The Nigerian Youth: The Genesis and Revelation in the New Normal

By

Prisca Abiye Gobo PhD
Department of History and Diplomatic Studies
University of Port Harcourt
drpriscaabiye1@gmail.com
08033168939

Abstract

This article chronicles the genesis and revelation of the Nigerian youth in historical perspective. The EndSARS protests in the midst of COVID-19 which led to the "massacre" of the peaceful protesters on 20/10/2020 at Lekki Toll Gate in Lagos has garnered renewed attention from historians and scholars across the globe, making them ask new questions. The protests started as a cry against police misconduct which have become visible today because of technology, and metamorphosed into a call for an end to bad governance at all levels. It spread across the 36 states, Abuja and the diaspora. It was a call for an end to rulers who have captured state power for primitive accumulation, and weaponised poverty to make the youth amenable to exploitation. The protests left legacies that have continued to shape our world and calls for a reassessment of the Nigerian youth in the New Normal. This article interrogates the resourcefulness, resilience and leadership qualities of the youth despite years of oppression and deprivation. Technological and scientific innovations were fully utilized during the protests and these continue to shape the world of the youth in the new normal. By asking many how and why questions like the historians do and answering them through the multidisciplinary approach, we will reveal the true worth of the Nigerian youth. This article concludes by stating that the Nigerian youth is a change agent. Therefore, identifying and addressing issues that affect the youth is a sure way of improving overall national development.

Keywords: Youth, New Normal, EndSARS, Leadership, National Development

Introduction

Nigeria is made up of about 370 ethnic groups and they occupy a total land area of about 923,769 sq/km (Ogbogbo, 2021; 1). It is a federation made up of 36 states and a federal capital territory in Abuja. The population of the country was estimated to be over 200 million inhabitants in 2019, which makes her the most populous African country and the seventh most populous country in the world (Ogbogbo, 2021; 1). Nigeria as a country is a

British creation although the inhabitants have existed for centuries before the British amalgamation of the north and southern Nigeria in 1914.

History is a form of memorial to the achievements and endeavors of a people or community individually or collectively even with the changes in the march of civilization. History concerns all that is memorable in the human past and its contemporary relevance. Thus one of the most important elements of history which is the idea of looking at events chronologically will be explored in this article to establish the changes and continuities over time and subsequently put recent events in proper perspective. The historian of today hardly needs to be reminded thanks to Marx and those influenced by him that man is a social and economic animal just like he is a political animal. The result therefore is a history that captures the reality that is life in a more balanced way and that in my opinion is the very essence of the Humanities. The argument here is that since no society in the modern world exists in a vacuum, it is the pre-established patterns of culture which determine to a large extent whether that society accepts or resists innovation and change, and the speed with which this is done. Put differently, the Nigerian youth has demonstrated a mastery of the use of social media for the greater good during COVID-19 and the EndSARS protests and with a little encouragement and an enabling environment, can generate national development in the new normal. However, it is imperative to start by tracing the genesis of the Nigerian youth from pre-colonial times up to the present to ascertain the changes and continuities for better understanding of the revelation.

Pre-Colonial

The Nigerian youths in pre-colonial Nigeria played significant roles in every community. For instance, in the Niger Delta, the youths were an integral part of the House which was the basis of communal life in administration and governance of the people. The leadership structure of the house was clearly defined. The House was headed by the chief, followed by the elders and next to the elders was the age-grade which was made up of the youths. The function of the youths included public duty and community service. The men in this category in the words of Erekosima (1989:125) "will generally operate as a loose cooperate unit that undertakes burials for the community; extracts fines from those whom penalties have been imposed by the chiefs, and generally supervise tasks that need hard labour such as cutting the bush in the village agricultural plots. These are usually activities in the domain of community service." It is in this category that in pre-colonial times (pre Pax Britannica) soldiers were primarily recruited into the armies of the various canoe houses (Wariboko 2007: 319) in the Niger Delta. The youths were also very hard working and engaged in various economic activities like farming, fishing, craft, and trading for

sustenance and exchange. The various age grades organized the social, political and administrative life of the villages (Onwaniban in Ogbogbo and Okpeh, 2021: 36).

There were various age grades and women groups that regulated the affairs of their peers and made up the village workforce across the various regions in Nigeria. This description of the functions of the youths in the Niger Delta is similar to what was obtainable in the other parts of Nigeria. There were the vigilante groups who fought wars on behalf of their towns and carried on various economic activities. Education of the youth was formal and informal in some cases. The informal education was done by parents in moonlight nights, at play and at work through story telling. This story telling was their opportunity to inculcate the right values in the youth. There were other forms of informal education like the one Wariboko described as c*ounterfoil choice* (Wariboko 2007: 303). In counterfoil choice, a father can teach his son a lesson about success by giving him two bowls. One bowl full of garri (cassava derived flour), and an empty bowl. The child is then asked to choose between the two bowls. The two bowls show that life offers two options, prosperity/power or failure/disgrace. The child is advised to choose right. This is a management tool used by the Kalabari in the past and present to ensure that their ethnic identity is maintained amidst the flux of changes from within and outside (Wariboko 2007: 302).

Counterfoil dramas are usually enacted at the peak of celebrations and rituals and whenever a celebrant is to be given a reward. On a daily basis counterfoil choices are given by parents and elders as training technics to inculcate the right cultural values into their children. An example of such is when a child is invited to eat from the same plate with his father and told to eat any piece of meat or fish. It is only a test because only his father has a choice to choose which one to give to the child. In addition, there were a variety of games of wit, skill and endurance through which the youths showed their mettle. These included racing, diving, high jumping, somersaulting, shooting and swimming. Every male child is expected to be active in masquerade/dance club activities because for him to become a "complete Kalabari man", he has to understand drum language and dance very well (Horton, 1966). Similarly in the Ogoni culture, *Yaa* tradition provided training for the youth. In the traditional setting, the individual *Yaa* man was trained for character, integrity and with a high sense of the sanctity of the human life, to the extent that there were taboos and strict sanctions safe-guarding it (Kpone-Tonwe 2003: 56). One way this was done was by observation of character among the youths through group eating or dinners at the palm wine camp (*nuloo*). It was also done during group activity or communal work. Through these means the elders observed character types, ability, creativity and talent among the youths. Such character traits as tendency to steal, lie, truancy, deviancy, dishonesty and other vices were carefully noted unknown to the child. This enabled the elders to know the

youths gifted with true leadership qualities and begin to provide subtle guidance and acceptability (Kpone-Tonwe 2003: 67). In a nutshell, there was strict supervision of the youths at several levels.

Every community also had time-tested ways of testing the character of every child and molding the child into an excellent youth and human being. There were also forms of formal education like the Iria ceremony (fattening ceremony) during which maids were secluded for sessions of intensive induction into adulthood. The Ibo youths in southern Nigeria used to go through rites of passage as well. But, who is observing and guiding the youth today? What kind of elders are they even looking up to?

Colonial Period

It is history and its lessons that inform and establish tradition. The mores, values and traditions which hold a society together endure by the collective memory of the history of the society and thus history can be described as a guarantor of stability and order in the society. This history and the stability that it provides however came under attack and the onslaught of the Europeans. Sub-saharan Africa, just like most parts of the developing world, was drawn into the world capitalist economy via European colonialism. The traditional societies of Africa were forced to contend with aggressive and relatively more powerful European invaders who were in Africa for economic reasons but along the line also changed the cultures of the people. This invasion of Africa by Europe had serious consequences which affected Nigeria and by extension, Africa in more ways than one. For instance, in most traditional African societies, work and effort had their own intrinsic values as they involved regular and orderly activity. Division of labour was gender based and the major source of labour was the household. Gradually, the traditional patterns of work changed as a result of the assault of the forces of modernization and particularly, industrialization. There emerged for the first time on the continent of Africa wage employment, side by side with traditional forms of work. This affected the people, especially the youths.

As each community started to crave for and demanded the basic features of development such as potable water, electricity, television viewing centers, tarred roads, literacy and others, they increased the possibility of exposure to modern and foreign values. The foreign values included quest for modern education, urban migration and the innate prompting to be relevant to modern times. The age-grade social interaction setting collapsed, evening time folktales reduced, boys and girls refused to join neither dance troupes nor masquerade groups, traditional musicians and instrumentalists became fewer. But Wilson (1988) observed that a proper understanding of what has always existed will

guide any structuring of a mixed system. Proper understanding and integration of existing (traditional) modes in the new will obviously yield better results, preserve the old and make the new relevant and meaningful especially in the new normal.

In the fifteenth century, Africa came in contact with the Europeans and the trans-Atlantic slave trade started. This gave rise to insecurity, economic recession and the displacement of the youths in the society. The youths were carted away as slaves while some of them became compromised as they became active collaborators who worked with the chiefs and Europeans to kidnap and organize the sale of slaves.

After the slave trade was abolished, the legitimate trade was introduced and once again the youths were at the center of it all since the legitimate trade which was supposed to put an end to the slave trade rather intensified it. This was because slaves, mostly youths were needed to process the palm oil, transport it from the source to the waterside, man the trade canoes and protect the trade canoes against pirates and rivals.

Post-Colonial

A specter of disintegration haunts Nigeria; it arises not from disagreement among its component ethnicities. Its referent is an emerging social identity, a consensus on personhood that stands as a powerful barrier to nationhood (Wariboko 2019: 19).

Wariboko opines that personhood in Nigeria has undergone a drastic change in the last sixty years, to the extent that it is no longer African and western but it has become a strange beast, a monstrous creation that threatens the very fabric of our existence as a people or nation. He therefore named this new self the lotus-self. This Nigerian new self appears distinct, resplendent in the midst of dirt and decay, indifferent to everything except the self. This state of affairs in the post-colonial Nigerian state that failed to provide basic public amenities has pushed Nigerians including the youths to become self-sufficient, to be states in themselves (Wariboko 2019: 52). Therefore, employment is a prerequisite for each person to provide for himself the basic amenities that the government has failed to provide for the citizenry, and that is in short supply.

The question here is what is responsible for the state of affairs in Nigeria and Africa especially as it concerns unemployment since 1960? A study covering three West African countries showed that in terms of ability, the African worker is not inherently handicapped as an industrial man (Isamah,1991). The samples drawn from Lagos, Accra and Abidjan showed clear signs that in terms of skill and knowledge they can compare favourably with workers in other parts of the world. They have also adjusted reasonably well to the

requirements of industrial employment as thousands of their counterparts have done all over Africa. Yet, instead of providing employment and an enabling environment for the Nigerian youth to thrive like those in foreign countries, they were labeled "lazy Nigerian youths" recently.

At the attainment of independence in Nigeria in 1960, the political leaders chose to manipulate and exploit the youth for their selfish interest. Since the civil war (1967-1970) and the era of the military, the time-tested values have disappeared from our educational system be it formal or informal. Nigeria is a machine for making corrupt politicians who lead with impunity, developing underdevelopment, and undermining human flourishing (Wariboko 2019). Public office holders who are the elders of today cheat and steal public funds and the youths know it. What moral justification do such leaders or elders have to caution the youths? Rather, the leaders have armed the youths to kill their fellow citizens and labeled them thugs, bandits, militants, and terrorists. They failed to provide employment for the youths rather they recruit them and give them firearms during elections for election malpractice which they fail to retrieve after elections. The youths may tolerate them because of their relative weak position in the scheme of things, but they do not respect them enough to see them as mentors in any positive way. This explains why in the universities and society at large the youths have gone underground and emerged as cultists, in which guise they now carry out what their elders are doing in society. Unlike the youths in the pre-colonial setting, the youths of today and the youth organizations have no philosophical direction. They exist only as appendages of the contemporary political structures and manipulated by the political class and the religious superstructures (Kpone-Tonwe, 2003: 67). They are therefore prone to acts of extreme lawlessness, piracy, violence and murder because they lack the stabilization of firm historical roots and the guidance of a clear traditional or national ideology (Kpone-Tonwe 2003:69). Nevertheless, the good news is that the story is not set in stone and can be rewritten (Wariboko 2019). Wariboko posits that to rewrite a nation, we must begin by entering its history, if only to recast it.

The relationship between the youths and elders has deteriorated over the years. The youths are at variance with the elders. They either arm themselves or are armed by others for selfish purposes. They receive bribes from the oil companies and other multinational companies in the name of the communities without the consent of the elders. On the other hand, the elders receive payments from the oil companies and other multinational companies on behalf of their communities but put such monies in their pockets instead of using it for community development. This situation over the years has generated frustration and desperation in the youths which culminated in the EndSARS protest in October 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nigerian Youth, COVID-19 and ENDSARS Protest

Nigeria has the largest youth population in Africa. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the country especially the youths due to the disruptions of essential health, nutrition and social services. Young people account for over 60% of Nigeria's population', says Oyeyemi Pitan, Convener of the Nigerian Youth Champions for Universal Health Coverage (NYC4UHC). The human coronavirus disease, (COVID-19) was first reported in Wuham, China in 2019 and thereafter spread all around the globe to become the fifth documented pandemic since the 1918 flu pandemic (Moore, 2021). By September 2021, almost two years after COVID-19 was first identified, there has been more than 200 million confirmed cases and over 4.6 million lives lost to the disease (Moore, 2021). In Nigeria the pandemic further pushed lots of people into anxiety and depression (Adebowale, 2021). Findings of a national survey carried out by the Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI), a non-governmental organization; indicate that the pandemic threatened the livelihood of at least 76 percent of Nigerians. The spread of COVID-19 and its impact on humanity has ushered in a new age – an age where mask wearing is the new normal, lockdown and restriction of movement is a public health culture and physical distancing outside of one's home is not a strange sight (Abiodun, 2020). As the world struggles to adapt to these measures, the resulting societal disruption has led to a number of challenges, ranging from stalled education to job losses - especially in resource-constrained countries - and has forced many around the world to seek new ways to survive (Abiodun, 2020).

UNICEF believes that young people possess unique viewpoints to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency is therefore collaborating with the Nigerian youth to help find creative solutions to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their communities. The COVID-19 UNICEF innovation challenge provides the perfect opportunity for young people in Nigeria to offer innovative solutions and Chukwuma won in the second week (Chukwuma, 2020). According to him "my solution was centered on the use of solar panels in establishing sustainable water supply systems in communities where access to water is inadequate for human use and consumption" (Chukwuma, 2020). There are many other organizations and Nigerian celebrities who are also training and empowering the youths in the new normal. The EndSARS protest took place at the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic which has continued to wreak havoc on the health of the people and social services. "COVID -19 has exacerbated inequalities, putting at risk hard won gains that have been made over the past decade" says Helga Fogstad, Executive Director of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH).

The EndSARS protests rocked Nigeria for two weeks in October 2020. The police unit had been accused of robbing, attacking and even killing people especially the youths (BBC NEWS). Tens of thousands of Nigerian youths took to the streets across the 36 states and Abuja, the federal capital territory calling for the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) police unit to be disbanded. Along the line, the scope of the demands of the protesters increased to include an end to bad governance, provision of employment for the youths and provision of social amenities among others. The EndSARS protest resonates with the Nigerian youth across ethnic and religious lines and has been described by one of the youths in a personal conversation as the peak of the awareness that Covid-19 generated (Gobo, 2021). However, on 20/10/20, the hitherto peaceful protesters were "massacred" at the Lekki Toll Gate in Lagos, Nigeria, and this led to an abrupt end of the protests. An inquiry panel was constituted and submitted a report on 15/11/2021 which says Nigerian armed forces shot and killed anti-police brutality protesters last year. Some of the findings of the panel match previous reports by Amnesty International, as well as local and international media, although the report has not been made official yet but leaked to the public. It is the opinion of the writer that the lockdown and restriction of movement gave the youths enough time and clarity of mind to observe, process and internalize the misrule of Nigerian leaders and police brutality which had been going on long before that time, hence the protests. The lockdown increased political awareness and the result was the protests. It was amazing to see Nigerian youths organize themselves in that peaceful manner for about ten days using social media to mobilize, raise funds and disseminate information. They even got the attention of the international community and Nigerians in the diaspora to join in the protests. They showed their ingenuity, resilience and leadership qualities in the way they managed the peaceful protests. Maximum use of digital technology worked in their favour then and is still doing so in the new normal world. The youths are full of energy and innovation, which are essential recipes for human and national development if properly channeled.

An attempt will be made to place the events of COVID-19 pandemic and the EndSARS protest within the context of the socio-economic issues in the Nigerian polity since independence in 1960 and even before so that its significance can emerge. Actually there are enough indications from our pre-colonial history of the fact that people are conditioned by historical experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the unemployment and poverty in the country. The lockdown and restrictions to business activities have affected the youths in more ways than one. Therefore, the Nigerian youths are adapting to new ways of doing things in the new normal. Work is so fundamental to the life of man, says Hughes (1951), that we cannot

understand the human condition unless we can make some sense of the ways in which man comes to terms with his work; these forms provide clues to the ways in which men live out their lives and see their destinies. And as Reisman (1955) pointed out, "the question of the meaning of work, of how it is experienced, is primarily a cultural problem; and cultures differ enormously in the way work is interpreted in their value scheme… Quite clearly then, the socially transmitted patterns of work behavior is a fundamental factor in the development of human societies and must thus feature in any serious discussion of societal change."

The Nigerian Youth in the New Normal

The Nigerian youths have successfully given work a new definition in the New Normal world through the use of social media and Information Technology.

- Most of them more than ever before have gone digital.
- By marketing and acquiring digital skills on line.
- Becoming influencers and CEOs on line
- Receiving and giving lectures online
- Making big business deals with international organizations
- Writing articles for online sites and blogs
- Owning their own blogs
- Becoming bloggers
- Social media is being fully utilized
- A lot of Nigerian youths are working remotely for companies in foreign countries like Canada, United States of America and Russia
- Virtual meetings have become the order of the day for the youths and others using tools like Zoom and Google Meet.
- Many youths are involved in trading cryptocurrencies, Bitcoin, and other digital currencies. And as some of them have told me in personal communication, with digital currency and business, it has become easier to make and lose money in the new normal
- Many youths have become very conversant with the use of apps for good and evil in a more sophisticated manner
- A lot of creative thinking is being demonstrated by the youths in the music and movie industry via social media and digital technology and this is generating more income for them. For instance, since the youths were stuck at home during the lockdown with nothing but their phones and internet, comedy skits, short films, and youTube videos became very popular. As a result, a new category has been added to the African Magic Viewers Choice Awards (AMVCA) in Nigeria, bringing many youths to fame and wealth through Nollywood, Comedy and the

music industry. Some of them have gone on to win the Grammys like Burna Boy and others who have received awards and recognition in Hollywood

- More businesses are online now more than ever, including petty businesses, thereby generating more income and customers
- Due to the economic hardship occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, more youths are adapting by creating more streams of income. It has become imperative now to have a side hustle. Yes, the new normal world has made side hustles to become popular
- More youths are now playing games online and earning fiat currency and tokens which they can assess and spend
- Some of the youths are now aware that it is better to prepare for an opportunity and not have it than to have an opportunity you are not prepared for. Therefore, even while schooling, they are receiving training online and offline to acquire other skills and make money while at it.
- There is influx of cash to those who have created services online and offline.
- Loss of jobs forced some youths to find jobs online or create jobs for themselves and indeed for others.
- With digital marketing that most of the youths are involved in, it is easier to make and lose money. This has made some of them to find new ways of securing their investments.
- Since the naira has been devalued, most of them are adapting by demanding to be paid in foreign currency online and offline.
- Because business is slow, most of them have found new ways of increasing their customer base through social media by advertising on various social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook.
- There are more collaboration among individuals and businesses among the youths.
- More youths are coding and doing computer programming as essential digital skills in the new normal world.
- The lockdown also forced people to face the reality of overdependence on social media.
- Some youths for the first time were compelled to face the reality of the hardship in Nigeria and had to find a way around it to survive.
- The social media has made it possible for youths who are celebrities to interact with their fans in a mutually beneficial manner. For instance, a Nigerian musician named Davido had asked his fans to donate money to him in celebration of his birthday and in about forty-eight hours he got about two hundred million naira (200,000,000.00). He in turn expressed his gratitude to his fans and set up a

committee to oversee the disbursement of the amount he got and an additional fifty million naira which will come from his pocket to selected orphanages and foundations across Nigeria. This is one of the many ways celebrities and their fans are giving back to the society in the new normal world and this is enabled by the social media. He also announced that he will be doing this fund raising every year on his birthday, November 21, and invited his friends to join him in this venture. Davido is just one among many celebrities who are giving back to the society and empowering other youths. It has become clear that every fan is a person looking to connect with another person and through these connections, the youths are not just making money, they are making a difference. Some people might say that money is not everything, they may be right, but money gives you options and it is a defense (Ecclesiastes 7:12). These innovations inspired by the Nigerian youths especially in the new normal, is generating solutions to the many problems in Nigeria. Indeed we rise by lifting others as the youths are demonstrating.

- Many youths have become adept at leveraging on the knowledge of the masters in various fields and this has become easier via social media.
- Mentorship is now a very popular activity in Nigeria among the youths and this is also empowered by social media.
- In other words, the Nigerian youth is adapting really fast to the new normal. This was shown in how effectively and peacefully they organized and managed the EndSARS protest. Because there was restriction of movement, all they had was the phone, laptop and internet which led to more discoveries and effective utilization of such discoveries.

However, this adaptation is both negative and positive. While some are adapting to new ways of committing crimes such as increase in cybercrime, cultism, banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery and various internet fraud, others are taking advantage of all the digital resources to build and maximize wealth creation. Peer pressure has increased in the new normal creating depression among the youths. The girls are under pressure to get married so that their husband can provide for them and the boys are under pressure to make money through any means since there is pressure on them to get married and provide for their family. All this is pushing them into depression in their desperation to earn a living. There is currently a wave of depression as some of the youths are not coping at all. Incidentally, more youths are also losing interest in schooling and education, while others are becoming more interested in education but believing less in schooling as their perspectives have changed in the new normal world. Accordingly, we shall argue that man, rather than science and technology, as the instruments of social, political and scientific changes, is the real enemy of mankind and the world (Makinde, 1993: 24). This is so because many youths

are using social media and technology for self-destruction instead of self-improvement. The same technology that has thrown men out of jobs are used to invade the privacy of individuals, their movements, and even their bank accounts and spending habits (Buchwald, 1984: 4). Thus, we agree that "automation and technology may offer us possibilities that this world has never seen in its long history, they are nevertheless possibilities for good and possibilities for evil" (Evans, 1970). However, it must be pointed out that science and technology themselves are neutral and not evil, what is evil is how we choose to use them. Proper guidance and collaboration between the youths and the leaders will reduce the negative uses of social media and technology generally to the barest minimum in the new normal. What informed this line of argument is the fact that during the EndSARS protest, majority of the youths used social media only to organize the protest peacefully, showing that majority of them are for peace and the greater good. Indeed, the Nigerian youths are some of the best in the world in information Technology. It will not be out of place to say at this juncture that national development in Nigeria will benefit a great deal from a conscious attempt at modifying the requirements of the new social and economic order to suit the established traditions. This will provide an orderly frame work for the youths to function instead of letting them grope in darkness without guidance. Otherwise, a great deal of the creative talent of Nigeria and in extension, Africa, will continue to be lost. In this regard, we agree with W. O. Jones that:

> *it is not the absence of economic man that has put tropical Africa so far behind the great societies of Europe, Asia and America. He lives in Africa today, as he has lived for millenia, and will eagerly serve African society as he has other societies when his presence is recognised and his tremendous energies freed to work for the common good.*

This paper has attempted to integrate the old into the new, with the firm belief that they are compatible and would prove invaluable in the new normal world. In a modern society with an ancient past, a rich mixture of both features is a *sine qua non* for national development with the youths championing it while the leaders create the enabling environment.

Conclusion

Haven traced the history of the Nigerian youth from pre-colonial times to the present, it is pertinent to state here that the Nigerian youth is a change agent. Events in recent times have revealed that despite years of deprivation and abuse, if well managed by the leaders, the youths are still capable of giving Nigeria the much needed national development. However, all their successes so far have been based on individual efforts. One can only

imagine how much success they would have if we have collective effort that is government driven with sincerity of purpose. There should be a way of drawing strength from our cultural values to move forward. What was it that made Nigerians in their various regions and communities to live relatively peacefully, successfully, and on equal terms with her neighbours in pre-colonial times? It is obvious that something needs to be done urgently because the youths are being regularly and systematically destroyed directly and indirectly in Nigeria and this has to stop. The solution will not come from Europe and America but from the citizens, the culture and traditions of this country. Nevertheless, we must note that what is required is not uniformity but unity of purpose to move Nigeria forward.

It is assumed that this article will inspire the leaders to be governed by reason and not by appetite, and rational as opposed to irrational choices and behavior for a change. We must also bear in mind that a nation's leadership is a reflection of its collective character and strength. Therefore, the followership must have better judgement and greater aggregate strength to enforce our good judgement. And one way of doing this is by taking full responsibility of our collective failure and charting a new cause instead of being docile and playing the blame game. What happens regarding the youths and national development in the new normal moving forward will depend on our collective will to apply our human intelligence, this time, to the right direction and history is there to guide us. The culture of impunity must give way to a drive for our shared humanity.

References

List of Oral Informants

Name	Occupation	Place of Interview	Status	Date
Kelvin Gobo	Software developer	Port Harcourt	Youth	24/11/21
Bestman Boye Michel	Student	University of Port Harcourt	Youth	10/11/21
Precious Monmon	Student	University of Port Harcourt	Youth	10/11/21
Soibi C. George	Student	University of Port Harcourt	Youth	11/11/21
Chigozirim Mathew F.	Student	University of Port Harcourt	Youth	15/11/21
Onyedikachukwu Ezike M.	Student	Port Harcourt	Youth	15/11/21

Onyinyechi Ogbonna	Student	Port Harcourt	Youth	15/11/21
Winifred Nwobodo C.	Student	Port Harcourt	Youth	15/11/21

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