

Paul Kehinde Michael

Youth crisis and the quest for social order through the career talent pathway, Nigeria's problem of political obligation: A philosophical reflection

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Paul Kehinde Michael
University of Benin – Benin-City, Nigeria

YOUTH CRISIS AND THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL ORDER THROUGH THE CAREER TALENT PATHWAY, NIGERIA'S PROBLEM OF POLITICAL OBLIGATION: A PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION

Słowa kluczowe: młodzież, kariera, talent, porządek społeczny, polityczne
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Schlüsselwörter: Jugend, Karriere, Talent, Sozialordnung, politische
Verpflichtung

1. Introducing the problem

*“How far any mode of government can be regarded as natural,
would seem to depend a good deal on the extent to which its guidance is
a simple response to the needs of those who are guided”
(MacKenzie, 1963:133).*

One thing is at least sure in the above quotation: the importance of guidance as one of the responsibilities of the state to its citizens. This has far reaching implications especially on political obligation concern and its relations to youth development for social order in Nigeria. This is particularly true given that he emphasizes the importance of state guidance understood as the state's obligation in the maintenance of social order. The idea of guidance by MacKenzie in the context of this essay will mean youth guidance especially the type of guidance that provides the youth with empowerment opportunities through education and employment which allows for the effective maintenance of social order in Nigeria. The idea of construing empowerment guidance for the youth as the state's obligation is in Nigeria crucial given the country's problem of social order. The great challenge before Nigerians will continue to be how to make Nigeria more organized, humane and progressive. In achieving this goal, Nigeria's social policies must conform to the nation's obligations to its citizens, and vice versa. As Obasanjo puts it, the responsi-

bilities of citizenship in Nigeria, compel us to create and sustain a community in which the well-being of all depends upon the collective thrust towards a common goal, and the obedience to the laws intended to guarantee security, peace, justice, equity and accountability (Ujomu, 2003:32).

Clapham (1991:91) was right when he said that “in any assessment of the predicament and prospects of modern Africa, the question of how Africans are governed must hold a central place”. A philosophical reflection on how Africans are governed would situate one of the causes of Africa’s predicament, to the youth crisis which in my view is a reaction to the state’s inability to meet up with its obligation to the youth. This is true of Nigeria especially given its socio-cultural, political and economic predicaments and prospects. In the case of Nigeria, it is not just the question of how it is governed but more importantly is the question of how the youth’s positive aspirations and visions are fulfilled. In view of this, there is a need to emphasize the ideal of obligation as an element of human nature, in a Nigerian State where there exists a feeling of and dissatisfaction with state’s responsibilities to the youth.

In tracing youth crisis in Nigeria to the problem of political obligation, it is instructive to link the idea of obligation to human nature, and the American philosopher John Dewey readily comes to mind in this regard. According to Dewey (1974) human nature can be defined by the innate needs of human beings. Dewey (1974:116) says that “I do not think it can be shown that the innate needs of men have changed since man became man or that there is any evidence that they will change as long as man is on the earth”. What this means is that as an element in human nature, obligation is a psychological need of man. As a psychological need it is the feeling of belongingness in man. It is the absence of this feeling of belongingness – obligation, and in this case political obligation that is responsible for domestic social problems such as: terrorism, ethnic conflict, political violence to mention a few. The real issue about the problem of political obligation and socio-political instability in the Nigerian state bothers on the question of its formation or creation. Seen in another way, it is the question of whose consent led to the creation of Nigeria. This is a problem of legitimacy understood as what rule of law created the Nigeria state. Legitimacy crisis is one of the most pernicious, endemic and the most challenging problem confronting the Nigerian state. The prevalence of political violence and gross instability in Nigeria therefore, is an empirical indicator of the low level of political legitimacy (Ogundiya, 2009:1). The whole of this essay is dedicated to pinpointing the problem of political obligation as the crux of Nigeria’s youth problem. First let us engage in the conceptualization of the idea of obligation and its tripartite notions.

2. Obligation and its tripartite notions

The concept of obligation is captured in ethical theories which have developed over time. The concept “ethics” is derived from the Greek word *ethos* which means character. According to Socrates, ethics is the knowledge of good and evil; the knowledge of the wisdom of life. Ethics is a sub-branch of philosophy and precisely a direct branch of axiology that deals with how human beings ought to behave. Ethics may be defined as fundamental norms of human conduct. The purpose of ethics is to influence human attitude. The focus of ethics is morality. Morality comes from the Latin word *moralis*, meaning customs or manners. Ethics or moral philosophy presupposes freedom; freedom involves choice and responsibility. Ethics is the practical science which aims at procuring man’s unqualified good; his absolute good. Ethics teaches not only the most general rules of remote application but also the particular rules applicable to the particular action to be performed. Thiroux (2001) says ethics asks such questions as: what part does self-interest or the interests of others play in the making of moral decisions and judgments (Thiroux, 2001:1–2)? In the context of the focus of this essay, let us define ethics as the evaluation and analysis of human conduct in relations to what he expects from other people and what other people expect from him. Although this narrow definition of ethics must be understood as only including relationships among human beings and excluding other non-human element in nature. From our definitions especially the last definition, we are correct to say that the focus of ethics is obligation. There are ethical theories which philosophers use as tools in analyzing and engaging ethical discourses. Michael (2014) opined that ethical theories can be separated into two main categories: one category includes theories of the good the other category includes theories of the right. The distinction between these two categories is that theories of the good attempt to explain what is worthwhile in life such as beauty or human happiness, while theories of the right explain what a morally correct course of action is such as lying or stealing. Theories of the right, as opposed to the good, describe actions that should be taken that are in accordance to a general rule. There are two major categories of these types of theories: teleological and deontological. Teleological theories apply a general rule that should be followed to all possible courses of action and determine morality based on the end result of that action. However, under a teleological theory, one action could be considered moral and immoral at different times under different circumstances. For example, lying may be justifiable and the right thing to do under certain circumstances, and morally bad in other circumstances. Most teleological

theories are considered consequentialist. Conversely, deontological theories describe actions which are always good or always bad; they usually construct a set of rules for morally right and morally wrong courses of action. Deontological theories judge actions based on the means, not on the ends. Some examples of teleological theories are ethical hedonism, utilitarianism, virtue, and welfarism, each of which apply a different rule to certain actions. Examples of deontological theories include universalized duty, rights, theism, and existentialist subjectivism (Michael, 2005:5–9). Obligation is thus, fundamentally an ethical concept that is applicable to other field of human endeavour such as law and politics.

The concept of obligation must be understood properly to enable us narrow it down to political obligation which is the focus here and then examine its problems. What then is obligation? An obligation is a responsibility; that is, a duty. One's duty is an action that a person is obliged or mandated to perform. Obligation represents a sense of duty, responsibility and commitment which can further be explained as having a stake in something and having a feeling of belongingness. Another way to understand the concept of obligation is to construe it within the framework of the idea of reciprocity. In that case, obligation can be defined as the reciprocity of duties, responsibilities and commitment between persons, groups, associations, and in the context of our discussion, between the state and its citizens. There are different kinds of obligation: one is duty of perfect obligation and the other is duty of imperfect obligation. The former has an "a priori" nature; one that can be exerted from an individual by necessity or compulsion while the latter is based on the individual's choice or volition. The notion of obligation can be legal, moral or political.

2.1. Legal obligation

A legal obligation is a bond between two legal persons which confers enforceable rights and duties. For example, if X negligently injures Y, then this confers on X the obligation in law to make due compensation to Y, and Y has a right to that compensation (Scruton, 1982:330). The weakness of the legal obligation is that it failed to take into consideration cases where lawfully keeping to a legal bond can cause greater harm. For example if there was a bond between X and Y that X should take custody of a weapon belonging to Y as Y is away for a short time, should X be law bound to return the weapon to Y on arrival even when X notices that Y is insane. Will it not be better for X to break the bond rather than allow Y cause harm to X and other people? I think the good of X and other people are more important than that of Y. Legal obli-

gation seems to be derived from moral obligation, hence the next line of attention. Legal obligation should therefore be understood as a legal bond between at least two persons and a forceful authority enabling the implementation of the obligation

2.2. Moral obligation

The term moral obligation has a number of meanings in moral philosophy, in religion, and in layman's terms. Generally speaking, when someone says of an act that it is a "moral obligation," they refer to a belief that the act is one prescribed by their set of values (Wikipedia). A moral obligation is a responsibility imposed on the moral agent by his own reason. To declare an action a moral obligation is to say that they are actions that others can legitimately insist that we perform while our expectations are those actions that we can legitimately insist that others perform. Moral obligation a duty which one owes, and which he ought to perform, but which he is not legally bound to fulfil. These obligations are of two kinds: one is those founded on a natural right; as, the obligation to be charitable, which can never be enforced by law: two is those which are supported by a good or valuable antecedent consideration. Mill (1990:468) asserts that duty is a thing which may be exacted from a person as one exacts a debt. Real duties are duties of perfect obligation which ensures that a correlative right resides in some person. As Kant also insists "duty is the designation of any action to which anyone is bound by an obligation" (Kant 1990:391). Moral obligations make sense to us given that human beings are "entities capable of long range action, of responsibility, of deep relations with other people" (McShea 1979:394).

2.3. Political obligation

Political Obligation is one, if not the basic and fundamental question and problem in political philosophy. The problem stays open, and it is a problem which has exercised moral and political thinkers all through the ages. Political obligation is distinct from other forms of obligation because it raises serious questions which are both legal and moral at the same time. Such questions for example include: what is the foundation of authority? Why should laws be obeyed? Why should I obey the State? Political obligation therefore raises a serious problem which consists in the justification of obedience to the State. The study of political obligation is important because it has been discovered that people obey the State when they are restrained by the fear of probable consequences of disobedience or by the conviction that they are morally obliged to do so. More generally, the problem of political obligation

is concerned with the theories of the State vis-a-vis the justification for demanding obedience and cooperation of its citizens for the maintenance of social order. In the context of our discussion, political obligation is concerned with the state and its justification for demanding obedience and cooperation from the youth in social order. In discussing the notion of political obligation between the state and the youth, we will start with the conceptualizing of the youth and social order.

3. Youth and social order in Nigeria

The concept of youth appears to be a contested idea. Despite this the “youth has been acknowledged as a formidable social force” (Ozohu-Suleiman 2006:98). The youth form a bulk of the majority of the citizens of Africa. However, a preliminary concern needs to be addressed. The question of who may be classified as youth is a subject of dispute, a contested notion. Let us have a view of the different classifications and some possible implications. According to Sule-Kano (2002:2–6) the youth constitute 42% of the national population. These are persons 15–39 years of age. The Nigerian National Policy on Youth sees the youth as those between 18–30 years. A broader view proposes that in most countries, the youth represent people in the age bracket of 12 to 40 years of age. At the international level for instance, the Commonwealth of Nations refers to the youth as those between 16–29 years of age. Even the United Nations on its part defines the youth as those between 15–24 years of age. Even though the youth issue is real as an existential concern but more delicately it is at another level basically a problem of perception about the way adults, elites, media, social and law institutions, communities and even the youth themselves perceive the idea and role of the youth in security and society. This issue of perception has consequences for the economic, political and social conditions of the youth in real life especially in Nigeria and generally in Africa. We may agree that “most of these young people’s vision for adulthood is ill-fated by difficult economic social political cultural health and psychological conditions” (Lo-oh 2009:33). This has serious implications on the maintenance of a viable social order in Nigeria. But what is social order? How is the youth important in building it? What is the role of the youth in it?

Social order refers to the social systems and schemes of social relations that define the political, economic and social roles, rights and duties of people in a society. It is the sum of all the human arrangements, values, rules, norms, regulations, ideologies and institutions that enhance the proper functioning of the various parts of the society or community (Ujomu 2001:6, Bier-

stedt 1963:1, Messner 1949:149, Fagothey 1959:523). Social order is a set of arrangements put in place by man in order to attain certain important ends like justice, peace, self and group actualisation as well as the general well-being of all in a social system. Social order arises out of the need to balance the conflicts and interplay of interests existing among individuals and between individuals and the society. It means that a community or society will possess a framework that defines rules, roles and functions of its members (Ujomu 2001:7). Social order is akin to a skeleton that supports a body, a scheme of social relations or a social system that underlies our real life actions as members of a society. The real issue is whether Nigeria as a country can establish and sustain stable and viable social order? In what way, if any does the social order facilitate the proper functioning of various parts of the society? These questions necessarily need not be answered directly now but it is sufficient that they were raised. From what we have said so far about the social order, it means that there are pillars, characterizations or features of the social order. In other words, the social systems, schemes, relations – society are human arrangements which can be seen in the political, economic and social roles, rights and duties of people in the society. What this means is that the different categories of people in the society – elders, youth and even children have their socio-political and economic roles, rights and duties in the society if it must maintain its social order. What then is the role of the youth in maintaining social order in Nigeria? Let us review an African conception of youth as expounded by Azikiwe a former Nigerian president, with the view of pinpointing their social and political relevance.

The youth discourse has an elegant history in the writings of some classical masters of the antiquities, political statesmen and even African independence leaders of Nigeria such as Nnamdi Azikiwe. As an example, Azikiwe a former Nigerian president has some profound comments on the youth. To summarize his views we can say that Azikiwe (1965) called for a balanced and equitable relationship between the elders and the young people. The rule of the elders is called gerontocracy (Azikiwe (1965:447–448). Azikiwe cited in (Nzimiro 1978) holds that youth remains that period of political activity, a time for training, education and leadership that pursues an anti imperialist political consciousness for the good of the African people (Nzimiro 1978:296). Azikiwe (1979) argues further that the “dynamic nature of the youth enables society to be progressive, it is the revolution of youth against injustice of the old which enables old age to realize that it needs a new set of values, morally or otherwise” (Azikiwe 1979:419). Azikiwe argues further that “if the youth should acquiesce in certain evils of the social order it would become immu-

nized, without the youthful in mind and body, the politics of society will degenerate, contaminate, corrupt, defile, taint and pollute the African social fabric” (Azikiwe 1979:419–420). Orizu (1979: 427–430) argues in support of the youth construct that “Zikism and all it stands for is a philosophy of the youthful in mind, a new philosophy of life.” In a way, Azikiwe is saying that for the survival, development and progress of Africa and especially Nigeria, the active participation of the youth in its social and political arrangement – social order is absolutely necessary. Having discussed the political contribution of the youth in Nigerian social order at least from the African perspective, let us now consider their contributions to the economic and social arrangements of social order in Nigeria. This dimension of contribution – economic and social, will be done using the career-talent interface in youth education and employment from Plato’s philosophy of education to underpin the shortfall in political obligation in Nigeria.

4. Political obligation, shortfall in the career – talent interface in youth education and employment in Nigeria: Plato’s philosophy of education

Earlier, obligation and especially political obligation has been viewed in a sense, as; what we expect from other people *vis-à-vis* what other people expect from us. In relation to the state, it is what the state expects from us *vis-a-vis* what we expect from the state. In the youth context, political obligation in Nigeria presupposes that the youth have some expectations from the government and vice versa. For example, the Nigerian state expects its youths to be patriotic and obedient to the rule of law on one hand. On the other hand, the youths expect the state to be responsible for the provision of basic educational and environmental framework for productive engagement – employment among other things. Herein lie the notion of political obligation; that is, what the youth expects from the government versus what the government expects from the youths. The problem under study here is clear. It is the problem of reciprocity of socio-political responsibilities otherwise called political obligation. The problem of political obligation has created a major youth related crisis construed as the shortfalls in youth education and employment which have bred other forms of social vices such as youth restiveness, conflict, violence, armed robbery, terrorism to mention a few. The phenomena – education and employment are ancestrally intertwined in that education is that tool which prepares one for productive engagement understood as employment. In discussing the two concepts, the author will explore the view of Pla-

to, a classical philosopher of education to show the relationships between the two concepts while underpinning its shortfalls to Nigeria's inability to pursue a development oriented educational programme.

Plato in his magnum opus the *Republic* proposed a utopian concept of the State. In his view, an individual's political obligation to the State is anchored on giving the individual his due. Plato thought that the major due of an individual especially the youth, education and training that enable them to fulfill their natural potential for the achievement of the common good. Put differently, an individual is obliged to obey the State in so far as the State provides for him a structure, system or framework that allows the fulfillment of his aspirations, in so far as it is within the interest and benefit of the state. Plato built his whole architecture of social order in the State on justice and was showing how a State should be organized. In his view, a just society is one in which the natural make-up and ability of the individual can function for the ultimate good of all. In this sense, an individual is obliged to obey the State on the grounds that the State will give him or her required privileges, rights and opportunities to function as a human being within the State. It also include that the individual will benefit from the State in terms of social amenities.

Plato presents a philosophical system for the training and education of the youth. He pushes an argument of education as improvement of the human person in all departments of his life. All efforts to bring up the child are aimed at the improvement of the understanding, character, behavior and actions up to the very end of life. This conception of education is holistic in nature with every part or member of the society playing its own unique nature given or designed role at its own time in the life of the child. As such the parents, care givers, teachers and others involved in nurture offer to the child a total package of education and admonition (Plato, *Protagoras* 1997:37). Parents teach honor and justice to their children. Teachers instruct the young ones in knowledge, letters and character. The gymnasts or physical instructors train the child to develop and improve the child's body. Even the state teaches the child the laws of the land (Plato, *Protagoras* 1997:37). As such the training or formation of the child is divided into sections handled by different persons.

In working out the outlines of a thorough and profound philosophy of education Plato affirms that "are not the best agriculturists those who are most agricultural? And a man will be most careful of that which he loves? And assuredly he will love that most whose interests he regards as identical with his own" (Plato, *Republic* 1997:59). The point here is that like will beget like as Plato says "your children will generally resemble their parents" (Plato, *Republic* 1997:61). There is a link between these tendencies and the principle of

justice whereby a person ought to do that which he is most suited to do. Justice “has to do with that inward performance of it [his own work] which truly concerns the man himself, and his own interests: so that the just man will not permit the several principles within him to do any work but their own” (Plato, *Republic* 1997:71).

To push the argument further Plato recognizes the existence of different natures whereby some natures by design perform different tasks or duties from others. For instance, the natures of men are different from the natures of women (Plato, *Republic* 1997:74). To link up the argument from nature and difference to talent Plato posits that “tell us whether when you say that one man possesses talents for a particular study and that another is without them, you mean that the former learns it easily, the latter with difficulty, and that the one with little instruction can find out much for himself in the subject he has studied, whereas the other after much teaching and practice cannot even retain what he has learnt; and that the mind of the one is duly aided, that of the other thwarted, by the bodily powers? Are not these the only marks by which you define the possession and the want of natural talents for any pursuit?” (Plato, *Republic* 1997:75). For Plato then the concern is to apply human beings to those areas of life that their abilities and potentials are most suited so as to get the best out of them. He sees human beings as creatures of capability and action guided by natural and social purpose. Plato thought that a just society is that which provides the institutional framework or platforms for the youth to get education and training in line with their natural flair or talent. As a system of justice he opined that the state is obliged to educate and train its youths in accordance with their natural suitability. The question is: does the Nigerian state provide that institutional framework and platform that allow the youth to be educated and trained in the areas where they are most naturally fit? The answer is not in the affirmative because of the Nigerian conception of the idea of lucrative disciplines.

In Nigeria, only some disciplines such as, Medicine, Engineering, Law, Pharmacy and Accounting are considered lucrative and hence deserving of study. The claim that has just been made is substantiated the 2012/2013 university admission process of the University of Benin, South-south Nigeria. According to the Registrar of the University, out of the 100% applicant for the undergraduate programme: 20% wanted Medicine, 20% wanted Engineering, 20% applied for Law, another 20% wanted Accounting while the other 20% chose among the over 80 disciplines remaining in the University. At the end, applicants are subjectively distributed into the over eighty departments in the university (Ogbogodo, 2013:2). The implication of that is that applicants are

forced to study courses they were not suited for and never interested in. the consequence of that is apathy, unemployment, unemployability to mention a few. This shortfall in youth direction has created distrust and lack of confidence in the Nigerian state. It has even created a kind of social agitation by the youth against the state. Put more directly, it has created in the youth a feeling of irresponsibility towards the state. This attitude is largely responsible for some kind of youth restiveness and youth involvement is criminal and violent actions. In a way, the youth see the state as an enemy against the development of their potential and progress. A local case study of Nigeria shows the link between harnessing youth potential, maintaining youth direction and curbing the terrorism plague and building the society. Nigeria thus faces a serious problem of social disorder owing to youth frustration at unfulfilled aspirations leading to criminality and outright terrorism.

5. Youth and national cum human security problem in Nigeria: shortfall in the career – talent perspective

Nigeria which is probably the richest country in Africa both in terms of human and natural resources has not been able to use these resources to achieve commensurate progress and development due to shortfalls in value orientation and value systems. Specifically, one of the reasons for the dislocation between resource potential and human achievement quotient on the African continent especially Nigeria is simply a lack of genuine direction or articulation of the talents, careers, energy, vitality, creativity and potential of its youths. The problem is; how will the linkage between talent and career as principles of youth direction enhance or fast track the much needed development in Nigeria and Africa as expounded by the MDG otherwise millennium development goals? The fundamental problems confronting the youth in Nigeria have not altered significantly in the past decades. The basic problems have centered around shortfalls in unity, security and social justice. The youth are a key factor in Nigeria's human and national security concerns because the youth are vulnerable having little or no opportunities to develop their potentials constructively, rather they have been used for negative purposes by almost all segments of the society ranging from the State at the top, political parties, organized criminal groups and even to the religious and ethnic groups.

The problems and shortfalls of youth education on national integration and national security in Nigeria are seen mainly in the inability of the various governments and the state agencies to consistently and institutionally moder-

ate the conduct of the youth in view of civilized conduct. The poor level and quality of youth involvement in security and society has compromised the integrity of the nation, exposing the bulk of citizens to unnecessary fear. This situation has bred cadres of youth (individuals and groups) in different sectors of national life, who share the common value of engaging in conduct inimical to their fellows. Such virulent fluidity and the malignant contradictions arising from these have led to spiraling insecurity.

Therefore the youth problem in security and society must be subsumed under the principle of securitization. If the focus of this section is on how some problems come to be considered as security matters, while others are not, then the youth challenge must be considered a matter for security prioritization against the backdrop of certain political, historical or strategic factors. Evidence of a need to rethink youth involvement in security and society is seen in the blossoming of a perverted idea of youth involvement in society and security. This is seen in the proliferation of vigilante groups, cabals of unemployed miscreants and ethnic militias that have emerged to fill certain observable gaps and to address inadequacies in the functions in the society. There is evidence of a negative input. The unyielding violence, turbulence, and instability has created a fertile substrate for the expansion of such groups. In some areas of the country the actions of these groups have been institutionalized and legitimized. The activities of the so-called 'area boys' and 'Almajiris' phenomena are instructive. They are employed by both the highly and lowly placed in the amplification of ethno-religious conflicts around the nation.

In the current dispensation, small youth gangs or bands of political thugs known as 'ecomog' are employed as personal security for political office holders, and are used for political violence. However, the dangerous aspect is that they have received a certain social and political legitimacy and now form part of the regular entourage of political office holders in the nation. They are even on the pay roll of some institutional frameworks! This outlandish mobilization of the youth has assumed a more virulent and malignant format through the installation of a more dangerous trend in the proliferation of ethnic militia and other dubious non-conventional community security and defence outfits. These unruly and acrimonious compositions have been put inadvertently in the service of wider but dubious political, regional and economic interests. The form of violence produced by these ethnic militia surpasses most preceding forms of violence known in society. For example, today, there is the unwelcome increase in the incidence of necrophilia and necromancy among the youth. This intimate connection with the dead and dead things understood in sexual or asexual terms, is one evolving fashion that must not, and should

not be encouraged. Presently, the manifestations of a desecrating and sacrilegious typology of necromancy and necrophilia can be seen in the following; ritual killings, kidnapping and abduction, ritual rape, grave robbing, cultism, stealing from dead people on the highways, stealing from the dead in crashed air planes, etc. This situation has largely become unacceptable and uncivilized posing a clear and present danger to different facets of national life. Necrophilia has become protean in nature and manifestation; radiating forcefully in the activities of individuals, groups, institutions operating in rural, transitional or urban areas.

Youth culture in security and societal matters becomes a critical challenge. It poses the problematic of human and humane civilized conduct as a function of social organization, understood simply and summarily as the prevailing order of control. Within this ambit and gambit the state has fitted tentatively and inappropriately into the redemptive role. It has used essentially defective instrumentalities that do not engage in a fundamental way the nuances of youth nature and culture. The institutional refusal to discover the character and consequences of untapped and underutilized talents, energies and proclivities suggest a form of denial, denigration and diversion that has bred the installation of despicable trends of prostitution, trafficking, cultism and banditry across the Nigerian society. The truth is thus that we are in need of alternative designs, principles and theoretical/ empirical approaches that can make positive impact on the evolution of a positive youth encounter with security and society.

Be that as it may, the state needs to fashion an idea of civilization that is useful for the youth. This quest is an embodiment of a set of core values; "first some measure of law and order, and secondly a conscious purpose whereby citizens seem bent upon pursuing certain ideals of conduct" (Tomlin 1968:34). The core of civilization is defined by three dominant features. These are the obedience of rules of civil intercourse, the scientific and intelligent exploitation of nature and the pursuit of peaceful relations with members of other communities. Thus the idea of civilization is insinuated of three distinctive features; the power of conceptual thought, the substitution of moral and civil laws, considerable scope for initiative and the acquisition of a conscience (Murphy 1942:251). Normatively civilization represents a constantly evolving amalgamation of parts that together provide an "interpretative vision about man and society" (Samuels 1991:23). Civilization is a "state of mental cultivation and discipline" (Newman 1979:475) Civilization is insinuated of a law, of acts of justice. Some features that are crucial to civilization include "freedom from barbarity, politeness, and rule of decency" (McKeon 1981:422). Other

values that are conducive to civilization include “honesty, modesty, intellectual integrity, self-criticism and self-control” (Kolnai 1971:204).

Conclusion

The question of talent and its role on the formation of character, behavior and action cannot be overemphasized because of its importance in building up and maintaining social order in Nigeria.

We saw that the problem of political obligation in Nigeria as seen by lapses in the theoretical and practical trajectories of career-talent perspective for solutions of youth crisis undermined the failure of the state to maintain social order in Nigerian. We established the youth as a patronized and repressed segment of the society, but more importantly showed it to be a contested conceptual category comprehended within manipulative ethnic-cultural and ideological-class interests and values. Such moral and social challenges compelled a philosophical formulation of the philosophy – career-talent interface as a strategy or vision of youth direction and empowerment. We looked for a strategy of education and employment when we made philosophical efforts that justified the import of underwriting our development theories with well worked out conceptions of youth empowerment and direction.

Above all, this essay is now saying that the youth need to see themselves as moral agents who have some sort of obligation or duty to do things differently. They must answer the philosophical question; does human nature change? Can tomorrow be better than today? Should we lie down and say that all hope is lost? The youth need to re-evaluate their worth or social value, as a set of persons who can ultimately make a difference in the scheme of things for the better. They need to see themselves as a people who have an obligation to alter the *status quo*. We must continue to engage our youth in conversation, dialogue and negotiation. Despite the authoritarian (intolerant of criticism, alternatives or opposition) and anachronistic (intolerant of change, reform and modernity) tendencies of our society to allow the youth choose their own career paths based on innate talents and abilities, we need to view our youth as human beings deserving of respect and independent power of choice. They need to be seen as responsible enough to take some decisions, make some contributions, be rewarded for good deeds and live with and learn from the mistakes they make.

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Summary

This essay examined Nigeria's problem of political obligation, the youth crisis and the quest for social order through the career-talent pathway from a philosophical view point. The essay stated that Nigeria which is probably the richest country in Africa both in terms of human and natural resources has not been able to use these resources to achieve commensurate progress and development due to shortfalls in progressive and viable philosophy of education and employment that considers career-talent pathway as veritable means of maintaining social order in Nigeria. In demonstrating the shortfall in Nigeria's security, a view of the youth as patronized and repressed within the framework of a manipulative ideological-class accretion was shown to be adverse given the desire to connect youth energy, talent and interest to the sustenance of social order. The essay pontificated that once youth interest and ability is not accounted for or employed productively, their desires and ambitions are left unfulfilled, it become conflicted and so the society gets saddled with the consequences of youth frustrations in relation to their aspirations. This dislocation manifests as national security challenges revealed as terrorism and sundry criminality. The author argued the youth need to re-evaluate their worth or social value, as a set of persons who can ultimately make a difference in the scheme of things for the better. They need to see themselves as a people who have an obligation to alter the *status quo*.

Paul Kehinde Michael is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria. He is also the Co-ordinator of the Center for Youth Direction (CYD), an NGO based in Nigeria. His current research area is in Social and Political Philosophy with special interest in youth development and security through career-talent approach, political obligation and the Nigerian state, among others. He has one published book and articles in reputable peer-reviewed journals.