

Political Violence Amongst Youth Groups in Africa's Budding Democracies - An Explorative Studies of Concepts, Issues and Experiences

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Abstract

Democratic processes the world over have exhibited tremendous challenges of diverse dimensions especially in emerging African states that are struggling to enthrone this valuable approach to management and public governance

Introduction:

What makes youth prone to engage in violent movements? And what program strategies show the greatest potential to moderate this risk? A number of research works recently undertook investigations in order to better comprehend or understand these questions, based on data from a number of youth empowerment projects in different African countries. These studies have shed more light on the debate over whether young people's economic conditions are a major driver of violence. They also seemed to have provided hard evidence on a number of social, political, and economic factors that influence youth propensity towards violence in developing countries. The findings in general have clear implications for peace building programs in environments like Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and several others where underlying tensions are known to have periodically erupted into violent conflicts. The results of these studies hugely lend support to the further use of economic incentives and promoting social integration among youth as pillars of peace building programs in these contexts. These researches also point to the need to expand young people's political and civic engagement to significantly reduce their risk of participation in violent movements. Several of such programs in these countries have already internalized this lesson and are promoting constructive avenues for political participation among youth alongside efforts to improve their economic independence. Recently, a newspaper report declared that over 10,000 youths have been trained in diverse fields in Taraba State, North East Nigeria, in order to stem the tide of politically motivated violence that has engulfed the native *Jukuns*, *Tivs*, *Fulanis* and the *Hausas* who are predominant in the region as clearly enunciated by the Leadership (June 2001) and the Daily Trust (Feb., 2011) similar number of the politically created *Yankalare* group in Gombe State, North-East Nigeria, were similarly reported as receiving training in diverse trades and skills and this initiative is financed by the State government.

Diverse Contexts of Violence

It seems easy to be positive about the statement which ordinarily asserts that some of our societies live in violent time. One needs to however reflect back on the assassinations of Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sir Akintola, General Murtala Mohammed, President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert F. Kennedy; the riots in many urban areas; police violence; the war in Biafra, the war in Vietnam; the Boko-Haram insurgency and the rising crime rate in different areas such as armed robbery, money laundering, human and drug trafficking e.t.c.

In making further efforts towards understanding the situation, we need to distinguish between violence against people and violence against things. A world of difference between beating up or killing another person and stealing or destroying things exist. Only those for whom there is no difference between life and property will miss this important difference. Furthermore, we have to cleanly delineate the distinguishing features between incidental violence, which may arise out of actions of protest or affirmations of certain views, and intended violence, which is aimed at the violation of others. Although it is often not simple to draw a clear line of distinction between these two kinds of violence, by and large they represent two forms of violence which can be distinguished from each other

The cry for 'law and order' which is raised in the name of stopping violence can equally be an expression of violence as it is often rooted in the "wish to use force to suppress unpopular opinions or attitudes" (Fromm, 1969). Fromm also added that law and order is "an emotionally charged slogan which often speaks against minority violence, while the mood behind it may be just as violent as that which it claims to fight". Adding from Eric Fromm's discussion, we also delve into asking the same question he raised on whether violence is an inherent part of human nature. The affirmative answer to this question is old, Fromm [1969] said, and further noting that-

"From [Thomas] Hobbes to [Sigmund] Freud to Konrad Lorenz, the assumption has been that man is an inherently aggressive animal. This assumption was made by Freud in his concept of the life instinct and the

death instinct and by Freudian psychoanalysts who did not follow Freud in this assumption but postulated the existence of a destructive instinct in man. Lorenz shares the concept of an aggressive instinct and combines it with assumptions about inherited aggressiveness rooted in the evolution of men from animals. According to the psychoanalysts and Lorenz, aggressiveness is spontaneously produced within the nervous system. It grows and accumulates and must be expressed if it is not to explode against or without a person's intention. Aggressiveness in this view does not need a special stimulus or provocation. It arises by itself and seeks and finds those stimuli which give it a chance to express itself". (Eric Fromm, 1969)

Youth and Political Violence:

Politically motivated violence occurs in every society at some point during its existence, Young people are known to have invariably played a significant role in perpetrating acts of violence against society. Indeed, in a number of weak and emerging societies, political 'leaders' oftentimes play what many have described as a subversive role in manipulating and mobilizing young people to violently actualize, realize and further their own selfish political objectives. Mobilizing youth to commit political violence is not an inherently African problem, but is common in many societies around the world. Election offers a clear African perspective on the mobilization of youth in political violence.

As enunciated earlier, young men and women get involved in violence for diverse and context-specific reasons. The prevailing theme in the commentary on youth and violence is that exclusion and lack of opportunities faced by young people leads to disillusionment and, in some cases, their participation in violence. Unemployment, insufficient educational opportunities, poor governance and social marginalization can lead to the deep disaffection of youth in society, increasing the likelihood of them resorting to anti-social activity and engagement in violence.

However, it is important to recognize that there are many contexts where youth suffer from high levels of exclusion but do not participate in violence. One may ask, what distinguishes those who are mobilized from those who remain on the periphery? Analyzing other African contexts of political violence from which Nigeria and others may learn, there are a number of discernible factors that, taking into account the above-mentioned underlying conditions of social exclusion, can lead to youth being mobilized to engage in dangerous acts of violence.

'Youth' - A Definitional Expedition:

A clear understanding of the nature and dynamics of youth violence must be preceded by the need to define youth itself. The word youth has been defined variously by different scholars and organizations. Kenniston [1971:27], refers to youth as representing a period between adolescence and adulthood in a post-modern era. He restated emphatically that it is a new stage of life which millions of young people are known to have entered today. The United Nations Children Education Fund, UNICEF [1972] observes that those between the age of 15 and 25 years as best described as youth. Johnson(cited in Abhuere, 2000:85), on the other hand argued that while leadership of youth programmes has no upper age limit, their membership has in real practice covered persons of over 35-45 years old. Berger (1972:42) also insisted that youth cuts across age, pointing to culture as the major issue that really matters, adding that anyone who feels youthful, and exhibits such qualities as spontaneity, impulsiveness, energy, etc. should be considered as a youth. Many others have conceptualized that "youth" should just be viewed as a transitional stage in life between childhood and adulthood rather than as a rigid construct based on age. This crop of analysts further recognizes the diversity of youth by gender, class, ethnicity and focuses on the multiple dimensions of exclusion that have systematically disadvantaged the youth. It also take a holistic approach to violence – recognizing that in practice different forms of violence [e.g. political, criminal, interpersonal, extremism] may formidably overlap and that some of the same structural and proximate factors may also drive youth engagement in different forms of violence. The United Nations General Assembly has defined —youth as the age between 15 and 24. As we have seen earlier and as we will further see, there is no single agreed definition of whom and what constitutes —youth, thus defining what constitute 'youth' ultimately varies between and amongst countries and organizations. The lowest age range for youth is 12 in Jordan and the upper age range is 35 in a number of African countries. The World Health Organization [WHO] use the term —adolescent for those aged 10-19, —youth for those 15-24, and —young people for those 10-24. According to Hilker and Fraser [2009], there is also a degree of overlap between international definitions of —youth and —children, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC] defining a child as everyone under the age of 18 —unless under the law applicable to the child, maturity is attained earlier. Thus, this new life stage can be characterized as a period of semi-autonomy, when young people experiment with adult roles but do not fully commit to them (World Bank, 2007). A growing literature on the transition to adulthood and what it means to become an adult in different cultural contexts is largely available. Achievement of adulthood can be determined by various factors such as achieving economic independence, leaving the parental home, getting married and having children. In some societies, particular social or cultural rituals may also mark the transition

to adulthood. In many cases, this transition to adulthood can be prolonged or shortened by many factors. At this point, it is crucial to recognize that "youth" is not a homogenous construct, but encapsulates several different experiences and diversities, for example according to gender, class, disability, ethnicity, education and provenance (e.g. region, rural/urban). In some distinct African cultures, female youth as a category scarcely exists, for example in Darfur females become women when they menstruate, before which point they are considered girls (Hilker and Fraser, 2009). Marc Sommers (2006) as reported Hilker and Fraser (2009) has also noted that in many contexts, motherhood tends to alter the social status of female youth far more than fatherhood changes the lives of male youth. To Hall, youth is viewed as a "recapitulation period". Gassets on the other hand [as quoted in Abhuere [2000], also quoted in A.Y. Muhammad], views youth as a "maturation process". Freud [as quoted in Abhuere, 2000] sees it as a "psycho-sexual period of lack of experience that falls between childhood and adulthood". On his part, Friedmann, as Abhuere [2000] reported youth are viewed as a "group that have reached puberty, but not yet acquired the full rights and duties of adult life, such as marriage, family and earning of living".

Youth Violence - An Explanation:

Having defined youth, it is pertinent to define violence and restate what in specific constitutes youth violence. The word violence like youth lends itself to different interpretations. To avoid confusion in defining and reviewing the term 'violence' in this study, we shall use the use of Corsini's (1999) definition which sees violence more as "the expression of hostility and rage through physical force directed against a person or property".

Against this background, that this paper conveniently define youth violence as essentially a deviant or gang subculture. More than a few literature on gang subculture have dealt with the criminal behavior of adolescent youths from working class background i.e. street corner gangs e.t.c. as evinced Ifaturoti (1994:150). In essence, therefore, youth violence is demonstrative of profound deviant characteristics, which further suggest an abnormal situation, making youth become directly liable to being involved in a series of illegal or anti-social activities. Youth violence, as used in this work, refers to abnormal practices of youth. Most of the cases we have seen and examined are largely about youths whose behavior run counter to the accepted standards of the society. As Cohen (1965) succinctly puts it, these groups of people usually have related problems. Some of them are direct products of broken homes. Some, especially the hawkers, beggars, touts, resort to violent acts because their parents are poor, and there exist no alternative for them. Furthermore, we must restate that the deviant activities of these gangs must be interpreted as an open manifestation of protest against the circumambient injustice and corruption with which they have to contend on a daily basis as Albert [1997] asserted. Such gangsters, as definably noted Redl and Wineman [1951], do not often see anything wrong in what they do but rationalize their activities by bending the general rules of the society to suit their own odd circumstances, which of course is a critical negation of what is defined as the accepted behavioral standards. Often delinquents have exhibited their propensity for deviance from accepted norms because: [a] many other 'normal' people are known to do similar things; [b] they simply lack 'better' option; [c] they want to be heard in the society, Albert [1997] again reiterated. It is once again interesting to note that deviant youths often have peculiar life styles by which they are identified and even often feared by the general populace in which they operate.

Political Parties and Recruitment of Youth as Agents of Political Violence - A Reflection

Henrik Urdal [2006] has asserted that "exceptionally large youth cohorts, the so-called "youth bulges," make countries more susceptible to political violence. Within two prominent theoretical frameworks in the study of civil war, youth bulges are argued to potentially increase both opportunities and motives for political violence". Urdal, has, thus, concluded that "this claim is empirically tested in a time-series cross-national statistical model for internal armed conflict for the period 1950–2000, and for event data for terrorism and rioting for the years 1984–1995".

The results are consistent both with an expectation that youth bulges provide greater opportunities for violence through the abundant supply of youths with low opportunity costs, and with an expectation that stronger motives for violence may arise as youth bulges are more likely to experience institutional crowding, in particular unemployment". Urdal [2006] further argued that some contextual factors have been suggested to potentially enhance the effect of youth 'bulges' or surging youth population, again reinforcing the position that youth bulges are particularly associated with an increasing risk of internal armed conflict in what he describes as "starkly autocratic regimes" and also even in "highly democratic countries". In a different sense, however, and specifically too, human faculty is disbelieved to be man's suggestibility. If his leaders try to make him believe that he is or will be threatened, and if he lacks critical judgment and is prone to accept as reality what his leaders tell him is real, he will react to the alleged threats in the same way he reacts to a real threat. It does not really matter whether he is really threatened; what matters is whether he is abundantly convinced of the threat, and this very importantly depends upon the degree of his dependence on his leaders, his suggestibility, and his apparent

lack of critical thinking. Descriptively therefore, this is 'reactive aggressiveness' and it is characterized by the fact that it is provoked by a real or alleged threat to vital interests of people. It also disappears when the threat has been warded off, and that the aggressive act is itself purpose-determined and does not produce any considerable amount of what is often seen or described as 'lustful feeling'. Several more specific and probably more empirical scenarios have been identified by a number of studies in their bid to unearth how the youth are 'conscripted' or perhaps how they are lured into desperate acts of violence. Amongst them principally are the following:

Politics of Identity: Young people may be drawn to defend their own ethnic base or political ideologies through the use of violence. In Rwanda, thousands of disaffected Hutu youth, known as *interhamwe*, were infamously mobilized through the use of political propaganda and hate-inspiring media during the 1994 genocide, to catastrophic effect. Nigeria has not been essentially insulated from this brand of political propaganda when one views Ansari Dokubo's ethnically inspired hatred against the so-called "North" or "*Hausa-Fulani*". It is pertinent to state this in the light of the clear realization that hate and destructiveness are impulses which obscure rational and objective thinking and easily create a serious polarization in that they reinforce each other on both sides of the political spectrum. This is indeed where the danger actually lies!

Indoctrination and Abduction Techniques: Many young people participate in violent activities because they are forced to, through elaborate techniques including abduction and indoctrination. Many armed conflicts were artificially prolonged through the incessant abduction of children who were forced to fight on the other side. These experiences have been most effectively dramatized in the conflicts in North-East Nigeria involving the *Boko-Haram* and the political conflict that reigned for a long time in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The use of child soldiers till today remains a veritable 'military' tool or strategy used by several African political or rebel groups such as MASOP, M-23 or even the FDLR.

Yan St. Pierre, the CEO of the Berlin-based security consulting firm MOSECON has according to a VOA Report, quoted by the Nigerian *Sun Newspaper* [Aug, 2014] said that Kidnap victims in Nigeria are strengthening *Boko-Haram* by increasing the strength of their army, adding that "once the group was just trying to survive, he says it (Boko-Haram) is now trying to take over territories". According to Pierre, "Boko-Haram is now planning strategically long-term, It's not about replenishing forces. It's about acquiring more personnel", he asserted. Records also have indicated, the paper added, *Boko-Haram* has killed thousands of people this year alone in a growing, five-year-old insurgency and it has also displaced over a million people. The group — which says it wants to enforce a version of Islamic law — is increasingly becoming well-armed and well-funded. St. Pierre further said the insurgents are also using the tactics pioneered by Joseph Kony in Uganda and Charles Taylor, ex-Liberian warlord, in Sierra Leone, to gain loyalty by all means from kidnap and abduction victims. He added that kidnap victims, including children, are sometimes forced to kill people they know or love. "By making them kill their own parents or their own family it makes them be in a position where they can't go back," he again opined. "Psychologically they are absolutely broken. They killed their parents. They literally murdered what brought them to life. In that sense, their loyalty becomes to the only family that they have now, which is the army or the terrorist group that kidnapped them", St. Pierre maintained. He again said *Boko-Haram* also kidnap girls and women, including the more than 200 schoolgirls abducted many months ago, to use as household help, sex slaves and most recently, bombers. At least nine people were killed in four attacks by female suicide bombers in Kano, North West Nigeria. Two other girls, the report continued, were arrested, one was a 10 year old strapped with a bomb. "They're taking these little girls now and using them as weapons," St. Pierre said. "So it's a double use by kidnapping girls". On the other hand, the report said, the Nigerian military will not concede any portion of this country to terrorists or any such group", Major General Chris Olukolade, a defense spokesman declared. However, a *Boko-Haram* "takeover" may not be what it sounds like. If villagers are terrified into pledging loyalty to *Boko-Haram*, the group can essentially control the area without hanging flags or building walls as observed *the Sun Newspaper*.

Trigger Political events: Events such as elections and political activities may hugely trigger acts of violence, particularly when underlying ethnic and social tensions are already existent. In early 2008, the disputed election results in Kenya led to running battles between the tribal support bases of the opposing political blocs - the Party of National Unity [PNU] and the Orange Democratic Movement [ODM] - resulting in over a thousand deaths. The Mungiki, a notorious gang which draws its members largely from the Kikuyu ethnic group, were responsible for orchestrating widespread violence during the post-election period, mobilizing unemployed and disaffected youth from impoverished areas to carry out acts of mayhem and violence, in retaliation for violent acts committed by pro-ODM youth, who are largely comprised of the Kalenjin. That the two previously warring ethnic blocs in 2008 – the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin – now share executive power in Kenya following the 2013 election, shows how malleable political and tribal differences can be in African societies. In 2011, following the declaration of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as winner of the presidential elections against his major contender, Muhammadu Buhari, a *Fulani* man of Northern extraction and who was largely adjudged as more popular, the country especially its Northern axis was engulfed in real violence with members of both the PDP, CPC and the

ordinary citizens suffering extensive casualties in terms of loss of lives and property. The CPC and their supporters claimed that the election was fraught with extensive rigging. INEC, the election management body was accused of manipulating the elections in favor of the declared winner, Jonathan Goodluck, an *Ituoke* tribesman from the oil producing Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

Weak and Limited Security Network: Weak capacity and control of state security provision; abuse of state force [human rights abuses, oppressive policing, as was noticed in the early days the Boko-Haram incursions etc]; presence of non-state security actors; availability of small arms and light weapons, which have become accessible from some key conflict sites, such as Libya, Liberia and Algeria in Africa; existence of external threat; regional / border conflict; international military involvement.

Socializing with the Norms of Violence: As a means of maintaining existing power structures, individuals and political bodies expectedly employ strategies of recruiting marginalized young people and socializing them in norms of violence, incentivizing them by appealing to their desire for status, identity and group cohesion. As enunciated A Y Mohammed in his article titled "Youth Violence in the Fourth Republic..." the elites in Nigeria, like in many African countries, have equally helped in promoting youth engagement in violent activities. He further cited them as representing essentially "the capitalists who depend on the state machinery for survival" as quoted in Joseph [1999], adding that they are also a major player in the ethnic game for exploitation and manipulation of non-elites, usually directed towards personal/elite groups interests, which mostly promotes division and hatred among people in pluralistic societies. This viewpoint is further reinforced by Otite [1990]. These elites Mohammed continued, deploy the "use ethnic and religious sentiment in order to achieve their political and socio-economic goals" citing further the example of a Sokoto Prince who in his address to youth corpsers posted to the state, in 1986, publicly expressed that the *Hausa* race is superior to other ethnic groups in Nigeria. Hassan M. Kukah [2002] extensively made reference to this statement. Mohammed, again, expressed that the others too, in reference to the *Yoruba* and the *Igbo*, have the same belief. In many other instances, he conclusively declared, the elites often sponsor youths in ethno-religious, political and cult violence. Such a situation, Mohammed further noted "sets an appalling role model for youths and increases their vulnerability to or penchant for violent crime". Obateru [1994:132] also noted that poverty apparently accounts for the bulk of violence due to such problems as unemployment, inadequate housing, physical and social infrastructures, as we have earlier been made to see. The current situation in Nigeria must have implicitly worsened the situation Obateru [1994], who also further observed that the situation of youths in the country, has rendered them idle and almost hopeless, hence they have become "instruments of manipulation by the elites for ethno-religious and political insurrections".

In the previous elections in Zimbabwe, a usual tactic of the reigning ZANU-PF's political machine was to recruit and indoctrinate affected young people into its so-called "youth wing", mobilizing them to intimidate and attack voters and political opponents. In many other African societies, young people have been the victims of policy neglect and excluded from decision-making processes. When patriarchal power structures exclude young people, violence can often be a way of venting their frustration, seizing control and making a significant impact. Unfortunately, the prevailing stereotype of youth involvement in African politics is that of the party-political thug and violent acolyte who may be mobilized during election periods to intimidate political opponents and voters.

Series of analyses of recent episodes of political violence in Africa have indicated that youth are manipulated and mobilized when needed, but otherwise marginalized and ignored by the political elite, especially when it comes to addressing the root causes of their social exclusion. Currently, there is huge campaign in Nigeria recently which tend to depict that the "political elites only use the children of others while theirs are fortified in European and American schools in pursuit of their studies" claimed a woman political activist in Kaduna at an organized forum for youth education. A recurrent election strategy used by Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF for example since the 80s, has been the political mobilization of unemployed youth, mostly males, and sometimes women, to attack opposition supporters and their property. Zimbabwe's 2008 election was no different, with the country submerged by a wave of state sponsored violence and intimidation in the run-up to the Presidential election. Many young men became involved in quasi-military groups, such as the ZANU-PF youth militias. ZANU-PF youth wing was indeed at the forefront of committing acts of violence. Moreover, the perpetrators of violence were the beneficiaries of police inaction or party protection, further engendering a culture of political impunity. Economic and educational opportunities for young people in many African countries remain extremely limited. While social exclusion of young people has undoubtedly been a factor in several of our experiences of youths in political violence, the principal driver has been the degree to which their engagement in violence has been actively promoted and sanctioned by the ruling party.

Clearly, youth are seen as crucial actors in realizing political goals. If political leaders can rapidly and effectively mobilize youth to become violent agents of political change on a widespread scale, then equally, it should follow naturally that youth can be mobilized to become peaceful participants in the political processes, the legitimacy of which are irrevocably dirtied when violence informs the ultimate result. Improving and

encouraging the peaceful participation of youth in politics and peace-building initiatives will increase the social capital of Zimbabwean society and reduce the prevalence of violence in times of political transition. However, in the present, leaders are expected to lead, and in 2015 Nigeria has the chance to show the world that it has consigned the practice of manipulating youth to commit political violence to where it belongs - the pages of history.

Governance Incompetence and Limited Participatory Politics: It is often believed that *Participation* in the formal political process may not necessarily provide the youth with an ideal outlet for the expression of their cogent needs, aspirations or even their most profound grievances. Several scenarios have indicated that young people are more commonly raised in countries that are characterized by the existence of a conservative "power structures, patronage networks and intergenerational hierarchies, which exclude them from decision-making and do not meet their needs". Where youth feel existing power structures marginalize them and in some cases obliterate them, violence can provide an ideal opportunity to have a voice, lead and make a resounding bang.

Conclusion

Hilker and Fraser [2009] in their report titled "Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States" prepared for the DFID, extensively quoted Frances Stewart's all-encompassing "Grievance perspectives", strongly argued that "relative deprivation or exclusion fuels conflict and that violence is a rational means to address grievances. These grievances might be economic – such as poverty, economic recession or inequality; political – such as lack of democracy, lack of minority rights or political participation; or socio-cultural – such as lack of language rights, destruction of cultural tradition etc. Central to —grievance arguments are arguments about inter-ethnic or —horizontal inequalities". The report further argued that "...horizontal inequalities [defined as —inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups] are an important cause of violent conflict". Hilker and Fraser [2009] also added that this viewpoint has been further reinforced by the results of "...eight case studies in Latin America, Southeast Asia and West Africa [from protests/armed struggle in Chiapas [Mexico] to civil war in Uganda and Sri Lanka]" adding that "there is an increased probability of conflict occurring where socio-economic horizontal inequalities are high, especially when these are consistent with political inequalities"

While for instance, youth policy and programmes seek to produce skilled and productive workers, especially through training, they also aim at having dedicated and qualitative leadership through the effective mobilization, for service of the already well-qualified youths. A combination of these factors is expected to promote overall national goals of development. Here, education [which translates into human investment] is expected to do the ultimate magic. Hence, these Nigeria and other developing states should be seen to organize youth at two levels: one for the less fortunate youth and another for the elitist ones amongst them. The final aim is to harness and channel their energies for national development. Margaret Thatcher, one time British prime minister, asserted that " young people ought not to be idle...it is very bad for them" *Times [London]*. It is therefore right to say that the apparent neglect of youths in the Nigeria's development plans has been one of the sources of youth violence in the country. American psychoanalyst and social philosopher Erich Fromm stressed the importance of social and economic factors on human behavior. His focus was a departure from traditional psychoanalysis, which emphasized the role of the subconscious. In his 1969 essay published in the *Collier's Year Book*, Fromm presented various explanations for human violence. He argued that violence cannot be controlled by imposing stronger legal penalties, but rather more fundamentally by creating a more just society in which people connect with each other as humans and are able to control their own lives. In practical sense, it is often unequal access to education that can become a major source for tension, which may likely lead to rebellions, conflict and violence. The nature and quality of education are also important, as the mismatch between the content of education and job opportunities available can be a source of frustration and school curricula can be a powerful means of mobilization and indoctrination. Therefore, it is fundamental to observe that functional education which emphasizes Entrepreneurship training, is vital in revolutionizing the content of education and in impacting positively towards getting a functionally educated youth population. Thus, in an educational system that places emphasis on entrepreneurship education, it may be possible to achieve an effective match between curriculum content and the opportunities for job creation in various areas. The end result of a combination of these strategies, would be a more organized society in which youth's abundant prowess in different aspects of human life, could be effectively harnessed and channeled for genuine development.

Also, in are more specific sense, programs that are designed to target the youth in many developing countries should also be seen to emphasize the following key composite approaches:

a. Full multi-level and multi-sectoral youth programs that clearly address diverse issues that are of specific concern to the youth in a more definable context should be promoted. Programs here are meant to focus on integrating young people into the labor market and/or their communities through capacity building, skills training, income-generating activities, peace-building and community empowerment.

b. Youth and peace-building programmes that seeks to engage young people directly in democracy and peace-building activities as a means to empower youth, to mobilize and exploit their energies and capacities as a force for change and to prevent them from being drawn into renewed violence. Programs that places great emphasis on peace education especially in our schools/tertiary institutions, training in rights issues, peace-building and conflict resolution, and the direct but positive involvement of youth in elections and human rights monitoring and voice, transparency and accountability programs.

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