Youth Alienation in Nigeria

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The mission of CLEEN Foundation is to promote public safety, security and accessible justice through empirical research, legislative advocacy, demonstration programmes and publications, in partnership with government and civil society.

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Acknowledgement

Preface

The youth have been aptly described as "the greatest assets that any nation can have (National Youth Policy, 1991)." Not only are they legitimately regarded as future leaders they are also the greatest investment any country can have for its future development. Young people serve as a barometer for measuring the extent to which a country can reproduce as well as sustain itself. The extent of vitality and responsibility displayed by the youth and the roles they play in society are positively correlated with the development of a country (National Youth Policy, 1991).

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, successive governments at the federal, state and local levels recognizing the importance of the youth population have adopted policies and developed programmes and projects aimed at integrating and improving the lot of young people in the country. These have ranged from in-school education programme for physical and mental development of the youth; out-of-school programme aimed at shaping the character and behaviour of the youth, as well as promoting competitive spirit and national unity.

In the 70's and 80's, following improved revenue base of the government as a result oil boom, the Federal Government elevated programme of youth development by the establishment of a Ministry of Youths and Sports, and increased funding of youth such programme. State Governments also established similar Ministries and initiated their own youth programmes.

Similarly, a National Youth Policy was adopted in 2001 by the Obasanjo government. The document took into account the range of problems faced by the youth, anticipated the challenges they were likely to confront and outlined appropriate objectives, policies, programmes and implementation plans which were supposed to be put in place to empower the youth to take charge of their own destiny as well as make them active participants in the shaping of the political and economic destiny of our nation. Importantly, the Policy recognized that youths are not a homogeneous category and that differences exist among them.

In spite of the foregoing, the situation of young people in Nigeria remains precarious and the youth policy has been implemented more in the breach. As a result, young people in Nigeria remain marginalized and alienated in terms of voice, empowerment and integration in the national scheme of things. This is illustrated by the alarming rate of youth unemployment and underemployment, involvement in violent and cyber crimes and willingness to leave the country in droves through unimaginably dangerous routes.

In response to this challenge, the CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with the Ford Foundation organized a national conference on youth alienation in Nigeria, which held in Calabar, Cross River States on June 16-17, 2010. This publication is a compilation of the proceeding of the conference.

It is divided into three sections. Section I focuses on opening speeches. Section II reproduced papers presented at the conference. Finally, section III contains the communiqué and report of proceedings of the conference.

Innocent Chukwuma
Executive Director

Part One

Opening Remarks

Welcome Remarks
By
Innocent Chukwuma,
Executive Director, CLEEN Foundation

Introduction

On behalf of the CLEEN Foundation I warmly welcome you all to this conference on Youth Alienation in Nigeria, being organized by the CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with the Ford Foundation West Africa office, as part of activities to mark Nigeria's 50th independent anniversary and Ford Foundation's 50th year of granting making on governance and human rights in Nigeria.

The theme of conference is carefully chosen to highlight one of the fundamental challenges that have confronted Nigeria over the past fifty years, which has been variously described as the youth problem. Simply put, we have not been able to harness the enormous potentials of our young people to develop our society. Rather, the young have been made to bear the brunt of our unwillingness to plan for today not to talk of tomorrow and yet they are humored and cajoled as future leaders.

And so today out of desperation and exclusion, young people are either leaving the country in droves through all kinds of illegal routes in search of non-existent greener pastures or stayed behind to commit all kinds of nefarious activities ranging from armed robbery, ethno-religious violence, cultism, cybercrime to political thuggrey. The latest being religious fundamentalism and terrorism!

Since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria has taken some steps to address the youth problem. These include the adoption of the National Youth Development Policy in and the passage of the Child Rights Act. These important policy and legislative milestones were put in place to encourage significant investments in youth development through provision of

educational, social and economic opportunities for the young. For instance, the National Youth Policy takes into account the range of problems faced by the youth, anticipates the challenges that are likely to confront them and outlines appropriate objectives, policies and programmes and implementation plans which should be put in place so as to empower the youth. The policy also recognizes that youth are not a homogenous category and contains provisions that address the specific and special needs of each of several identified group target groups.

However, since the adoption of the policy and passage of the Act with a fanfare and flowering speeches by then president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, not much has been heard about the implementation. In the case of the Child Rights Act, the provisions have been observed more in the breach. From all social, economic and political indicators, young people today are more alienated and excluded from the mainstream of the Nigerian society than they have ever been in the history of the country. You only have to look at the data coming from international and intergovernmental organizations to which Nigeria belongs to, such as those periodically produced by the UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank to appreciate the.

There is therefore the need for a platform to enable us remind ourselves about the time bomb we are toying with and more importantly what could be done to reverse the trend.

Objectives of the conference
This conference, which is the third in a series of four conferences planned by CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with the Ford Foundation around Nigeria's independence anniversary, is aimed at providing opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on the issue of youth alienation in Nigeria and suggest measures that could be implemented in order to integrate our youth into the mainstream of our society.

We expect to produce two sets of products at the end of the conference:

- A communiqué articulating the views of participants on ways and means of dealing with corruption and bad governance in Nigeria.
- Publication and extensive dissemination of the proceedings of the conference in a monograph, which will hopefully contribute to scholarship, national discourse and action on the subject matter.

Structure of the conference

The conference is divided into three sessions to provide participants ample opportunities to contribute in the discussion. In the first session after this opening, we will have the presentation of two commissioned papers on the theme of the conference. The first, which will be presented by Dr. Abubakar Momoh, an Associate Professor of Political Science and Head, Department of Political Science, Lagos State University, which will focus on strategies for breaking the vicious cycle of youth Alienation in Nigeria.

The second paper will be delivered by Dr. Urban Ericson who would provide comparative experience from Sweden in dealing with youth Alienation. After the presentations, we will have time for responding to the presentations, which will take us to lunch.

After lunch, we will go into more focused discussions on three main issues, using the principles of identifying core blockages and recommending high impact solutions. The final session, which will take place tomorrow morning, will focus on report back to plenary, adoption of a communiqué and closing.

Compliments

We thanks Ford Foundation for its support over the past fifty years to governance and human rights work in Nigeria and for collaborating with the CLEEN Foundation to facilitate these series of national conversations. We hope their support would be complemented by a resolve on our part to work tirelessly to rescue this great nation from its current challenges and set it on the part of actualizing its enormous potentials in uplifting the livelihood of its people and giving every citizen, including the youth, a sense of national belonging regardless of their gender, ethnicity, faith, age, socio-economic status,

physical and psychological status, sexual orientation and other diversities that make us a truly great nation and the hope of the black race.

Thank you all.

Innocent Chukwuma
Executive Director

Part Two

Paper Presentations

Area Boys and Youth Alienation in Nigeria
By
Abubakar Momoh

Introduction

All key statistics in Africa show that the youth are in demographic majority and political minority. This has been the trend since colonial era when the youth, all over Africa, were at the forefront in the struggle for decolonisation, political independence and social liberation. Virtually all the key nationalists in Africa started as student union activists in Europe, America and Africa. And many of them, who attended the Manchester pan-African conference in 1945, did so as student –nationalist activists. Students have also been the vanguard and cadres of both old and new social movements in Africa. Their struggles had been animated by youth idealism and anxiety informed by a lived essentialism and social history.

Globally, there is both a universal and specific context for the understanding of youth politics and youth sub-culture, and these had been informed or determined by the role and nature of productive forces, the reigning ideational system, the balance of forces, peer influence and perception of generational, gender, racial, and even class divisions. These had resulted in the May 1968 revolts in Europe and America, and Senegal. The South African students' anti-apartheid struggles of 1976, following the murder of Pietersen, which rekindled global interest in anti-apartheid struggles and the increasing world unity and solidarity among students' movements, including International University Students Association (IUS).

This paper seeks to achieve three things. First it sets the historical, economic and social context for understanding changing youth attitudes in Nigeria. Second it engages the discourse of economic adjustment and the youth bulge and demonstrates how it is not the cause but the consequence of youth alienation. It also in the process shows that indeed, the youth bulge is a myth that is romanticised in order to play into the wider politics of the "failed state" in

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Africa, and to indeed show that the youth in Africa is a "lost generation" Third the paper examines the identity of the Area Boys: who they are and what they do?. In the process it shows how Area Boys have been alienated and marginalised in Nigeria. And how, indeed, they struggle to reproduce their material life and in the process they became both victims and agents of the urban social milieu.

The Economic and social Context
By the late 80s the radicalism and idealism of students and youth in many African countries had waned and degenerated into materialism, cultism and child soldiers (Abdullah, 1998, and El-Kenz, 1996). This is because, as the case of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone made up of lumpen and marginals were inspired by the ideas of Frantz Fanon and Cabral, among others that were taught in Forah Bay College. This now found concrete expression in an instrumentalisation by those who wanted to take over power by force viz Johnny Koromah and Foday Sankoh, who promised the Sierra Leonean youth better life if they joined in the overthrow of the legitimate government. These youth joined both the RUF and the Soldiers/Rebel (Sobel) movement.

However, cardinal to their support had been the expectation of political empowerment and improvement in material standards of the youth. This is because structural adjustment programme in Africa had produced what Abdullah called the "Youth man" or "prolonged youthhood". By this he meant that many youth who by classical definitions fell between the age bracket of 18-25, found that there youth life continued beyond 25 years, often extending to even 45 years. This is explained by the simple fact that many youth could not graduate into adulthood. Since they could not graduate into adulthood because they could not take charge of responsibility that the'rite of paassage' into adult life brings with it viz marriage, meeting family needs and obligation, catering to the needs of parents and the extended family and so on. Hence even after attaining the full blown age (if not status of) men, such people still remained youth because they could not meet the obligation of adulthood in Africa. Hence they remained youth, ably qualified as "youth man".

The counter position to Abdullah's position is that SAPs, civil wars and HIV/ AID pandemic, among others, had reduced the life span in Africa, thus making the definition of an adult by chronological age highly tenuous. Hence life expectancy had fallen to as low as 42 years in some parts of Africa, it is reasoned that by such qualification the 25 years age limit to youth may no longer be tenable, as it needs to be further reduced to say 20 or even 18 years!. The more crucial point is that, economic hardship resulting from SAP, wars and HIV/AIDs, had reduced life expectancy and above all had made child-parenting a common feature in Africa. In Liberia, children and youth of ages 1-25 years constitute over 70 per cent of the population, ditto for Sierra Leone. This is a result of almost two decades of civil war. In Malawi, Botswana, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya, the population of those countries is youthful due to the HIV/AID pandemic. Whereas in Nigeria, Niger and Senegal, the SAPs have made the population youthful.

As Ali El-Kenz (1996), aptly demonstrated SAP has made the youth in Africa to resort to new modes of livelihood basically hinged on survival on the fringes. This has created a class or subalterns in the youth beyond the derisive youth sub-cultures often associated with urban life. This plays out in contradictory forms resulting in both youth agency and victimhood. The reality of African urban life shows this quite graphically whether in the role of young women who participated in supporting the sexual desires of men in the Sierra Leone and Liberian war, the "war wives" in Mozambique, the children who were victims of mines in post Angolan UNITA insurgency, youth militia in Congo Brazzaville and Child soldiers in DR Congo civil war, and the role of youth Somalia warlords, which later found outlet in the lucrative piracy and political militancy expressed as religious fundamentalism.

SAPs led to the further disillusionment and disempowerment of the African youth finding vent in all kinds of social and political outcomes-both negative and positive, making the youth in Africa both victims and agents. One dominant feature of Africa, as a result of SAPs is the emergence of lumpen elements, de classe and subalterns. This had devastating and disempowering social and political consequences for Africa. This is because adjustment reforms implied cut in social services, the rolling back of the state, divestiture programmes

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and the commercialisation and privatisation of public enterprises. By 1998 over 36 African countries were practising adjustment reforms with none of them coming out successful? Even Uganda and Ghana that were showcased as models turned out to be heavily donor-supported, Dollarized and NGOs-driven economies. This could not be sustained for long and that reality dawned on the two countries. The World Bank admitted that SAPs failed in Africa. But the IMF said that SAP failed in Africa because it was badly implemented by African Heads of States and government. Curiously, Asia, and in particular, South East Asia, did not experience SAPs. This partly explains the so-called miracle of the Asian Tigers. This experience was unlike African countries that were imposed with harsh external conditionalities, enjoyed economic protection, subsidy and external markets, depending on the country involved. Hence while growth was witnessed in Asia between 1982 and 2000, soaring/alarming poverty was achieved in Africa due to the implementation of SAPs.

The Youth Bulge in Africa

SAP and its effect are often abstracted in the analysis of the social and demographic trends in Africa. It has become increasingly a fascination to explain the youth crises in Africa through a neo-Malthusian thesis of the youth bulge. The impetus for this was provided by Robert Kaplan. He starts his alarmist analysis by claiming that "Africa is a universe of meaningless violence" (1994: 26). His conclusions derive from just study of post-conflict Sierra Leone which he claimed is characterised by:

> "disease, over population, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources refugee migrations, the increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders; and the empowerment of private armies, security firms, and international drug cartel…." (Kaplan, 1994a: 46)

This was now linked to the "greed and grievance" thesis, a formulation which was linked to rebellion and civil wars in Africa (Collier, 2000); it was suggested that population density and demographic trends contributed to wars in Africa. (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; and Worku, 2007). It is contended that young people fight in Africa because Africa is the poorest continent where the

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population is young or youthful and militia life offers training and livelihood opportunities (Richards and Peters, 1998).

This is what led to the notion of the "Youth bulge". The youth bulge is defined as a situation where youth of the age 15 years to 24 years to the entire adult population is predisposed to violence. (Worku, 2007: 34). The claim is that sub-Saharan Africa has the highest fertility rate in the world, and following the raging effect of HIV/AIDs, those who are left are the youth, with an average youth bulge of 36% which is said to be two times that of developed world. The mindset is that traditionally the youth have been responsible for fighting wars worldwide.

This formulation was further deepened by Unrik Urdal who argues that population pressure have led to internal armed conflicts because population pressure led to resource depletion, and distribution, resource scarcity, economic stagnation and marginalisation, resource competition and therefore armed conflicts. This has resulted in what he calls "generational clash" rather than "civilisational clash". (Urdal, 2006: 607; 2007). Urdal contends:

> "… youth bulges provide greater opportunities for violence through the abundant supply of youth with low opportunity cost, and with an expectation that stronger motives for violence may arise as youth bulges are more likely to experience institutional crouching, in particular unemployment" (Urdal, 2006: 607) .

But Hope and Sommers have challenged this formulation. Using the Rwanda genocide to explain the youth crises, Sommers argues that the correct question to ask is: "… why certain people are so threatened by some young men rather than why those young people seem so threatening..." Because the irony of urban Africa is that the youth "… are a demographic majority that sees itself as an outcast minority" (1996: 16). The youth bulge thesis states that the youth are angry, marginalised violent and dangerous in sub Saharan Africa (ibid: 4) he contends that the case of Rwanda shows that the youth after the genocide were afraid of returning to the rural areas for fear of retribution, that indeed, they were accused of organising the genocide while indeed, young

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people were both killers and killed, rapists and raped, looters and looted (Sommers, 2006: 8). Hence youth violence should be conceptualised in a dialectical rather than a linear way.

Hope, on his part, uses other indicators to explain why the population in Africa is rising. He attributes this to poor public health and commercial services (such as clean water); low income and poor education, housing and food consumption and high fertility due to early marriage, reproduction and contraceptive behaviour, low education among female, cultural factors in childbearing, under employment and unemployment, overstretched urban facilities in housing and urban services and urban bias in development policy overstretched health facilities (Hope, 1998, 345-354).

Alienation and Subalterns

Alienation in classical Marxism entails the separation of the worker from the products of his/her labour, the separation of ownership from the means of production, the inability to influence managerial policies, lack of control over conditions of employment and lack of control over the immediate work process (West, nd: 2). As a result the worker becomes dominated by impersonal market forces. Labour itself becomes commoditised and a relationship of commodity fetishism exists. And the labourer becomes dehumanised.

Sloam has applied the concept of alienation in the understanding of the role or relationship of youth in British politics. He argues that youth are not merely showing apathy to politics but are alienated from the political system and from conventional politics or electoral politics reduced to voting. He contends that there is need to address "youth-specific" explanations for their non-participation in politics, noting that there is need to interrogate youth individualism, youth perception of political participation, youth interpretation of politics and youth reasons for participation or non-participation in politics (2007: 549). This is even more so, because problems relating to youth cannot be individualised but should be seen in the general context of societal problems, instead of being seen as part of character flaws, or personal failing or even their being criminalised. Such problems as youth alcoholism, poverty, joblessness, homelessness and illiteracy should be posed in a wider context.

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This is more so because youth is no longer a national priority as welfare is now constructed primarily within the language of the market (Giroux, 2008). To meet the challenge of alienation and individualism, the youth have found complex network of breaking through conventional problem-solving means to self-help. One example is the role of ex-combatants in creating the Bike Riders Association (BRA) in spite of the DDR project in Sierra Leone, thus creating new youth enclaves in urban neighbourhoods which seek to empower the youth (Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010, 261). This shows that through sub-cultures and agency, the youth can empower themselves.

The concept of subalterns was first used by Antonio Gramsci, he sought to find a political vocabulary and contest in Latin/Italian politics and Marxist class distinction. His original claim was that the bourgeoisie and proletariat stood in two distinctive class categories and that the proletariat relates, as a subaltern, to the bourgeoisie-that is they are marginalised and dispossessed. But he also tried to show that the proletariat was not the only subaltern group, but merely constituted one of the many subaltern populations. He used this in explaining alienation in industrial capitalism. However, Ranajit Guha used the case of South Asia and especially the caste and racial classification in India to explain subalternity.

> "…Subaltern appears as agents caught in the web of the hegemonic power and their struggles emerge as a consequence of their consciousness of being in exploitative condition! (Mignolo, 2005: 382)

To Raman, "… being subaltern signifies the ability of the subject to speak out and to play a pivotal role in the struggle for an alternative hegemony…. (2008: 83)
To him the role of subaltern cosmopolitanism is to struggle against the advance of corporate capitalism, by building networks within the local community as part of the world wide community of human beings by creating "spaces of hope" to use the politics of everyday life to rehumanise society and through relevant global ethics and sustainable human rights (ibid: 84)

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Who is an Area Boy?

An Area Boy or girl is not just any youth in the streets of Lagos. They are neither children in the streets or Children of the streets. They are essentially neighbourhood youth who are found in various neighbourhood of Lagos (Momoh, 2000). This has also spread to not only Mainland Lagos but other parts of South West Nigeria. The concept of Area Boyism (Ismail, 2008) has resulted in the rise of the need to distinguish between Area Boys and those who share the Area boys' syndrome.

There are those youth who are alienated and marginalised who are not necessarily Area Boys but they share in the tendencies of the Area boys. They live in slumps and ghettos and seek livelihood conditions through criminal means. Many of them share multiple identities, both negative and positive.

There are three perspectives to the definition of the Area boys, there is the historical definition which connects the Area Boys to the Boma and Jaguda boys of the 1940s and 1950s, this is essentially because they shared some common traits of picket-pocketing (Heap, 1996, and Fourchard, 2006) Whereas there are those who connect them to cultural life of Lagos, hence they are defined as Omo Adugbo, Omo Area, government Pickin and untouchables (Momoh, 2000) The third definition connects the Area boys to the economic crises of structural adjustment reforms (Omitoogun, 1994, 1997; and Adisa, 1994). This school of thought claims that SAP created social misery and mass poverty and this had negative impact on urban Lagos. A related development is the high rate of school turnover connected with the Free Education programme of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) in 1979 which by 1983 could not find outlets to tertiary institutions following heavy turnover and drop outs from the High schools in Lagos.

One of the key defining attributes of the Area boys is that they are rooted to their communities and neighbourhood and easily identifiable within them. Many of them are hooked on drugs and eke a living through multiple modes including working closely with the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW). The most defining feature of the Area boys is that they are located in *Junctions* and *Bases*. All kinds of activities take place within these sites which

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in the least constitute subaltern sub-culture where a new community, complex relationship and transactions are carried out. Where global and local cultural and political exchanges take place. And where a sense of subaltern citizenship, identity, and solidarity is forged.

To be sure, there are Area girls and Area fathers. Many of the Area girls are closely associated with the Area boys; they sexually and socially service the Area Boys, while eking a living on the margins especially in the social sites of the Area boys called Junctions and Bases. Whilst the Area fathers are mostly Area Boys who had crossed particular age bracket (often between 40 and 50 years) and their patrons. Some of them suffer withdrawal syndrome due to drug conception while others have retired from Area Boyism and merely serve as mentors to Area Boys.

Three Arenas of Alienation: Economic, Social and Political
Lagos Island is the commercial nerve centre of Lagos State and indeed Nigeria and the headquarters of many Multinational corporations and banks. However, in this context, the Area Boys who are often children or grand children of landlords and land owners of Lagos, suffer what I call the"geography of oppression". By this is meant that the Area Boys who live in make shift homes, shanties and even slums. They survive on the margins by eking alive through menial means of income including street vendors, who engage in such vocation partly out of lack of education but also because of high rate of unemployment. Some of the Area Boys who are university graduates are unable to secure employment. They are often used to harass Igbo traders and tenants on the Lagos Island for the purpose of extorting money.

The Area Boys are politically instrumentalised. They are used by politicians of all shades and they support them indiscriminately giving them token sum to share and to buy drugs. Although the political role of the Areas boys in the struggle for the de-annulment for the June 12, 1993 elections was seen as progressive and commendable (Momoh, 2003), however, increasingly the Area boys have not taken an ideologically- inspired position in their politics. They have indiscriminately supported both the politicians of the Action Congress

(AC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and they had been used as party thugs and as political hirelings during elections.

Four cases of Agency and Victimhood of Area Boys*
♦   **At Omididun/Ricca Area with McKay**
The FGD with McKay (real name – Makanjuola, 47 years old, 6ft 2inches' tall) and his group was incisive. He took us round his area and introduced some of his men. His area of influence has a total of five streets on Lagos Island and some shanties where people lived in semi-detached structures with domestic animals. The area is an enclosed residence having petty trading structure. McKay is huge, tall dark and complexion . He has a physique of a boxer in his French Safari suit. He detested questions on gangsters, rebels, extortions and violence in the neighbourhood. His expression has an elitist inclination. Claiming that his role and interest is to protect and secure peace in the community. Due to limited expression and fluency in English language, Mckay instructed other members who are able to express themselves to speak on behalf of the group. He sent for the Honourable Councillor of Ricca Ward to speak on behalf of the neighbourhood. (The Councillor is a graduate of Lagos State University). The age range of the group is between 30 and 49. Evidently, this group is not so poor. In the course of the discussions, cross sections of them excused themselves intermittently to receive phone calls. Most interestingly, the findings reveal that the group meets as from 11a.m till 7p.m or beyond on a daily basis; its members do work in either government establishments, or have a trade. They have the quality of responsible husbands taking care of families. Some of them have performed pilgrimage to Mecca during Hajj period, while others, stressed they have been to the United Kingdom for holiday.

McKay is works for the politicians. He is well experienced in a manner that he keeps or maintains peace in neighbourhoods. He has authority over huge number of young men aside his group members in and out of Lagos Island. To some extent, he is a friend to the police and he collects stipend from the Lagos Island local government authority. During the course of this study, there was fuel scarcity; he simply walked into the Gas Station on Igbosere road to pick some fuel ahead of a queue of over 50 people. He is well known in Lagos

Island. Amongst Lagos Island politicians, of both PDP and AC – Mckay is a force to be reckoned with.

Asake of Isale-Eko

Asake was elusive. Titi made several telephone calls to reach him. He gave but refused to keep appointments at different times. Asake who coordinates youth gangs in different neighbourhoods at Isale-Eko avoided the FGD because he did not know its purpose. He is unlettered. The basis of his elusiveness is that he was not interested to talk about youth involvement in politics of the state; also, he has an already existing case at Adeniyi-Adele Police Station. He is a major actor, having been alleged to be involved in killings. He had led several street fights of which lives were claimed. He works for some politicians in Lagos and he is influential in his way. We concluded that he is an AC supporter.

♦ **Kunle-Poly of Idumota**

Kunle is his real name. . According to a source (Lekan **a.k.a Votron**), Kunle has Ordinary National Degree Certificate from Ogun State Polytechnic; and that being the reason for the name, Kunle-Poly. After several visits to Idumota, he was elusive. In the long run, one "Yeye" called Tawa, who smokes hemp and has two-body guards decide to help out. She is one of the many youth who owe allegiance to Kunle-Poly; she is next officer in command to Kunle. She controls over a hundred of youth in Idumota at the Kunle's absence. Kunle-Poly absconded due to his involvement in the last electoral violence in 2007; Kunle-Poly was alleged to be involved in the use of firearms during the PDP/AC fracas in the last General elections. While he works for politicians; he also collects toll from Motor Bike (Okada) drivers with the assistance of NURTW officials Kunle-Poly is said to be a PDP supporter, who personally worked for PDP Gubernatorial candidate in Lagos State, Musiliu Obanikoro in the last election.

The youth group in this location said that there is no pre-defined social characteristic to their identity; there is no age limit; they are mere instruments of violence; as many of them are extortionists; and anytime civil disorder occurs, they use such opportunity to loot and break into commercial places.

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♦ **Omo Raji at Oshodi-Epetedo**

Omo Raji is one of the few notorious individuals on Lagos Island today. He is a rebel with a frightful appearance. He has several of cares resulting from stabs on both his face and head. Raji is his real name. he is 27, years old with height – 5ft 6inches tall). Votron knew him and facilitated his appearance for the interview. His expression reveals someone who life means nothing to, and who is ready to do any 'dirty job' as long as a fee is involved. He did not reveal where he lives; but after the interview, he took us to his base; where he breeds miscreants. The environment where he operates is filthy and dirty. The building where Raji converges with other members of his group is a wrecked and dilapidated building. The question is what do they do there? They smoke cannabis, cracks and other drugs; they assault ladies and to some extent rape some of them. When the research team visited again the following day at 9a.m, Raji and few other who were conscious of our visit and became alert; while a large number of the youth were still asleep. While the team interviewed him, he stressed that he has never at any time worked for any political party or supported any of one. He agreed that, he has been involved in several neighbourhood conflicts many of which had landed him in police cell or detention. According to him, he leads his group in conflict or fracas; and that he sustained injury in the process. And as long as other rivalry groups are not ready to quit gangsterism, he is not ready either. Omo Raji stresses that, the only work he does as side street fighting – is the stipend he collects from Okada drivers that operate in his neighbourhood and from his friends that work with the NURTW. Raji states that he still intends to work as political thug for the politicians.

Other members of his group complained of poverty and homelessness asking to be rehabilitated. But one outstanding thing about some of these youth is that, irrespective of their militant nature, there a few of them who sang some choruses (acapella) with beautiful voices claiming that one day they will find there way to the top in the music industry or travel abroad to Hollywood to become stars and Grammy Award winners.

To conclude, in September 2006 I carried out a Focused Group Discussion (FGD) on two youth groups whose members were preponderantly Area Boys

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they are viz: Eko Youth Congress (EYC) and the Epetedo United Youth Movement (EUYM). They identified the following as the major causes of violence on Lagos Island:

1. Idleness, unemployment and joblessness
2. quarrel over scarce resources as a result of frustration
3. Landlord induced quarrel with tenants
4. Non-payment of levy at construction sites by landlords/developers
5. Inter-neighbourhood youth contestation for space and supremacy
6. Politicians-induced violence due to use of money as incentive, in their struggle against opponents. Many of such politicians purchase weapons for use by the youth
7. Purchase and resell of fuel during acute scarcity
8. Cultural festivities and the sue of masquerades (Egun)-which leads to carnage, arson, looting and anarchy
9. Influence of drugs and alcohol resulting in violence (Momoh, 2008: 17)

State Policy Response

The key Policy instruments on youth in Nigeria are the National Youth Policy (revised) 2001; The Child Rights Act, 2003, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999), African Charter in Human and Peoples Rights (1982), African Youth Charter (2006), National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan (2001) and Children and Young Peoples Act (YPA). Many of these policies have been obeyed in their breach hence they have not resulted in the empowerment of the youth. Not even the establishment of a Federal Ministry of Youth in 2007 has been able to assuage the situation.

State Programmatic Response

The main rehabilitative approach of government to the Area boys' problem is two fold, through the Rehabilitation Centre (RC) set up by Maria Sokenu, former Managing Director of the Peoples Bank, meant to rehabilitate the Area Boys from drugs and train them in artisanal professions. The second means is employment creation.

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As things stand today, many of the rehabilitated Area Boys have not been reintegrated because they were not prepared for such a task. The RC at Adeniji Adele Phase II is more of a stench. There are currently 320 Area Boys at the RC. Many of them have been fully rehabilitated from drug abuse. Some of them have moved in with their families to live at the RC partly because they do not have any means of fending for themselves or starting life afresh. Many of them cannot afford accommodation outside the RC. Government, both state and federal, have completely abandoned catering to the needs of inmates at the RC. Indeed, it is the fully rehabilitated Area Boys that go out to get fresh Area Boys from the streets who are hooked on drugs and that are willing to be rehabilitated. Many of the Area Boys at the RC suffer heath hazards as there is huge refuse dump inside the RC complex, with nor portable water to run facilities such as toilet and bathroom. However, the RC has a well organised and hierarchical leadership operated by the rehabilitated Area boys. It is kept my inmates and an NGO led by Pastor Kayode Williams. Government ahs abandoned the RC. Instead it ahs established the Tekunle centre at Ita Oko where it hopes to train the Area Boys in various trades.

A few Area Boys were employed in the beautification of Lagos under Buba Marwa. No concerted effort is being made to rehabilitate the Area Boys from drugs neither is there a well-laid out plan to reintegrate them into society or employ them fully or support them with micro-credit to economically empower them.

Policy Options
There is need for both the Lagos state government and federal government to take seriously the processes of adopting a participatory approach in addressing youth issues. In other words, the youth themselves must define their problems in the ways they understood them. Second, rehabilitation must be linked to empowerment and reintegration. Third there is need for Nigeria to ratify and domesticate and then implement relevant Conventions, Treaties and instruments relating to the youth. The Miniseries of Youth at state Level should play more proactive role in implementing the NEPAD framework of LEEDS at the local level. There is need to improve the quantum of social workers and NGOs working on youth-related matters. Budgetary allocation

to Youth Departments and Ministry require to be improved upon. There is need to design concrete programmes from the National Youth Policy and key instruments that should guide youth development in Nigeria and continentally. The soaring youth unemployment has created more youth suffering Area Boys syndrome there is needed to address this crisis. This takes us back to the way the youth problem is understood viz as Youth bulge. It is a bulge because the youth are seen more as a burden than an asset. They are seen as a burden because they are marginals, subalterns. Hence the youth question is ultimately about subalternity and class war.

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Dealing with Youths Alienation: the Swedish Experience
By
Dr. Urban Ericsson

Abstract

This presentation will elaborate on alienation and youth in Sweden. Starting with a discussion on the concepts of alienation and youth the presentation will refer to studies dealing with youth's education and youth's way in to the labor market. The aim is also to give some examples on institutions who work as policy makers in that they are there for investigating and help setting the future for the benefit of youth. In the last section of the presentation I will dwell on one young man's negotiation with the surrounding society. By telling the story of a graffiti painter in one suburb to Stockholm in the early 2000s I think that the concepts of alienation and youth in relation to class, gender and ethnicity can be looked at and understood as a complex and multilayered phenomena.

Introduction

The word alienation derives from the Latin *alienare*, which means dispose of or remove. It denotes the stage of estrangement, feelings of powerlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation, exclusion and lack of identity. To alienate or alienated means thus making foreign, and to be estranged. Youth alienation can be analyzed from different perspectives. Usually it is a concept stressed by adults to highlight what they think is the problems of youth. This is also said I think for every new adult generation when they look at today's youth and comparing it with their owns. In social sciences alienation often refers to an individual's estrangement from traditional community and others in general. But it is obvious that alienation also can be seen as a category exercising power of distinct social categories.

May be it is fruitful to look at categories of youth who, normally are said to be alienated, respond to and navigate in society and the reasons why they become isolated or in this perspective more correct are made isolated. Social alienation is in this respect also about power. Power together with notions of class, gender and ethnicity will set focus on the main conditions

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for Swedish youth today. In this presentation I will therefore present different pictures of youth alienation in Sweden with the notion of class, gender and ethnicity as guiding concepts.

But before we get there we also have to elaborate on the concept of youth. Youth is a time when a lot takes place in life, and the conditions under which young people grow up often leave a lasting impression on them. In recent youth studies one reoccurring theme is the problem of categories. In all category makings there are willingness to generalize. In anthropology and ethnology there have been much said about this and we are trying to catch the draw backs of this by talking about the complexities of youth, often meaning that the concept of youth is not a fixed category. Furthermore looking at youth as a phase between childhood and adulthood tends to not fully consider the life worlds of young people. It is regarded as a state of transition something to grow out of. In recent research efforts is done to change these, partly by using words like *being* and *becoming*, stressing that we should not look at youth as a passive category. Instead people always try to negotiate their social positions and do so in a variety of ways. In this way youths forms a dialectical relationship to the surrounding society meaning that they move between being actors and being acted upon (Hage 2003, see also Christiansen, Utas & Vigh 2006). I will try to illustrate this later with help of the experiences of a young graffiti painter who had to navigate and comes to term with different social positions in his strive for artistic recognition.

Youth: education and labor

In her study *the road to self sufficiency. On young people's schooling and entering the labor force* the sociologist *Magdalena Czaplicka* has identified three distinct historical periods concerning youth in Sweden.[1] The first discernable period runs from 1940 to the early 1960s. *Czaplicka* found that education beyond the

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[1] Czaplicka, M, "Vägen till självförsörjning. Om ungdomars skolgång och inträde i arbetslivet " i: Johan Fornäs, Ulf Boëthius & Bo Reimer Ungdomar i skilda sfärer, FUS Rapport Nr 5, Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion AB, Stockholm, 1993, s 103 168.

compulsory level was then still an exclusive right. The adolescents who chose to seek their way
out directly in labor market was relatively unhindered to get a foothold in the open market. The wages they received, however, were hardly enough to form their own households.

- Urban population: 85% of total population (2008)
- There is a total population of about 9.3 million of these approximately 1.5 million are in the age group 13 25 years.

The second period extends from early 1960s to the mid 1970s. The expansion in educational sphere was then in full swing.
There were still those who couldn't find place at secondary education but these problems didn.'t exist at university level. As long as you had the prerequisites acquired you were able to study at the university. Towards the end of the period could be discerned, however, difficulties for young people to find their way in to the labor market. This applied to both boys without upper secondary education, and girls who were younger than 18 years.

The third period begins in the middle of the 1970s, now the difficulties for young people to get a foothold in the labor market became more pronounced, at the same time the expansion of secondary education made it all the easier for youth to continue their studies. The reverse applied to higher education where competition for admission increased significantly.

The beginning of the 1980s marks a milestone in the treatment of young people's difficulties in the labor market. Until then, no distinction had been made between young and adult job seekers. The specific treatment started with young people without upper secondary education was stripped of the ability to obtain relief work. The specific treatment also was about employment conditions and wages. This debate has been ongoing since then. In the election to come youths unemployment is of great importance for the political parties. They have to show that they are dealing with the increasingly high unemployment numbers (9%) Just a few weeks ago the

Minister of Education said that youth must decrease their wages and youth can't expect to earn as much money as adults.

Czaplicka means that the relations between the spheres family, school, work has shifted during this period (1940 1990). It can be seen through youth's path from economic dependence to self sufficiency, and also through the cyclical process of modernization. The changing material conditions is permeated by a number of stored differences and inequalities in relation to, class and gender. This has made it clear how the socio economic resources and constraints put some essential conditions for the development of youth cultural expressions, Czaplicka writes. To add to this picture the notion of ethnicity could give some more information. But in the early 90s when this study was published the ethnic dimension was not yet an issue even if the existence of structural discrimination in relation to ethnicity surely was a discernable factor.

As seen the late fifties and early sixties higher education became more and more common for Swedish youth. Education was a key issue for the Social Democratic party in their construction of the welfare state. It became possible for young people to in one sense leave the working class and head for the middle class (Ek Nilsson 1999, Löfgren 2003).

Times of recessions, from the seventies and forward, meant that more and more young people left rural areas, former industrial areas, for larger cities where job and educational opportunities still were to be found. During the seventies and eighties high educated migrants came to Sweden leaving their home countries because of conflicts and civil wars, but quite often their cultural capital was not legitimate in Sweden. They now find themselves and their children in the working class. Instead of obtaining and maintaining a position in the middle region of the social ladder they often have had to start over again (Ericsson 2007).

In the report *Living Conditions Young people in Swedish society, The generation gap 1980.–2003* you can read that the effects on the living conditions for youth after the crisis of 1990s were to be seen in the unemployment

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statistics.[2] This meant that young people's ability to establish themselves in the labor market was delayed. Compared to the early 80s the group's living standards was unchanged or reduced. At the same time older generations experienced a more positive development of welfare and the report summarize that the generational differences have increased.[3]

The Swedish youth policy is based on two guiding principles. First that youth is a *human resource* and second that youth should be *allowed and encouraged to participate in the affairs of society* as much as possible.[4] Under these guidelines the *Swedish National Board for Youth* work. The *Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs* is a government agency assigned to make sure that young people have access to influence and welfare and to support the municipalities in their youth policy work. To measure this and make policies the agency has stated some main areas to investigate and at their website you can read:

Education and learning: In Sweden today the great majority of young people undergo, besides 9 year compulsory school, a secondary education, and roughly 50 per cent then study at the university level before they are 30 years. Of those young people who have parents who are workers, just over 50 per cent plan a longer education, while those who have parents who are higher non manual employees, over 80 per cent do so. Children and young people in schools in deprived areas show worse school results than in other areas in Sweden.

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[2] The government response to the 1992 crisis, when there was a run on the currency, was to launch reforms to improve Sweden's competitiveness. This was done on behalf of the welfare state and the beginning of privatizing public services. This new way of dealing with economic decline has remained pretty much independent of governance since then.

[3] Ungdomars etablering : generationsklyftan 1980 2003 / [Young people in Swedish society : the generation gap 1980 2003] / Statistics Sweden. Living Conditions Young people in Swedish society, *The generation gap 1980.–2003,* Report no 108, Statistics Sweden 2005.
http://www.scb.se/statistik/_publikationer/LE0101_1980I03_BR_LE108SA0501.pdf

[4] Muller, Franz Charles (red.) (2000). *Youth policy in Sweden: report by an international country review group appointed by the Council of Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing

Health and vulnerability: A bigger share of young people feel anxious about their health and psychosomatic symptoms like stomach ache, headaches and sleeplessness are more frequent.

Influence and representation: Only 5 per cent, amongst both younger and older people, consider they are able to influence political decisions

Employment and means of support: Young people living in socially deprived housing areas have a considerably more difficult situation in the labor market than other young people in Sweden

Culture and leisure: Playing computer games is the most common leisure time activity among young people.[5]

Today the use of Internet is a common knowledge shared by generations. *The Swedish Post and Telecom Agency* (PTS) states that in 2009 91% of Swedes between 16 and 75 year of age use Internet and 89% of the population have access to Internet at home (89% in 2002). The differences between generations are to be found if you look to actual usage of different Internet applications (Buckingham 2007). We now see new forms of social interactions at the web. Using Blogs, Twitter, Facebook and other forms of social media the younger generation may take part of and interact in social, religious or other movements in a much more rapid and profound way than before. This is perhaps leaving the family outside the involvement their sons and daughters invest in different social contexts. But this is still something to investigate further

Global Youth?
In today's Swedish society, seen through mass media, seems to upraise the extension of adolescence. It appears as that the adolescence is prolonged. In this imagery the fantasies of youth is about freedom, not yet bound to responsibilities that comes with adulthood. This is of course a narrow imagery

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[5] Information from *The Swedish National Board for Youth Affair*
http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/english_main/0,2693,,00.html, cut and paste from their website.

but looking at the last decades it is evident that the educational career is longer today. You are older when you get your first job. Swedes are generally older when they get a family than they were 20 years ago. If we don't look at youth as a matter of age and instead looking at it as a category before these above mentioned events takes place you could claim that the adolescence is prolonged. In this discourse the main message is that youth is about freedom.

But there are also economic/structural patterns beneath this development. In the welfare state, for a long time the ideological foundation for the Social Democrats in Sweden, everybody's right to education, health and work was the guiding principles for the society. In their rhetoric's of today these questions are still important but the Right wing parties has challenged this and to some degree incorporated the discourse in their own politics. Looking at the last decades the actual trends are that the earlier common goals for society, often expressed in terms of class, instead are visualized and thought of as individual projects. I think this is an important aspect for understanding the different circumstances that youths faces today. There is no predestinated way for today's youth if they are brought up in a traditional working class environment. The big Swedish industries no longer exist as they did up to the 70s. Then these industries could host new generations of young predominantly male workers and in that way a lineage from father to son were to be maintained. In these deindustrialized and rural areas of Sweden young people of today leave these areas for higher education in the cities. The general tendency is that young people don't see their future at these places. The future is not to be found were the history of the family made their futures.

This generational movement from rural areas to larger cities has been going on for the last decades because of lack of jobs in the home region and maybe expectations of another way of life. But as seen in the statistics youths find it hard to be anchored in the labor market regardless if they live in cities or rural areas.

> Today's generation of young adults has been introduced to a much harsher situation on the labor market than earlier generations.

During the 1990s, more than one in ten jobs disappeared. Since then, recovery has hardly come halfway. Due to this fact, newcomers on the labor market came in on a much lower employment level, and unemployment was considerably higher than for those who were young during the 1970s and 80s. In the mid 1990s, one in five people aged 20 24 were underemployed, and every other person had temporary employment. At the same time, young adults are more highly educated, but required skills and expectations on the labor market are also higher. Today we see a more qualified younger generation meeting a harsh labor market marked by global competition, increased productivity and a more demanding working environment. (."Young people in Swedish society, *The generation gap 1980.–2003."*, *Living Conditions*, Report no 108, Statistics Sweden 2005)

The global competition is about wages and knowledge and in a globalized world you are told to be moveable: move to where the work is to be found, flexible: always adjust to the never ending new demands of the labor market. The future often seems located elsewhere and the required skills are in constant changing, just out of reach. This makes youths strive, those who can come to terms with these conditions and feel that the future is for them. Of course those who feel that they are left alone also strives but what happens with those who for different reasons don't fit in to or are invited to this discourse of the promises of absolute uncertainty (Giddens 1991)? One major consequence of this shift from lifelong investments in the industrialized era to a much more unstable and uncertain situation for today's youth could be that the need of experience from the parent generation/elders that's been so crucial before, for navigating the new generation in to the labor market, has lost its function.

There has evolved a gap between generations which could be interpreted as the role of the society is getting more important. If we add the absolute uncertainty to this picture of no stable structures youth of today face a different reality.

Ethnographic tours – alienating space – the Swedish suburb

Published in the newspaper Expressen*, 930910. photo* Torbjörn Andersson. The artist points out the border between the suburb Rosengård (in Malmö) and Sweden.

In my thesis I Illustrate how the idea of the "Invandrartäta förorten" ["Immigrant dense suburb"] was created and how this place has become a place for hosting alienation and made to perform Otherness.[6] I then analyze the interwoven relationship between the fantasy frame of the suburb and the mediated immigrant made subject. This is also about youth. The suburbs of Sweden, built in the 60s and 70s, have been about youth ever since they were built.

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[6] Ericsson U. Belägrade människor .– Belägrade Rum: Om invandrargöranden och förorter [Besieged People – Besieged Spaces: On Immigrant making and Suburbs]. [Thesis]. Uppsala: Institutionen för kulturantropologi och etnologi; 2007. Etnolore, 30. http://www.diva portal.org/smash/record.jsf?searchId=2&pid=diva2:169723

In the early sixties, the Social Democratic party launched the so called million programme. It aimed at addressing the housing shortage. This specific political ambition was achieved. But during the construction of the suburbs, and in the aftermath of the project, the public reacted and questions were asked. The suburb thus became an arena for political controversies. Up to this day, the suburb is host to narratives about society. The million programme was supposed to mean housing for all, and represent "Folkhemmet" – the welfare state – as defined by the Social Democratic party. At the beginning these areas were national symbols for ideas about "Swedishness" and the future. It wasn't only a housing programme, but a reform programme that aimed towards and prepared to take Sweden into the future. The suburb was portrayed as a national event – even though similar high rise buildings and large scale neighbourhoods were also springing up in many parts of Europe.

Critics thought that the high rise buildings were anonymous and created a hostile environment. Major city suburbs were represented in the mass media as places were unemployment, criminality, anonymity and other alarming social tendencies could be witnessed daily. The suburb thus became a problem. In addition, migrants living in these areas became increasingly represented by the mass media as images of the Other. As a result, the suburb no longer represented Sweden's future but an attempt at integration into Swedishness. The geographical positioning of the suburbs – on the outskirts of a city – had become metaphorically associated with outside societies in terms of Immigrants and Ethnic groups. Such images had previously been reserved for the working class, but from the late seventies and early eighties, the ethnic element became increasingly emphasized in mass mediated narrations.[7]

[7] The above text is from the article: Ericsson, U (2005) Haunting Experiences of Images. Blind Spots and Fantasy Frames in the Mass Mediated Suburb, Ethnologia Europaea Vol. 34:2

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Alienation as a requirement for recognition

"En del av Sverige." [A Part of Sweden] by *Martin Burgos. ph*oto: Urban Ericsson.

This painting is made of a young man then living in one of the segregated suburbs in Stockholm. In the beginning of the 2000s he had a major success in the Swedish art scene. As a graffiti painter he and his friends used to paint the subway trains and concrete walls with their tags and suddenly he was invited to the public by mass media. He now exhibited his art at galleries, had exhibitions and openings after having painted public walls and underground trains, which attracted much attention in the mass media.

Headlines
Graffiti gave a new identity *(Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet, 2002 07 13)*

> ***"Graffiti the world's most beautiful crime"***
> *(Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet, 2002 07 14*

> ***Graffiti makes its way in to the salons***
> *(Svenska Dagbladet, 2002 09 23)*

> ***Martin's scrawls became expensive art***
> *(Aftonbladet, 2002 09 23)*

> ***Graffiti art or vandalism?***
> *(Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter, 2002 09 27)*

> ***Tags inwards***
> *(Swedish newspaper Expressen, 2002 09 28)*

The whole scenario takes off with the article in the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet and ends with invitations to celebrity parties is something that, if not predicted as yet had hoped for and taken for probable. In that sense it is the case scenario, a fairytale character. Burgos said at the regular discussions we have had that it was the Cinderella story that attracted the media. Newspaper headlines highlighted this transformation or journey with titles connoting this from .–to theme: *From vandalism to artist* or *From the suburb to the gallery*. The premise of the story rests on the journey, a journey that is addressed to the audience or the reader to consider. Journeys like these are convincing if they can be
anchored in both space and time.

The newspaper articles run the message that Burgos has had his chance. He is referred to alternately as a graffiti painter or the former vandal. With the knowledge that the mass mediated scenery is planned the stories appoints

new meanings. It is gratifying for the media to reproduce the Cinderella theme. The audience knows it. Alienation is the key concept in the journey that Cinderella makes. But there are further meanings stored in the premises of this specific attention of how alienation is used to increase the level of celebration. And the most important aspect I think is that once the stage was set the responsibility laid on Martin to make sure that he could manage the chance, the media had constructed for him. The scene was there ready to enter and operate if only Burgos managed the conditions in the right way. Burgos was created as a character of a media event which was based on the expectation of attention linked to the *suburb* and *immigrant backgrounds*. Juvenile delinquency and affiliation to the suburb were two important elements in this scene. There are several other young people with migrant and suburban background who has been depicted in this light during recent years. One of the more known is the football player Zlatan Ibrahimovic who lived his first years in the suburb Rosengård.

The trip from the suburb to the central Stockholm depicts a freedom that comes from the notion that the depicted person is turning away from and leaving the suburbs and entering a new economy and a new social environment. The texts of Burgos imply that it is a success story and upward journey. From the suburb to the inner city environments of Stockholm, in these articles presented as the center of all things. Burgos argues that the middle class is not interesting in these travel narratives, instead there are extremes that attracts the reader. The reader wants to follow an "alienated immigrant" from the suburb on his journey to the center of Stockholm, said Burgos in one interview.

> As both graffiti artist and with migrant background, I am an interesting person for the mass media. They focus on what they can make so extreme as possible, they don't want to hear about everyday things. / ... / They want to raise someone as high as possible and then lower yourself. Somehow I've not been taken seriously.

Mass mediated "discoveries" of the alienated young man or woman from the suburb always contains this preoccupation of the migrant background and

rests on the pre understanding that the nation is tolerant and multicultural (Hage 2000). But looking in to these narratives it is evident that the conditions for recognition are well defined. The media has created a discursive space where the stereotyped Immigrant is portrayed in a narrow narrative frame with the suburb as the point of departure. The concepts of class, gender and ethnicity are all important to fully grasp the young man's experiences of alienation. You could say that alienation was a key asset for his fame.

In one article Burgos speaks about an advertisement on TV4 called "A part of Sweden" and how it inspired him to paint a picture of the same name (see image above, where Burgos has painted his name into the landscape). The advertisement showed how the blonde child was playing on the sandy beach on a summer day. Burgos says that immigrant children are not in the picture and goes on to say:

> You get such an urge to escape into the picture, and forget all problems. Nothing is as good as a Swedish summer with light winds and you are in the countryside and the smell of hay. I have lots of memories of a farm between Rinkeby Tensta [suburbs] and we used to go to with my day mother when I was little. One sees no high rise buildings, so it feels like the countryside (Dagens Nyheter 2003 02 22).

The article is titled "A part of Sweden." and refers to Burgos and not the painting. The painting was meant as a commentary on what the picture excludes. There were no children with black hair in TV4's ad and with the painting Burgos write himself into a Swedish landscape. He painted himself into the landscape. The symbolism of the art is excluded from the interviews and that was soon what Burgos experienced as the most difficult aspect to meet.
The disappointment came when discovering that the interest from the mass media was not mainly about his art but his suburban/migrant background.

Being part of the picture which Burgos refers to can in a way be interpreted as a desire not to be questioned, just like the blonde is not questioned in what is referred to a Swedish landscape. In the painting, he writes himself into

the landscape. The political content of his art was not discussed in the media in a reflective way. The focus was instead on his biography. The limited space he was given from mass media was the one that gave Burgos his value. Even though his art was a comment on society, his paintings were rarely discussed at all in the media. His (social, geographic, ethnic) journey instead overshadowed his art. The celebration of him left him without any opportunity of speaking outside the fantasy frame that had been invented for him. Even though the media left both him and the reader with the notion that he now had a chance to speak and be listened to, Burgos soon discovered the restrictions of his public appearance. Instead of creating feelings of togetherness and belonging these narratives reproduced alienation.

The anthropologist Ghassan Hage puts this kind of scenery in to the capitalist society meaning that it is about the almost magical ability to distribute hope for social mobility. The hopes are about better jobs, better wages and for people to believe in a future for themselves. For this to be a guiding principle for people in their everyday life there must be circulating narratives of people who have "moved on", he writes. But as in most cases there will be no upward mobility but the thing is Hage writes: The power of these hopes is such that most people will live their lives believing in the possibility of upward social mobility without actually experiencing it (Hage 2003:13 14).

Summary
In this presentation I first discussed the notions of alienation and youth as concepts that need to be understood as complex and not fixed categories. The first part of the presentation is about how the situation for youth has shifted during the last decades when it comes to labor market and education. New expectations on youth from the society in a way leave youths in new life worlds with little help from the traditional network of the community or family. The global competition is about wages and knowledge and in a globalized world you are told to be moveable: move to where the work is to be found, flexible: always adjust to the never ending new demands of the labor market. The future often seems located elsewhere and the required skills are in constant changing, just out of reach.

We have seen a welfare state that is about being disassembled. All the effects of the deregulation of the public sector have not yet been visible.

In the second part of the presentation I refer to a young graffiti painter in one suburb to Stockholm and his way to the Swedish art scene in the early 2000s. My aim was to show that the concepts of alienation and youth in relation to class, gender and ethnicity must be understood as a complex and multilayered phenomena. In Burgos case the surrounding society's demand on him was to appear as alienated, in a way *perform* alienation.

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Youth and Community Policing in Nigeria
By
Abubakar Momoh

Introduction

The failure of the African state has been reflected in a number of challenges which have led to 'exits' (Osaghae, 1999). These challenges in a number of African post-colonial states had either resulted in conflict-prone states, with only a few that are developmental states. (World Bank, 2000). In some cases, rather than claim the current century, African states have degenerated into crisis and social insecurity which have led to coinages such as 're-traditionalisation,' 'ethnic militias,' or more directly 'vigilantism.' The youth had been, and will continue for a long time to be, at the centre of discuss urban and rural security in the context of the crisis of the state to handle security questions more efficaciously.

In Nigeria the case has not been totally different in spite of civil rule in 1999. The country's historical trajectory has been marked by a number of complexities and contradictions which continue to shape contemporary reality. The Nigerian state is currently faced with a number of political and socio-economic challenges with multidimensional implications. While these socio-economic and even political problems have been explained within the context of a number of factors (ranging from her national ethnic diversity or 'cultural plurality,' unequal resource endowment/access, weak institutions, corruption, violent native-settler conflict, rent-seeking and mono-cultural economic base, epochal impact of prolonged military rule, absence of infrastructure and dependence on more developed countries, among others), solutions have been difficult, at least at the level of implementation. Thus, these challenges have manifested in clichés such as "federal character," "derivation," "resource control," "state police," "sovereign national conference," "secession," "political *Sharia*," "MEND," "Biafra," "*Boko Haram*," "brain drain," "Ghana-Must-Go" and numerous others. This scenario is complicated by a report by the United States' National Intelligence Council (NIC) which essentially forecasted that as a result of some of these aforementioned challenges, "Nigeria would disintegrate by the year

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2020" (Yaqub, 2006: 20), yet Mammaur Ghadafi, in early 2010, believes stability can only be achieved in Nigeria if the country is divided along religious line and what he simplistically called north-south dichotomy. The basis for this last statement speaks to the socio-economic (in) security of lives and property following the failures of the Nigerian police to mitigate periodic loss of lives in ethno-religious and native-settlers conflict in Jos, Kano, Bauchi and even Borno on the one hand, and resolve even elite murder cases on the other hand. Thus, in a way, both the masses and the elite are united in the struggle for security in insecurity.

It is against this background that this paper is seeks to do the following: First, it aims to engage the issue or reality or possibility of youth policing in Nigeria while looking at some of its semblances in groups such Odua People's Congress (OPC), Bakaasi Boys, Egbesu Boys. Second, it will attempt to disengage from romantising these groups to an extent that 'negatives' and failures of youth policing will also be highlighted. This paper is divided into five parts which include an introduction, attempting to situate perspectives of youth policing, reality of youth policing in Nigeria, dangers of youth policing and conclusion.

Perspectives on Youth Policing
A discuss on youth policing presupposes two understandings. First, it is pertinent to understand who is a youth. Second, it is need to understand what policing entails. It is only when these twin concepts are understood that youth policing becomes apparent. There is no universal agreement as to who constitutes youth. Thus, in Ghana, a youth is between 18 and 35 years; in Sierra Leone, it is considered to be between 15 and 30; in Senegal, Cote D'Iviore, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mali, and Gambia, it is between 15 and 35. In Nigeria it is between 18 and 35 years. The United Nations and the World Bank defines the youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 while the Commonwealth defines it as between 15 and 29 (Ubi, 2007: 3). Policing on the other hand covers those actions that entail the act of preventing, and resolving crime. Youth policing therefore means youth involvement in crime prevention and resolution.

Youth policing could be understood from more than one perspective not only because it is a social issue but more importantly because it is subject to diverse connotations in countries. Thus, youth policing could be understood within the context of morality, structuralism and agency of youth. Though there may be other, even differing perspectives, these four suffice for this paper. In the moralist context, youths essentially have three options in relations to crime and criminality in which case youth policing is just one of the realities of youth in every society just like other realities such as youth criminality or violence and youth neutrality.

By youth criminality and violence, we speak to the involvement of youth in crime which range from pick-pocketing, illegal gambling, or bullying to more serious crimes such as rape, armed robbery, kidnapping, hijacking or even terrorism. Youth neutrality relates to the reality whereby youths do not take part in crime nor are they interested in reducing crime, actively. Therefore, youth policing in this sense is what is obtainable in Toronto, Canada, where there is the Youth In Police Initiative (YIPI), in Lakewood City, Colorado, Police's Youth Police Academy, or Halifax Regional Police's Police Youth Program and other summer police camps in some Western societies. While these camps aim at encouraging a friendly relationship between police and youths as well as practicing what is known as 'community policing,' some are merely reward schemes that serve as time-out for students that have above 2.0 GPA as is the case in Lakewood City Police. In Nigeria, the relationship between the police and the youth has been complex and often contradictory, there is no such organised interface like a youth policing camp.

Mainstream Sociological thought have conceptualised youth policing within the context of structural functionalism. For proponents of this thinking such as Talcott Parson, Emile Durkheim, Bronislaw Malinowski, Robert Merton, Radcliffe Brown, Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell, society is understood as a mosaic of functional parts. Borrowed from the core sciences, functionalist perspectives in the social sciences view society or polity or economy as a collection of several parts with respective functions and whose effective or ineffective functioning have implications for the overall performance of the system. Along this line, it is a broad perspective which addresses social structure

in terms of the functions of its constituent elements namely norms, customs, traditions and institutions.

It studies society as a structure with interrelated parts which are therefore broadly united in the view that firstly the rules and regulations both informal norms and formal laws are necessary to organize a society effectively and secondly, that social institutions both traditional and governmental form the necessary constituent part of the social structure. The central concern of structural functionalism is a continuation of the *Durkheimian* task of explaining the apparent stability and internal cohesion needed by societies to endure over time. Societies are seen as coherent, bounded and fundamentally relational constructs that function like organisms with their various parts or social institutions working together in an unconscious, quasi-autonomous fashion towards achieving an overall social equilibrium. All social and cultural phenomena are therefore seen as functional in the sense of working together and are effectively deemed to have lives of their own. The individual is significant not in and of him/herself but rather in terms of his/her states, position in patterns of social relations and the behaviours associated with status. The social structure then is the network of statuses connected by associated roles. Generally speaking, functionalism is an approach that argues that society is a system made up of parts that must be able to respond to two basic kinds of problems: those relating to the environment and those relating to its internal structure (Adedokun, 1999: 161).

The Failure of Nigeria Police
The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) indeed necessitates this failure which has not only gained expression in terms of the low esteem of the police which has descended to 'NGN20 Syndrome' on highways even in front of not only youth but also children. But more dangerously, the police has faced a major challenge in resolving the challenges of security. This insecurity has gained grounds not only among the low and middle class but also among the political class. Some names suffice: Aminasori Dikibo (vice-president of the People's Democratic Party, PDP) was shot in the head on his way to the South-South zone of the PDP; Harry Marshall (Dikibo's predecessor) was murdered in his hotel room in Abuja where he had gone to attend a meeting of the ANPP, a party he

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decamped to few days to his death; Chief Bola Ige (a serving attorney-general and minister of justice) was killed right in his house in spite of his police guards; Eze-Odimegwu Okonkwo (an ANPP stalwart in Anambra State) murder in Nnewi in his state; Barnabas Igwe, a out-spoken chairman of the Onitsha branch of Nigerian Bar Association, and Abigail his wife (both lawyers) were gruesomely murdered; Obonnaya Uche (an ANPP stalwart who was preparing to contest for the Nigerian senate) was killed inside his house in Owerri some days after he defected from the PDP; Theodore Agwatu (principal secretary to [ex]Governor Achike Udenwa) was killed in his residence; Odunayo Olagbaju (a member of Osun State House of Assembly) was killed in his residence in the wake of political crisis in the state; Ahmed Patagi (chairman of PDP in Kwara) was assassinated; Dele Aroja (PDP governorship candidate) was murdered in Lagos; Funsho Williams (a leading governorship contender in Lagos State PDP) was murdered after he had decamped from the Alliance for Democracy (AD) to PDP, etc. All these murders in spite of the high calibre of victims remain to be solved. Meanwhile, NPF mechanisms such as the 'Operation Fire for Fire and other anti-crime and rapid response squads in some states have not being immune from allegations of extortion. Then what is the plight of an ordinary Nigeria? Who will ensure their security?

Meanwhile, political office holders that were not killed were kidnapped. A serving governor[1] was abducted for failing to *perform* the required *thing*. Journalists, expatriates, children and even popular actors are no longer immune from being kidnapped for ransom. In the thinking of structural functionalist, therefore, society seems to evolve a system-maintaining mechanism to ensure its survival and mitigate what Kristof Titeca terms "institutional chaos" (Titeca, 2009: 291). This line of thinking resonates with Ted Robert Gurr's "relative deprivation" thesis of political violence, particularly its 'decremental' variant, in which "value expectations" exceeds "value capabilities" (Gurr, 1970). Here, "value expectation of a collectivity are the average value positions to which its members believe they are justifiably entitled" while "value

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[1] Governor Chris Ngige of Anambra State was abducted by a group of persons allegedly sent by Chris Uba in a publicised issue that covered how and when both had gone to the *Okija* Shrine to take oath of allegiance.

capabilities of a collectivity are the average value positions its members perceive themselves capable of attaining and maintaining" (Ibid: 27). In a *Gurrian* sense therefore, the wider the gap the more likely the resort to violence as an option. It is against this background that the act of vigilantism emerged against a somewhat failure of the Nigerian state to guarantee its ultimate goal of security of its people just as it did in Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, or even United States (Tankebe, 2009; Titeca, 2009; Buur, 2008; Thompson, 2009). It is against this background that this paper locates youth policing within the context of vigilantism.

While vigilantism is a basis for interrogating the issue of youth policing, it does not argued within the purview of the 'retraditionalisation thesis' (Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Bayart et al, 1999; Kagwanja, 2002; Ellis, 2005). This thesis tends to explain vigilantism as a mere return of Africans to a past that they view in terms of either youth power or communal justice system. An argument which Murunga captures as "discernible drift from modernity toward re-traditionalisation of society at face value" (Murunga, 2006: 28). Even if vigilantism has a semblance with pre-colonial organic solidarity, the thesis fails to understand that it more a response to state failure than a glamourisation of the past. Most importantly, because youth policing in its vigilante form in Nigeria speaks to relatively less education of members, it begs the issue whether historical vigilantism is a consequence of low status or rather, in which case it is true, of organic solidarity. Thus, the crisis is more occasioned by the character of the state than a resort to history (Momoh, 2000).

Vigilantism: A Reality of Youth Policing
Vigilantism in various societies evolved as a result of peculiar local specificity. For instance, the Masai vigilante group on the border town of Bwera in Uganda evolved to attend to a dialectical need of ensuring security on the one hand and ensure an undisturbed trafficking in *Khat* on the other hand (Titeca, 2009). But like most concepts in the social sciences, does not have a universally accepted definition. To Bruce Baker (2002: 223-224) vigilantism is a form of non-state self help characterised by reactive, ad hoc and often violent methods of control. Titeca, particularly in his study of the Masai of Uganda, sees it as a means to ensure peace and security on the one hand but also entails selfish

interest of such groups on the other hand (Titeca, 2009: 306). Yet Insa Nolte defines it as the control of town and villages by groups usually consisting of young men who patrol the area especially at night and often receive or collect money from the from their communities (Nolte, 2002: 186).

Beyond these, Rosenbaum and Sederberg view it as establishment violence. Thus, vigilantes are individuals identifying with an established order defend that order by resorting to means that violate these formal boundaries (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974: 542). They argue that though vigilantism connotes "rowdy cowboys lynching an unfortunate horse thief," it amounts to the establishment violence which consists of acts or threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of an established socio-political order (Ibid). In this case, government is faced with the challenge of controlling dissident violence as represented in armed robbery and other social violence and needs establishment violence (groups) to counter the dissident violence, even though in most cases governments fail to acknowledge establishment violence (Ibid: 545-546). There are different types of vigilante groups as well as methodology.

Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1974: 548-559) identify three types: crime control vigilantism, social group control vigilantism, and regime control vigilantism. The crime control vigilantism is directed against individuals involved in acts proscribed by the formal legal system. Examples of these groups include *Esquadrao da Morte* (Death Squad) in Brazil, Argentine "The Gentlemen," Afro-American Group Attack in Chicago, Spades Unlimited in Washington, and Masais in Uganda. The social group control vigilantism are those that are against groups that are competing for, or advocating a redistribution of, values within a system. This is based on the fear or threats of upwards mobility by a segment of society or aimed at engendering change in societal hierarchy. It could be used by those groups that fear threat of domination and those that are dominated just as they could be religious as in the case of the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt spurred by the infiltration of decadence. Groups could be ideological as in the case of the Mexican student group, *Halcones* (Falcons); in Argentina there were Organised National Argentine Movement (MANO) and Anti-Communist Group (GRACO), Bolivian Death Squadron, and Dominacan Republic's rightist "Bands." These groups could also be

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communal or residential. Other examples of this include *Jatis* in India, Guatemalan *Ojo por Ojo* (Eye for an Eye) and Anti-Communist Command of Guatemala (CADEG), and Ku Klux Klan in the US and "Brown Shirts" under Adolf Hitler in the 1930s.

The regime control vigilantism are those that exist to control administrations. In this case, vigilante groups become so influential that they determine political leadership and often change administrations, should they suspect an irritation. These are occurs "if the established sectors find their lack of capabilities too frustrating... then, establishment violence [*is*] intended to alter the regime, in order to make the 'superstructure' into a more effective guardian of the 'base' (Ibid: 556). It is in this context that Rosenbaum and Sederberg explain such military coups in Ayub Khan's Pakistan in 1958 and Latin American countries that were geared towards establishment maintenance as against a revolutionary take over in Nasser's Egypt.

It must however be pointed out that these attempts at classifying vigilantism are by no means compartmentalised but could be rather be inclusive. In addition, these groups have different trajectories to an extent that a vigilante group could degenerate into a means of social dysfuctionality and instrument of oppression of those that they hitherto swore to protect. Thus, classification could also be based on membership which could be religious, ideological or communal. It could also be based on structures whether organised or unorganised, centralised or decentralised. Just as it could be based on area of coverage be it national, regional or residential.

The Nigerian Experience

Based on the foregoing, groups like Odua People's Congress (OPC), Hisbah and Bakaasi Boys qualify to be vigilante groups and because of the large membership of youths in its activities, provides the bases for youth policing (Pratten, 2008b: 70; Momoh, 2000). In fact, an Oxford social anthropologist, David Pratten, in his article entitled 'The Politics of Protection: Perspectives on Vigilantism in Nigeria' states, "Vigilantism has become an endemic feature of the Nigerian social and political landscape" (2008a: 1). He goes further to highlight that beyond fighting crime, these groups spearhead political contest

"between the politics of identity and citizenship, and represents divergent aspirations for Nigeria's future including a pro-*Shariah* movement in the north and ethnic nationalism in the west" (Ibid).

Though these groups are collectively described as vigilantes, in reality there could be a differing line between them to an extent that while some accept being described as such others do not. Aside, while some of these groups enjoy manifest government support and recognition as in the case of the Bakaasi Boys in Anambra State and the Hisbah in northern Nigeria,[2] other groups enjoy overt support from government in which case it is not impossible to see vigilante leaders in social gatherings with top government officials. This is not saying their cannot be time when there is mutual antagonism which for instance is marked by government's imprisonment of some group leaders like Chief Fredrick Faseun and Gani Adams both of the Odua People's Congress (OPC) and Sheikh Yahaya Faruk Chedi and his deputy Abubakar Rabo Abdulkareem both heads of Hisbah in Kano were also arrested and taken to Abuja for leading an "unlawful society" (Last, 2008: 52-53).

David Pratten (2008a: 8) explains the differences in the vigilante groups thus:
> *While it is possible to draw distinctions, Nigerian vigilantes are frequently conceived within the same framing as forms of militant youth movements such as militias, campus cults, and street gangs known as 'area boys'. The self-ascriptions of vigilante groups are themselves sometimes blurred. While the shari'a implementation committees (hisba) in northern states constitute a form of alternative policing, they do not, like night guards, call themselves vigilantes. Within the history of Yoruba vigilantism, too, there are continuities and discontinuities between vigilantes, forms of hunter and night guard association, and community policing.*

In spite of these differences in methodology and ideology, a good number of these vigilante groups are made up of youths. It is in this sense that they

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[2] In Kano State for instance, the government had appointed 9,000 Hisba personel ordering them to stop all motorcycle riders carrying women unrelated to them (Last, 2008: 52).

qualify to be engaged as youth policing (Pratten, 2008b: 70; Momoh, 2000). Here policing involves not only the use of conventional weapons but traditional charms such as armlets, wristlets, rings, caps, eggs, among others. Native 'bullet-proofs is not always out of place (Anderson, 2002). It is perhaps this 'weapons' that supports the argument that vigilantism cannot be divorced from occultism (Nolte, 2004; Meagher, 2007: 111; Pratten, 2008b: 65), for instance, links some Nigerian vigilantes to occultism. The various cult groups in Rivers and Bayelsa states belong to this category. Beyond the issue of weapons, methods of engagement differ. For instance, while Hisbah may be involved in the destruction of cartoons of beer OPC and Bakaasi Boys may be caught accusing suspected criminals. Just as the history of societies varies, vigilantism in some societies have deep root in religious activities just as some can be traced to age differentiation in which youth men were in charge of security (Pratten, 2008b: 66). Like most social groups, hierarchy is paramount as for instance noted by Pratten in his study of Annang vigilantes in Ukanafun Local Government of Area of Akwa Ibom State. Communication is also central and this could be in form of horn or whistle blowing. Areas of policing include markets, religious organisations, and residential areas among others. It is in this context that Nigerian youths participate in policing regardless of sex (Nolte, 2008). Methods of fighting crime could range from mere beating and torture, to burning or hitting thieves with nail-platted spikes.

The core OPC groups led by Gani Adams and Fredrick Faseun engage in vigilante activities for social and political protection. But there are other fractions of OPCs that engage in more professionalised form of vigilante activities and they interact with the community purely from a professional and wage-based approach. They neither live nor do they belong to such communities

Danger Signals
It is often argued that youth policing or vigilantism has within it the seed of its destruction especially when it has been argued that regardless of the initial performance of vigilante groups at its creation, they often degenerate into lawless and criminality (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974: 559-560; Murunga, 2006; Titeca, 2009: 311-314). It is therefore no news that today's youth police

may be tomorrows criminal. It is against this background that youth policing faces a number of dangers both to youths in particular and the society in general (Rosenbaum and Sederberg, 1974: 559-560; Murunga, 2006; Titeca, 2009).

Though the first danger signal of youth policing relates to the sliding capacity of vigilante groups from ensuring order to promoting disorder or defending the majority to operating as a private 'army' (Titeca, 2009: 311-314), there is also the danger of factionalisation. The OPC faced this challenge to an extent that Gani-led group not only saw themselves as being different from the Faseun-led group but there had been some bloody clashes. Third, the emergence or re-emergence of vigilante groups has also witnessed the rise of police-vigilante clashes. The Bakaasi Boys, OPC and the Egbesu Boys had clashed with policemen leading to deaths on both sides.

Fourth, it is difficult to argue that vigilantism, particularly ethnic-based vigilante groups, engender national integration. It is easier to argue that they do contribute to national dis-integration when placed against the background of bloody clashes such as OPC and Hausa-Fulani clashes in Mile-12, thereby deepening native-settlers or ethno-religious divides. Evidence that vigilante groups were also involved in the religious clashes of between 1999 and 2010 shows that they have a negative implications for national unity (Pratten, 2008a: 1). Also, with poverty and illiteracy it becomes easy to use vigilante groups as political instrument of violence during elections or after election.

Community Policing
There are other forms of community policing that involve members of the communities on a "shift" basis through the night. Some of these neighbourhood security groups have links to the police and also have police checking their activities. This has given rise to Community Police Partnership Forum (CPPF) that have sprung in all parts of Lagos state. Some of the key issues of concern to the CPPP include: securing the community against robbery and hoodlums, drugs, rape, arbitrary blocking of roads for night party, arbitrary police arrest, the menace of people with Area Boys syndrome, the menace of Okada riders and so on. The CPPF is hierarchical with stakeholders invited to monthly and

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emergency meetings. It should be noted that those who take active interest in the activities of the CFFP are youth.

Towards strategic Partnership for Policing
The activity of neighbourhood watch and community policing can best be carried out by the most active and vigil members of the community who are preponderantly constituted by the youth. The Nigeria Police and various neighbourhoods have a lot to gain by cultivating and employing this social category. The principles that should undergird the partnership should include:

1. Identification and registration of youth groups and associations in a neighbourhood for purpose of community policing
2. Assessment of capacity and capability of each youth group/association in policing
3. Signing MOU and contract with such youth associations/organisations stating conduct of conduct/practice
4. Connecting such groups with Nigeria Police
5. Identifying time and areas of coverage and jurisdiction for such youth groups
6. MOU should state nature of relationship with the police and how the Youth/police partnership can be used to serve the community
7. Outlining grievance/dispute and redress procedure
8. Stating exit points in case of breakdown in the terms and spirit of MOU

Conclusion
Youth policing is universal but varies in the level of success especially when understood within the prism of vigilantism. Since no society can boast of being immune from crime and criminality, then it becomes understandable that regardless of the nomenclature, individuals and groups will continue to look for a way out when there is the challenge of insecurity. This will be more correct if a government finds it difficult to engender a policing system that is and takes into account the means and methods of existing neighbourhood and community security apparatuses and vigilante groups. Increasingly many of these groups have grown as self-help projects as forms of "exiting the state". The Nigerian Police can do well to engage them in partnership rather

than demonise them. In establishing this engagement points, the leadership, followership, source of sponsorship, and even ideology of vigilante groups will be known and made to conform with acceptable norms and values.

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Part Three

Appendix

COMMUNIQUÉ

National Conference on Youth Alienation in Nigeria, Organised by CLEEN Foundation in Collaboration with the Ford Foundation, at the Metropolitan Hotel, Calabar, June 15 - 16, 2010

Preamble

Against the background of increasing alienation and exclusion of the youth in the social, economic and political development of Nigeria; the inability of successive governments at federal, state and local levels to harness the enormous potentials of Nigeria's relatively young population and the dangers the youth drift portends for the safety and security of the nation, the CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with the Ford Foundation organized a two-day national conference on Youth Alienation in Nigeria, at the Metropolitan Hotel, Calabar, June 15-16, 2010. The conference was organized as part of activities to commemorate the golden jubilee of Nigeria as an independent country and the 50 years of Ford Foundation's grant making on governance and human rights in Nigeria.

It was attended by major stakeholders comprising representatives of government, security agencies, civil society organizations, development agencies, academia, students/youth groups, political parties and the media. In all, 80 persons took part in the conference. After very exhaustive discussions on incisive papers and keynote remarks presented by renowned scholars from Nigeria and Sweden on the issue of youth alienation, the participants concentrated on identifying the following as core blockages to effective social, economic and political integration of youths in Nigeria and recommended high impact solutions that could be adopted and implemented by different stakeholders to break the cycle of youth alienation in Nigeria.

Core Blockages

♦ *Poor and misdirected education of youths*

The participants considered the system of education in Nigeria as not only poor in terms of quality of infrastructure, environment of learning and availability of qualified and motivated personnel but also misdirected in the sense that it focuses on theories and provides no practical skills to the students, which would have prepared them to be self reliant and result oriented after completion of studies. They stressed that the curriculums have also remained basically the same over the decades in spite societal advancement and changes in the manpower needs of the country. The result is that young people graduate from secondary and tertiary schools with very little ideas and skills about finding their feet in the larger society.

♦ *Youth unemployment and underemployment*
The participants identified youth unemployment and underemployment as critical major factors in youth alienation in Nigeria. Noting that a situation where young, able bodied and willing to work persons cannot find job to do and the few that were lucky to find the jobs are either not commensurate with their skills or could not earn them a livelihood, cannot augur well. Examples were given of research cards who are graduates and young people hawking 'pure' water and other articles of trade whose total value cannot buy them a decent meal.

♦ *Pandemic Corruption*
The participants were piqued by the fact that despite the plethora of laws, policies and establishment of institutions by the government of Nigeria to tackle corruption, the phenomenon has remained pervasive at all levels of public and private lives, thus calling into question the seriousness of the government in dealing decisively with the scourge. The result is that resources that would have been used for the development of the youth and planning for the future of the young are recklessly squandered.

♦ *Poor Implementation of laws and policies on Youth*
The participants observed that successive governments have passed legislation and adopted policies aimed at addressing the youth problem. However, the laws and strategies have neither been scrupulously implemented nor their impact evaluated to find out what difference they have made in addressing the problem. The result is that staggering numbers of youths in Nigeria have become disillusioned about the future.

♦ *Inadequate Parental Care and breakdown in social values*
The participants noted that parents have abandoned the upbringing of their children to house helps, day cares, boarding schools and sometimes total strangers while pursuing money. The participants argued that this practice denies parents the opportunity of inculcating good moral values in their children and ability to observe early in the day changes in the behavior of their children that needs to be nipped in the bud before they get out of hand. The result is that parents nowadays bring up young people that are total strangers to them in terms of values, attitudes and behaviors.

♦ *Absence of financial credit for young entrepreneurs*
The participants observed that the strict requirement of collateral facilities instead of sound business plan by banks in Nigeria before credits are extended to investors, have made it difficult for young people with bright and marketable ideas to have access to funds to actualize their dreams and visions and thus creating a feeling alienation in them.

♦ *Lack of credible elections and good governance*

The participants noted the link between credible elections, good governance and youth alienation in Nigeria. It was observed that successive general elections in election have not produced leaders committed to the people because of electoral fraud and manipulations that have characterized them, leading to a situation whether they are

more loyal to the godfathers that rigged the elections for them instead of serving the people including the young.

High Impact Solutions

Education

Governments should:

- Prioritize technical education in secondary schools by reviving old and establishing new technical colleges in all states of the federation in other to equip young people with the skill sets and competencies that would enable them to be meaningfully engaged after graduation.

- Establish skill acquisition and vocational education centres across the states to equip young people who are not able to go to tertiary institutions with artisanal skills that would enable them to establish small businesses of their own instead of engaging in endless search for non-existent jobs. This would promote artisanship as a foundation for the development of the productive base of our economy should be encouraged

- Consider limiting the number of times candidates can seat for GCE, SSCE or JAMB examination in a bid to make their papers for entering tertiary institutions before they are automatically diverted to technical colleges, skill acquisition or vocational educational centres, which should be made tuition free. This would put a stop to the current situation where staggering number of young people are trapped in taking these exams for many years without making progress in their lives.

- Place a moratorium on approval or establishment of new universities and devote the resources to adequately resourcing and transforming the existing one into real universities in substances comparable to their counterparts in other developing countries.

- Carry out a fundamental review of curricular used in schools from primary to tertiary institutions in Nigeria in order to make them more responsive to manpower needs of Nigeria in the 21st century.

- Increase the education budget to 26% of the annual budget of federal and state governments as prescribed by the United Nations.

Economy

- Government should address decisively the perennial energy crisis in the country, which has put a lot of young people out of job and made it difficult for entrepreneurial ones to establish small artisanal businesses such as welding workshops, electrical/electronic repair shops, bakeries, tailoring shops, beauty/barbing saloon etc.

- Government should encourage financial institutions to give more start up credits to young business people by relaxing the stringent collateral facilities required before loans can be granted and focus more on financing sound business plans and ideas.
- Manpower needs audits should be conducted by federal and state governments in order to identify skill set areas where more young people are needed and areas where we have surplus for outsourcing. This would enable the targeting of resources to areas where more qualified young people are needed and areas that we need to promote for overseas jobs through economic diplomacy.

- Government should support and promote real sectors of the economy that create more jobs such as agriculture and manufacturing.

Family and Society

- Parents should pay more attention to the emotional and psychological needs of their children, especially those in their teens, by spending

quality time with them, guiding and supporting them as they make decisions and choices that may impact on their future lives.

- ✔ The societal values of hard work, honesty and integrity need to be inculcated in young ones by the exemplary behavior of adults and leaders instead of preachments.

- ✔ The current craze for get rich quick and by all means needs to be discouraged and deemphasized as they create unnecessary pressure on young people to make money at all costs, which often gets them into trouble with the law.

Political leadership

- ✔ The vote of the electorate must count so that only people who won through the ballot can be entrusted to political positions.

- ✔ Laws and policies that impede the aspiration of young people to highest positions of political authority need to be reviewed.

- ✔ Young people should not allow themselves to be used by unscrupulous politicians to rig elections and engage in electoral violence.

Innocent Chukwuma
Executive Director

Conference Report
By
Chidi Nwankwo

Introduction

On June 15 and 16, 2010, the CLEEN Foundation, in collaboration with the Ford Foundation, held a two-day national conference on Youth Alienation and Politics in Nigeria at the Metropolitan Hotel in Calabar, Cross River State.

The objective of the conference was to provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss the economic, social, and political factors that contribute to youth alienation in Nigerian, suggest steps that can be taken to improve the situation, and finally, to draft a communiqué to the government that includes the suggestions made by participants.

Over 90 participants attended the conference, including representatives from political parties, NGOs, state and federal government, academia, and the police.

Youth alienation has emerged as a major problem in Nigeria. Young people, feeling disillusioned and marginalized, face an increased risk of becoming involved in crime, radicalism, and other destructive behaviors. This conference aimed to address these concerns and exchange ideas on how to mitigate some of the conditions that lead to youth alienation. What follows are highlights of the proceedings.

Opening Session

In his opening remarks, Mr. Innocent Chukwuma, Executive Director of CLEEN, put the problem of youth alienation in Nigeria in context. Nigeria, he explained, has been largely unable to harness the significant potential of young people for national development. The 2006 census report showed that 7 out of 10 Nigerians are youths, which should be a blessing. Instead, the talents and energies of young people have not been utilized to move the country forward. As a result, many youths feel desperate and alienated. A large proportion of the best and the brightest have left the country for lack of

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opportunities in their home country. Of those who have stayed, many have gotten involved in destructive activities such as criminality and religious fundamentalism.

Chukwuma went on to note that the Nigerian government has taken steps to address these problems, such as the passage of the National Youth Development act in 2001, and the Child Rights act, passed in 2003. The National Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of action looks carefully at many of the problems facing young people today, and provides a blueprint for dealing with those concerns. The problem, Chukwuma remarks, rather than lack of good ideas, is lack of implementation of the policies already on the record. Therefore, we have seen little progress on the issue, despite the legislation already passed and policies already written.

This conference, Chukwuma remarked, represents an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on these issues and, most importantly, suggest ideas that could be implemented to improve the situation and get more policies implemented.

Following Mr. Chukwuma's remarks, Prof. Friday Okonfua, Program Officer, Ford Foundation, delivered his welcome remarks on behalf of the Regional Representative of Ford Foundation, Dr. Adhiambo Odaga. He pointed out that Nigeria is currently undergoing a demographic transition. The population is growing increasingly younger with each passing year. The question, he posited, is whether the country can take advantage of the great economic advantages that this change offers. To this point, he believes the country has failed. Youths have suffered the negative impacts of the scourge of poverty, and feel abandoned by a government that is not executing policies to effectively address their concerns. He closed his remarks by stating that without youth development, Vision 2020 will not be realized. Youth must be seen not only as the leaders of tomorrow but as leaders for today and the drivers of future economic growth.

Next, Ms. Eka Ikpi Baird spoke, former Vice Chancellor, Cross River State University of Science and Technology, pointed out that if such a large

percentage of the population is neglected, it will have negative ramifications for development. Mr. Fimhian Adeoye, a representative of the Nigeria Police Force, Cross River State Command, then spoke about the issue from a law enforcement perspective . He mentioned that 80 percent of the individuals that the police deal with are youths. There is a cycle of poverty that leads to alienation, which is the root cause of the problem. The emphasis, he asserted, should be placed on breaking that cycle.

Finally, Chris Monnang, from the Office of Youth and Sports Development, Cross River State, wrapped up the opening session. He asserted that Cross River State has had some success in addressing youth alienation because the state government understands the need for constructive dialogue. Cross River State has implemented youth empowerment programs, citizenship and leadership training, and a number of other programs that encourage engagement between youths and the government. He expressed his sincere wishes that the conference would generate solid ideas to help mitigate the problems of youth alienation, and then declared the conference open.

First Plenary Session

During the first plenary session, chaired by Mrs. Ayo Obe, two scholars delivered lectures related to their own research on issues of youth alienation. Those lectures were delivered in order to illuminate some of the causes of the problem and inspire new ideas.

First, Dr. Abubakar Momoh delivered a lecture on his paper entitled "Youth Alienation in Nigeria: Breaking the Cycle." Dr. Momoh began his presentation by stating that his paper is not as ambitious as the theme of the conference. He acknowledged that the problem of youth alienation is actually quite complex. Firstly, it can be difficult to even define youth. Is it a group of people within a certain age range? Is it more defined by socioeconomic status (ie whether an individual is living with parents, has a job, etc.)? It seems that policymakers, advocates, the police, and scholars have divergent views on the very definition of youth.

Dr. Momoh continued by citing a study conducted in ECOWAS countries on youths, which concluded that the majority of youths are trying to eke out a living, to make something of their lives in a very difficult environment. These findings were a shock to ECOWAS, which had subscribed to the perception of young people as sullen, disengaged, and almost nihilistic. These results led to a significant policy shift.

Momoh went on to discuss the Youth Bulge theory that has become popular in recent years. The Youth Bulge Theory posits that the demographic change in recent years, with an exploding population of young people, represents a threat to society, because young people are anarchical, and thus prone to violence and destruction. Momoh does not support this theory, saying that it automatically criminalizes youths, and that it cannot be used to explain many of the instances of violence that take place in Africa, such as the Rwanda genocide.According to Momoh, far and away the leading cause of youth alienation is poverty. Nigeria for example, has not yet attained a large bourgeoisie population, leaving millions living on the fringes, marginalized.

From here, Momoh launches into a discussion on the main topic of his paper, the Area Boys. Area Boys, defined by Momoh, are boys of the neighborhood. Their identity is reproduced in their own neighborhood. They use junctions and bases to reconstruct their identities. They find citizenship and empowerment in these places. In the context of their own victimhood, they find their environment by creating their own subculture. It gives meaning to their lives. Public policy, Momoh asserts, has failed to address the situation with Area Boys effectively. Rehabilitation centers are poorly run, often lacking basic amenities such as running water. There is very little connection between rehabilitation and reintegration, which leaves them in a position of continued marginalization and ostracism.

According to Momoh, the best way forward, in terms of policy options, is to listen to the voices of young people. Currently, policies are made without any input from young people, so its not surprising that they fail. Young people need to get more involved and make themselves heard. Youth leadership is essential to tackling the problem.

Following Dr. Momoh's presentation, Dr. Urbann Ericcson, a Swedish scholar, read from his paper "Dealing with Youths Alienation: The Swedish Experience". He reaffirmed Dr. Momoh's point that its important not to generalize or categorize too much when dealing with youths.

Questions, Comments, and Discussion

After the lectures, there was time for questions and comments. The questions, comments, and responses are summarized below.

C1: Do we take a materialist interpretation of alienation? We should see the role of capitalism and its values as defining factors in the alienation of Nigerian youth. What are your ideas about what specifically can be done in terms of handling these problems?

A1: Dr. Momoh: Some societies affected by capitalism with youth alienation have programs and a safety net in place. In Nigeria and other developing countries, these safety nets don't exist. Political economy is important, but its not only an ideological question.

C2: At what point can the cycle be broken? In regard to the Youth Development Policy, how can we drive the process of implementation?

A2: Dr Momoh: I'm not trying to paint a pessimistic picture, but if we don't pose the question correctly, we won't be able to come up with the right answers. To homogenize and think that you can present one answer is too simplistic. Attitudes and dispositions still vary. We need to take all these strands and analyze them thoroughly to come up with answers. Niger Delta is an interesting case. What macro projects can provide youths the spaces to empower themselves? What about youth apprenticeships? Who is mentoring who? The youth are wandering, trying to find their bearings all by themselves because society has disappointed them. What are the alternative policies that we can pursue to replace those that have failed? Alternatives that are youth driven, that prioritize young people. If the youth are to break out of the cycle, they must empower themselves. If you take the template of Nigeria today, you find that the average age is between 25 and 35. They don't believe in themselves

or their leaders, and don't think they're capable of the ingenuity necessary to transform society. It is not an intergenerational clash as much as it is and ideational clash. People do not believe in ideas anymore: they believe in crass materialism. The youth are no longer idealistic. They feel that ideas are no longer prime, and once that happens, people lose faith.

C3: How can youths establish the right structure to empower themselves for their environment? Most of them are dropouts, but they have something to contribute. What structure can be established in the informal sector?

A3: Dr. Momoh: Framework for informal sector participants is important. There is a myth that those in the informal sector will get rich, but it's not true. Many of these people remain very poor. Empowering them, giving them knowledge and creativity to empower themselves, is crucial. The informal sector itself can be dehumanizing and alienating. Empowerment means giving people skills and talents to participate in the society.

C4: What next? Are you here to impart the knowledge on us about youth alienation and then set us free to put things in place? How do you intend to implement the ideas generated at the end of the program? What happens after the program?

A4: Dr. Momoh: We should not jump the gun. Take it one step at a time. First, come up with an agreement on these issues. It's the lack of conviction that's often caused the problems.

C5: How can change come through the youths? On their own, I don't know the class they belong to. It's in the class context that we can understand how to better put ideas into action. Ideas do have to drive it. For youths, it's the big picture they should look at, how to improve the society, motivated by ideas that will bring a better society. They are in a position to do so because they are unemployed, they're not too busy!

C6: Nigerian youths have failed because of poor governance and bad policies. What ideas should they have when they have no jobs and they're hungry? We

won't solve these problems until we have a process that can guarantee credible leadership.

C7: Youths have a lot of ideas. Ideas must be minute. The problem is the materialistic nature of society. Nobody gives them support, so they never express those ideas. These days we don't have firebrand associations where youths meet. Society has failed to generate good models for the youths. Youths are betrayed. They betrayed themselves and they've been betrayed.

Plenary Session 2
During the second plenary session, there was first a brainstorm to identify core blockages to the integration of youths into society. Following the brainstorm, participants shared their ideas on how to address youth alienation and how to mobilize stakeholders to take action on the issue.

The results of the brainstorm identifying core blockages are summarized below:

1) Poor Education
2) Bad political leadership
3) Administrative failures relating to the NYOC. Students should be able to stand up and graduate.
4) Values: At home, parents don't teach their children the right lessons and they're not concerned about it. The average Nigerian youth believes he has to make money by all means. Believes he has to make money over a very short period of time. Attitude of grabbing, making money overnight
5) The Nigerian state. Its not developmental. Politicians don't have a genuine interest in the development of society.
6) Political system. Youths are not able to put into place what they have learned in school. They're not able to contribute. Problem of misplaced priorities.
7) Structural: What kind of laws and policies do we put into place to enhance the position of youths? Structure is a big problem.
8) Lack of access to credit, lack of entrepreneurial development centers so they can come up with concrete business plans.

9) Political and economy go together. What is being given to you to help you carry your program? Money should be given to help people buy equipment for budding businesses.
10) Most schools do not prepare students beyond academic instruction. Don't prepare students for setting goals for themselves after they graduate. Don't prepare them with life skills. Need to look at curricula properly to give them skills for outside the classroom.
11) When government gives out money to empower youths, government agencies should be given time to let them know that all those ideas of government are taken into account by those agencies.
12) Youth are potential. Nigerians neglect potential, neglect ideals
13) Corruption is something we should look at closely. Facilities are not being built for youths to find fulfillment. The amount of money being taken out of the economy is the problem.

After looking at the blockages to youth integration into society, the conference shifted to a brainstorm on solutions to these issues. Those solutions can be found in the communiqué that was drafted and is contained in this monograph.

Next, there was a brainstorm to identify strategies to mobilize stakeholders' actions to reduce youth alienation. The suggestions made during that session are also included in the communiqué contained in the monograph.

Day 2: Report Back to Plenary and Closing

On the second and final day of the conference, a summary of the proceedings from the previous day's activities was read first. Then, the floor was opened up for feedback from participants on any issues that weren't adequately addressed or needed more debate.

After the completion of these debates, the communiqué was read out loud for all the participants to hear. They offered final feedback and recommendations for changes that should be made to the language and

content of the communiqué. Finally, Mr. Chukwuma moved for the adoption of the communiqué, to which participants offered their consent. To close, Ms. Isioma Kemakolam, who coordinated the conference, offered her final remarks and insight into the proceedings. She thanked all the participants for making it a lively conference, for discussing these important issues in depth and making insightful comments. She then made the point that the ideas generated at the conference should be carried forward and utilized to improve the situation in Nigeria.

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