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# Youth-Related Crises and the dynamics of Public Sector Management in Nigeria: Implications, Challenges, and Remedial Strategies.

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## Abstract

*This research investigates the relationship between problems connected to youth and the dynamics of managing the public sector in Nigeria. It explores the ramifications, difficulties, and methods for addressing these issues. The research utilises a thematic literature review and analysis of secondary data to identify the primary elements that contribute to young discontent, such as unemployment, poverty, corruption, and social marginalisation. The challenges of cultism, ethnic conflicts, religious extremism, and governance failings are aggravated by these factors, resulting in heightened social unrest and political instability. The results emphasise the crucial need of implementing efficient crisis management measures to reduce the negative impact of youth-related crises on the administration of the public sector. To tackle these difficulties, it is necessary to adopt a comprehensive strategy that gives priority to investing in education, vocational training, and programmes that empower young people. Enhancing the organisational structures, advocating for effective governance methods, and cultivating cooperation among the government, civil society, and the private sector are crucial measures in establishing robust public sector institutions that can effectively address the requirements of Nigeria's young population. Nigeria can overcome youth-related issues and develop a stable, egalitarian, and successful society by implementing proactive governance changes and making investments in the future of its youths.*

**Keywords**: ***Nigeria, youth-related crises, public sector management, governance, unemployment***

## Introduction

Youth-related crises in Nigeria present complex challenges that intersect with the dynamics of public sector management, with profound implications for the nation's socio-political, economic, and educational landscapes. As highlighted in the literature, youth unemployment emerges as a pervasive issue, with far-reaching ramifications that permeate various facets of Nigerian society (Muyideen & Okuneye, 2020). This phenomenon has catalyzed calls for concerted efforts from government entities, philanthropic organizations, and non-governmental entities to prioritize initiatives aimed at fostering social contracts and vocational education. By equipping young Nigerians with skills and opportunities for meaningful employment and economic empowerment, these initiatives seek to address the root causes of youth unemployment and promote inclusive growth.

Moreover, youth restiveness poses another pressing concern, necessitating multifaceted approaches that tackle underlying factors such as poor family upbringing, governance failures, and unemployment (Mustapha, 2019). Citizenship education emerges as a potential solution, emphasizing proactive value re-orientation, job creation, and public enlightenment to foster social cohesion and mitigate unrest among the youth population. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges, particularly youth unemployment, underscoring the need for private sector interventions to stimulate economic recovery and job creation (Adebimpe et al., 2021).

Crisis management within Nigeria's public sector assumes paramount importance for maintaining political stability and governance integrity, with organized labor unions playing a pivotal role in advocating for workers' rights and welfare (Medoye, 2020). Efforts to alleviate youth unemployment and poverty necessitate the implementation of robust social protection strategies, focusing on incorporating informal sectors into national economic priorities and combating corruption (Ishaq et al., 2017). However, challenges persist in Nigeria's health workforce, highlighting the imperative for governance reforms in the healthcare sector (Adeloye et al., 2017).

Public sector management assumes a central role in addressing systemic issues such as corruption and poverty, which are fundamental barriers to sustainable development and economic diversification in Nigeria (Ugoani, 2016). The interplay between unemployment, illiteracy, and corruption exacerbates national insecurity, necessitating government support for economic development initiatives and entrepreneurial education (Akpan, 2015). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of Nigeria's weak health sector, necessitating comprehensive governance approaches to address socio-economic challenges and strengthen healthcare systems (Omeje, 2021). Additionally, poor performance in Nigeria's downstream oil sector has led to industry crises, prompting policy responses such as subsidy cuts and deregulation efforts to mitigate economic volatility and promote sectoral resilience (Akinola & Wissink, 2017).

The background and context of this study stem from the pervasive nature of youth-related crises in Nigeria, characterized by high rates of unemployment, political unrest, and socio-economic marginalization. Within this context, the public sector's role in governance, policy formulation, and crisis management assumes critical significance, as it intersects with the complex web of challenges facing the country's youth population.

At the heart of the issue lies a profound statement of the problem: How do youth-related crises intersect with the dynamics of public sector management in Nigeria, and what are the implications, challenges, and remedial strategies associated with this nexus? This question encapsulates the central focus of this study, aiming to unravel the underlying factors driving youth-related crises and explore their implications for public sector governance and management.

The objectives of this study stand out in twofold: First, to elucidate the multifaceted nature of youth-related crises in Nigeria, encompassing factors such as unemployment, political violence, and governance failures. Second, to analyze the implications of these crises for public sector management dynamics, identifying challenges and proposing remedial strategies to foster sustainable development and social cohesion.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policy formulation, strategic planning, and intervention initiatives aimed at addressing youth-related challenges and strengthening public sector governance in Nigeria. By shedding light on the complex interplay

between youth dynamics and public sector management, this research seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on governance, development, and social change in Nigeria.

## Literature Investigation

### Youth Unemployment and Socio-economic Challenges

Youth unemployment in Nigeria is a multifaceted issue with profound socio-economic implications, as highlighted in various scholarly works. Muyideen and Okuneye (2020) underscore the pervasive nature of youth unemployment and its far-reaching ramifications across socio-political, economic, and educational spheres. This phenomenon not only hampers individual livelihoods but also undermines national development efforts, exacerbating inequalities and social tensions. Muyideen & Okuneye (2020) emphasize the urgent need for concerted efforts from government, philanthropists, and non-governmental organizations to prioritize initiatives focused on social contract and vocational education. Such initiatives aim to equip young Nigerians with skills and opportunities for meaningful employment and economic empowerment, thereby addressing the root causes of youth unemployment.

Moreover, Mustapha (2019) identifies poor family upbringing, governance failures, and unemployment as underlying factors contributing to youth restiveness in Nigeria. Citizenship education emerges as a potential solution, emphasizing proactive value re-orientation, job creation, and public enlightenment to promote social cohesion and mitigate unrest among the youth population.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated existing challenges, particularly youth unemployment, as highlighted by Adebimpe et al. (2021). Private sector interventions are deemed essential to create jobs and stimulate economic recovery, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts between government and the business community in addressing this issue.

Addressing youth unemployment requires comprehensive strategies that tackle its root causes. Kamta et al. (2020) suggest that the lack of economic opportunities and education contributes to the development of conflict that leads to youth-related crises in Nigeria. Similarly, Namadi & Haruna (2016) emphasize the predisposing factors influencing youth crime and delinquent behaviors, including poverty, unemployment, corruption, substance abuse, and insufficient education. The interplay between unemployment, poverty, and corruption exacerbates national insecurity, necessitating government support for economic development initiatives and entrepreneurial education (Akpan, 2015). Additionally, efforts to alleviate youth unemployment and poverty require robust social protection strategies, focusing on incorporating informal sectors into national economic priorities and combating corruption (Ishaq et al., 2017).

Youth unemployment in Nigeria represents a complex socio-economic challenge with far-reaching implications for individual well-being and national development. Addressing this issue requires holistic approaches that prioritize education, job creation, social protection, and governance reforms to foster inclusive growth and mitigate socio-economic disparities.

### Governance and Political Stability

*Governance Failures and Political Instability*

In Nigeria, governance failures have been closely linked to political instability, as highlighted by Mohammed (2019). The dictatorial "representational culture" perpetuated by bad

governance leads to marginalization and increased political violence, creating a volatile environment that undermines social cohesion and economic progress.

Ogunbayo (2022) emphasizes that governance failure contributes to high youth unemployment, which, in turn, fuels sectarian criminality, terrorism, and state insecurity. Poor governance practices, such as corruption and lack of accountability, erode public trust in institutions and exacerbate socio-economic inequalities, leading to social unrest and political instability.

*Role of Effective Governance in Conflict Mitigation*

Good governance is essential for conflict mitigation and resolution in Nigeria. Okoro (2014) argues that effective governance practices, characterized by transparency, accountability, and respect for the rule of law, can address root causes of conflict, such as youth unemployment and marginalization. By fostering inclusive economic policies and social interventions, policymakers can promote social cohesion and mitigate the risk of violent conflicts.

Furthermore, Abdullahi (2012) emphasizes the importance of good governance in reducing tensions and promoting social stability. By upholding democratic principles and fostering inclusive decision-making processes, governments can build trust with citizens and strengthen social cohesion, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicts and promoting sustainable development.

*Impact of Governance on Social Cohesion*

Governance plays a crucial role in shaping social cohesion and national unity in Nigeria. Bolaji (2023) highlights that bad governance leads to institutional failure, political violence, and economic downturn, undermining citizens' confidence in government institutions and eroding social cohesion. Conversely, effective governance practices foster trust, transparency, and accountability, creating an enabling environment for social cohesion and inclusive development.

To reduce political violence and promote social stability, Akpan (2015a) underscores the importance of adequate government support, employment opportunities, education, healthcare, and the rule of law. By addressing governance failures and promoting inclusive policies, governments can enhance social cohesion and strengthen national unity, thereby mitigating conflicts and fostering sustainable development.

Governance plays a pivotal role in shaping political stability, conflict mitigation, and social cohesion in Nigeria. Addressing governance failures and promoting effective governance practices are essential for building trust, fostering social cohesion, and promoting sustainable development in the country.

## Education, Empowerment, and Community Development

Education and Vocational Training Initiatives

In Nigeria, education and vocational training initiatives play a crucial role in empowering young people and fostering community development. Kamta et al. (2020) emphasize that lack of economic opportunities and education contributes to the development of conflicts that lead to youth-related crises. Investing in education and vocational training programs can provide young individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure employment and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Moreover, Mustapha (2019) highlights the importance of citizenship education in addressing youth restiveness and promoting social cohesion. By emphasizing proactive value re-orientation, job creation, and public enlightenment, citizenship education programs can equip young Nigerians with the tools to become active participants in their communities and advocates for positive change.

Youth Empowerment Programs and Citizenship Education

Youth empowerment programs are instrumental in promoting citizenship education and fostering community development in Nigeria. Adebimpe et al. (2021) underscore the significance of private sector interventions in creating job opportunities for young people and stimulating economic growth. By providing access to education, skills training, and entrepreneurship programs, youth empowerment initiatives empower individuals to become agents of change and contribute to community development.

Furthermore, Ofem & Ajayi (1970) demonstrate the effectiveness of community-based approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria's Niger Delta region. By engaging young people in educational programs, infrastructure provision, and credit facilities, communities can address underlying grievances and promote social cohesion, thereby reducing the risk of violent conflicts.

Community-based Approaches to Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

Community-based approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding are essential for fostering sustainable development and promoting social cohesion in Nigeria. Namadi & Haruna (2016) highlight the role of community organizations in addressing predisposing factors influencing youth crime and delinquent behaviors. By providing support services, mentorship, and skills development opportunities, community-based organizations can empower young people and steer them away from criminal activities.

Moreover, Tedheke (2016) emphasizes the importance of grassroots initiatives in addressing youth-related crises. By promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and community participation, grassroots organizations can build trust and solidarity among diverse groups, thereby strengthening social cohesion and resilience to conflict.

Education, empowerment, and community development are integral components of efforts to address youth-related crises and promote sustainable peace and development in Nigeria. By investing in education and vocational training initiatives, promoting youth empowerment programs, and supporting community-based approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, policymakers can empower young people and build resilient communities capable of overcoming challenges and achieving inclusive development.

**Research Methodology**

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, incorporating secondary data collection, thematic literature review, and analysis of secondary data. Secondary data were sourced from academic journals, government reports, policy documents, and reputable online databases, providing valuable insights into youth-related crises and public sector management in Nigeria. Thematic literature review involved a comprehensive examination of existing research, theories, and frameworks relevant to the study's objectives. Key themes, trends, and patterns within the literature were identified to deepen understanding of the research topic.

Analysis of the collected secondary data was conducted to extract key findings, identify common themes, and discern underlying patterns. This process involved organizing the data,

coding relevant information, and synthesizing insights to address the study's objectives. By integrating findings from both thematic literature review and secondary data analysis, the study aimed to provide a holistic understanding of youth-related crises and public sector management dynamics in Nigeria.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of relying solely on secondary data, including potential biases and constraints in data availability. Ethical considerations, such as proper citation of sources and confidentiality of data, were carefully observed throughout the research process. Despite these limitations, the mixed-methods approach enabled a comprehensive exploration of the research topic, yielding valuable insights into the complex interplay between youth-related issues and public sector governance in Nigeria.

**Summary of Findings**

The study's findings underscore the convoluted interplay between youth-related crises and public sector management dynamics in Nigeria. Key findings include:

**Root Causes of Youth-Related Crises**: The study elucidates the multifaceted factors driving youth-related crises in Nigeria, including unemployment, poverty, corruption, and social marginalization. Cultism, ethnic tensions, religious fanaticism, and governance failures exacerbate these challenges, leading to increased social unrest and political instability.

Implications for Governance: Governance failures perpetuate youth unemployment and political violence, creating a dictatorial "representational culture" that marginalizes citizens and undermines institutional integrity. Bad governance hinders public service delivery, economic development initiatives, and efforts to promote social inclusion and equity.

**Role of Crisis Management**: Effective crisis management strategies are essential for mitigating the impact of youth-related crises on public sector governance. Proactive measures, such as stakeholder engagement, conflict resolution mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives, enhance governance resilience and foster adaptive responses to emerging challenges.

**Remedial Strategies and Policy Implications**: The study proposes a range of remedial strategies and policy implications to address youth-related crises and strengthen public sector management. These include investing in education and vocational training programs, strengthening institutional frameworks and governance mechanisms, implementing targeted interventions to address the root causes of youth unemployment, promoting social inclusion and equity through community-based approaches, and fostering collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector.

The above summary of findings underscore the urgent need for coordinated action and proactive governance reforms to address youth-related crises effectively and build resilient public sector institutions capable of responding to evolving socio-economic realities in Nigeria.

**Discussion**

The discussion of this study delves into the complex nexus between youth-related crises and public sector management dynamics in Nigeria, drawing insights from the thematic literature review and analysis of secondary data. Central to the discussion are the multifaceted challenges facing Nigerian youth, the implications for governance and political stability, and potential remedial strategies to address these issues.

## Youth-related Crises and Governance Challenges

The study elucidates the intricate web of factors contributing to youth-related crises in Nigeria, including unemployment, poverty, corruption, and social marginalization. These challenges, exacerbated by governance failures and institutional weaknesses, manifest in various forms of social unrest, political violence, and economic disparities. Ezemenaka (2021) underscores the significant role of cultism and ethnic tensions in fostering violent behaviors among Nigerian youths, exacerbating social divisions and exacerbating tensions within communities. Similarly, Ehinomen and Afolabi (2015) highlight rising youth unemployment and extreme religious fanaticism as key contributors to feelings of deprivation and frustration, leading to increased violent crimes in Nigeria.

Moreover, the study underscores the impact of governance failures on political stability, emphasizing how ineffective governance structures and lack of accountability contribute to social tensions, ethnic conflicts, and religious extremism. Mohammed (2019) posits that bad governance in Nigeria perpetuates youth unemployment and political violence, creating a dictatorial "representational culture" that subjugates its subjects and fosters marginalization. Ogunbayo (2022) further contends that governance failure leads to high youth unemployment, contributing to increased sectarian criminality, terrorism, and state insecurity.

## Implications for Public Sector Management

Against this backdrop, the discussion explores the implications of youth-related crises for public sector management in Nigeria. It elucidates how governance challenges undermine the effectiveness of public service delivery, hinder economic development initiatives, and impede efforts to promote social inclusion and equity. The study by Bolaji (2023) underscores the detrimental effects of bad governance on political stability in Nigeria, leading to institutional failure, economic downturn, and low self-esteem for citizens.

Furthermore, the discussion examines the role of crisis management strategies in mitigating the impact of youth-related crises on public sector governance. It underscores the importance of proactive measures, such as stakeholder engagement, conflict resolution mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives, in enhancing governance resilience and fostering adaptive responses to emerging challenges. Medoye (2020) highlights the crucial role of organized labor unions in navigating crises and advocating for workers' rights, underscoring the need for collective action to address systemic issues and promote social justice within the public sector.

## Remedial Strategies and Policy Implications

In light of the findings, the discussion proposes a range of remedial strategies and policy implications to address youth-related crises and strengthen public sector management in Nigeria. These include investing in education and vocational training programs (Kamta et al., 2020), strengthening institutional frameworks and governance mechanisms (Mohammed, 2019), implementing targeted interventions to address the root causes of youth unemployment (Wayas et al., 2019), promoting social inclusion and equity through community-based approaches (Ugiagbe, 2021), and fostering collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector (Ishaq et al., 2017).

Finally, the discussion underscores the imperative for coordinated action and proactive governance reforms to address youth-related crises effectively and build resilient public sector institutions capable of responding to evolving socio-economic realities in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics of youth-related crises and their implications for public sector management in Nigeria. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and thematic analysis of secondary data, the study has shed light on the root causes, consequences, and potential remedies for addressing these pressing challenges.

The findings highlight the pervasive impact of youth unemployment, poverty, corruption, and social marginalization on Nigeria's socio-political landscape. Cultism, ethnic tensions, religious fanaticism, and governance failures exacerbate these issues, leading to increased social unrest, political instability, and economic stagnation. Furthermore, the study underscores the critical role of effective crisis management strategies in mitigating the adverse effects of youth-related crises on public sector governance.

Moving forward, addressing youth-related crises requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes investment in education, vocational training, and youth empowerment programs. Strengthening institutional frameworks, promoting good governance practices, and fostering collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector are essential steps in building resilient public sector institutions capable of responding to the needs of Nigeria's youth population.

In light of these findings, policymakers must prioritize youth empowerment initiatives, implement targeted interventions to address the root causes of youth unemployment, and foster inclusive development strategies that promote social cohesion and economic prosperity. By embracing proactive governance reforms and investing in the future of its youth, Nigeria can overcome the challenges posed by youth-related crises and build a more stable, equitable, and prosperous society for generations to come.

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