



---

## **COMBATING YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND SOCIAL VICES AS A PANACEA FOR SELF-RELIANCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA.**

**Saidu T Umar (PhD)**

Department of Sociology And Anthropology

Adamawa State University, Mubi Nigeria.

### **Abstract**

With the advent of new world order, there have been various efforts put in place in order to summon the attendant challenges therein. These challenges are more pronounced in the sub-Saharan Africa. However, the critical aspect of these upheavals is that of youth restiveness and the related social vices. The case of Nigeria is becoming alarming thereby threatening the socio-economic and political stability. Particularly, the geopolitical zones namely South- South, South East, North- North, North West, North Central and North East in one way or another recorded violent destructions. For instance, Militia group known as Independent people of Biafra (IPOB), the Oduduwa peoples progress (OPC), the prolong Jukun- Tiv violence in the North Central and the most violent activities of the Farmers- Herders violent, the youth restiveness in the North West of Zamfara State characterized by adoption and kidnapping, the North East recorded yet another humanitarian crises of our times known as the Boko- Haram. The paper strongly argues that most of the participants in all these violent destructions are youths. Illicit Drugs have been identified as cardinal inspiration for violence. Under the influence of narcotics and related substances enormously contributed to youth restiveness. This restiveness to large extent threatens the corporate existence of Nigeria as a political entity. Thus, National security of Nigeria remains bleak as a result of these forms of threats in the political zones in the Nigerian polity. This paper recommends that good governance and social justice can go a long way in combating youth restiveness in Nigeria.

### **INTRODUCTION**

With the advent of new world order, there have been various attempts on the part of number nation states especially in the sub Saharan Africa to liberalize politics and democratic processes. With little difference, some of these countries are moving towards consolidating gains on acquisition and utility of power. These efforts tend to face pressures of different magnitude .Largely; new strategies have been evolved in the economy, and economic relationships (Gelinias, 1994). Therein are evolutions of new social organizations including belief systems characterized by contradictions in the learned and shared customs? As significant creative energies have been driven towards mechanisms for expansion and consolidation of influence and power, governments' faces two major challenges.



Firstly, there are new commitments and doggedness in establishing structures and institutions of governance. Secondly, there are behavioral tendencies contradicting the desired goals of good governance and service provision. Thus, the scenario witnesses constitutional amendments and attendant challenges of the parliamentarians. This is more so, with the leadership of the parliaments manifesting in form of legislative and executive recklessness. Many attempts have been made to either impeach or sack judges or otherwise of counter actions. Political discourse of the body polity has been characterized by Executive, judicial and Legislative Squabbles (Hassan, 2005). Political elites employed divisive ways by inciting the members of their various constituencies against each other using the syphoned funds main for constituency projects. The executives' branches are faced with stiff opposition through violent behaviors'. These and many more of the events are featured at the National and State levels of governance. Hence, there are emerging militia groups with ethnic, regional and political party colorations. At times, national security can equally be threatened, especially secession (Abdu, 2019).

However, new rules are put in place to curtail violent activities thereby mounting pressures on deployment of military and paramilitary at various locations. Serving chiefs and Police Bosses are frequently appointed and removed. Violent crimes move at geometric progression. National security at times becomes hopeless and meaningless. National life is preoccupied by hysteria and total confusion from all quarters (Chinye, 2005, Adenyi, 2011)).

Historically, the current situation can be equated or a replica to the period of Industrial revolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Basically, the bottom line is between the old ways of life clashing with new ways at individual and national life. New socio economic and cultural elements have been introduced, thereby contradicting the entire processes of governance. Most times, transition periods are usually marked by degeneration and regeneration in values and orientation that are detrimental to the philosophy and principles nationhood (Damian and Kerker, 2005). The populace experienced what Emile Durkheim described as anomie. New crimes both violent and non-violent crimes become order of the day. New epidemic diseases erupt which could equally be linked to attendant problems of epileptic health services and mass poverty among others (Hahu, 1990). Social vices increased tremendously with complexities such as commercial prostitution, vagrancy, drug abuse widely known destitution and illegal begging for help and assistance among others. These indeed and many of these challenges can be compared to the current outbreak of diseases and violence in communities in Nigeria (Bamisaye and Awofeso, 2001).

The challenge of governance in the 21st century is to a large extent influenced by the communication revolution. Specifically, the internet service converted the earlier disintegrated world into what have been described in modern literature as global village. There are cases of mixed benefits and easy access to information and terrorist network across the globe. These



events and many more are symptoms of clashes of civilization and ideologies. Politics has been characterized by scandalous propaganda, gross income inequality preoccupied national economic life, art and process of governance becomes a battle ground, and above all, religion becomes over monetized and radicalized (Yusuf, 1987). There is little or no censorship in national life. The entire process of governance is faced with the challenge of maintaining harmony among interest groups at the domestic level (Abdu, 2010). Presence of the Military was observed in about thirty-two (32) states of the Federation (Mungono, 2013). Another dimension of chaotic incidence of violent attacks on the Igbos was the Maitatsine uprising and the Darnish cartoon of the Prophet of Islam. On the other hand, there is enormous quest to project and liaise with international community for recognition and development.

It is in view of the above background that this piece of work examines how combating youth restiveness and social vices could enhance self-reliance and national security in Nigeria.

## **CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **Who is a Youth?**

This concept of youth is one of the porously abused one in Nigeria's polity. Professionals and experts vary in views as to who is actually a youth. To demographers, a youth is a member of a population structure who is within the age bracket of 18-35. To a psychologist, a youth is an individual whose physiologically ripe enough to reason properly. (S) He possesses behavioral tendencies that are not considerably strong to be diligent in thinking and action (Bottommore, 1972). To a legal luminary, a youth is a minor who cannot pass reason man's test. Conventionally, a child is the one who is above the age of seventeen. To the political elite, a parlance is where abuse of the youth concept is prolific thereby making it so opened. In this work, youth refers to human creature regardless of age that have creative capacity when employed can be fruitful in the determined goal. In the political cycle, a youth is machinery used by a self-centered politician to achieve political victory for self-aggrandized purpose.

## **YOUTH RESTIVENESS**

Youth restiveness is a phenomenon of collective behavior. It is also a violent behavior that occurs in crowd or mass. Youth restiveness are broad base behavior that include riots, mob, mass hysteria, fads, fashions, rumors and public actions in a given socio-economic and political contexts. Youth restiveness occurs when people largely and youths in particular surrender their individuality and moral judgment in crowds and give hypnotic powers to the leaders who shape the crowd as they like (Ojokwu, Ukatu, and Nnakwe, 2016). In addition, youth restiveness is not organized structures or institutionalized norms. It is always reinforced by people or individuals of like minds with shared dispositions for certain form of behavior or actions.



Aside from these individuals converging for actions arising from shared beliefs and conditions, the behavior and actions are also contagious. In other words, these aggrieved individuals have been contaminated or infected by other people's thoughts, emotions and ideas. In other words, such actors are mentally infected by an emerging norm (Turner and Killian, 1993 in Ojukwu, Ukatu, Nnakwue , 2016)). The actors are the norm following human beings believed in the prevailing norms as against the conventional norms. Mostly, the youths who indulge in the act of restiveness are convinced that the conventional behavior is no longer paying. Not only had that, but even the ones who deviate received no consequences of their actions or inactions.

In this piece of work, youth restiveness has been operationalized as army like and energetic category of human population who by act of omission or commission misguided by orientation of ideology to embark on undesirable and violent activities capable of creating chaotic and ruthless circumstance in given social system or body polity (Kiriwin, 1996, Patril, 2013). Youth restiveness comes to bear the said society is been held to ransom of irrational thought and action. Youth restiveness is mostly the manifestation of dysfunctional basic institutions of that society in question. Instances could draw from failures of the family, religion, economy and polity (Damian and Kerker, 2005). It further occurs when action of the youth could lead to mass destruction of life and property. The youth under the said category can destroy the material and immaterial products of the family(life) religion mosques and churches, economy, banks, cars, buildings, governance or polity, offices, schools, hospitals and killings using devices like stones, knives, and explosives (Terrorism Act, 2011). The socio-economic and political landscape records ugly trends of humanitarian crises.

## **POLITICAL THUGGERY**

Political thuggery is a new concept in Nigeria body polity. It is easy to describe the concept than defining it. It is pervasive action influence by neurotic feelings against life and property. To put it differently, thuggery refers to bizarre expression of verbal and physical violence or threat of violence by the opposition parties and groups (Mingione, 1972 in Abdu, 2010). Thuggery occurs when expectation becomes very high and little or none of the expectations have not been met. It is a manifestation of bitterness when desirable goals and ambition are not. Thuggery includes backbiting, unguided utterances, bickering, intimidation, assault, and harassment to public office holder by taking laws in to their hands (Okonkwo, 2001, Abdu, 2010). It is a pervasion from socio-legal procedure for redress. Thuggery is a manifestation of failure in the judicial system and gross failure of the rule of law by those in authority. A nation where political thuggery is rampant, many militia groups will emerge.

However, controversy tends to arise when individual is forced to negotiate and sometimes compromise in decisions making and taking action. It is not only applicable to individuals and communities including nation states. In practical terms, self-reliance is a utopia concept both in



psychological and national life. Dependency and interdependency is a practical reality of human life (Bamisaye, Awofeso, 2011).

Nevertheless, individuals and nations get trapped in a web for trying to do away with phenomenon that cannot be removed either intentionally or practically. There has been ever-increasing confusion between the body and mind on one hand and that of nation states (Gelinas, 1994). To an individual, it is egoistic for the purpose of proving a point. The effort of image building and image management are indeed an endless battle field for individuals, communities and nations. Therefore, set the standard of self-reliance to not only the youths including the nations are mirage. To be practicable, it is more of condition rather than circumstantial. Self-reliance is a confusing and most perplexing concept in social sciences. Hence, to minimize the trends in international politics is further compounding problems and confusion in the contemporary world.

Carefully analyzed, political thuggery, drug abuse, prostitution are all vices that generate nation and international tension. At the centre of self-reliance is man but not things. The anticipated freedom linked to self-reliance has no meaning and relevance when man is not the centre stage of discourse and action. Therefore, the reconciliation between combating drug abuse and social vices on one hand self-reliance on the other is egoistic to the individual concern or the collective concern of the people as a nation. Self-reliance is indeed a mere manipulative and restrictive gesture to distract the real freedom and alienation of things versus people. The frustration the people especially the youth is the undesirable frustration of modern (Jacob, 2010).

Thus, the youths and the wider society at large conceived self-reliance as limited opportunity to enjoy freedom. The reaction to these restrictions from inflation and shrinking welfare programme people into drug abuse and all forms of social vices. The capacity people of citizens has incapacitated from self-fulfillment and aspiration. Leaders who are supposed to be captains of higher thoughts neck deep into bizarre display of wealth and power. In modern times, doors and windows are widely opened under globalization with alarming recklessness. Leaders possess little or moral justification for blaming the youths who are mostly into drugs and vices. The assertion and many depicts the view of Lord Keynes who **DRUG ABUSE**

There are a lot of misconceptions about the meaning of drugs. Literarily drug refers to any substance in liquid, gas or solid form that when added to the body chemistry it alters the functions of the body. The intent behind any drug is altering the activities of the body. There are two major classes of drugs. It is either a stimulant or depressant. Examples of stimulant are cannabis; horse powers any drug that enhances the activity of the central nervous system. While the depressants are the ones weakens the activity of the central nervous system. These include diazepam, codeine ( Ngatida, 2018). Having said this, one could attest that every day food we eat is a drug. On the other hand, Drug abuse, is the misuse of drugs. These acts include among





many others self-medication, over dosage, or any irrational intake of drugs. In this work, drug abuse has been operationally to mean honorific applicable or use of any drug with the intention of deliberately influencing the body to perform specific tasks. Comments from the abusers are always on getting high. Sometimes, it could gear towards inducing sleep or getting extra ordinary strength for self-assigned tasks or tasks assigned by the organization in which one works.

Drug abuse and related social vices continue to threaten the security of Nigeria as a people and nation. It is on record that for past two decades, Nigeria witnessed series of violent crime and violent. Most of these killings are usually linked youth restiveness. Many militia groups emerged in Nigeria's body polity. There have cases of ethnic and militia groups spread across the six geo-political zones (Abdu, 2010).

In the South West have been cases of attacks from Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC). This militia group at a point held the Nigerian state to ransom by throwing explosives in the city of Lagos (Bamisaye, Awofeso, 2011). Similar violent was recorded such as Ife- Modukeke in Osun State, Yoruba- Hausa clashes at Shagamu, The South- South also experienced yet other brazen destruction oil pipes of the oil companies. Petrol has been the major source national income. These activities drastically affected the revenue base of Nigeria. In the South- South State was also the Eleme- Okrika in Rivers state In the South East; the youths continue to threaten the corporate existence of Nigeria as a political entity (Hassan, 2005). Similarly, the Odi violence and subsequent invasion to the people of the Niger Delta marked another point of violence in the zone. The indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) over the years have agitating for sovereign nation. This group has yearning for secession for independent Sovereign nation from Nigeria. The violent situation arising from this seems to be the most threatening youth violence in the Nigeria's national life. The militia threatened election boycott in General elections since the return of democracy in 1999 (Hassan, 2005).

Furthermore, the North- North there has cases of ethnic violence attacks on the Igbos who are indigenes of the South East. The shops mostly owned by the Igbos were looted and vandalized (Iman, 2006 in Mungono, 2015). These attacks always are reprisal in nature and character. The activities of pro- government and anti- regime violent protests were recorded in the City of Kano. North central and the Benue valley have not been left out in perpetuating violence with ethnic coloration. The prolonged Tiv- Jukun and Farmers- Herders attacks among communities have been unprecedented (Abdu, 2010).

The North-East witnesses one the worst form of humanitarian crises by a terror group known as the Boko Haram. This group preaches radical Islamic ideology and doctrines detrimental to the corporate existence of Nigeria as a political entity. The activities of this Islamic sect involves adoption, kidnapping, burning of worship centres such as Churches and Mosques, The activities of the Boko Haram violence have been said to be worse than the destructions during the Nigerian



Civil war. The devastating effects of Boko Haram was not only the thousands of lives lost but schools, Churches, Mosques, Schools and government establishments were destroyed. In July 2014 an International Organization for migrants (IOM) placed the displacement matrix as at April, 2015 about 1,491,706 in Adamwa, Borno, Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba (Mungono, 2015)

Economic activities were brought to haul. In most recent times, the North West also witnessed violent extremism from cattle rustlers and kidnappers. Destructions from that zone made life unbearable for the inhabitants and beyond.

### **SELF AND SELF RELIANCE**

The concept of self continues to occur in literature of personality scholars, especially George Horton Cooley, William James, George Herbert Mead, and Sigmund Freud (Ritzer, Stephisky, 2016). The centre stage of this premise is anchored on the presumption that self is a psycho-social aspect of human behavior. Three cardinal issues are involved in self-formation and development, namely, the mind, self and society. However, the self process is seen from two phases, I. and Me whereas, I is the spontaneous, inner, creative and subject identity of an individual. On the other hand I refer to the organized attitudes of others in wider social context of the society which is socially determined. Mead define mind as the basis of self as a process and not a thing. Mind is also an inner conversation with one's self. It is not found within an individual; rather it develops within the social process and as an integral part of that process. The distinctive characteristics of the mind is the ability of an individual to call out himself not simply a response of the other but the response of the community or wider social context under which the situation arises. The mind involves thought processes oriented towards solving a problem. In other words, the real world is rife with problems, and it is the function of the mind to try to solve those problems and further permit people to operate effectively in society and the world at large. So, why people are so unhappy and experienced frustration, they will engage in youth restiveness, drug abuse and related social vices, unless they are provided with clear definition of the problem.

In this regard therefore leaders and intellectuals provide such statements that once accepted, it can help reduce uncertainty and ambiguity to the socio-economic and political predicaments (Thandike, 2005). The activities of youth restiveness and related social vices cannot be exhibited unless there is a particular event or action that takes place. It is this particular event no matter how minute can precipitate youth restiveness and violent crime. These activities and behavioral tendencies are only possible when there is partial information or at times misguided information (Ngatida, 2018). Misguided information or partial information and guide may reinforce youth restiveness and related vices. These activities are sometimes contagious arising from emerging norms as it contravenes the conventional norms of the society in context.



By and large, self-concept exists at the memory, mind, and the wider society. Broadly, self is purposely employed to explain behavioral tendencies which an individual is known or identified with (Mead in Ritzer, 2016).

Practically, self is not an object. It is indeed subjective, meaning it is perceptive understanding and explanation of actions and reactions arising from an individual. To an individual, self is an inner motive or rationale for a given behavior. Therefore, self is both psychological and societal values and virtues that explain desired behavior in which the very individual and the significant others have about a behavior. Self is an inherent contradiction navigating in the psychic of an individual for identity and esteem (Bloomsbury, 1991).

Aside from the self as an individualistic affair, it also transcends to community and national and international image processes. This scenario made self and self-image to either generate or degenerate into image crises posited that political problem of mankind to ability or otherwise of it to combine economic efficiency, social justice and individual liberty (Lewis, 1994).

## **NATIONAL SECURITY**

Nigeria is sovereign country with a Federal Constitution which stressed as we the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria having firmly and solemnly resolved to live in Unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble Sovereign Nation under God dedicated to promotion of inter-African Solidarity, World peace International co-operation and understanding. And to provide for a constitution for the purpose of promoting good governance and welfare of all the persons in our country on the principles of Freedom, Equality and Justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the Unity of purpose (1999 Constitution).

In line with this backdrop, one would be tempted ask if these noble national aspirations and objective have been attained. If yes, to what extent has the national goals and expectations been achieved or actualized? If not, what are the forces responsible for the non- attainment. From the foregoing literature, it seems National aspirations in Nigeria has fallen far below expectations. This is because having living in perpetual fear and intimidation. People suffer from real and perceived danger and national hysteria. People hold the impression that the Nigerian State has not been protected as stated in the Constitution. People through multiple voices have expressed high sense of insecurity. This is more so when there are cases of outright rejection to co-exist in different parts of Nigeria.

There have been verbal voice outcries through Mass media about social exclusion among ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. Political scenario becomes scandalous and mischievous in character and content Institutions of governance failed to perform in a right direction. Political parties are highly factionalized. There is total absence of internal democracy even within the political





parties. Everyone is bent to pursue individual or group interests. There is general political apathy among the electorates. Citizens owned allegiance and loyalty to their ethnic extractions. Religious institutions are over radicalized and monetized. Economic sphere is in shamble. There double digit inflation in the economy. Poverty rate increases at geometric rate. Social investment schemes are affected by widespread corrupt and sharp practices. The gap between the rich and the poor continue to widen. Social services are grossly inadequate. The power sector continues to be a ground for opposition parties continue to play blame game between and among regimes. Public policies are lopsided. Development agenda is urban biased and fragmented. Both public and private sectors are infected and contaminated by corrupt practices, (Alanana, 2006) .

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion, trends in youth restiveness and related social vices are not mitigated; National security will continue to threaten. More dissidents and economic dregs may at a point hold the entire country at ransom. The population of youths as unemployed is rising rapidly. So, if joblessness, especially among the energetic youths, neck-cut ambitious individuals' especially wealthy politicians can engineer collective behavior that could hamper the corporate existence of Nigeria as indivisible and insoluble country.

In order to avert these ugly and unhealthy trends, the following measures shall be put in place at all levels both locally and the international levels:

- Nigerian government in collaboration with members of international community collaborates on illicit drug management mechanisms using preventive, management and control measures.
- National action plan on youth restiveness and illicit drugs intake
- Judicial officers and related professionals required synergy in combating the menace of youth restiveness and social vices.
- Strong and co-ordinated social investment to be urgently implemented to reduce widespread poverty in Nigeria.
- Educational services which is key to all forms development to be reviewed in order to tally with international best practices.
- The media outfits to be censored in information dissemination, especially hate speeches.
- Advocacy programmes are to emphasized in sensitizing the populace on the dangers of youth restiveness and social vices.
- Researches are to be conducted to provide data base for policy actions



---

## REFERENCES

Abdu, H. (2010), Clash of Identities, State, Society, and Ethno- Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria. Published by DevReach Publishers Nigeria, Limited

Abdu, H.( 2016), Security and Governance in the North East, published by CLEEN FOUNDATION, Abuja

Adeniyi, O. (2011), Power, Politics and Death, a front row account of Nigeria under the late, President Yar, adua, Prestige This Day.

Alanana, O. O. (2006), Sociology of Development: an Introduction, Joyce Graphic Printers Publishers.

Bamisaye, O. A., Awofeso, O.,(2001), Democracy and Democratic Practice in Nigeria, Issues, Challenges,and Prospects. Vol. 1.

Bloomsbury (1991) , MPS For Hire, The Secret World of Lobbying, The Press and politicalDissent.

Bottomore, T. B. (1972), Sociology, a guide to problems and Literature, Revised Edition, Uwin University Books.

Chinye, C. C. (2005) The Nigerian Factor,, Amazingrifiks Limited.

Cole, J. 1977), The Poor of the Earth,MacGraw Hill

Damian, B. Kerker, J ( 2005) Moral and Discipline, Obeta Gentemental Press Federal Republic of Nigeria, Official Gazette, 2011 Constitution (As AMENDED), The National Industrial Court.

Gelinas, J. Freedom From Debt, The The Reappropriation of Development Through Financial Self- Reliance, Zed Books LTD.

Hahu, P. (1994), Understanding your Health, Mac Graw Hill.

Hassan, A. S. (1999), Nigeria under Democratic Rule (1999-2003), Vol. 1, Kembin Press LTD

Jacob, M. (ed) (2010), The Fourth Republic and Integration in Nigeria, (1999- 2009), Aboki Publishers.

Kirwin, B.(ed), ( 1996) Ideology, Development and Social Welfare, Canadian Perspectivees, Third Edition, Canadian Scholars Press, Inc.



Lewis, O. (1994), Human Right Made Easy, Introductory Text on Human Right, Arts and Angets LTD.

Mingione, E. (1981) Social Conflict and the City, Basil Blackwell Oxford. Mohammed, H. (ed) (2015), The Patterns and Dynamics of Party Politics in Nigerias youth refund, Hall Marks Publishing P, S.

Ngatida, A. M. (2018) Drug Abuse, The cankerworm Raving our Society, Sky Digital Prints

Ojukwu, U. G., Ukatu, C. N., Ohuoha, M. I. Nnakwue, N. (2016) Fundamentals of Political Sociology, RHYCE KEREX Publishers.

Oke, M. (2005), Beyond Materialism and Spiritualism, Hope Publications.

Okoro, B. C.(2002), Law of Employment in Nigeria, Concept Publication LTD. Okonkwo and NAIH, (2001) Criminal Law in Nigeria, Spectrum Books Limited. Ugwuoke, C. U. (2010) Criminology, Explaining Crime in the Nigeria Context, great AP Publishers LTD.

Ornga, C. S. (2009), Anti- Corruption in Nigeria, a Paradox: Aboki Publishers.

Ritzer and Stepnisky, J. (2016), Sociological Theory, MacGraw Hill.

Patil, A. R. (2013) Community Organization and Development: An Idian Perspective., PHI Learning Private Limited.

Terrorism, Act, 2011 and Money Laundering Act, 2011 (As AMENDED).

Thandike, M. (2005) African Intellectuals, Rethinking Politics, Language, Gender and Development, CODESRIA Books.

Yusuf, B. (1987), the Manipulation of Religion in Nigeria, 1977- 1987, Vanguard Printers and Publishers.