Nigerian nation. The high level of insecurity to lives and property is very inimical to national development. Destruction of lives and infrastructure inhibits development as Nigerians and foreign investors are afraid to invest their resources in the country. Tackling the problem of youth restiveness is a Herculean task, but it is possible.

We have no other country we can call our own if we destroy Nigeria through restiveness. In fact there will be no future for us youths and the generation unborn. We have to devise home-grown-youth-led strategies to overcome the problem of youth restiveness. The future is in our hands and posterity will not forgive us if we allow the country to collapse in our generation. Based on the opinions and findings in the preceding paragraphs, we have found the magic wand to curb or totally eliminate youth restiveness in Nigeria. This magic wand is embedded in the following workable recommendations:

- i. The youth should resort to dialogue rather than reckless destruction of lives and property whenever they are aggrieved or have issues with the government. This is because the cost of violent conflicts youth restiveness when juxtaposed with merits of peaceful dialogue / negotiations can hardly be over-emphasized.
- ii. We strongly suggest the involvement of the youths in key decisions and enactment of policies that affect their well-being.
- iii. How many youths were among the delegates in the recently concluded national conference? We recommend the urgent convention of a national conference of the youth – a forum to deliberate on the state of the nation from the youth's perspective.
- iv. Nigeria is made up of about 450 ethnic groups and thousands of language groups / dialects. The enormous advantages accruing from this diversity should be harnessed rather than used as source of disunity.
- v. Fairness and equity should be the watchword of the political leadership in the distribution of the gains and pains of development.
- vi. We strongly recommend gender-sensitivity and gender-balancing in addressing the problems of the youth in Nigeria. The girl-child is still disadvantaged in education, and so on – when compared with their male-counterparts in many parts of Nigeria. Laws should be made and implemented to protect this vulnerable segment of the population.
- vii. Counselling units in tertiary institutions in Nigeria should be re-invigorated to chart proper attitudinal course for the youth at the critical formative stage of their lives.
- viii. Entrepreneurship education is the key – production of skilled manpower and innovative and self-reliant citizens. We insist that you teach us fishing rather than the palliative and unsustainable approach of giving us fish.
- ix. Students who have bankable business plans should be mentored and given financial and / or material assistance to start their own business.
- x. Public-private partnership should be evolved to ensure sustainability of entrepreneurship initiatives of young graduates.
- xi. Religious and ethnic sentiments should be eschewed in programmes and policies for the youth.
- xii. We recommend bottom-up approach to enable the youth to take active part in the initiation and execution of policies and programmes that affect their welfare.
- xiii. Job creation through public-private partnership is paramount.
- xiv. Poverty reduction programmes should target youth empowerment.
- xv. There should be a mechanism / platform that will ensure that the creative skills and technological prowess which most Nigerian Youths are imbued with are continually harnessed and channeled inwards productivity.
- xvi. Finally, we recommend the full implementation of entrepreneurship education as designed by the National Universities Commission (NUC) by all the universities in the country.

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