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## **Contemporary Socio-Economic Challenges and Youths Vocational Development: Implication for Nigeria's Development**

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### **Abstract**

*For many years the people of Nigeria especially since independence have been yearning for development. Any meaningful development anchors on very many indices – strong institutions, availability of resources and good management. Resources comprise human and natural resources. However, the development processes are sabotaged by socio-economic challenges, which include hunger, poverty, unemployment, poor health, illiteracy, corruption, greed, insecurity, among others. The paper concludes that for meaningful development, and for the youths to be part of the global system, the Nigerian state must arrest and address the issues of poverty, unemployment, corruption, greed, besides providing free health and free education to all at all levels. Today good education is power. The youths must work hard, be focused, be curious and ready to sharpen their intellect and create ideas that must be revolutionary for them to claim the future and establish economic independence.*

## **Introduction**

Nigeria is the second largest economy next to South Africa in Africa. She has about 150 million people with the youths making about 51 percent. For many years especially since independence, Nigerian people are much in a hurry to develop. The main aim now is for her to belong to the comity of the developed states and by extension one of the 20th biggest economies in the world by 2020. But unfortunately, development has tended to elude the state. However, all hopes are not lost.

Indeed, it is not enough to say that 51 percent of the Nigerian population is made up of youths. It would be worthwhile to ask what is the quality of the youth population. Or how healthy is the population and what is the effect on productivity? Population explains low productivity, which in turn has negative effect on the growth of the Nigerian economy. There are many factors to be considered before one can say that a given population is healthy. This includes levels of poverty, state of employment and underemployment, levels of education, access to safe drinking water and the quality of environment. Against this background, the present crop of Nigerian youths is made to face the socio-economic challenges.

## **Understanding the Youths**

Within the Nigerian context, it is difficult to explain who the youths are? Many people see it quite differently. On the economic rating and production within the system, Ekpo (2011) an economist defined youths as “persons between the ages of 17 and 35 years.” In this connection, they are expected to be strong and be able to give and take the best society offers. It is not surprising therefore, that during the dubious Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, those who were shipped to Americas and Europe to work under harsh and inhuman conditions were basically youths. The hard infrastructure built in the USA, for example, was undertaken with slave labour (Williams, 1964, Uya, 2005; Ekpo, 2011).

In the areas of interaction, the World Football Body, Federation of International Football Association FIFA defines youths as people between the ages of 17 and 20 years. On a more simplistic way, youths are persons from the ages of 12 and 30 years.

A cursory look at Nigeria shows that there are more than a million youth organisations or associations scattered all over. Surprisingly none of these groups have been able to throw up any dynamic person to lead them positively. Going through history, it would be recalled that Nigerian youths organisation led by Solanke fought alongside their forebears to obtain independence for Nigeria. It was youth group that battled Tafawa Balewa's government to abolish a military pact Nigeria signed with Britain at independence. That, it is known is the implication of such pact.

However, in the 1970s National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) used to be a force to be reckoned with especially during Mr. Okewo's days as a leader. Since then nothing is heard except that they belong to 'settlement' camp. They are supposed to be leaders who should defend their actions but they instead become pawns in the hands of political "locusts" and "caterpillars" who pillage our economy and render us useless among comity of nations. Today Nigerian youths have no visionary leader and that expresses the reasons why they are sidelined in the Nigeria project. In the NLC national strike that has just ended, it was the youths, that the government used as powerful propaganda tool in its disparate attempt to destabilize the labour who, to a greater extent has the interest of the youths at heart than the government's propagandists. At the end of it all, the youths' actions attracted Nigeria president's commendation in his broadcast to the nation.

Issues such as corruption and greed are products of poor or bad leadership. Nigerian leaders are not transparent; they are corrupt, reckless and poor managers of our economy. Because they are corrupt and greedy that explains why public functionaries are corrupt and have no respect for rule of law and accountability. Corruption stiffens the economy. The youths know this, but how many of them can really voice out. Some of them are the beneficiaries through dubious means. Insecurity in the Nigerian state are planned by the elite class and executed by the youths for a fee. Militancy and other vices are carried out by the youths.

In the last general election in Nigeria, Nigerian youths mainly National Youth Service Corps were alleged to have been used to rig election by extending peanuts to them by mean politicians. That was greed. When they were used, it was hoped, since they are the future leaders, they would lead by

example, but it turned out to be a failure, meaning that the youths have lost their future.

### **Conceptualising Development**

Development, like other concepts has many explanations depending on the meaning intended to convey. It is increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being (Rodney, 1972). Nnoli in Nnadozie (2004), sees development as a phenomenon associated with changes in man's ability and creative energies. It is an unending improvement in the capacity of the individual and society to control and manipulate the forces of nature as well as themselves and other individuals and societies for own benefits and that of humanity at large. It is a process of actualizing man's inherent capacity to live a better and more rewarding life.

It is one's ability to have good and affordable food to eat, access to safe drinking water, good shelter, access to good medical facilities, being able to communicate, have access to good education, have access to use decent and sustained infrastructural facilities. It does not convey want.

### **Conceptualising Productivity**

Productivity is a buzz word and almost everyone uses it. Yet the term productivity means different things to different persons. In spite of what appears like confusion, there are several characteristic features that represent the concept of productivity that could be identified. However, productivity in industrial engineering, is defined as the relation of output (i.e. produced goods) to input (i.e. consumed resources) in the manufacturing transformation process (Akerlele, 1991). Productivity could therefore be seen as closely related to the use and availability of resources. Mali (1978) defines productivity as the measure of how resources are being brought together in organisations and utilized for accomplishing a set of results. By this definition, productivity is seen to be strongly linked to the creation of value. High productivity is achieved when activities and resources in the organisation are transformed and in the process create sustainable value. Nigerian youths today face many challenges such as poverty, unemployment, poor health, corruption, greed and insecurity.

## **Poverty**

Poverty indicates people who hardly afford a meal a day, cannot clothe themselves, have no access to good drinking water, no access to basic education, no access to good shelter. To say the least a person that lacks the basic means of living is considered poor. Poverty therefore induces hunger. Hunger is a condition in which persons do not have access to good food (diet), and perhaps can go for days without food. This condition bestrides our society and is common among students in higher institutions and rural dwellers with poor economic background, low wages and large families.

Nigeria is a rich country by the current oil production sold in the international market for the past twenty years or so. Yet majority of Nigerians are poor. It is estimated that 55.8 million Nigerians are very poor and live below the universal poverty line of 1 US dollar a day. It indicates that these poor people are found mainly in rural areas. The youths of this country constitute the majority living in these rural communities. Because, they are poor and cannot feed adequately, provide for themselves good shelter and health facilitates, the future for them is punctured. This ugly condition thus gives birth to prostitution, armed robbery and drug taking. It is also from this group that Nigerian bourgeoisies politicians recruit and arm as political thugs and aids during elections – and by extension increases the social problems in our communities.

Poverty is often times lead to HIV/AIDS. In this connection HIV/AIDS is mainly a disease of the low strata of people in the society and it is to a large extent the product of dire need arising from poverty. Research has indicated that HIV/AIDS is common among the youths between 15 and 25 years (Omoragan and Okeke, 2010; Kogbara, 2010). In thinking of HIV/AIDS, two things are important – it has negative effect on the economy because it reduces productivity. On the other hand, it brings about or causes social divide among members of the public through stigmatization. HIV/AIDS have far reaching impact on poverty and hunger. HIV/AIDS aggravates poverty and hunger and vice versa. HIV/AIDS affects the quantum and quality of education. Poverty and hunger daily arrest youth of this country's capacity to think straight arising from poor governance.

## **Unemployment**

Unemployment is everywhere both in the developing and developed economies. The significant thing is the rate between them. It is difficult to say the number of unemployed Nigerians. Unfortunately, neither the Manpower Board nor Ministry of Labour nor Federal Office of Statistics has accurate data on the unemployment rate in Nigeria. However, about six years ago, the Federal Office of Statistics claimed that the national unemployment figure was 3.6 percent outside those who have not registered with labour exchanges. Comparatively, in countries such as USA and Britain it is only one digit ranging between 0.4 and 1 percent. The number is much higher since Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Allied Institutions are turning out graduates in thousands into already saturated labour market. The other pool in the rural areas who did not attend higher school are part of the system. Recently, Chief Kola Jamodu, the President of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) estimates that in 2009 alone, 834 businesses, mostly small and medium enterprises, closed shops due to the hostile and uncompetitive operational environment, with an estimated 83,400 redundancies. One can imagine the figure today (Manuaka, 2010, Kogbara, 2010, Oshiomode, 2011).

Besides unemployment, many Nigerians are underemployed, or better still exploited because they lack an alternative for basic living. It is not uncommon to see even Master's Degree holders earning ten thousand naira a month against the real salary. It is also not uncommon to see Nigeria university graduates becoming bus conductors – all because of frustration. Some too, are Okada drivers. It is because of these odd jobs engaged by this group of Nigerians that Gbenro Adesina and Femi Ayodele of the News Magazine described them as “The Wasted Generation” (Adesina & Ayodele, 2011).

Unemployment has thrown the youths into very many illegal business orbits – many are used for drug trade in overseas countries; some as political thugs as earlier mentioned, some are prostitutes locally and abroad. Apart from greed, unemployment has sentenced young Nigerians and are serving jail terms abroad. According to a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 52 Nigerians were on death row in foreign countries; 3,132 in foreign prisons, 1,640 in detention, 5,145 (mostly young girls) estimated as trafficked victims, while 3,719 were awaiting deportation (Umukoro, 2009). There were

other youths who were trying to cross the Sahara Desert to Europe in search of jobs, but many found themselves perished in such attempts. Apart from environmental degradation that gave birth to militancy in the Niger Delta, frustration caused by lack of employment or underemployment was responsible for kidnapping and hostage taking of company workers. Today kidnapping and hostage taking for ransom have become part of Nigeria's culture and are carried out by youths.

However, the important thing is that youths are part of the society and are progressively turning to its development. Good or gainful employment has a linkage effect on the health of individuals. Good health translates and in turn engenders or motivates one to contribute positively to the economy. So when a large pool of youths finds itself in the swamp of unproductivity, where lies the hope for Nigeria's future?

### **Education and the Nigerian youths**

Education is the power for development. It liberates the mind. It is a tool that prepares manpower to meet the requirement for modern world in areas such as agriculture, health, security, etc. Research indicates that about 45 percent of Nigerians does not have access to basic education and out of this number women affected and the youths are the most. The ratio of persons acquiring education has nothing to do with population. The percentage of people accessing education is an indication that when people are educated it is a plus because they would know the value of themselves – care for themselves and the environment which they live. They would also contribute positively to the economy thereby stimulating development. This meaning that education is the most potent instrument for alleviating and eventually abolishing poverty. Indeed, Nigeria education system is in shambles – educational policies are somersaults.

Within the sector, many youths do not have access to tertiary education. Nigeria parades about ninety-five Universities (private inclusive) and well over thirty polytechnics, over forty Colleges of Education, and allied institutions, yet many cannot secure a place to study. Some have attempted JAMB for more than three times without success. It is this frustrating group that falls easy prey and becomes willing tools in the hands of dubious politicians and drug 'masters' or peddlers. The state of education is very poor in Nigeria and that explains why some Nigerian elite pride themselves in sending their children to school abroad, and even to our next door neighbour,

Ghana. In most of our universities, we are producing more educated illiterates. The number of Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education should not give an impression that we are doing well. In 2008, the Times Higher Education ranked the universities in the world. No Nigerian university made the list of the top 500 universities worldwide. No African country made the 100 best universities (Akintunde, 2009, Osuagwu, 2011, Ekpo, 2011).

Nigeria over the years has not funded education properly and has not adhered to the international standard recommendations for countries the world over. For instance UNESCO recommended 26 percent of the Nations budget as a global benchmark to fighting illiteracy especially in developing economies (Asiru, 2011). The United Nations recommended that developing nations set aside at least 2 percent of their GDP on Research and Development. In the same corollary, the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.) now African Union (A.U), in its Lagos Plan of Action of 1980 recommended that member states commit at least 1 percent of their GDP to Science and Technology. Between 1985 and now Nigeria's percentage of GDP commitment to R & D lingers between 0.1 percent and 0.6 percent. Comparatively, industrialized countries such as Britain, Japan, Germany, U.S.A. that have attained development devote not less than 2.5 percent of their GDP to R & D while Nigeria hoping to belong to the clique of developed economies by 2020 is still dragging behind in Science and Technology (CBN, 1994, Akpan, 2005; Akpan, 2008). The youths therefore are in position to watch the nation with keen interest.

### **Health and the Nigerian youths**

On the health sector, Nigerian youths also face some challenges. Many youths do not have access to affordable medical treatment because of its high cost. Often times, one may misconstrue the fact that one is well, when in actual fact or with examination, very sick. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Achalun and Achalu, 1999). From the above corollary how many Nigerians or indeed youths are healthy taking into consideration the earlier used indices.

For more than two decades, Nigerian health care system was and still in coma, and was attributed to the country's poor governance and leadership of the military era. The question usually asked was: "were the military rulers not



human beings”? With the advent of democracy in 1999, it was expected the situation would change, that was not to be. Between 1990 and 2003, the federal government for instance budgeted between 0.2 and 2.7 for this sector (Ali-Akpajiake, 2003).

Apart from the migration of qualified medical personnels abroad for greener pastures, the major challenge to Health care in Nigeria is underfunding as mentioned earlier. It is estimated that over 40,000 Nigerian medical doctors are based in North America and Europe, leaving the country with rising dearth of qualified medical doctors (Omoragbo, 2011). Indeed, Nigeria has been ranked poorly in major health care indices globally. Nigeria is persistently challenged by diseases and ailments such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, typhoid fever, cholera, guinea worm, meningitis etc. Poverty, poor health system, hunger among others have seriously dealt with Nigerians and have recorded a dwindling life expectancy which currently stands at 47 years. If life expectancy is 47 years, how many years of productivity would the youths put in for the development of Nigerian economy? Very little. Good health is a pivot to increase productivity. When the youths and indeed the working population are healthy, other things being equal there is bound to be an appreciable expansion in the economy whereby the overall wellbeing of the citizens could be engendered.

### **Vocational Development and the Nigerian Youths**

Vocational development is a function of vocational education. It is from vocational education that the youths can identify and develop skills that could be used in productive activities for worthwhile living. For the youths to develop vocationally they have to tap from the utilitarian purposes of vocational education which are manifested in the following ways:

- a. Appreciation of dignity to work;
- b. Utility and culture in vocational education;
- c. Democracy in vocational education;
- d. Plight of school dropouts;
- e. Economics of vocational education;
- f. Needs of youth and adults;

- g. Needs of the society; and
- h. Basic right of the citizenry.

### **Appreciation of dignity to work**

No single force has been identified to be more powerful in man's rise from savagery to civilization than work. Work has enabled man to satisfy his ever-increasing needs and wants.

Today, individual with few wants spend less time at work than individuals with many wants. Man needs to spend only a small part of the day at work to escape starvation, but must work the greater part of the day to provide the comforts and necessities that make the difference in present day savagery and civilized living (Robert, 2003).

Man discovered early in history that he did not wish to remain in savagery and that by work, he would be able to obtain more palatable food, more decent and comfortable clothing and additional conducive shelter. Individuals have learnt to work through various ways. Apprenticeship, which originated during ancient times and flourished during the middle ages was among the first form of this planned learning. Work, the continuous application of energy for a purpose is accomplished through many forces; water, electricity, gas, steam, chemical reactions etc.

From the standpoint of an individual, work consists of existing physical or mental energy or labour for the accomplishment of a specific purpose. When the object is a product or a service for consumer use, the work involved is said to be productive work.

Productive work engaged in as the main means and for the purpose of making a living becomes one's chief gainful pursuit, regular occupation or vocation. As the individual seeks and finds new and improved ways of working, he increases his vocational efficiency.

People in the developed countries of the world, by means of continuous purposeful work have converted the resources of the nations into a quantity and variety of goods and services hitherto known in the history of mankind. The products of this conversion have enabled the citizens to maintain a standard of living far beyond most dreams of their forefathers. Scientists are constantly discovering new products and processes and from these

discoveries come new sources of power and many other devices and services for the improvement of standards of living the world over.

The expansion of economic system in any country is due to many factors. Among the factors are the country's system of inventions and patents, the techniques of mass production and increased productivity per worker, efficient business management and the methods of profits distribution. The successful use of most of these factors and techniques is conditioned by educational programmes and procedures. An appreciation of the nature of work, significance of work and the result of work will undoubtedly, re-position vocational education for self-reliance and productivity.

### **Utility and culture in vocational education**

The classification of the contents of education into the categories of vocational and general has led some authorities and individuals to suggest that vocational education is associated with utility and general education with culture.

According to Roberts (2003), two alternatives are prevalent among those who accept this point of view: one suggests that the two terms - culture and utility are not antagonistic but that they have nothing in common, the other suggests that the two terms are antagonistic and unless vocational courses are severely restricted, culture will perish.

Individuals who hold to the theory that utility and culture are not antagonistic suggest that the curriculum should thank of a proper balance between vocational and general education and this balance may be achieved by the selection of certain subjects some of which are broadly cultural. The proper balance of these two theories will contribute to the development of well-rounded individual (Osuala, 2004).

### **Democracy in vocational education**

Calhoun and Finch (2001) asserted that some individuals are of the opinion that it is undemocratic to teach a boy to become a carpenter because by doing so, he may be prevented from becoming a lawyer, a doctor, a computer analyst, an engineer etc. Individuals who proposed this point of view contend that it is more democratic and productive to provide each person with vocational preparation. Broad education in secondary schools is a post secondary preparatory curriculum. This preparatory curriculum is in reality a

preparation for further education in the professions at higher education levels. Thus, vocational education for the professions is approved but not vocational education for man positions in agriculture, business, industry etc.

A second and more defensible point of view with reference to democracy in education is that modern society requires that all workers be educated for their work, and that equal opportunity for obtaining this education be provided. Barlow (2005) showed that individuals differ in interests, needs and abilities and that no one type of educational programme is suited to the needs and capabilities of all workers. This suggests that a variety of educational programmes must be provided to meet the needs of the many types of workers in present-day society. Recognition of a person and adequate remuneration for what he can do best should now be practiced in our society if we are sincere in our quest for self-reliant education.

### **Plights of school dropouts**

Outright looking at school dropouts in our society as 'deviants' is not in any way a healthy development since the school dropout syndrome is not without foundational causes. Parents and members of the society are becoming more and more disturbed with the large number of youths who leave school without completing the usual secondary school education. The seriousness of the dropout problem and its relationship to unemployment of youths has brought forth many suggestions for its solution. Some educators and laymen have indicated that the dropout problem may be solved by increasing the scope of the programmes of vocational education and industrial arts in our schools. This suggestion or opinion is predicated on the assumption that youths leave school because of poor performance in loaded academic work or because of an uninteresting programme of studies and that vocational education and industrial arts will interest them. Morphet (2006) Opined that in some instances, youths leave school because they find little or no interest in mental activity but would likely stay in school if more manual activities were provided.

However, neither vocational education nor industrial art will completely eliminate dropouts. Vocational education has as its purpose the education of individuals for gainful employment. It is an education designed for individuals who need and can profit from it. Without doubt a comprehensive programme of education, both general and vocational has possibilities for reducing the number of school dropouts.

Such a programme should include industrial arts and other practical arts subjects as well as an adequate programme of guidance and counselling. It should be designed for in-school and out-of school youths and adults, both talented and disadvantaged. Such a programme will enable such students to achieve their maximum in the knowledge, skills and pattern of conduct necessary for a successful and satisfying life.

### **Economics of Vocational Education**

There are two aspects of economics of vocational education: vocational education as a contributor to society's economic main stream and economics of vocational education itself. Explaining these in a simple language, Calhoun and Finch (2004) stressed that labour is a basic component of any economic system.

Everyone involved in the process of educating Nigerians should have a working knowledge of vocational education. The forces currently shaping the direction in which our society is moving require that educators as well as those outside educational establishments be involved in the formulation and operation of effective educational programmes. The down-trodden of the present Nigerian's economy requires that we all plan ahead and insist that everyone leaving the school system acquires some type of occupational skill appropriate to earn a living. It is this imperative that vocational teachers and teachers of academic courses at all levels – elementary, secondary and tertiary as well as education officers at the local, state and national levels develop a working relationship with vocational education. There is the need for long- range planning which addresses itself to the question, 'what will our world be like tomorrow and how should we educate our youths to live in it?'

### **Needs of Youth and Adults**

The success of the nation's economy depends in no small measure on the proficiency of the nation's work force. These workers use various means to acquire proficiency. In the past proficiency was acquired either by the "pickup method" or "apprenticeship". The pickup method was proved to be costly, inadequate and time consuming and the apprenticeship system was applicable only to a limited number of occupations and workers.

The two methods alone will not provide the number of workers and the quality of workmanship required of the devices and system for maintaining

an efficient labour force. Programmes of vocational education have been established to meet these needs of education and training. Vocational education is needed for youths and adults attending post-secondary schools where they may secure education or training for the more highly skilled trade and technical positions.

It is also needed for young people who have left full-time schooling for their first regular employment. Many of them leave school to take positions requiring limited knowledge and skill. Frequently, these positions are temporary and the youths in time, find themselves unemployed. They required educational programmes that will permit them to go to school on part-time basis and still remain on remunerative work for self-support.

Vocational education programmes are needed for persons who, because of academic, socio-economic handicap or other hindrances cannot succeed in regular vocational programmes without special educational assistance or modified vocational education.

Another major group in need of vocational education is composed of older adults who have been employed for a number of years. Many of these individuals find themselves in need of training due to technological changes in industry and new discoveries and inventions in agriculture. Unless education is provided, these people may become unemployed because of their inability in the skills that could keep them on the job.

### **Needs of the Society**

The society recognizes the fact that every citizen should be equipped with skills to contribute effectively to the welfare of the society. The highest possible welfare is achieved only when each individual produces to the limit of his capacity. For this reason, the necessity for equipping each citizen with saleable skills for lifelong endeavours is a fact that even the most primitive society has recognized. The society has known that youths and adults do not need only vocational competencies but also general abilities.

It seems appropriate therefore, to assign responsibility to some agencies or institutions qualified and capable to provide the training.

### **Basic Right of the Citizenry**

The individual privilege of choosing his or her own occupation should be a basic right in the country, and the opportunity to participate in its cultural values should be dependent upon the satisfactory employment of its members. To facilitate this outcome, social demands and legislative directives should require a commitment of vocational education to planning programmes for all kinds of people, in all kinds of communities and for all kinds of occupations.

Morphet and Jesser (2006) informed that in developed countries where vocational education programmes and efforts have been greatly successful, the charge given to vocational education requires (a) an extensive corps of highly competent curriculum specialist to work continually for the improvement and modification of existing curriculum and to create institutional programmes for new occupation and (b) a coordinated programme of in-service training to assist teachers in the affective use, evaluation and further improvement of curriculum materials.

### **Implication for Nigeria's Development**

The future of any country rests on the shoulders of her youths. The youths are the pivot of any society – that depends on the viability of these youths. Viability – physical, intellect, psyche, economic, social etc. For Nigerian youths to become an asset for this country, educational policies must change. We should do away with the Euro-centric type and advance to vocational, entrepreneurial, and technological education. These would prepare and reorientate the youths against depending on the white-collar jobs. This would minimize their dependence on government, politicians and in a long run reduce unemployment. Besides, Nigeria is rich by all standards – education and health care should be free at all levels. Only few who are educated would want to carry gun or become suicide bombers or militants.

Besides, most industries in our shores have closed shop. The industries showcase the insensitivity on the part of our past and present leaders. The youths need employment. They must struggle through dialogue on the need for government to create more jobs. It is believed that frustration is responsible for drug taking, prostitution, armed robbery, desert exploration, militancy and hostage taking except few exceptions. If truly youths are the future leaders, they need to be consulted through their leaders in major policy

decision of this country. At all times, they should be taken and seen as partners in this nation's project.

Wages paid to workers in this country is very low. That perhaps explains why many are corrupt except politicians who are corrupt because it is inherent. Some time ago, a British envoy to Nigeria opined that about \$ 3 trillion dollars are stolen by Nigerians and kept in western banks, a very serious indictment on the part of Nigerian leaders. The recent revolutions in North Africa and Middle East were caused by youths' dissatisfaction with the way their countries were governed.

The youths should rise up and challenge negative practices in Nigeria in a bid to correcting them – electoral frauds, corruption, insecurity among others. In this way, they can truly prepare to take over as future leaders.

### **Conclusion**

So far, attempts have been made to explain the problems youths are facing in the Nigeria project. These problems are caused by the ineptitude, parochial ideas of political 'locusts' called leaders. Nigeria is rich by all standards but our resources are being freted away by mismanagement, and this has manifested itself through hunger, poverty, unemployment, insecurity, poor health, low level of education and weak institutions. It is also noted that to upturn the ugly indices and place Nigeria on the path of development, free and alternative educational policies have to be adopted, health care delivery made free at all levels; and job creation institution reactivated. The youths, be proactive and revolutionary as they would the only way to claim their future is taking a cue from the recent events in North Africa and Middle East. We must explore these means otherwise the 2020 plan and beyond is a bad dream.



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