

SAFEGUARDING THE VOICES OF NIGERIAN YOUTH: A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE END SARS PROTESTS

Dr. Amina Abdullahi Suleiman¹ and Prof. Ibrahim Hassan Bakari²

Article Info

Keywords: Nigerian youths, End SARS protests, police reform, policy-making, violence

Abstract

This paper examines the Nigerian youth movement, with a focus on the End Special Anti-Robbery Squad (EndSARS) protests and the challenges facing Nigerian youths. Nigerian youths have contributed greatly to the country's development through various facets such as democracy, governance, politics, economy, security, and community development. However, failure to invest, promote, and protect youths may lead to radicalization, violent acts, and extremism. The EndSARS protests were not just about the brutality and disbandment of SARS but also about reforming the entire Nigerian Police Force and other lukewarm attitudes of the government towards Nigerian youths. The paper identifies short-sighted policymaking as a failure to properly integrate the needs of youths in political and economic structures, leading to agitations and violent acts of political thuggery, armed robbery, ethno-religious crises, and kidnapping. The paper recommends reforming the Nigerian Police Force as a means of regaining public confidence and promoting the interests of Nigerian youths as a vital component for a prosperous and secure Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the African countries with huge population size, high population density, and great social diversity. The number of youths in Nigeria is higher than the population of some African countries. Over the years, youths have enormously contributed towards the development of Nigeria through various facets such as democracy, governance, politics, economy, security, and community development (Yusuf, 2019). Also, youths have been deeply involved in self-help projects in Nigeria. As a progressive force for development, youths' social and psychological disposition and level of productivity are feasible when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to prosper. This depends on the societal willingness to empower the youths in social, economic, political and legal terms as some of the youths' challenges. Omoju and Abraham, (2014) further

¹ University of Maiduguri, Faculty of Social Sciences, Sociology and Anthropology Department

² University of Maiduguri, Faculty of Social Sciences, Sociology and Anthropology Department

identified youth challenges in Nigerian from the problem of youth's unemployment and underemployment, limited access to education and lack of economic opportunities, lack of access to basic education, high HIV prevalence rate to high poverty rate among others. To promote youth leadership and more inclusive politics, more than 100 Youth organizations known by its hashtag #Not-Too-Young-To-Run in Nigeria mobilized for a constitutional reform to lower the eligibility age to run for political office in 2016. It is aimed to reduce the age limit to stand as political candidates to promote good governance and youth political participation (Krook and Nugent, 2018). The youth movement in Nigeria started long ago but the organized one was created in 1934 with titled Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) and it was based in Lagos. Its primary objectives were the development of a united Nigeria out of the conglomeration of people who inhabited Nigeria, and the promotion of complete understanding along with a sense of common nationalism among different elements in the country. Politically however it sought to increase the native Nigerian participation in civil service and government with the ultimate goal of self-government. Furthermore, the movement established branches in urban areas throughout the country in an attempt to promote inter-tribal cooperation (Gann, 2011).

Youth movements could be positive or negative, but as far as the government concerns, any kind of youth movement either positive or negative would affect the government of the day's interest. Because it reminds the government that some policies were not properly implemented or executed, asking to change the entire policy like EndSARS youth movement. EndSARS protesters are a group of Nigerian youths under the umbrella of the New Nigerian Youth Movement (NNYM) that demand the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) unit, as well as, other reforms in the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). At the beginning of the EndSARS, their demands were very clear and straightforward urging the government to abolish SARS, offer justice to victims of police brutality and reform the police. The genesis of the protest was a video clip of *police officers thought to be members of the SARS unit, allegedly killing an unarmed young man* (Ukpe, 2020). What started as a peaceful demonstration by thousands of youths in some of the states in Nigeria, degenerated into chaos after the protests were hijacked by hoodlums. Unpatriotic set of youths took over the protest to achieve self-centred interest contrary to law and changed the narrative of the movement. Citizens' rights were interfered with, loss of lives, property worth billions of naira were stolen and destroyed among others. Other reasons for EndSARS protest are the political and economic structures in Nigeria which did not properly integrate youths' needs. This is what led Kamarudeen stated that:

“the manipulation of the political and economic structure by political elites have endangered high rate of youth unemployment and underemployment, poverty, poor access to quality education, and poor access to political opportunities, thereby influencing Nigerian youths to indulge in series of agitations and violent act reflected in political thuggery, armed robbery, ethno-religious crises, kidnapping etc.”

(Kamarudeen, 2011; 171)

Consequently, the occurrence of youth's violence in present Nigeria is on the proliferation and it has generated public worries as the violence is seen as anti-thesis to individual's and national development. Nigeria has become a violence-prone nation with the youths at the centre of most of it. No part of Nigeria is immune from one form of violence or the other, ranging from Boko Haram insurgency, herdsman-farmer's crisis, ethno-religious crises, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, and EndSARS protest among others. Against this background, this paper, therefore examines the youth's movement, EndSARS protest in particular and challenges confronting youth in the country. Consequently, the paper is divided into seven sections. Section one provides an introduction while section two deals with the conceptual framework. Section three deals with the empirical review, while section

four examines youths and Nigerian police on EndSARS protest. This explains the deteriorated relationship between Nigerian youths and NPF. Section five explains the challenges confronting Nigerian youths while section six offers recommendations and section seven provided for the conclusion.

CONCEPTUALUAL FRAMEWORK

Some articles had been written about EndSARS because it is a new phenomenon with an old subject matter. The agitation for the disbandment of SARS was not recent but long ago. Therefore, an attempt has been made in this part of the paper to elucidate concepts that are used by other authors. This is because these concepts may have a different meaning in other discussions.

Youth Movement in Nigeria

Youths in Nigeria formed a movement seeking for the attainment of self-government, social unity, economic, environment etc. Ginn, (2011) stated that Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) was Nigeria's the first genuine nationalist organization, founded in Lagos in 1934 with Professor Eyo Ita as the founding father and many others compatriot Nigerians. The 1934 youth's movement has the following objectives to:

- work towards the unity of Nigeria;
- work towards the attainment of self-rule; and
- unite all ethnic groups in Nigeria for the fight against colonial rule.

The recent youth's movement was Nigerian's youths protest, founded in Lagos in 2020 popularly known as #EndSARS. The protesters, a group of Nigerian youths under the umbrella of New Nigerian Youth Movement (NNYM) has drawn up an action plan to reposition the future, as well as demand to disband the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and reform the Nigerian Police Force. The youths are calling for law enforcement agencies to respect the rule of law, respect for human rights and deepening democracy, the revival of the educational and health systems and stronger efforts toward job creation (Oluola 2020).

There is no visible leadership for the EndSARS protest. As a result, Kabir (2020) observed that unarguably, the absence of a formal leadership structure made the protests last for more than the period anyone could have thought. The 2020 youth's movement has the following demands:

- Immediate release of all arrested protesters;
- Justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensations for their families;
- Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reported police misconduct within 10 days;
- Carrying out psychological evaluation and retraining of all disbanded SARS operatives before redeploying (this should be verified by an independent body); and
- The government should increase police salary and be adequately compensated for protecting the lives and property of the citizens (Ukpe, 2020).

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad was created in 1992 as a response to violent crime, particularly armed robbery (Uwazuruike 2020). One of the basic responsibilities of the government in all societies is to ensure the safety of life and property of its citizens. Section 14(2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Constitution), states that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. Therefore, it is by establishing and maintaining an efficient police force that the government provides a feeling

of security to its citizens. As a result, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is an agency established by law to ensure the preservation of public order and law enforcement as well as prevention and detection of crime (section 214(3) and 4 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria). The police play a vital role in the administration of justice in any society and present the entry point into the criminal justice system either through reports from the public or its investigation and surveillance (Benjamin, 2007). Special Anti-Robbery Squad popularly known as SARS was a segment of NPF saddled with responsibilities of curtailing armed robbery and other related crimes in Nigeria. However, the police unit has come to be known for its high-handed tactics and gross violations of human rights. SARS evolved from a special outfit created by different state Commands to address specific violent crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping, communal violence and religious violence. In each state, SARS is under the Criminal Investigation Department of the Police Command. However, the group (SARS) quickly became controversial for its links to extra-judicial killings, torture and illegal activities (Samuel, 2020; 135).

On the other hand, SARS was a special police unit set up decades ago as Nigeria, the most populous African country, battled with rising levels of crime and kidnappings. Initially, it was successful in reducing cases of violent crime but more recently the unit had been “turned into banditry”, according to Fulani Kwajafa, the man who set up SARS. In June 2020, Amnesty International released a report that documented at least 82 cases of torture, ill-treatment and extrajudicial execution by SARS between January 2017 and May 2020.

Torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other forms of cruelty by Sars officials against Nigerian youths are prohibited in all circumstances under the Nigerian law (Sections 4, 8, 10 and 11 of Anti-Torture Law 2017). No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether in a state of war or, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture. It is not enough for states to simply prohibit and criminalise torture under national law; it is suggested that there is no range of further measures to protect the youths and prevent these forms of violation hence the agitation by protest. International and national human rights law safeguards, not properly implemented, resulting in abuses of human rights. Despite the human rights and constitutional provisions, however, ill-treatment remains routine practices by SARS officials. It is also believed that corruption in the Nigeria Police has been exacerbated by poor working conditions, inadequate logistic and working facilities. These have greatly undermined the operational efficiency of the police to prevent and control crime in Nigeria. These and other reasons prompted the EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

THE 2020 ENDSARS PROTEST IN NIGERIA

Nigeria has witnessed numerous protests in the past. However, the EndSARS protests attracted massive national and global attention with numerous political, business, entertainment, and religious leaders and organizations across the globe supporting the campaign. EndSARS is a protest mounted by Nigerian youths agitating for the immediate disbandment of SARS, as a result of brutality against the public and youths in particular. Samuel, (2020) stated that the mass civil protest against SARS was an outcome of prolonged and continuous polices’ acts of torture, intimidation and extrajudicial killings of Nigerians and more especially the youths. According to Mayowa, (2020), EndSARS protest was triggered by the public lack of confidence in the SARS of ending robbery activities in Nigerian society. He further stated that the remote and immediate cause of the protest was as a result of prolonged acts of coercion and intimidation by members of SARS towards Nigerian citizens.

Furthermore, the immediate trigger was a video that showed a SARS officer shooting a young motorist in Ughelli, in Delta state, pushing the body out of the car and drove the deceased’s Lexus SUV. Within days, crowds of young people gathered in Nigerian cities to demand the abolition of SARS (Samuel, 2020). Nevertheless, the youth movement took to the streets and vowed not to back down before substantial change was made. The protests spread into many states across Nigeria and are centred in the largest city, Lagos. The protest of EndSARS started

peacefully in the process and it turned to violence where many innocent's youths died and properties worth millions of naira were stolen and destroyed (Kabir, 2020).

The protests created a powerful movement that appeared to shake those in power (Aliyu T). But those currently in power at first misunderstood what was going on this time (Gimba. K). It gave young Nigerians a voice that has shattered the country's culture of deference. As the protest went viral, so did defiance of the elite in Nigeria. The trashing of the palace of the highly respected oba, or traditional ruler, of Lagos, was symbolic of this mood. The protest has become a conduit to vent anger with the elites in charge of Nigeria for decades and demand change. Kakanda added that it brought awareness on the part of the authorities that poverty and hardship are national security threats. In the end, it is now realised that the Nigerian Government can no longer take such outrage for granted as it has done before and it is believed that the #EndSARS movement can achieve something.

REVIEW OF SOME RELATED WORKS

Related studies are reviewed in this section. The focus is to look at the concern, methodology, findings, and recommendations; this will enable this study to avoid repeating what other kinds of literature have done and also improve on the study.

The first study reviewed is titled: *The Political Economy of the #EndSARS Protest in Nigeria: Opening the "Black Box" of Police Brute-Force and Extrajudicial Executions*, by Samuel (2020).

The focus of the study is on the analysis of the remote causes of the #EndSARS in contemporary Nigeria. It tries to critically examine and analyse the police act of brutality and extrajudicial killings of the Nigerian citizenry with a particular focus on the Special Anti-Robbery Squad SARS.

The study attached on both qualitative and quantitative data from the reports of researches carried out by scholars, local and international NGOs and human right organizations. He concluded that the #EndSARS protests were as a result of prolonged acts of coercion and intimidation of members of SARS towards the Nigerian citizenry. The study adopted the political economy theoretical perspective, to articulate the emergence/establishment of the Nigeria Police Force as a coercive state apparatus established by the then British colonialists, despite political independence of the 1960s, and the Police Force still retained its coercive and retributive attributes of torture, use of brute-force and extrajudicial executions.

The study, therefore, recommended that the Nigerian state should embark on a holistic reformation of the police institution. The study also recommended the creation of a civil police system to avoid the occurrence of such uprising rebellion by members of the Nigerian public.

The study critically looked at the remote causes of #EndSARS protest and the brutality meted on the public by Nigerian police especially SARS. The major gap in this study is its reliance on SARS operation only. The study failed to see Nigerian's youth who are the vulnerable and victims of police brutality and extrajudicial killing.

The second study, titled; *Attitude of Nigerians Toward the Nigerian Police in South West, Nigeria*, by Mayowa, (2020), focused so much on the protest which was triggered by the Public lack of confidence in the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) to end robbery in the Nigerian society. The objectives of the study looked at how the attitude of Nigerians toward the Police has affected the performance of the Nigerian Police *vis-à-vis crime control and the maintenance of law and order*, to determine how police public image can be enhanced, to gain public trust and confidence. The study was a survey that used a questionnaire to obtained information from respondents. Thirdly the *Police and the Public in Nigeria*' by Okonkwo (1966), raised invaluable issues of the role of police in the prevention, detection and enforcement of crime (1966). Though he addressed the Nigerian issue in his book, there are certain grey areas he failed to enunciate and examine, such as the role of the police as it relates to society in the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria

The study revealed that the public has lost confidence in the Nigerian Police to perform its statutory function of maintaining law and order. It also pointed out that criminals bribed Police to secure freedom and at times, Police often collude with the criminals to perpetrate crime. The study also revealed that the Police had turned checkpoints to Automated Teller Machine (ATM) centres where illegal money is collected from travellers. People perceived Police as lazy, corrupt, inefficient and trigger-happy. The study revealed a high level of corruption within the rank and file of the Nigerian Police. The study recommended to curtail corruption in the Nigerian police, the government should improve welfare packages to the officers and men of the force.

Like other studies, this study did not focus on the challenges facing the Nigerian's youth. It is unlike this study; it was an empirical study.

THE YOUTHS, NIGERIAN POLICE AND THE 2020 ENDSARS PROTEST

In modern times and some years back, the attitude of Nigerian youths towards the NPF has been bad and on the edge of deterioration. This may not be unconnected with Aina, (2020) described that the NPF, which is saddled with the responsibility of ensuring law and order, is now seen by many as being unable to deliver on its mandate. The duty of the police is perceived as a gatekeeper of the criminal justice system, saddled with the enforcement of the law in the society, to protect lives, and property and maintain civil order in the country.

The core mission of the police is to control crime. Indeed, professional crime-fighting ought to enjoy the support of the society specifically the youths as the basic strategy of policing and to embody a deep commitment to this objective (Mark H. Moore, Robert C. T, and George L. Kellin, 1988). In contrast, the police unprofessionally are in problems with the youths in the society which to blur this focus. If these unprofessional acts of the police leave the community more vulnerable to victimization, it would be undesirable alternatives. As a result, the youths are no longer having confidence and trust the Nigerian police in handling the responsibilities vested on the force by law. This resulted in the EndSARS protest. Mayowa, (2020) Stated that the protest was triggered by the youth's lack of confidence in the SARS to end robbery in Nigerian society. However, lack of confidence is not only limited to SARS alone but the generality of the Nigerian Police. The Nigerian Police is bedevilled by social vices like corruption, extra-judicial killings, aiding and abetting criminals, etc. He further stated that:

Despite the slogan that Police are your friend, bail is free, etc., many Nigerians still do not trust these assertions by the Nigerian Police simply because the institution has lost its credibility and respect among the citizens. The public believes that the Nigerian Police which is expected to be responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the society has greatly deviated from this primary assignment (Mayowa, 2020; 3).

Conversely, on the highways policemen are worse; there are some instances where a police officer may conspire with criminals by giving outgun and ammunitions. It is believed that the NPF is mostly promoting corruption, accepting gratification, corrupt demand etc contrary to the law (Section 33 and 34 of the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act 2004, Cap, E1 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria). These and other attitudes painted the images of the NPF in the eyes of the Nigerian public in particular youth, as most victims of police brutality. To rebuild the loss of trust Aina (2020) suggested that the police must be properly funded, adequately equipped and trained to ensure greater professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness. These if adequately addressed as a matter of urgency, would go a long way towards rebuilding trust in the NPF. Also, lack of education and enlightenment contributed to the youths violating and responding to abuses contrary to the law. To bring to an end of this dilemma between Nigerian police and the youths, government as matter of urgency should reopen the tertiary institutions in the country subject to the pandemic protocols. Jobs should also be

provided to the teeming youth, establish small and medium entrepreneurship and offers loan, reform the police with professional pieces of training on the significance of the police-community relationship.

It is further believed that it is necessary to amend some legal provisions on the operation and function of police which have negatively affected the operational capacity of the police. It is suggested that corruption in the Nigeria Police has been exacerbated by poor working conditions, inadequate logistic and working facilities. These have greatly undermined the operational efficiency of the police to prevent and control crime in Nigeria. Similarly, the police must be properly trained, and adequately equipped and well remunerated. The police must also collaborate with the youths in sharing intelligence to facilitate crime prevention and detection in Nigeria

The recent upsurge in violent crimes in Nigeria has created enormous uncertainty in the security of lives and property of individuals and social stability in general. The incidents of traditional crimes such as armed robbery, arson, drug trafficking and abuse, murder, kidnapping, rape, hired assassinations and ritual killings are examples of the most serious and violent crimes which have been on the increase in the recent past. The failed trust between the police and the youths resulted in that criminals are getting more organized, sophisticated and brutal in operation and dastardly acts. The nation is witnessing the emergences of dangerous trends in the social and economic wellbeing.

It appears that the primary functions of the police are detection and prevention of crime as well as the preservation of law and order is not enforced as required. The police's constitutional powers of ensuring the prevalence of law and order and the preservation of public peace now resulted in rancour with the youths. The powers and duties of the police force conferred by the constitution for effective oversight and accountability are virtually abused. Most activities were done contrary to the provisions of the Police Act (Section 4 of the Police Act Cap 359 LFN, 2020) which charge the force with the general duties of protection of lives and property, detection and prevention of crime; apprehension of offenders (Section 214(2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with Amendments 2011) etc.

In the end, it is believed that the rights of the youth must not be subjected to abuse by the NPF since the rights are mostly the right to life, the dignity of the human person, liberty, fair hearing, privacy and family life. The challenges or some of the factors responsible for the ineffective performance of the police or brutality against the youths are discussed.

CHALLENGES FACING THE NIGERIAN YOUTHS

Nigerian, in general, are confronting numerous challenges, these include unemployment and underemployment, erratic power supply, infrastructural gaps, insufficient social amenities, poor healthcare services, the lack of access to quality education and the threat posed by violent extremism all in the past decades (Omoju & Abraham, 2014). Those who occupy the proportional number among the youths are youth, those below the age of forty years. Several studies pointed out that Nigerian youth are facing challenges, despite the high population size and potentiality they possess. However, the majority of those of working age do not have formal employment and there are few opportunities to get standard education. Earlier this year, government statistics showed that 40% of Nigerians lived in poverty as found by the National Bureau of Statistic, (NBS, 2020). This portrays that the major challenges facing Nigerian youths are unemployment or underemployment, poverty, poor or lack of quality education, coupled with police brutality, intimidation, harassment, extrajudicial killing and extortion.

The poverty rate among the youths has remained very high due to underemployment. The Nigerian government in 2008 stated that 80 % of Nigerian youths were unemployed while 10 % were underemployed (Daily Trust,

2008). NBS (2020) revealed that Nigerian unemployment rate as in the second quarter of 2020 projected is 27.1% indicating that about 21.7 million Nigerians remained unemployed. However, unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria are combined at 55.7%. This means that the total number of Nigerians who are unemployed and underemployed as of 2020. The most pathetic situation, the worst-hit are Nigerian youth with over 13.9 million currently unemployed. Youth between the ages of 15-24 have about 6.8 million Nigerian out of job and another 7.1 million unemployed. Consequently, NBC, (2020) further revealed that Nigerian's youth population eligible to work is about 40 million out of which 14.7 million are fully employed and another 11.2 are unemployed. To put things into context, the Nigerian youths unemployed are more than the population of Rwanda and several other African countries. Additionally, NBS (2020) stated that the youth Population is also about 64% of total unemployed Nigerians suggesting that the most agile working-class population in the country remains unemployed. Consequently, this assertion may not be unconnected with various agitation, antisocial vices and criminal act engaged by youth in Nigeria. The movement of Boko Haram was established by youth; the movement of herdsmen-farmers was perpetrated by the youth; the kidnapping groups and the majority of the members are also youth. In the positive part, organizers and members of Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) are youth; the EndSARS movement and protesters are youth, but it was hijacked by another set of youth who have a different mission. Therefore, if youths were given the necessary care and support they would contribute positively to the development and growth of the country. However, contrary to it, there is the tendency of youths engaging in various social problems such as insurgency, kidnapping, herdsmen-farmers conflict, protesting and terrorism among others.

Poverty is another problem confronting Nigerian youth because there is a proportionate number of youths roaming around the street in cities, towns and villages that couldn't afford three square meals in a day.

Youths are the backbone of development of any given society. No rational community will afford to neglect the contribution of its teeming youths because they are the vital resources of development. The neglect of this group of human resources is no doubt the most pernicious of wastes, which can militate against the development of efforts of the nation (Oday & Okoye 2014). Conceptually, there are three views of poverty and each one apply to Nigerian youths; first, poverty as severe deprivation of human needs at the individual or household level. second failure to achieve basic capabilities such as being adequately nourished, living a healthy life, possession of skills to participate in economic and social life, permission to take part in community activities etc. third subjective poverty assessments. The core of this view of poverty is that poverty must be defined by the poor themselves or by the communities that poor people live in Oday & Okoye (2014). Looking at the three views of poverty, the first view considered poverty as material deprivation, while the second regarded it as multi-dimensional phenomena, and the third said poverty has both physical and psychological dimensions. However, the majority of the youth segment of the Nigerian population lives below the poverty line, due to unemployment. Consequently, with Nigeria labelled the "poverty capital of the world," many citizens are frustrated and would do anything to change their situation. These served as the fodder that added to the ranks of the EndSARS protesters. Unemployed, street youth soon joined their educated colleagues and these massive crowds soon attracted local and foreign media outlets. Protesters with no food at home were fed at the barricades (Agbalajobi, 2020).

Despite the numerous challenges facing the Nigerian youths, the Nigerian Police were not helping matter in this situation. They become known for their violent harassment of innocent young Nigerians and forced the Nigerian youths to withdraw money from ATMs and make a transfer under duress by the Nigerian police. Furthermore, there are various examples of people who have been raped, harassed, flogged, extorted, injured or killed by the unit of SARS (Amnesty International, 2020). They further, reported that SARS has been responsible for "at least

82 cases of torture, ill-treatment, and extra-judicial execution" in a stretch of a just over three years, primarily targeting young, poor men.

These cumulative challenges that put Nigeria youths to form many movements to removed themselves out of nefarious exploitation, harassment, extortion, extrajudicial killings, rapes and other ill-treatment perpetrated by Nigerian police against young Nigerians. Historically, it is the user of these nefarious forces, the Nigerian police meted to the members of Boko Haram that led to the escalation of Boko Haram insurgency for more than a decade. Apart from the police brutality young Nigerians are, therefore, most affected by government policies that have led to a lack of jobs and meaningful sources for livelihood. Other triggers include the lavish lifestyle of political leaders. The government budgets more money for the members of the National Assembly than for health and education. These are some of the challenges confronting and affecting the Nigerian youth and they used the End SARS protest to express their anger and dismay.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The involvement in violent acts may not be unconnected with lukewarm attitude demonstrated by political leadership, extravagance behaviours exhibited by the politicians and socio-economic inequality permeating the nation. The widespread of employment and underemployment, poverty, poor sharing of resource and police brutality, extortion, exploitation, extrajudicial killings, have created a series of emotion and frustrations, thereby influencing the angry youths to agitated for changes or indulge in violent acts. The EndSARS protest has affected government, economic of the country, individual, group and many youths sustained different degree of injuries and some loss their lives.

Considering the implication, the negligent attitudes by the government against the Nigerian youth and what the youths can do, the paper, therefore, recommends the following:

- i. Government as a matter of urgency should reform the entire Nigerian police force and fetch out the bad eggs among them. So that the institution will regain its confidence from the public in general and Nigerians youths in particular. So that to avoid the future occurrences of EndSARS or any youth unrest in the country.
- ii. The police organization should establish a strong committee that will look into any complaint of misconduct presented against SARS or any policeman. However, the perpetrators should have brought to book. That will be a deterrence to other rank and file in the police organization.
- iii. The youths on their part should engage in schooling, petty business, small and medium business to avoid idleness. In other words, you should invest their energies in productive activities capable of brightening their future life chances so that they can contribute implicitly to nation improvement.
- iv. Also, the youths in the country should be allowed to express themselves and integrate them into governance, economic and any decision for the development of the country.
- v. The parent should take up their role seriously in terms of training, guarding and guiding their children. To keep their eyes on which friends are they moving with, where they are going. This will contribute immensely in preventing and protecting the children not to found themselves into moving with bad eggs youth, taking drugs, anti-social vices, violent acts etc.

It is important to recognize that the judicial commissions of inquiry have started sitting in various states of the country. However, what will unfold next round of #EndSARS largely depends on the willingness of the Federal Government to investigate the Lekki Tollgate shootings of the #EndSARS protesters openly and transparently, and in good faith. Concerted efforts by the Federal Government to address the concerns in the 7-point agenda submitted to President Buhari would also boost the trust of the #EndSARS protesters and the supportive Nigerians in the diaspora.

CONCLUSION

The paper examined the issue of the youth's movement concerning EndSARS protest to the challenges confronting or facing the Nigerian youths. Therefore, the public confidence should be resuscitated towards the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), this will protect the future reoccurrences. The relationship between Nigerian police and Nigerian youths are on the verge of deterioration. The poor attitude of the government of Nigeria and the Nigerian police brutality against the citizenry are the factors responsible for the EndSARS protest. This makes youths to create violent means to express their anger and grievances in form of violent acts.

REFERENCES

- Amnesty International (2020). Urgent Action, EndSARS: Investigate Killing of protesters <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4432542020ENGLISH.pdf> Gann, B. (2011). The Nigerian Youth Movement (1934-1951). Retrieved from <https://www.blackpast.org/global-africa-history/nigeria-youth-movement-1934-1951/>
- Oluwola, O, Youth protests for police reform in Nigeria: What lies ahead for #EndSARS, Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/10/29/youthprotests-for-police-reform-in-nigeria-what-lies-ahead-for-endsars/> Aliyu Tanko How the End Sars protests have changed Nigeria forever, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54662986>
- Aina, F. (2020). Young People and Police Brutality: Generational Leadership in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/youth-and-leadership-in-nigeria/>
- Benjamin. B. O, The Role of Nigeria Police Force in the Administration of Justice: Issues and Challenges A Thesis Submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Master of Laws Degree Department of Public Law, Faculty of Law, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria
- Oday M. A., & Okoye C. O., (2014). Poverty Reduction Policy and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria. Public Policy and Administration Research: www.iiste.org. Vol.3, No.4 Omoju, O. E. & Abraham, T. W. (2014). Youth Bulge and Demographic Dividend in Nigeria: African Population Studies (APS) Vol. 27, 2 supp.
- Krook. M. L & Nugent. M. K, (2018), Not Too Young to Run Age Requirements and Young People in Elected Office, International Justice Review, 2/2018
- Ukpe, W. (2020). #EndSARS: A Day by Day Timeline of the Protest That Has Brought Nigeria to its knees: nairametric.com
- Mayowa I. O., (2020). An attitude of Nigerians Toward the Nigerian Police in South West, Nigeria <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/>
- Zumbe, (2020). The political Economy of the #EndSARS Protest in Nigeria: Opening the "Black Box" of Police Brute-Force and Extrajudicial Executions: International Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, review

NBS, (2020). 13. 9 Million Nigerian Youth Are Unemployed-NBS: Retrieved from <https://nairametrics.com/2020/08/14/13-9-million-nigerian-youth-are-unemployed-as-atq2-2020-nbs/>

Kamorudeen, A. (2011). Socio-Economic Inequality and Youth Involvement in Violent Conduct in Nigeria: (ed.) by Duze, M. C., (2011). Bayero Sociologist: A Journal of Sociological Studies (SOJOSS)

Kabir, A. (2020). Nigeria 10 Reasons #EndSARS Protest Gained Global Attraction. Premium Times Online: Retrieved on 17th Dec. 2020.

Agbalajobi, D., (2020). Why #EndSARS Protest Are Different, and What Lesson They Hold for Nigeria. <https://theconversation.com/> Okonkwo, C.O., The Police and the Public in Nigeria (Sweet and Maxwell, Publication, London, 1966), p.18.

Mark H. Moore, Robert C. Trojanowicz, and George L. KellinMark H. Moore, Robert C. Trojanowicz, and George L. Kellin, Crime and Policing A publication of the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, and the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, June1988)

Abegunde, B., "The Nigerian Police and Human Rights Abuse" in Abegunde, B. and Adebayo, W.A. (eds) Essays in Honour of Oba Emmanuel Adebawola Adebayo, sPetra Educational Publishers, Ado-Ekiti, 2008, p. 28.