

## Appraisal of the Role of Youth in Nation Building

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### ABSTRACT

Appraisal of the roles of youth in nation building is a major issues in any given community. The paper is to identify the indices of nation building in order to facilitate youth readiness to achieve them. This study is analyzed based on the inadequate financing by the government to the youth in nation building. The quantitative data were collected through questionnaire and interview conducted because of the need to look for commonly held attribute and to cover a large proportion in order to capture variation. Twelve (12) in-depth interviews were conducted in order to generate data from prominent politicians in the areas of study. Also, youth play a vital role or attribute in order to build or develop a nation. Recommendation based on the findings are; nation should invest in human capital of their society (especially the youth) by way of sound quality and affordable education. Parents, teachers, and government should provide avenue for youth to develop their potentials. Education and training should also be given.

**Keynote:** Appraisal, Role, Youth, Nation, Building.

### INTRODUCTION

Youth particularly those under 18 years of age are said to be 46% of the local global population. In the United State of America, youth below age of 18 years constitute 26% of her total population. Youth are endowed with

certain future and gift that should be properly harness or trapped for the betterment of their immediate societies. It should be cleared that while some of these gift and features are talent others are very active.

Youth are the great assets that any nation can have (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Not only are they legitimately regarded as the future leaders, they are potentially and actually the greatest investment for a country development, they serve as good measure of the extent to which a country can produce as well as sustain itself. The extent of their vitality responsible conduct and roles in society in positively correlated with the development of their country.

According to Nigerian youth development policy, the youth comprise all young persons of age 18 to 35 year who are citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This category represent the most volatile and yet the most vulnerable segment of the population.

Youth has been defined as individual male or female above ten (10) or below thirty five (35) years of age. The youth has also been viewed as a concept. Define youth as a period in an individual life which runs between end of childhood and entry into the world of work. People in this age bracket definitely constitute a sizeable chunk of nation population on which the burden of nation building falls.

In (1985) when IBB was the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, students were told that they were the leaders of tomorrow. Twenty five years later, the same man said unequivocally in an interview with the BBC Hausa service that the youth are not prepared to take political leadership in the country.

There is the unfortunate mindset of the baby Boomers of Nigeria (those presently in their 60s and 70s) and it is what has informed the pattern of leadership success in the ruling party and much so that a 60 year old is the national youth leaders of the party. They don't have the right to think this way, when so called youth in Port-Harcourt shamelessly went ahead to protest the Farouk Lawan subsidy report which was held by all right thinking Nigerians as a courageous step in the right direction.

Why would this not be so when the future of the youth has been mortgaged for personnel gain advantage of instruction and enlightenment because of the wreckage, neglect and rape of the educational sector for almost three decades when the value system has been a bad example of leadership?

Nigeria is a nation where youth are over 70% of the population that are under 35 years of age and this call for a rude awakening on the part of Nigerian youth in the area of responsibility. If we are to divert destruction from the cold hand of the baby boomers and their strokes in government. We have a certain mixed feeling concerning the future of Nigeria, it is one of the permission and optimism. My permission mirrors of the statement made by the eminent Professor Samuel Aluko (of a blessed memory). When he said in his article titled the Cale for Rapid Industrialization in Nigeria in April, 1970.

Despite the government commitment in trying to develop the youth in nation building with numerous efforts and roles through financial assistant, non-governmental organisation also assist in provision of financial and technical support to see that Nigerian youth contribute in nation building but up till date success is not achieved. Social media also have an impact on the youth towards nation building. This include the inability of the youth to identify the indices of nation building.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This paper will provide in-depth insight on youth nation building. Opinions from different authors will be utilized to provide a better theoretical understanding of the nation building, this paper is basically non-empirical since information is collected directly without changing the environment.

Youth club and voluntary organisation in settings are concerned with maintenance and promotion of areas where some vital social amenities are low or not available at all, for example hospital, clinics, schools and other various public gainful amenities in the society, which we believe must be carryout by the youth in every aspect. In view of this, it is clear to see how helpful and successful is the part of youth club and association or organisation is to our society. This club of youth and association contribute immensely in the rest creation of maximum social

function that they bring out positive change in the society where necessary. There is no nation that can attain a desired development, peace and progress without taken the cognizance of crucial role of youth, they further said that full mobilization of youth making them fully involve in the execution of developing project and gainfully employed in various field of human development, endeavor necessary paraphernalia and their unique position in nation building and to simply tag them as misfit and over-jealous is to decrial the progress toward rapid development.

The youth are a powerful force to be reckoned with in every sphere of life. For example agricultural science and technology, sport and culture, the civil servant and the future of the great country lie to a large extent in their hands.

The youth are therefore a variable ingredient or driving force and instrument for the population of this country in the technological race that has turned the world into global village. No nation will attain the desire development when youths are neglected and they are not empowered to pursue tangible productive means of livelihood, its therefore not an overstatement to say that the youth occupy a central and very strategies role in the country development. They are the caterpillar and bulldozer that are needed to bulldoze the country to higher height.

The former managing director to the New Nigeria Newspaper Limited. Alhaji. Sidi Sirajo in 1989 stated that the decision of the then administration under General Badamasi Babangida to commit the future of the nation in the hands of the youths by encouraging them to participant fully in politics was described as a welcome ideas. Mr. Sidi expressed his view on the matter at a symposium on a new breed politician in 1992 and beyond. This symposium was organized for at the Kaduna State youth service corps member on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1986. He further said if the gap forth general (IBB) vision of the primary if youth as determinant of the new political culture of their republic, it is the impact for youth and the new breed will be wipe out in our national political history for a thousand youth to come.

The speaker (Sidi) was trying to emphasize the vital role that youth can play in political life of our country. He observed that the population of youth is higher than any age group in the country and they are economically valuable in nation building. The managing director also refer to the vision of the general in which the president made nation new political culture of the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) republic. He said if the third republic fails then there is no hope for Nigeria again. In this case, the statement clearly showed the important and role of youths in nation building.

This paper seeks to understand the role of youth in nation building. It is essentially a study of impact of youth contribution to sustainable development. Based on this, the paper will be situated within the ambit of new public management theory because the new management theory is the transition from process and procedure to an arrangement that is workable, practicable and result oriented. The theory emphasizing on good conceptualization of the effective service. The new public management theory is a relentless movement in the direction of greater transparency in resource allocation, decentralization of management authority and performance management through service quality (Pollit, 1996). New public management theory therefore captures the basis of institutional and organisation restructuring as an attempt to raise its performance by improving the quality of service delivery. It is result focused rather than the process of result. The theory is concerned primarily with how to deliver public foods efficiently and equitably (Shah, 2006:6).

The new public management theory came up with different concepts for performance and principles to achieve it (Hood, 1991). Basically, Hood identified the principle as accountability and efficiency; reduction of public sector expenditure; improvement in resource use through labour discipline; flexibility in decision making; competition in the public sector through decentralization and emphasis on result and not procedure.

Jones and Thomson (1999), interpreted the new public management as the five (5) Rs, they are restructuring to focus on core competence, reengineering of work process, radical, radical organisation reinvention, realignment by introducing activity based costing and responsibility budgeting, rethinking by reconceptualizing public sector bureaucracies or learning organisation. They focus on models on new public management and conceptualized four categories of model as follows; efficiency model, downsizing and decentralization model, management of change model and public service orientation to change model. These model are developed to engage effective service delivery.

It was also observed that the new public management theory centres on accountability, transparency, democratization and citizen participation. The new public management theory was an effort to improve government service delivery to the citizenry because of the expectations of the people. In many developing countries of Latin America and Africa, the new public management, was a paradigm shift from autocracy to democracy in the dawn of political pluralism. New public management becomes avenue through which democratic governance will transform into a better governance that will then lead to public policies that are technically efficient and effective and also responsive to the need of large section of the citizenry. The main current of the new public lecture is concerned not with what to do but how to do it better. It argues for an incentive environment in which leaders are given flexibility in the use of resources but held accountable for results. Top-down controls are thus replaced by a bottom-up focus on result (Shah, 2006:10). The emerging focus on client orientation and result – based accountability is encouraging civil service to innovate in many parts of the world. As a deviation from the principles of the new public management, the civil service abysmal performance in Nigeria can be viewed and understood as a carryover effect of this deviation. New public management has captured vividly the reason for the procedure without results of civil service operation in Nigeria. It can be said that various civil service reform in Nigeria did not consider the option of new public management as alternative to excessiveness, therefore, policies were very good on paper and implementation and workability remain a tall dream. The civil service in Nigeria is still being explainable using the old bureaucracy that depends on degree of rigidity of rules, formal structuring and inefficiency, which in advertently affect sustainable development at all levels of government in Nigeria.

Therefore, the framework underlying the youth in nation building is at risk, youth is currently quite limited and has been identified by youth service provider as significance when submitting funding proposal for nation building program. The term “nation building” is used here to include a wide range of early intervention on youth health promotion which is at risk, such as drop in spaces online support service camps or retracts peer support groups, education and skills building programs.

The peer support programs are excluded. The evidence base relating to youth in nation building which promote healthy social and emotional development and mental well-being is at risk, youth is relatively small when compared to the youth education focused on topic such as adolescent, Sexual health building, smoking and drug prevention.

The great diversity of nation building programs and target groups crates significant challenges for developing a universal theoretical frame work.

## CONCLUSION

Youth in nation building are useful in order to prepare them for leadership role in the future. In a situation whereby right education is given and enabling environment is provided for them to realize their full potentials there is no possibility of these youths to be derailed into violence. Nation needs to borrow a leaf from Malaysia as it is the only nation free from polities, social and economic turned into which her counterpart are plunged. Youth want to be assured of secured and promising future and since government is able to provide such assurance and enabling environment, there is peace harmony and progress.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the findings availed by the study, it is recommended hereby;

- The nation should invest in human capital of their society (especially the youth) by way of sound qualitative and affordable education.
- Youths are vital resource of a nation hence effort should be geared toward tapping them in order to guard against being used for destructive purpose.
- The nation should ensure that miles of laws are facilitated, respected and followed.
- Youth should properly engaged in other separate energy for the greater glory of the society and humanity as a whole.
- Parents, teachers and government should provide avenue for youth to develop their talents.

- They should be given civil education or training
- The institution of family should be rejuvenated and repositioned to play it vital role in the society.

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