

# Establishing the Connection between Youth Unemployment and Insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria, 2008 – 2020

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## ABSTRACT

Youth unemployment in Nigeria, particularly in the north-central region has assumed a very cancerous disposition culminating into series of security challenges which have claimed many lives and properties. In the north-central region, the youths are the worst hit when it comes to the issue of unemployment at a very alarming rate. A glimpse at rush into the north-central states by job seekers and unproductive youths portray the catastrophic and ludicrousness of the youth unemployed problem. However, the governments of Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau states have continued to strive to contain the disastrous effect of youth unemployment by providing various youth empowerment initiatives and security measures to extricate the prevailing security challenges. In spite of governments effort to steam the menace of both youth unemployment and insecurity in the region remain abortive because youth unemployment and insecurity is on the rise. It is based on this that this paper sought to find out how governments across the region in collaboration with federal government have fared in engaging youth unemployment with youth empowerment initiatives in the north-central region which is the study area. The study adopted survey research methods. The study employed both primary and secondary sources in generating its data and utilized tables and for data presentation and the simple percentage for analysis. Adopted frustration-aggression and human needs as theoretical underpinning to explain the topic under investigation. Findings from the study revealed that there is strong connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central Nigeria. it also revealed that frequent herders/farmers clashes, lack of proper monitoring and evaluation, corruption, lack of political will, official mismanagement while its revealed that poverty, politics, ethnicity and religion were some of the factors responsible for security challenges in the north-central States.

**Keywords:** Youth, Unemployment, Security, and Insecurity

## INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

The concept of youth unemployment and insecurity are intertwined, it would be a difficult task to separate youth unemployment with security challenges especially the kind that is currently going on the North-Central region of Nigeria. The issues relating to youth unemployment is a longstanding problem which has become a serious concern globally. In many countries across the world, statistics are showing unemployment conditions which generally suggest that youth are confronted with comparatively regrettable and harsh labour market results. The challenge of youth unemployment is more noticeable in developing Nations where youthful individuals encounter intense unemployment in both the formal and informal labour markets. Whilst a deficit of skills and opportunities for wage employment, labour market-relevant competencies also play a significant role in limiting youth job outcomes (BPSR, 2017).

In several instances, the menace of youth unemployment has fostered insecurity in the north-central region. (Monday & et al 2015) observed that insecurity of life and property is considered a major threat to any

nation. The north-central Nigeria as a result of prevalence nature of youth unemployment have had to face series of political thuggery, armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom and other forms of violence, which have led to loss of faith in the ability of government to protect the people. The role of security in the maintenance of sovereign nation is central to the respect commanded among other nations. Nigeria shortly after independence and brief civil rule experience coup and counter coups which have worsened the security situation of the country and subsequently passed through civil war (Monday, et al 2015). According to the NBS, 2021 the unemployment rate in Q2, 2020 was **27.1%**, up from the 23.1% recorded in Q3, 2018. The underemployment rate increased from 20.1% in Q3, 2018 to 28.6%. The NBS 2022, report that the unemployment rate for the year 2022 in Nigeria is estimated to reach 33 percent. This figure was projected to at 32.5 percent in the preceding year. Chronological data show that the unemployment rate in Nigeria rose constantly in the past years.

One exclusive attribute of the Nigeria economic growth profile is its inability to create more jobs. The recent downturn of economic activities as a result of Covid-19 pandemic as further exacerbates the wage employment deficit amongst the youth. The current growth rate of population which outpaces growth rate of employment generation is, certainly, a policy consideration in addressing youth employment and productivity. The Nigeria's population presently stands at 217, 079, 601 according to "Worldometer", as at August 25, 2022. The youths accounting for 70 percent of the 217 million, which stands at a huge 151 million youths, and 42 percent of the 70 percent are under the age of 15.

Many researchers have been conducted into the dynamics of security challenges in Nigeria, and reports indicated that no one regime is spared of one form of security challenge or the other. According to Aliyu (2021) Nigeria is faced with an unprecedented wave of different but overlapping security crises, from kidnapping to extremist insurgencies, and almost every corner of the country has been hit by violence and clashes. The trend is worrisome, especially, when there exist many conflict entrepreneurs in the polity (Joseph, 2013). The recent increase of insecurity in the north-central is linked to the harsh poverty and economic recession and unemployment across the country. Youth unemployment currently stands at 33% and the country is at the peak of the worst economic downturns in last 27 years (Aliyu, 2021). According to (Ismail et al, 2022) weak security systems, lack of political will to addressing the security situation are also some of the factors responsible for unpleasant security challenges in Nigeria.

Youth unemployment and insecurity are critical issues of concern in the north-central region of Nigeria. The situation is more prevalence in the rural communities in the region. These rural communities are left to fend for, and survived for themselves. Rarely governments take a stake in salvaging the rural communities affected by youth unemployment resulting from pervasive insecurity. However, in response to these challenges, government at all levels have put in place various employment and security mechanisms both state and non-state actors to fight the menace and to bring hope to rural communities in north-central Nigeria, particularly Niger and Benue states but to no avail. It is against this background that this seminar paper examines the extent of youth unemployment and security challenges in the north-central Nigeria with a view to make recommendations on how the problem can be addressed.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Nigeria youth especially youths in the North Central states are terribly afflicted by the scourge of unemployment as even graduates have to wait for several years before securing employment. The current official unemployment report for year 2022 as revealed by the NBS at 33 percent is quite embarrassing and a call for fear (Ismail, 2022).

The effort by the successive governments in creating several employment initiatives such as Poverty Alleviating Programme (PAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic

Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS) during Obasanjo administration, Subsidy Re-Investment and Empowerment Program (SURE-P) of President Jonathan administration, N-Power youth empowerment program of president Muhammad Buhari jointly with series of youth employment initiatives across the north-central states including the Kogi state youth empowerment and skill acquisition program, the project yes in Niger state tagged Youth Empowerment Program (P-YES), the Nasarawa state agency for youth empowerment, the youth empowerment and employment generation scheme (YEEGS) in Kwara state, and Plateau state youth empowerment initiatives as well as other youth employments programmes in Benue state are in vain. In the north-central region persistent herder/ farmer clashes, corruption in the public sector, limited political will by the politicians and other related factors as hampered the country's ability to utilize the large resources resulting to massive youth unemployment which has had unrestricive adverse effect on different sector of the society (Ngozi et al, 2015).

In recent years, the increasing youth unemployment has exacerbated insecurity situation in the north-central Nigeria. Insecurity has become the order of the day in many states across north-central Nigeria. The rate at which security challenges increased is quite alarming, especially in Niger and Benue states. The situation has put fears in the minds of citizens. No day passed by without reports of kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, robbery, wanton killing, riots, terrorists attacks, communal cashes, cattle rustling, farmers herders conflict, ethno religions crises and so on. More disturbing is that despite all resources and effort expended by the government to curbing the menace, the situation keeps deteriorating, as residents both in the urban and rural areas hardly go to sleep with their eyes closed, while the government seem to be helpless of the situation. As people in the rural communities are suffering from severe threats of social security and economic degradation. Rural people have been deprived of their original settlements, force to migrate to either relatively secured areas or settle in Internally Displaced Camps (IDPs). North-Central states and Nigeria at large is struggling with enormous security challenges that threatened socio economic development in rural communities. This is due to factors including weak security system, youth unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, corruption, negligence, intolerance, lack of political will and so on. This study is thus, conducted to establish the connection between youth unemployment and security challenges in the north-central Nigeria.

### Research questions

1. What is the extent of youth unemployment in North-Central Nigeria?
2. What are the causes of youth unemployment and insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria?
3. How does youth unemployment impact on insecurity in North-Central Nigeria?
4. What policy recommendations would significantly improve youth unemployment and security situation in North-Central Nigeria?

### Objectives of the study

The central objective of this study is to establish the connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north –central Nigeria between 2008-2020. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the extent of youth unemployment and insecurity in North-Central Nigeria
2. Ascertain the causes of youth unemployment and in the North-Central Nigeria
3. To identify the impacts of youth unemployment on insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria
4. Provide policy recommendations that would significantly improve the menace of youth unemployment and security situation in Niger state.

of sovereign nation's entity is very vital and its attainment makes it to command respect from othe Nigeria shortly after independence and brief civil rule experience coup and counter coups

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### Youth

The concept of youth have no single definition, youth is describe in accordance with peculiar situation of a given nation. Conversely, the United Nations describes youth as group of men and women between the ages of 15 – 24 years (Ryan, 2003, in Monday, et al, 2015). The Commonwealth placed the youth age between 15 – 29 years, while the Nigeria’s National Youth Policy (NNYP) puts the age of her youth between 15 – 35. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2011) reporting on social and political crimes and health categorized youth as persons between the ages of 10 to 29 years.

Youth can be classified into two stages, the early stage 15-24 years who are still tied to the apron strings of their parents and can therefore not stand on their own and 25-30 who can decide for themselves. At the early stage of youth, very huge care is required as it’s a ‘period of storm and stress’ and thus, needs direction as to what to do in life, based on the type of schools to attend, course of study and the intention of what to become. At the later state, such a person must have been on his or her own, catteries paribus, given the right environment and resources available (Monday, et al 2015).

This study adopts the definition position of National Population Commission (NNYP, 2009) which categories the age ranges of the youth from 15 to 35 given the nature of Nigerian society.

### Youth Unemployment

(Ngozi & et al 2015) asserted that unemployment has become a major source of concern to policy make, researchers and social commentators all over the world as a result of it consequence in the society.

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2007)

Defines the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1998:63). Also, for Adebayo (1999) this exists when members of the labour force wish to work but cannot get jobs.

Youth unemployment, consequently, could be portrayed as the group of youths with varied background, willing and able to work, but cannot find any. When the supply of labour outstrips the demand for labour, it causes joblessness and unemployment (Okafor 2011:362). As a result of lack of sufficient employment opportunities in the formal sector, young people may be compelled to engage in casual work and other unorthodox livelihood sources, thus leading to underemployment (Echebiri, 2005; Gibb & George, 1990; Onah, 2001).

Ngozi, et al (2015) cites Okoye-Nebo, et al (2014), Oladele, et al (2011), Alao (2005) and Fajana (2000) who enumerated different types of unemployment as structural unemployment, seasonal unemployment, frictional unemployment, cyclical unemployment residual as well as technological unemployment. Unemployment is measured among people in the labour force (Obadan & Odusola, 2001; National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Monday, et al (2015) viewed that the labour force of a country as defined by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2009) is a set of people or citizens of a country who are willing and are able to make available at any given point in time their efforts for gainful employment.

The unemployed are the individuals with no work, but are looking for work at the time of any study.

Youth unemployment could be explained as the inability active persons who are willing to work between the age brackets of 15 – 35 and could not access any job on time. Youth unemployment is in different categories starting from people that have not acquired any former education in other word the unskilled persons who are out searching for menial jobs such as cleaners and house boy/house girl syndrome etc. There are people who have acquired primary level of education, secondary level with their SSC and persons with tertiary education (graduates), who are highly groomed with skills required for critical thinking and innovation. Ngozi, et al (2015) cites Okoye-Nebo et al (2014) exposition detailing on the incidences of youth unemployment in Nigeria, opined that the unemployment situation in Nigeria is bad to the extent that universities graduates spend over ten years before securing a meaningful employment. Graduates from Nigerian universities are less or unattractive as employer as they as seen as graduates who are not well trained, as such many employers of labour reserves opportunities in their companies for Nigerians who graduate from foreign universities.

### Types of Unemployment

There are several types of unemployment but the most prevalence is going to be enumerated here and explained.

1. **Structural Unemployment:** This type of unemployment occurs if the labour market is not capable to provide jobs for everyone who is in need of a job, as a result of mismatch between the skill of the unemployed persons and the skills requires for the existing jobs (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2011).
2. **Frictional Unemployment:** There are difference on the causes and meaning of frictional unemployment. For instance Udu and Agu (2005) avowed that, there is frictional unemployment when certain occupations have surplus workers in one part of the nation, while vacancies of the same jobs remain unfilled in other parts of the same nation. According to them, immobility of labour and impact knowledge of the existence of jobs opportunities in somewhere else are the major cause of frictional unemployment.
3. **Seasonal Unemployment:** (Udu, & et'al, 2005) observed that, seasonal unemployment occurs mostly in industrial sector and in the enterprise which are seasonal in nature. For instance, during the rainy season, many men who are fishing and building may face hard times in work when the weather is bad.
4. **Cyclical unemployment:** This varies in duration and intensity. It is usually associated with a depression of the business cycle and occurs when the labour supply exceeds the over-all demand for labour. Recurrent unemployment occurs at particular phases of the business cycle, starting with the downturn from a boom. This unemployment is caused by a deficiency of aggregate demand and is associated with a fall in the number of job vacancies.
5. **Rural Urban Migration:** Young able men/women seeking employment and a better life, migrate to cities where they hope could find such life changing opportunities. This resulted in overpopulation in the cities they moved into and triggering unemployment and many of these youths turned out to incline in crimes to survive, lack of accommodation and other social related issues.

### Causes of Youth Unemployment and insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria

The causes of youth unemployment in the North-Central Nigeria is peculiar to the geographical location of the region, the following are few of the factors responsible for youth unemployment in the North-Central Nigeria;

1. **Herders/farmers clashes:** The crisis between the Fulani herders and the indigenous people across the North-Central has discouraged huge numbers of the youth and consequently migrated from their rural communities to cities in search of jobs that they were not trained for, since many of these rural youths have little or no former education which will prepare them to gain a reasonable job in a former



organization. This situation as assumed cancerous proposition for the fact that the menace of herder/farmers spread across states like Benue the food basket of the nation, Kogi, Nasarawa, Plateau and Niger states; Kwara state where there is less incidence of herders/farmers crisis has also witnessed several clashes between the herders and farmers. The north-Central region is a fertile agricultural area with substantial number of able body youths that could have taken advantage of government support in revolutionizing agriculture, but these youths were forced out their villages as a result of herders/farmers conflicts. The Fulani herders are the habit of destroying the farm products planted by the farmers and if the farmers dare say anything they risk their lives and properties. Several respondents attested to destructions by the Fulani herders in Abugi Kupa communities in November, 2014 in Kogi state, recently on 1st of November 2022, 18 persons including children were feared dead in a fresh armed herdsman attack on Ukohol and three other neighbouring villages in Guma Local Government Area, LGA, of Benue state (Vanguard, 2022). The report further revealed that “Several people were killed at the Ukohol market and other surrounding villages including children; and many others sustained injuries. One of the eye witnesses revealed to Vanguard reporter that “the entire place is like a war zone, people are fleeing their homes and running to anywhere they can find safety since no one knows where they would attack next because the attack was unprovoked.” These forms of situations occur frequently and has discouraged farming by the youth who did not feel like leaving their communities is the answer to herders attacks and instead of engaging in farming do other menial jobs like Okada ridding to put food in their tables, this is the trend in almost all the states in the north-central Nigeria.

2. **Kidnapping for ransom and banditry:** Farmers in the north-central are confronted the severe problem of kidnapping for ransom and banditry. On the 20th February, 2022 Vanguard newspaper reported that eight (8) farmers who were reportedly kidnapped by suspected armed herders on their farms at Agasha town in Guma Local Government Area, LGA, of Benue state have been rescued by the joint security team in the state codenamed Operation Whirl Stroke, OPWS. In Kogi state, the Guardian Nigeria newspaper report on the 12th of July, 2016 that three persons were kidnapped on their way to their farms in Osara community. According to (Sahara Reporters, 17th July, 2021) the crisis of kidnapping and banditry has worsened in the recent years in Kogi state which residents lamented have also affected business and economic activities. On July 14, 2022, gunmen abducted a traditional ruler, the Adogu of Eganyi in Ajaokuta LGA. On September 17th 2021 Vanguard newspaper reports claimed that two poultry farmers, and one other person were kidnapped and the bandits demanded for 15 million Naira.
3. **Negligence of agriculture sector and corruption:** Agriculture was the mainstay of Nigerian economy constituting major income earning for the country and the largest employer of labour with over 90% of the population earning their living from the sector on daily bases. In 1970s with the rise in the price of petroleum gas and its massive foreign income, the sector has led to the rise of public and private sectors which motivated people to move from rural villages to urban centres.
4. **Lack of career awareness:** There is inadequate entrepreneur and vocational studies, the youths are not supposed to be well equipped with entrepreneur and vocational skills instead of theoretical studies which could not train them to be self-reliance but jobs seekers. This brings us to the issues of revamping curriculum at all strata of our education system to meet up the current trends of training skillful youths through all levels of education.
5. **Lack of good governance and purposeful leadership:** Political observers maintained that there are sufficient ideas geared toward stimulating the welfare of the citizens, what was lacking is the political will to turn the ideas into reality. Asaju (2010) asserts that “barely had any administration come on board without a new plan well packaged to ease the pains of the masses. Be that as it may, most of the plans are only affected on papers. Successful administration had made efforts to curb the scourge of unemployment and its negative effect ended in deadlock, and the reason is not far from corruption and political will to implement for proper actualization of government policy.

6. **The growing population:** (140,431,790 as per 2006 Census) which is projected to be over 180 million by annual growth rate of 3.2% continues (National Population Commission and ICF Macro, 2009). Okoye-Nebo, et al (2014) concluded that the high population growth rate has resulted in the rapid growth of labour force, which is far outstripping the supply of jobs. Their stance was that accelerated growth of population Nigeria's unemployment problem is multidimensional. The high population growth rate affects the supply side through a high and rapid increase in the labour force relative to the absorption capacity of economy. Whereas, the population increases, the industries are reducing, as a result of unfavorable operating environment. The main adversarial condition has been non constant power supply, resulting too many industries even the multi-national companies (Michelin and Dunlop) relocating to some other African countries. Serious measure must be taken to ensure favorable business environment, to avert the heinous consequences of the growing unemployment.

### **Concept of Security:**

The concept of security is hazy as it encompasses every field of endeavour in the academia, and has continued to expand every day. According to (Muyiwa, 2015, in Hassan & Fatima, 2020) describes security as presence of peace, safety, gladness and the protection of human physical resources or absence of crisis or threats to human dignity, all of which facilitate development and progress of any human society. (Ladan, 2011) define security as the protection of individuals against both violent and non-violent threats to their lives and human dignity. However, (Buzan, 1991) asserts that security is about freedom from threat and ability of state to maintain independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile while its bottom line is survival (Bochunle, et al, 2014). (Aluta, 2021) described security as stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life, protection from crime, and a freedom from psychological harm. From the foregoing, security is believed to be alleviation of the all kinds of threats and fears that threaten the peaceful survival of a people.

### **Concept of Insecurity**

According to (Aluta, 2021) insecurity is defined as, the state of fear or anxiety, stemmed from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. It also refers to a lack of or inadequate freedom from danger. (Adeleke, 2013) opined that insecurity is a situation in which the security agents appear incapable of handling manifestation of threats like armed robbery, kidnapping, destruction of property, creation of fear, lack of protection and so on. Insecurity is lack of protection of individuals against threats violent or non-violent, external or internal to their lives and human dignity (Buzan, 1991). Thus, insecurity means absence of safety, lack of protection of lives and property of human society. However, it was a condition that threatens the social existence of a people living in a community.

This study is centered on the effect of human security in the North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. This study therefore, examined the connections between youth unemployment and the pervasive security challenges in the North-Central Nigeria. Though, the study conceptualized traditional security and its jurisdictions of responsibility.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

### **The Extent of Youth Unemployment and Insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria**

The North-Central Nigeria is a confusingly defined entity which extends from Kwara, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger and Kogi states. It's ethnically the most diverse region in the Northern hemisphere and the country entirely. The region harbors ethnic groups such as Nupe, Kupa, Alago, Tiv, Angas, Berom, Chawai,

Eggon, Gbagy, Idoma Igala, Basa-Nge, Basa-Kumu, Jukun, Katab and Tarok (SBM, 2020).

The labour force in Nigeria particularly in the North-Central region has continued to increase in line with the growth in population and natural age specific transition in the economy. The labour force increased from 47 million of which 87 percent were employed in 1999, to 54 million of which 88.9 percent were employed in 2005. Aggregate wage employment in industries and businesses expanded from 3.66 million in 1999, to about 4.52 million in 2005 overall, aggregate employment in Nigeria grew at 3.76 percent per annum, between 1999 and 2005 (NIYEAP, 2009-2011).

The state of youth unemployment in Nigeria is worrisome, Nigeria's population is said to have reached about 167.2 million people in 2012 (National Bureau of Statistics). The National Population Commission (NPC, 2013) states about half of the population is made up of youth, defined as individuals between 15 and 34 years of age. Unfortunately, as the youth population grows, so does the unemployment rate. In fact, unemployed youth numbered about 11.1 million in 2012. Here we explore a number of trends in youth unemployment in Nigeria and discuss various government programs attempting to address the problem.

This study views the extent of youth unemployment in the North-Central states as multi-dimensional and multifaceted. However, the study claimed that the nature of youth unemployment in the North-Central region is combination of structural, seasonal unemployment. Partly as a result of shortage of irrigation system and the recurrent herders/farmers clashes.

The extent of insecurity in the North-Central states is complex. According to survey by Small Arms Survey in 2017, it was estimated that there are over one billion small arms in circulation. Out of which 87% or better put 875 million of those arms are in the hands of non-state actors or civilians. The rise of Boko Haram terror sect in North-Eastern Nigeria and the Fulani Herder versus Farmer conflict in the North-Central region of Nigeria (Nigeria's breadbasket) are the most recent manifestations. This has negatively impacted Nigeria's internal security and international standing, as Nigeria is now designated the third most-impacted nation by terrorism, going by the recent reports, in the unenviable company of Afghanistan and Iraq and war Torn Syria (Small Arms Survey, 2017).

The nature of security challenges in the North-Central Nigeria is in diverse ways, ranging from kidnapping for ransom, herders/farmers clashes, armed robbery, political thuggery and burglary among others. According to SBM reports on small arms, Mass Atrocities and Migration in Nigeria (2020), the insecurity in the North-Central region is increase by a combination of proliferation of small weapon, already existing state corruption and mass youth unemployment is responsible for the rising criminality and violence in the region. While the study affirmed the position of SBM report on the causes of corruption in the North-Central region, it critic for failure to identify the pervasive poverty and hunger which has forced many of these youths into taking arms against the society.

Economics played a vital role in the North-Central region, there have been tension between sedentary Farmers and Fulani herders who are increasingly moving southwards as a result of climate change pressures on pastureland. These tensions have led to armed confrontations, mass killing and displacement of some farming communities. There have also been cases of cattle rustling by armed groups, leading to violent clashes between rustler and Fulani herders (SBM, 2020).

The reports further established that aside from hostility between Fulani herders and local farming communities, the North-Central zone is endemic with cases of ethnic militia, making it a hotbed for violent ethnic and religious crises using small arms in actualizing their aims. The SBM (2020) described the North-Central Nigeria as the geopolitical zone accounting for the largest form of violence concerning communal groups. Communal militias accounting for over 40% of violent related cases with herders/farmers clashes in



equal proposition and less political violence in the North Central region.

Thus, (Idakwoji & et al 2018) report in their empirical study titled Herders/Farmers conflicts in Kogi state: Security and Developmental Implications revealed that farmers and herdsmen conflicts have socio-economic implications which affect not only the individuals or groups involved in the conflict, but also the state(s) and nation at large. As reported in the Premium Times of July 5, 2017, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State lamented that more than 1,878 people were killed between 2014 and 2016, with tens of thousands displaced and disengaged from their main economic activities. Equally too, The Nation Newspaper March 22, 2017 reported that the Benue State Government lost N95 billion between 2012 – 2014 to herdsmen attacks, as asserted by the State Governor, Ortom.

The International Crisis Group Report of 19 September, 2017 indicated that between January 2015 and February 2017, about 62,000 persons were displaced in three states mostly affected by the herders- farmers conflict, namely; Benue, Kaduna and Plateau. This has brought serious social and economic dislocation to the people of the affected states as most people sought shelters in other rural communities, compounding the existential stress on the available scarce resources. SBM intelligence viewed that small arms proliferation in North-West and North-East zones is at variance with what is visible in the North-Central zone. In the North-East the driver of violence are radical Islamic groups attempting to carve a sphere of influence or to establish Islamic Caliphate, the Boko Haram terrorists intentions are premised on this.

### **Summary of Knowledge Gap**

While this study agree with United Nations definition of youth as people between the age range of 15 – 24, the study asserts that definition of youth cannot be generalized, the range of years that could be described as youth in America and other developed nations may not be the same with what is obtainable in the developing nations like Nigeria and other third World Nations due to disparities in opportunities available to the people. As such this study opted to ally with Nigeria National Youth Policy (NNYP) on operational definition of the term youth. Scholars works reviewed on youth unemployment like Echebiri (2005), Gibb and George (1990) and Onah (2001) only emphasized that lack of sufficient employment opportunities in the formal sector as the only cause of underemployment without considering the impact that the informal sector could make in providing employment opportunities for the teaming youths, forgetting the fact that North-Central Nigeria is an agrarian society. Thus, this study critically examines the place of informal sector and how it would help in providing employment opportunities for the youth and variable reduce the insecurity. The major gap covered by this study is it attempts to study the connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in North-Central Nigeria, which was actualized through the engagement of research assistances and a well structured Google document form that makes the research easy and inclusive for the researcher.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Due to the magnitude of this study the theoretical underpinning that best explain and analysis the topic under investigation could be said to be the “Frustration-aggression theory and human need theory”. The main premise of these theories is that human needs can push them to misunderstanding. It views that every human being has certain needs which are arranged in order of priority. There are some of the needs that are called basic or fundamental needs and failure to satisfy them could lead to frustration and consequently the frustrated person or groups may be forced to aggressively react in a manner that could lead to a crisis or conflict.

The frustration-aggression theory originated from Neal E. Miller, Robert R. Sears, O. H. Mower, Leonard W. Doob and John Dullard published in (1939), the publication was on aggression which is presently known as the Frustration-Aggression (FA). The theory asserts that:

Frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. The theory suggest that frustrated, and prejudiced individuals should act more aggressively towards the groups they are prejudiced against and can also show more aggression towards everyone.

Monday & et al (2015) observed that the above assumption have greatly influenced the western reasoning faculty on aggression more deeply than any other publication. It is intended to suggest to the student of humanities that whenever aggression is seen, he should turn a suspicious eye on possibilities that the organism or group is confronted with frustration and that when he views interference with individual or group habits, he should be on the look-out for among other things, aggression.

In the same vein, Dollard & et al (1939) opined that;

The occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression. Frustration in this sense was specified as the thwarting of a global response, and a global response in turn, was taken to mean the reinforcing final operation in an ongoing behavior sequence.

According to them, frustration is restricted to the process of blocking a person's quest for attainment of their desires, but also to the reaction to such blocking.

(Ajaye & Nwogwugwu, 2014) contended that people are motivated to act aggressively by a drive induced by frustration. "The concept of frustration signifies condition that arises when goal attainment is blocked, while aggression constitutes actions aimed at harming perceived stumbling blocks" (Jegade & Ajayi 2008: 147). The implication of proposal of this theory is that frustration will inevitably lead to some nature of aggression. Again, there are certain unacceptable practices such as youth unemployment that have become institutionalized in the society, which became a source of pain. Apparently, as long as the very active young men and women are not provided with the opportunity for self realization in terms of gainful employment after acquiring knowledge through education, the tendency for them to be frustrated and turn aggressive as such showcasing their frustration on the society is high.

A closely related to the Frustration-Aggression theory is the Human Needs theory. Developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a holistic theory of human behaviour, it is built on the assumption that humans have basic needs in order to maintain stable societies. Burton (1991), avowed;

We believe that the human participants in conflict situation are compulsively struggling in their perspective institutional environment at all social levels to satisfy primordial and universal needs-needs such as security, identity, recognition and development. They strive increasingly to gain control of their environment that is necessary to ensure that satisfaction of these needs. This struggle cannot be curbed; it is primordial. The frustration of not satisfying these needs leads to aggression and subsequently conflict

The differences between Human Needs theory and the Frustration-Aggression theory is that the former is mainly concerned with absolute requirements (needs) while the latter is centered on want and desires.

Burton further states:

Unless identity needs are met in multi-ethnic societies, unless in every social system there is distributive justice, a sense of control, and prospects for the pursuit of all other human societal developmental needs, instability and conflict are inevitable.

The repercussion of this is that entails the frustration of the needs and aspirations of groups or individuals by actors through poverty in the midst of plenty, unemployment and lack of attainment of certain goals in life

causes insecurity.

Nigerian Constitution was created to promote good governance, social justice welfare of the citizens as well as provision of security for all persons so long as they are Nigerians. regrettably, there is a detachment between the government and the citizens in Nigeria. Presently, there is massive poverty, high rate of unemployment across states instigated by both past and present political leaders who has failed their responsibility to create sound and implement, good policies that poses the ability to generate high wealth for the benefit of all Nigerians. In Nigerian, the politicians has abandoned the ethos of governance which entails selfless service to humanity and engaged in siphoning of public wealth at the detriment of their subjects, which has resulted to the pervasive youth unemployment that has foiled the menace of insecurity in north-central and Nigerian of today exists only to launder and amass wealth for themselves at the expense of the people, which is why there is high level of insecurity as a result of frustration of the needs and aspiration of citizen in the country.

Both frustration-aggression and human needs approaches are reminder to the political office holders on how they have defiled the principle of democratic governance to plutocratic system where few who are elected to leader are not longer visible to the electorates and as well represent the interest of few cronies. And of course the frustration and aggression on the part of their subject that felt outwit by the political leader for not able to access their own fair share of the national resources through the creation of jobs, provision of infrastructures and deprivation from contributing to national development on their own capacity is the aftermath of current waves of insecurity in the north-central states. Paradoxically, when the political leaders who have caused the youth's pains and damages are not visible for their retaliation, they vent their grievances and hanger on the innocent citizens who are also trying very hard to survive the hardship created by the political actors.

In essence, the insecurity we are experiencing in the north-central region and Nigeria at large, is partly the result of frustration of the majority of the citizens.

The unemployed youth has a feeling that he/she has no stake, they are suffering the same faith as their parents, no security and that is why they can do anything when they are aggrieved or could easily compromise their loyalty to the state since they are not weld treated by the leaders.

### **The Relevance of Assumption of the Theories to the Study**

It is the responsibility of government world over to ensure justice, fairness and equitable distribution of national resources, provide welfare and security to her citizens. In Nigeria, there is a disconnect between the government and the citizens because of the later dodging off their duties of providing basic infrastructure and enabling environment for wealth creation. Majority of the youth who constitute the largest part of the population are mostly idle, poor and unemployed as well as surviving through immoralities. The state owned industries were privatized and liberalized recklessly without considering the plight of the citizens. Nigeria is one of the largest oil producing nations in the world in terms of oil and gas exploration. Nevertheless, the oil wealth did not translate into exterminating poverty and the glaring youth unemployment. There is underemployment and no social security for both the unemployed and the weak in Nigeria as is done in the other parts of the world. There is prevalence of corruption and mismanagement of public funds; the elected (politicians) are only protecting their interest at the detriment of their electorates.

The citizens particularly the youth from poor homes cannot afford basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, housing, accommodation, good healthcare system, education etc. Per capita income is low and the standard of living is low according to official statistics, this denial and frustration has transcended into armed robbery kidnapping, insurgencies, banditry and general insecurity in the north-central region and Nigeria generally.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive survey research conducted to examine the connection of youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central region of Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of policy makers, community leaders, security personnel, unemployed youth, students and relevant stakeholders selected from the six states that comprise the North-Central region of Nigeria. The sample size of 220 was drawn from the 480 population using the Taro Yamane's statistical formula, and showed the significant level of 0.5. Cluster, Purposive and Simple random sampling techniques were used for the study. Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire and interview were instruments used for data collection. The questionnaire was administered to 220 respondents partly face to face and through a well designed Google form. Data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistical percentage tables.

### Data presentation and Analysis

Table: 1.1 Demographic features of the respondents

Age		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
15-19	25	11.3%
20-24	20	9.1%
25-29	25	11.3
30-35	30	13.6%
36-40	103	46.8%
41-45	11	5.0%
46- above	6	2.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>
Gender		
Male	150	68.1%
Female	70	31.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>
Education Qualification		
Primary	30	13.6%
Secondary	98	44.5%
NCE/Diploma	38	17.2%
B.Sc. equivalence	31	15.9%
M.Sc.	19	8.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>
Occupational Status		
Traditional/ Religious leaders	8	3.6%
Farmer	53	24.0%
Business Groups	50	22.7%
Students	74	34.0%
Civil servants	35	15.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Religion</b>		
Islam	120	54.5%
Christianity	98	44.5%
Others	2	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table above shows that 103 respondents representing (46.8%) of the respondents ages between 36- 40. It also revealed that 160 respondents constitute (72.7%) were male. Findings revealed that majority 98 (44.5%) of the respondents attended secondary school. Findings also revealed that 74 respondents which formed the majority of the study (34.0%) were students, 53 (24.0%), and 50 (22.7%) of the respondents were farmers and business groups respectively.

Table 1.2: Respondents views on the type(s) of unemployment common to his/her rural area in the North-Central States.

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Frictional Unemployment	9	4.0%
Seasonal Unemployment	98	44.5%
Structural Unemployment	22	10%
Cyclical unemployment	16	7.2%
Rural-Urban Migration	75	34.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table shows that majority 98 (44.5%) and 75 (34.0%) of the respondents affirmed that seasonal unemployment and rural-urban migration are the most prevalence forms of unemployment in the North-Central Nigeria.

According to one of the interviewees;

There is no doubt that seasonal unemployment is the famous form of unemployment in the North-Central Nigeria. As a crop scientist since I left university I have been engaged in farming, and I will tell you for free that every dry season I feel out of work. You know we can no farm without water, and as you know irrigation system is capital intensive project which more than 90% of farmers in the North-Central region cannot or doesn't have financial ability to build forcing them to be out of job for months. Though, one cannot talk of unemployment in the North-Central without recognizing the large number of youths leaving their rural areas in search of jobs that are not created in the cities. Some of these youths are mostly pushed out because of herders/farmers conflicts; they already developed fear for herders who are always destroying their farm products and in few cases kill the farmer if he decided to question the pastorals position to intrude their farms. Because of these factors many youth think there is basis wasting time to farm that will later be destroyed by pastoralist without paying for the damage.



Table 1.3: Respondents views on the connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the North-Central Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	80	36.3%
Strongly agree	127	57.7%
Disagree	6	2.7%
Strongly disagree	3	1.3%
Undecided	4	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It is obvious from the above table shows that majority of respondents affirmed that there is strong connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central Nigeria. 127 respondents constituting (57.7%) of the respondents strongly believed that there is connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central while 80 respondents represent (36.3%) firmly agreed that youth unemployment and the pervasive security challenges in the north-central region is intertwined.

According to some of the interviewees, police officers DSP Abdulkadir M. Bello and DSP Kondom J. Terhemba from Niger and Benue state respectively;

DSP Abdulkadir stated:

It's very obvious that youth unemployment is a major reason for the insecurity not only in the North-Central Nigeria but country wide. It's said that an idle man is a devil workshop. Government must ensure that the youths are engaged in positive ventures in other for them to channel their potentials positively.

DSP Kondom stated:

There is nowhere in the world where the youths would be left to their faith and the society would exist peacefully. When the youths are left unemployed, they are bond to take to crime. If government is serious about drastically reduce insecurity, the government should create a friendly environment for Small Medium Enterprise.

To corroborate the above assertion, an empirical study by Isma'il & et al (2022) on assessment of the impact of insecurity on women's entrepreneurial activities in Shiroro local government in Niger state revealed that (90.75%) acknowledged that insecurity is the factor responsible for the collapse of women's entrepreneur activities in the Shiroro local government of the state.

Table 1.4: Respondents views on the causes of youth unemployment in the rural areas in North-Central Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Herders/farmers clashes	67	30.4%
Kidnapping & banditry	51	23.1%
Negligence of Agric sector/Corruption	48	21.8%
Lack of career awareness	36	16.3%
Lack of good governance	11	5%

Population growth	7	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 1.4 above shows the opinions of the respondents revealing that herders/farmers clashes in rural villages in the north-central Nigeria which is forcing the youths to move to the cities in search of jobs which are not readily available or not created by the government. 67 responses represent (30.4) asserts that herders/farmers clashes are the major factor responsible for the menace of youth unemployment in the north-central Nigeria.

Though, the negative effects of kidnapping for ransom/banditry and negligence of agriculture sector as well as corruption are notable factors watering the pervasive youth unemployment situation in the north-central Nigeria. According to one of the interviewees;

Mohammed Aliyu avowed:

In my village we don't care with government representation or corruption. We actually enjoined import restriction on rice importation by the administration of Muhammad Buhari, because our farm products are now valued and patronized by the people. Our major concern is the insecurity orchestrated by the Fulani herders men, our farms are being devour recurrently using their cows and one cannot dare react; if you do your life will be in danger. We are craving for strong security. If government can provide solution for the insecurity caused by the herders, I assured you that no youth graduates or not would depend on government for employment in our communities.

To corroborate the above finding, an empirical study by Bechir (2016) asserts that, many researchers have investigated the economic consequences of corruption on unemployment and the labor market in general through the channel of foreign direct investment (FDI). The theoretical view is that in a highly corrupt environment, foreign actors are more reluctant to invest and to create job opportunities in the local market (corruption increases the cost of doing business (often referred to as the corruption tax). This view has received empirical support from recent research. The perception among foreign actors that due to corruption, the allocation of domestic human capital toward the most productive economic sectors is inefficient constitutes an obstacle to the inflow of foreign capital in the economy. We use the variable (FDI/GDP) to analyze this hypothesis of the impact of capital inflows on the development of labor market dynamics in the presence of corruption practices.

Table 1.5: Respondents views on the causes of security challenges in the North-Central Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Youth unemployment	61	27.7%
Poverty	52	23.6%
Illiteracy	11	5%
Lack of Political will	16	7.2%
Ethnic and religious intolerance	14	6.3%
Official corruption	25	11.3%
Weak security system	41	18.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Its glaring on the table above, that majority of respondents which constitutes 61(27.7%), 52(23.6%) and 41(18.6%) asserts that the menace of youth unemployment, poverty and weak security system are the main causes of the prevalence of insecurity in the north-central Nigeria. however, 25(11.3%), 16(7.2%) and 14(6.3%) believed official corruption, lack of political will and ethnic and religious intolerance were the causes of insecurity while 11(5%) asserts that illiteracy is the root of insecurity in the north-central states.

However, Abbass & et'al (2021) on their empirical study on the implication of security challenges on rural development in Niger state, Nigeria, discovered similar findings with respondents believing that weak security system followed by the menace of youth unemployment are the main factors responsible for insecurity in the rural villages in Niger state.

Table 1.5: Respondents views on the implications of youth unemployment and in North-Central Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Rising level of crime rate	9	4.0%
Rise of insurgency	12	5.4%
Weaken economy security	17	7.7%
Increase in cyber insecurity	15	6.8%
Internal aggression	11	5%
All of the above	156	70.9 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table above reports that 156 respondents represent (70.9%) of responses generated avowed that youth unemployment has increased crime rate, led to formation of kidnap/banditry, weaken economy security, increase the cyber crime orchestrated many internal aggression with the north-central region. However, 17(7.7%) and 15(6.8%) of the respondents suggested that weaken economy security and increased cyber crime some of the glaring implication of youth unemployment in the region.

Table 1.5: Respondents views on the causes of insecurity in North-Central Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Youth unemployment	63	28.6%
Poverty	44	20%
Weaken security system	36	16.3%
Politics	15	6.8%
Ethnic and religious aggression	11	5%
Corruption	22	10 %
Farmers/herders crisis	29	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Several causes of insecurity in north-central Nigeria has been established, such as; youth unemployment, poverty, weaken security system, ethnic and religious aggression, corruption and herders/farmers clashes. Topping the list is the menace of youth unemployment with 63 respondents (28%), followed by poverty with 44 respondents (20%). Weaken security system is the next with 36 respondents (16.8%), followed by herders/farmers clashes with 29 respondents (13.1%), corruption with 22 respondents (10%), politics with respondents (6.8%) and ethnic/ religious aggression with 11 respondents (5%). This mean that the variables are causes of insecurity in the north-central Nigeria.

## FINDINGS

Findings from the study shows that majority 103(46.8%) of the respondents age between 36- 40. It also revealed that majority 150 (68.1%) of the respondents were male. It also revealed that majority 98 (44.5%) of the respondents attended secondary school. Findings also indicated that majority 74(34.0%), 53(24.0%) and 50(22.7%) of the respondent were Students, Farmers and Business groups while 8(3.6%) traditional/religious leaders. Muslims formed the majority 120(54.5%) of the respondents while 98(44.5%) were Christians.

1. Based on the first objective of the study; to determine the connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central Nigeria, 127 respondents (57.7%) and 80(36.3%) of the respondents believed strongly that there is inseparable connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central Nigeria. It also indicated that majority 98 (44.5.2%), 75(34.0%) and 22(10%) believed that seasonal unemployment, rural urban migration and structural unemployment were the major forms of youth unemployment prevalence in the north-central region.
2. Findings revealed that majority 67(30.4%), 51(23.1%) and 48(21.8%) of the respondents believed that herders/famers clashes, kidnapping/banditry and negligence of agriculture/corruption were the major causes of youth unemployment in the north-central region. However, 36(16.3%), 11(5%) and 7 (3.1%) viewed that lack of career awareness, lack of good governance and population growth respectively were the root causes of youth unemployment in the north-central Nigeria.
3. The study also established majority 61(27.7%), 52(23.6%) and 41(18.6%) of respondents affirmed that youth unemployment, poverty, weak security are the root causes of insecurity in the north-central region. However, 25(11.3%), 16(7.2%), and 14(6.3%) of respondents believed that official corruption, lack of political will and ethnic and religious intolerance are the causes of insecurity in the area under investigation while 11(5%) respondents blamed illiteracy as the main cause of insecurity.
4. It was reported that majority 156(70.9%) of the respondents affirmed that rising level of crimes, rise of insurgency, weak economy security, increase cyber crimes and internal aggression are all negative impacts of youth unemployment in the north-central Nigeria. Though, 17(7.7%), 15(6.8%) and 12(5.4%) of the respondents believed that weaken economy security, increased cyber crime and increase insurgency are the most visible implications of youth unemployment in the north-central Nigeria. on causes of insecurity in the area of study, youth unemployment with 63 respondents (28%), followed by poverty with 44 respondents (20%). Weaken security system is the next with 36 respondents (16.8%), followed by herders/farmers clashes with 29 respondents (13.1%), corruption with 22 respondents (10%), politics with respondents (6.8%) and ethnic/ religious aggression with 11 respondents (5%). This mean that the variables are causes of insecurity in the north-central Nigeria.

The implication of this study's findings is that there is strong connection between youth unemployment and the prevailing menace insecurity in the north-central Nigeria. Hence, Ngozi etal (2015) cited Edward (2011) reported that the problem of social and political crime in has been exacerbated by the high rate of unemployment and economic hardship which has forced several university graduates into crimes. Emeh (2015) cited Okafor (2011) exposition on youth unemployment and implications for stability of democracy

in Nigeria said “Unemployment is a global trend, but it occurs mostly in developing countries of the world, with attendant social, economic, political, and psychological consequences. Thus, massive youth unemployment in any country is an indication of far more complex problems. And that in Nigeria, accurate unemployment rates are difficult to access”. Ibrahim (2006) detailed that an empirical survey of children and youths in organized armed crime in Nigeria, revealed that disenchantment and frustration of young people due to mass poverty and unemployment, has increased the number of aggrieved youths which has culminated into the emergency of “area boys” and Almajiris who targeted the society that alienated them.

Though, Oyebade (2003) classified Nigeria’s unemployment into two categories: first, the older unemployed who lost their jobs through retrenchment, redundancy, or bankruptcy; while the second category is the younger unemployed, most of who have never been employed. Emeh (2015) cited Awogbenle & et’al (2010) who reported revealed that statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics showed that Nigeria has a youth population of 80 million, representing 60% of the total population of the country. Also, 64 million of them are unemployed, while 1.6 million are underemployed. The 2017 data on youth unemployment showed that the largest group of the unemployed is the secondary school graduates. The NBS revealed that number of people within the labor force who are unemployed or underemployed increased from 13.6 million and 17.7 million respectively in Q2 2017, to 15.9 million and 18.0 million in Q3 2017. Total unemployment and underemployment combined increased from 37.2% in the previous quarter to 40.0% in Q3 2017. During the quarter Q3 2017, 21.2% of women within the labor force (aged 15-64 and willing, able, and actively seeking work) were unemployed, compared with 16.5% of men within the same period. In Q3 2017, 16.4% of rural and 23.4% of urban dwellers within the labor force were unemployed and unemployment is increasing at a slightly faster rate for urban dwellers than it is for their rural counterparts. Underemployment is predominant in the rural areas (26.9% of rural residents within the labor force in Q3 2017), are underemployed (engaged in work for less than 20 hours a week); compared to 9% of urban residents within the same period. The NBS further asserts that Unemployment tends to be higher for people within the labor force that have post-secondary school (31.8% unemployment rate and 50.0% combined unemployment and underemployment in Q3 2017).

On the causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria, scholars like, Awogbenle etal (2010), Adebayo (1999), Alanana (2003), Echebiri (2005), Ayinde (2008), Morphy (2008), Okafor (2011), Anyadike, et al (2012) and Echebiri (2005) among others have identified several causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria, ranging rapidly growing urban labour force arising from rural urban migration to rapid educational expansion. Rural-urban migration Okafor (2011) clarified is regularly explained in terms of push-pull factors. The push factors include the pressure resulting from man-land ratio in the rural areas and the existence of serious underemployment arising from the seasonal cycle of climate. The factors are further worsening in Nigeria by the lack of infrastructural facilities that makes the rural life unpleasant. Youths move to urban areas with the intention of getting lucrative jobs and enjoy the social amenities in the cities. This means that either the rural areas are neglected in the allocation of social and economic opportunities or funds made available for the development of rural areas are embezzled by the public officers in charge.

Consequently, rapid population growth was identified going by the 2006 census in Nigeria, the nation’s population was put at 140,431,790 and projections for the future indicate that the population could be over 180 million by the year 2020, given the annual growth rate of 3.2 percent (National Population Commission & and ICF Macro, 2009:3). With this population, Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa. It is argued that the high population growth rate has resulted in the rapid growth of the labor force, which is far outstripping the supply of jobs. The accelerated growth of population on Nigeria’s unemployment problem is multifaceted. This affects the supply through a high and increase in the labour force relative to the absorptive capacity of the economy, especially when considering the estimation of about 168 million populations. (NPC, 2012).



Adebayo and Okafor identified outdated school curricula and lack of employable skills as a causal factor of youth unemployment in Nigeria hence the argument of some scholars and commentators that as far as the formal sector is concerned, the average Nigeria graduate is not employable, because they did not possess the skills required by the companies employing labour bring about various jobs interviews and aptitude tests to select the few employable among the millions of graduate youths. It was avowed that the course contents of most tertiary education in Nigeria lack entrepreneurial contents that would have enabled graduates to become job creators rather than job seekers.

Okafor (2010) identified public sector corruption as a causal factor of unemployment resulting to insecurity, funds made available for development projects have been misappropriated, diverted, or embezzled and stashed away in foreign banks, while some incompetent and corrupt bureaucrats and administrators in the public enterprises and Parastatals have liquidated these organizations or make way to sell them cheaply for their associates and friends.

## CONCLUSION

This seminar paper established the connection between youth unemployment and insecurity in the north-central Nigeria.

It also identifies the forms of youth unemployment and insecurity, causes of both youth unemployment and security challenges in the north-central Nigeria. The study revealed that youth unemployment and security challenges in any environment can cause serious threats to the peaceful coexistence of members of such environment; and it can discourage socio-economic activities to prosper as well as development of the region and the country. The study also discovered that there is a positive link between youth unemployment and the current security challenges in the north-central Nigeria, and that, if nothing is done to curtailing it now, the menace will continue to rise and the tendency is that it mars the future of rural community in the state and Nigeria as a whole. The paper concluded that government and relevant stakeholders should rise up to fight the menace of youth unemployment and insecurity which currently formed the ogre that are threatening the progress of north-central states and Nigeria generally.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the paper recommended the following:

1. No nation would be at peace and attain economic prosperity if the majority of its youth are unemployed and citizens insecure, it will be very difficult for it to develop, thus, government and actors in the private sector should form a formidable force in addressing the menace of youth unemployment and insecurity.
2. Government should develop the political will in creating the required policy framework that would build the economy and in turn lead to creation of employments for the youths. This will reduce the youth's involvement in political thuggery, kidnapping etc.
3. Creating youth empowerment programme without acute supervision, will not give any positive results in terms of youth employment. Thus, it is vital to establish strong monitoring and evaluation agency to monitor and evaluate the performance of every employment initiative.
4. The government should support the Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with low interest loan, this will help in boosting their businesses and therefore employ some youth which could reduce joblessness and encourage the youth to channel their potentials positively and refrain them from crime inclined activities.
5. The security system should be strengthened by given the personnel proper training to be proactive so as to stop the progress of any perceived security threats. There should be synergy among the

governors of the north-central state in security intelligent sharing.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

1. Adoption of strong accountability and transparency implication on N-Power Youth Empowerment initiatives in the North-Central Nigeria.
2. Inclusion of traditional leaders in security decision making a panacea for the pervasive Farmers/Herders Conflicts in North-Central Nigeria.

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