

Curbing Insecurity In Nigeria Through Youths Employment And Skills Acquisition: Ebonyi State In Question

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Abstract

Insecurity has been of serious concern to both past and present governments in Nigeria. This has been as a result of the Nigerian history and development challenges that have been continuously rooted in conflicts and instability. Various governments in the country have made several efforts aimed at addressing the situation ranging from creation of various security agencies and several reforms of the existing ones as well as various forms of youth empowerment, yet the security challenges remained unabated. The objective of this study is to find out if the rate of unemployment and level of unskilled youths in the country especially in Ebonyi State is the reason why the country has continued to remain unsafe for the citizens. The theory that anchored the study is the deprivation theory while quantitative research design which made use of survey method was employed to accomplish the purpose of the study. The data for the study were collected through structured questionnaire items and focus group discussion. 400 respondents were purposively selected from the study area. Five points Likert type scale was employed in data collection and to measure the magnitude of the responses. Data collected were analyzed using percentages. The three formulated hypotheses were tested using Chi-Square. The findings show that youth unemployment and lack of skills acquisition as well as the character of the Nigerian state are the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria. It equally shows that government has not made serious efforts to address unemployment rate and acquisition of skills especially the youths. The paper recommends among other things that governments at all levels should engage the youths in a productive and skills manpower development as security measure while those leaders who take advantage of these unemployed and unskilled youths to champion their selfish interest should be prosecuted whenever found culpable.

Key Words: Insecurity; Youths Employment; Skills Acquisition; Ebonyi State; Nigeria.

Introduction

Insecurity in Nigeria has been an age long issue. However, there has been a serious increase of insecurity in the country making it a prominent issue in recent times. The continuous increase and frequent occurrence of acts of violence and lawlessness including issues such as kidnapping, arms insurgence, cultism, assassination, ritual killings, violent robbery, murder, cattle rustling, militancy among others have called for serious concern. In Ebonyi State, the case is not different, prompting Ngwama (2012) to opine that most people sleep with one eye open as those who escape burglars, kidnapping and other security threats are kept awake all nights by booming sounds of gunshots. There are communal conflicts in almost all parts of the state. Inside the capital territory, car vandals

is on the increase on daily basis as motorists lose their car batteries, wind screen, side mirrors, brain box, tires among others to armed robbers. Those who withdraw cash from the banks are not safe, as hoodlums follow and snatch such monies from them at gun point even in broad day light. Nevertheless, insecurity in Nigeria and Ebonyi State in particular is not a recent phenomenon as there have been various forms of insecurity. Most of these insecurity are both economically, and politically motivated and have existed for a long time. To address the economically motivated violence and insecurity in the country and Ebonyi State in particular, various governments have come up with different initiatives aimed at curbing the menace. At the national level, government has initiated such programmes as, Poverty Eradication Programmes, Community and Social Development Programme as well as the establishment of National Directorate of Employment and the most recent N-Power programme, while at the State level, government has been more focused in forming vigilante groups, youths Assembly, Neighborhood watch all aimed at curbing insecurity in the state. With all these efforts, available records still show that the more some of these programmes evolve, the worse the situation gets. There is no doubt that these security challenges pose serious threat to the socio-economic and political stability of Nigeria. Although several factors could have contributed to this situation, there is no doubt that lack of access to means of livelihood, illiteracy and hopelessness among the youths have contributed immensely to the level of the present security challenges in Nigeria and Ebonyi State in particular. Young people all over the world are vital and important segment of the society in which they live, as disciplined, focused and law abiding youth can create a bright future for any nation (Anasi, 2010). However, the present unemployment rate in the country as published by Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (2017) puts it at 14.2% in the last quarter of 2016, up from 13.9% in the preceding quarter, indicating that unemployment rate in Nigeria has continued to rise. The youths are the most affected groups who in turn due to frustration, resort to violence, compelling Ezeji and Okorie(1999) to argue that unemployment has become chronic and intractable and has become the brain behind youth restiveness in the country. This conforms to the popular saying that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. Most of the youth who acquired various certificates including degrees are idle and stranded, unlike in the time past when acquisition of such certificates were considered as a sure ticket to a paid employment in either the public or private sectors of the economy. Those of them who did not go to school, get discouraged and are left with neither certificates nor skills. As a means of survival, these youths take to crime. In Ebonyi State, the government has not made any employment in any of its ministries, parastatals or local government councils for the last decade now, a situation that makes the youth to seem to have been forgotten by the government. This prompted Ajaegbu (2012) to argue that the problem of insecurity in Nigeria lies with the negligence of the youth by the government.

However, the level at which these issues of unemployment and skills acquisition for the youths are addressed will go a mile stone in curbing insecurity in Nigeria. This study therefore investigated the relationship between youth unemployment, unskilled manpower and insecurity in Ebonyi State Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

One of the most unique issues in governance is the provision of security and enabling environment to enable citizens to move freely and face their legitimate businesses and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. Nigeria with over one hundred and eighty million people endowed with both human and natural resources have over the years been continuously rooted in conflict, instability and insecurity, prompting the country to be rated very low by the

Global Peace Index 2016. In Ebonyi State, the continued deterioration of security in the state could be openly seen in the areas of kidnapping, incessant assassination, burglary and stealing, communal conflicts among others which seem to have defiled all solutions, including security measures.

Various administration in the country have made different efforts at bringing the situation under control yet, the more these efforts are made, the worse the security situation gets. While some blame the government for not doing enough to bring the situation to an end, others were of the opinion that the problem of insecurity in Nigeria and Ebonyi State in particular were as a result of the neglect of the youth by the government especially in the areas of employment and skills acquisition.

Despite these accusations, available studies have paid only momentary attention to the issue, especially the non-show of political will by the government to address unemployment situation and skills acquisition especially among the youth in Ebonyi State.

This study therefore strives to unravel the relationship between unemployment and lack of skills acquisition among the youth and insecurity in the state. In doing this, addressing the following research questions have become imperative.

Research Questions

1. Has Ebonyi State Government been able to provide employment and skills acquisition for the teeming unemployed youth?
2. What informed security challenges in Ebonyi State?
3. Can youth employment and skills acquisition curb insecurity in the State?

Research Hypotheses

1. Ebonyi State Government has not been able to provide employment and skills for the youth.
2. The security challenges in Ebonyi State is caused by unemployed and unskilled youth.
3. Youth employment and skills acquisition will curb insecurity in Ebonyi State.

Conceptual Review

Insecurity

Insecurity which is the extreme opposite of security is viewed from both social, economic and psychological angles, prompting Aminu, Hamza, and Ali (2015) to explain insecurity as a condition that exists due to lack of effective measures put in place to protect individuals, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions. It entails a situation where individuals in a given society cannot freely go about their normal daily activities due to threat or fear of harmful disruption of their lives and possessions. In his view, Akin (2008) sees insecurity as the situation not put in place for the protection of persons, information and property against influences, action and hostilities from others. It is a situation where people in society are denied the freedom to go about their normal businesses or daily activities due to fear of threats to their lives and properties. Lack of security therefore brings about insecurity which is its antithesis. Therefore, insecurity as explained by Beland (2005), is the state of fear, anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection, referring to inadequate freedom from danger. It is equally seen as unstable and unsteady income, not knowing what to expect, feeling unsafe, lack of protection from emotional stress which results from lack of assurances or not knowing what one needs, non-acceptance or loved and unprotected in one's community or neighborhood by the people around him. Insecurity puts one to a situation where he is aware of his predicaments but is not in position to stop or avert the situation since he is not capable of protecting himself against such threat.

On the other hand, security is the protection of lives and property and means of survival. This prompted Ogunleye et al (2011), to explain that security encompasses all established means to protect the citizens and their belonging against violent occurrences. This entails safety from all sorts of threats and protection from harmful disruption. Collaborating the position of other scholars, Achumba (2013) sees security as stable and steady income, knowing what to expect, feeling safe, safety or protection from emotional stress which results from the assurances or knowing that one is needed, accepted, loved and protected in one's community or neighborhood and by the people around him. Achumba explains further that security is the protection against all forms of harm whether physical, economic or psychological, arguing that security is not only the absence of threats or security issues but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise.

Lack of control and inability to take defensive action against forces that portend harm or danger to an individual or group.

Youth, Employment and Skills Acquisition

Youth is generally regarded as young boys and girls who are still at their prime age beyond being recognized as children but not up to be seen as adults. However, as a result of its varying definitions by countries, organizations and cultural groups, the term youth has not been captured by one definition. That notwithstanding, officially, the Nigerian Population Commission sees youth as persons between the ages of 18 and 24. In order to avoid unnecessary debate, the National population Commission went further to describe youth as persons who normally would have completed secondary education and would either be in tertiary institution or striving to secure employment, or be already employed. Contributing to this, the National Youth Development Policy (2001) sees youth as people aged 18-35. This definition is also contained in the 2009 Second National Youth Policy Document of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that went further to add that such persons should be between the ages of 18-35 years, male or female who are citizens of Nigeria. In some other places, youth has been defined as a phase, a transition from dependence to independence and possessing certain distinct features such as; leaving the parental home and establishing a new living arrangement, completing full time education, forming close and stable personal relationships outside of the family which often results in marriage and children bearing, testing the labor market by finding work and possible settling into career and achieving a sustainable livelihood (Osakwe, 2013).

In their views, the United Nations has defined youth as persons in the age range of 15 to 24 years while the World Health Organization report on violence and health categorize youth as persons between the ages of 10 and 29. In Sierra Leone, the United Nations Peace-Building Commission define youth as belonging to the ages of 15 and 35 while the Northwest territories of Canada sees youth as individuals aged 12 to 17 years. On their own side, the United States consider youth as person under the age of 21 (Osakwe, 2013).

The above different definitions show that there is no generally agreed exclusive definition of youth, rather, the definition is dependent on the immediate social-cultural, political and economic environment as the various definitions indicate the value, importance, dynamics and occurrences in this human groups.

In addition, employment is seen as the relationship that exist between two parties where one party which may be an organization, corporation or agency engages the services of the other party on a paid job. Here the party providing the services is the employee while the owners or management of

such organization is the employer. The terms of services including remuneration are always contained in a mutual agreement between the parties. Employment could be either full time or part time. It is the engagement of people in productive means that is referred to as employment (Osakwe, 2013). He as well sees skills as the ability to produce solutions in some problem areas through the ability that has been acquired by training. It is therefore the process of empowering a person to acquire knowledge in certain areas to be able to effectively make decisions and positively interact with his peers and at the same time, provide for himself.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of analysis adopted for this study is the Human Security Approach propounded by Mary Kaldor, Kofi Anan, Thomas and Roberts. The concept came to lime light after the Cold War and was first propounded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2010. While the traditional goal of national security emphasized the defense of the state from external aggression, the major argument of human security approach is that since insecurity emanates from individuals, that security should therefore focus on individuals since it is the collective view of people that are required for national, regional and global stability. This is based on the fact that threats to human life emanate not only from situation of violent conflicts but other non-conflict sources of threat such as poverty occasioned by lack of access to means of livelihood (Aminu, et al 2015). Human security is concerned with the protection of individuals from critical and life threatening dangers such as poverty. This prompted Beland(2005) to view human security as a condition of existence which entails basic material needs. When individuals at their productive age stay without jobs and means of livelihood, there is every tendency that they resort to available means including violent means to make the two ends meet. This theory is most appropriate for this study since most of the insecurity beseeching the country today are perpetrated by the youth who are jobless and unskilled, and it becomes imperative that security should be tackled by providing protection for individuals in the areas of employment and skill acquisition which is the anchor of this study.

Methodology

This section adopted the research design, the population of the study, the sample size and method of data collection for the study.

Research Design

The Study adopted quantitative research method and applied cross sectional survey design. The study was carries out in Abakaliki and Ebonyi Local Government Areas of Ebonyi State where some communities in these Local government Areas were selected in addition to selected state government institutions such as some staff of Ministry of Economic Empowerment and Job Creation, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Border, Peace and Conflict Resolution, Sports and Youth Development, some staff and students of Ebonyi State University as well as some residents of Abakaliki urban. The choice of these areas were as a result of their understanding, exposure and greater knowledge of the issue under study.

Population and sample Size of the Study

The total population of the study area is two hundred and seventy six thousand, nine hundred and nine (276, 909) being the population of the two Local Government Areas of study while the sample size of the study is 400, applying Taro Yamene's mathematical model. The Bowley's

proportion allocation formula is used to determine the sample size for each local government area under study.

Method of Data Collection

The study used primary source of data with the instrumentality of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained twelve Likert scale questions which were distributed to the respondents by the researchers.

The descriptive statistical analytical methods involving frequency tables were employed for data analysis while inferential statistics using Chi-Square and analytical technique were used for testing of hypotheses with the aid of SPSS software. Construct validity and inter-rater reliability methods were respectively used to guarantee validity and reliability of measurement instrument and findings.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Frequency Responses of Research Hypothesis 1 Questionnaire Items

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Response/percentage					Total
		SA	A	UND	D	SD	
1	Ebonyi State has not been able to provide employment and skills for the youth in the state.	170 (45%)	160 (42%)	5(1%)	20 (5%)	25 (7%)	380 (100%)
2	Ebonyi State Govt. has not employed its youth for many years now.	130 (34%)	160 (42%)	20 (5%)	60 (16%)	10 (3%)	380 (100%)
3	Ebonyi State Govt. has not been able to train the youth in skills.	140 (37%)	150 (39%)	20 (5%)	40 (11%)	30 (8%)	380 (100%)
4	There is high rate of unemployed and unskilled youth in Ebonyi State.	150 (40%)	168 (44%)	15 (4%)	27 (7%)	20 (5%)	380 (100%)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2018.

Responses on item 1 in table 1 above shows that 170 respondents, representing 45% of the respondents strongly agreed that many youth in Ebonyi State are unemployed and unskilled. 160 representing 42% agreed while 5 respondents representing 1% were undecided. On the other hand, 20 respondents representing 5% disagreed while 25 respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed.

On the 2nd item, 130 (34%) strongly agreed that there has not been any form of employment by the government of Ebonyi State for many years now, especially the youth. This was followed by 160 respondents representing 42% of the total respondents that agreed while 20 (4%) were undecided. On the other side of it, 60 (15%) disagreed that the state government has not provided employment for many years now while 10 (3%) strongly disagreed.

On responses to questionnaire item 3, 140 (37%) strongly agreed that the state government has not been able to train the youths in skills acquisition, 150 (39%) agreed while 20 (5%) were undecided. On the other hand, 40(11%) disagreed while 30 (8%) strongly disagreed.

Responses on the 4th item shows that 150 (40%) strongly agreed that there is high rate of unemployed and unskilled youth in Ebonyi State. 168 (44%) agreed on this view while 15 (4%) did not respond to the question. 27 (7%) and 20 (5%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

Table 2: Frequency of Responses of Research Hypothesis 2 Questionnaire Items

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Response/percentage					Total
		SA	A	UND	D	SD	
1	Insecurity in Ebonyi State is caused by unemployed and unskilled youth?	100 (26%)	220 (58%)	20 (5%)	30 (8%)	10 (3%)	380 (100%)
2	There is strong relationship between unemployed and unskilled youth and insecurity in Ebonyi State	120 (32%)	190 (50%)	30 (8%)	20 (5%)	20 (5%)	380 (100%)
3	The unemployed youth in Ebonyi State resort to criminal activities as a survival mechanism?	160 (42%)	180 (47%)	18 (5%)	12 (3%)	10 (3%)	380 (100%)
4	Unemployed and unskilled youth take to crime out of frustration in Ebonyi State?	170 (45%)	127 (33%)	40 (11%)	20 (5%)	23 (6%)	380 (100%)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2018.

Responses on item 5 in table 2 shows that 100 respondents representing 26% of the total respondents strongly agreed that there is strong relationship between unemployed and unskilled youths and insecurity in Ebonyi State. 220 (58%) agreed while 20 (6%) were undecided. On the other hand, 30(8%) disagreed while 10(3%) strongly disagreed.

On the 6th question as contained in table 2, 120 (32%) strongly agreed that insecurity in Ebonyi State is caused by unemployed and unskilled youth. This was followed by 190 respondents (50%) that agreed while 30 (8%) did not respond to the question. Furthermore, 20 respondents (5%) disagreed while 20 (5%) strongly disagreed.

Responses to item 7 shows that 160 respondents representing (42%) strongly agreed that unemployed and unskilled youths in the state resort to criminal activities as a survival mechanism. 180 (47%) agreed to this view while 18 (5%) respondents were undecided. On the other hand, 12 (3%) disagreed while 10 (3%) strongly disagreed.

The last question in table two shows that 170 respondent (45%) strongly agreed that unemployed and unskilled youths in Ebonyi State take to crime out of idleness and frustration. This was followed by 127 (33%) that agreed while 40 (11%) abstained. 20 respondents (5%) disagreed with this view while 23 (6%) strongly disagreed.

Table 3: Frequency of Responses of Research Hypothesis 3 Questionnaire Items

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Response/percentage					Total
		SA	A	UND	D	SD	
1	Insecurity will be curbed in Ebonyi State if the youth acquire skills and are	140 (37%)	190 (50%)	5 (1%)	35 (9%)	10 (3%)	380 (100%)

	employed?						
2	The youth need to be engaged in productive activities to curb insecurity in Ebonyi State?	150 (40%)	130 (34%)	20 (5%)	50 (13%)	30 (8%)	380 (100%)
3	The youth in Ebonyi State need to acquire skills to be self-reliant?	170 (45%)	120 (32%)	50 (13%)	20 (5%)	20 (5%)	380 (100%)
4	Ebonyi State Govt. need to show commitment and Political will in youth employment and skills acquisition as panacea for peace and security in the state?	140 (37%)	180 (47%)	20 (5%)	30 (8%)	10 (3%)	380 (100%)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2018.

Responses on item 9 in table 3 shows that 140 representing 37% of the total respondents strongly agreed that insecurity will be reduced in Ebonyi State if the youths are skilled and employed. 190 (50%) agreed to this view while 5(1%) were undecided. 35 respondents representing 9% disagreed while 10(3%) strongly disagreed.

On item 10 in table 3, 150 respondents (40%) strongly agreed that youth need to be engaged productively in order to enthrone security in Ebonyi State. This view was agreed by 130 (34%) respondents while 20 (5%) were undecided. 50 (13%) of the total respondents to this question disagreed while 30 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed.

On item 11 in table 3, 170 respondents representing 45% strongly agreed that youths in Ebonyi State need to acquire skills and be empowered to be self-reliant for the state to be safe. 120 (32%) agreed with this view while 50 (13%) declined to respond. This was followed by 20(5%) respondents that disagreed with the view and 20 (5%) that strongly disagreed.

On the last questionnaire item as contained in table three, 140 respondents representing 37% strongly agreed that Ebonyi State Government need to show commitment and political will in youths employment and skill acquisition which will serve as bedrock for security in the state. This view was agreed by 180 (47%) respondents while 20 (5%) were undecided. 30 respondents (8%) disagreed with the view, as 10 (3%) strongly disagreed.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Ebonyi State Government has not been able to provide employment and skills for the youth.

This hypothesis was tested using questionnaire item 1 in table 1 above.

$$\text{Expected Frequency (E)} = \frac{380}{5} = 76$$

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 1

O _i	E _i	O _i -e _i	(O _i -e _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - e_i)^2}{E_i}$
170	76	94	8836	116.2
160	76	84	7056	92.8
5	76	-71	5051	66.3
20	76	-56	3136	41.26
25	76	-51	2601	34.22

Total **350.78**

Field Survey Data, 2018.

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value (r-1) (c-1) Cell x row
 = (C-1) (R-1)

Where R = 5 C = 2

Therefore df= (5-1) (2-1)

= 4 x 1 df = 4

Critical value at 4 df is 9.488

Therefore since the tabulated value of x (350.78) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the hypothesis which states that Ebonyi State Government has not been able to provide employment and skills acquisition for the youths is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: The security challenges in Ebonyi State is caused by unemployed and unskilled youths

This hypothesis was tested using questionnaire item 5 in table 2 above.

Expected Frequency (E) = $\frac{380}{5} = 76$

Table 5: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 2

O _i	E _i	O _i -e _i	(O _i -e _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - e_i)^2}{E_i}$
100	76	24	576	7.57
220	76	144	20736	272.8
20	76	-56	3136	41.26
30	76	-46	2116	27.8
10	76	-66	4356	57.31
Total				406.74

Field Survey Data, 2018

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value (r-1) (c-1) Cell x row = (C-1) (R-1)

Where R = 5 C = 2

Therefore df = (5-1) (2-1)

= 4 x 1 df = 4

Critical value at 4 df is 9.488

Therefore since the tabulated value of x (406.74) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the Hypothesis that states that Insecurity in Ebonyi State is caused by unemployed and unskilled youth is accepted

Hypothesis 3: Youth employment and skills acquisition will curb insecurity in Ebonyi State

This hypothesis was tested using questionnaire item 9 in table 3 above.

Expected Frequency (E) = $\frac{380}{5} = 76$

Table 5: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 3

O _i	E _i	O _i -e _i	(O _i -e _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - e_i)^2}{E_i}$
140	76	44	4096	53.8
190	76	114	12996	171
5	76	-71	5041	66.32

35	76	-41	1681	22.11
10	76	-66	4356	57.31
Total				370.54

Field Survey Data, 2018.

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value $(r-1)(c-1)$ Cell x row = $(C-1)(R-1)$

Where $R = 5$ $C = 2$

Therefore $df = (5-1)(2-1)$

$= 4 \times 1$ $df = 4$

Critical value at 4 df is 9.488

Therefore since the tabulated value of χ^2 (370.54) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the hypothesis which says that insecurity will be curbed in Ebonyi State if the youths are trained to acquire skills and employed is accepted.

Summary of Findings

As a result of the significant statistical support given to the alternate hypotheses as shown in the result of the chi-square test presented in tables 4, 5 and 6 above, the following findings were made.

1. There is high rate of unemployed and unskilled youth in Ebonyi State and these youth stay idle all day, yet they must feed and take care of some essential needs.
2. As a survival mechanism since they have no other means of attending to their immediate needs, these youths resorts to all sorts of criminal activities ranging from armed robbery, Kidnapping, burglary, murder, rape, violent and conflict in the state there by making the state
3. The government of Ebonyi State has not shown much commitment and political will to tackle the problem of youth's unemployment and unskilled manpower in the state, as most of the approaches were based on short term benefit for the privileged few that they use as thugs during elections.

Discussion and Conclusion

Unemployment and unskilled manpower especially among the youth play a pivotal role in exacerbating youth's vulnerabilities and susceptibilities of becoming involved in such criminal activities such as kidnapping, violent, armed robbery, prostitution, rapping, assassination, conflict among other vices. Good number of these youth ordinarily would not have involved themselves in such activities if they had hope of survival, but since they feel neglected and abandoned without hope for tomorrow, they get frustrated in life especially after spending a lot of financial and material resources by both the parents and these youth to acquire education. Such deprivation generates depression, disillusionment and isolation as noted by Chukwuma(2013) and could trigger aggregate psychological and physical problem, boredom, disenchantment thereby forcing one to be involved in taking unnecessary risk practices including excessive drugs and alcohol.

It is on this believe that Akpan (2010) and Ajaegbu (2012) are of the view that youth take to criminal activities as the last resort since they graduate and stay idle at home for several years coupled with the prevailing cost of living and the rate of corruption in the country to justify their actions.

It is based on the above situation that Ademola (2013) sees unemployment in Nigeria especially in the form of graduate unemployment to have become so pronounced in the last two decades as the rate has continued to grow yearly due to an upsurge in the output from tertiary institution without the capacity of the labour market to absorb them. Government therefore need to draw the educational curriculum to suit our local environment where students could be empowered to address the problem of youth employment in specific areas.

It is when the issue of engaging the youths in meaningful socio-economic activities are adequately addressed that the problem of insecurity will be solved. The elite who ought to be seeking for solution to unemployment rather see the vulnerable unemployed youth as political tools to silence their political enemies, while at the end, they surround themselves with security personnel and protect themselves from these aggrieved youth, thereby leaving the consequences of insecurity to the majority of the helpless citizens.

In conclusion therefore, it is agreed that the high rate of unemployment and unskilled manpower among the youth make them cheap tools for criminal activities. However, with show of commitment and political will on the part of government through implementation of programmes that would enable the youth acquire skills in the process of their educational career and be able to engage themselves in productive means of livelihood after their education, the challenges of insecurity in Ebonyi State will be addressed.

Recommendations

1. Since it will never be possible for government to employ all the youth in the state, the government should encourage the youth through skills acquisition and soft loan to enable them start some businesses of their own, while the government continues to monitor the beneficiaries, offering them advice and guides where necessary.
2. The State government can as well encourage the youth to queue into the agricultural programme of the state by acquiring land and other farm inputs at subsidized rates as well as making tractors and other equipment available, and can go further by assisting the farmers sale their produce at appreciable rate through marketing board which the state can establish.
3. The N-Power programme of the Federal Government should be partnered with by the State government to see that the beneficiaries actually acquire the knowledge and skills as designed in the programme, while encouraging them to save part of their monthly stipend for investment in their different areas of participation during the period with the assistance of the state government
4. The federal government on their part should draw the educational curriculum especially from post primary to tertiary institutions to suit our local needs to be able to create opportunities for the youth to acquire skills in different fields to enable them sustain themselves when they leave schools, since the all awaited white collar jobs are nowhere anymore to be found, except for the few privileged once that are highly connected in the society.

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