Discussion Paper

AFRICAN NATION BUILDING: LESSONS FOR YOUTH IN MODERN DAY AFRICA

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Abstract

Modern day Africa is a far-cry from what the early visionaries of independent Africa had in mind concerning political and economic aspects for the general citizenry. It is punctuated with high levels of poverty, socio-economic inequalities and corruption being witnessed at varying degrees in almost all African countries. For us to grasp the concept of African nation building it is important to understand the drivers of early post-independence African nationalism and its links with Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism proved very popular among African nationalist leaders of the 1950s. Nation-building is the constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. A wide range of processes and policies have been followed by political leaders in trying to achieve national integration. Amongst all these policies education, ethnicity and language policies have been noted to contribute to the developing patriotism and national pride. The most famed African nation building policies took place in Tanzania in 1967, when President Julius Nyerere introduced the Ujamaa. national youth service programs that have been implemented in Africa in a bid to instil nation building and discipline amongst youth. A number of national youth service programs have had a fair share of challenges and criticism over forced participation, corruption, militarisation of citizens, production of militia and a waste of resources. Nation building needs to be revisited to ensure that it caters for the needs and aspirations of Africans while keeping alive the visions of the founding fathers and mothers of independent Africa. Going forward nation building efforts should focus on economic development, democracy and socio-economic development. Programs and policies that address corruption, conflict, unemployment, curtail brain drain and that create opportunities for citizens to thrive within the continent need to be put in place. This paper will examine case studies of post-independence-era attempts at nation building in Africa, interrogating the ideals, objectives and methodologies by which the objectives were pursued. It lays the foundation for nation building discussions amongst young leaders enables them to identify ways they can participate in nation building processes across the continent.

Key words: nation building, youth, pan-Africanism, African nationalism, postcolonial Africa, integration

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background and purpose

Modern day Africa is a far-cry from what the early visionaries of independent Africa had in mind on political and economic aspects for the general citizenry. What is disheartening being the high level of poverty, socio-economic inequalities and corruption being witnessed at varying degrees in almost all African countries. As noted by Agbese and Kieh Jr (2007: 4), "*the typical modern day African state is noted more as a repressive, brutal, corrupt, and inefficient entity than a mechanism for the promotion of the collective well-being of its citizens. Consequently, the state has become irrelevant and distant from its own citizens.*"

This paper will examine case studies of post-independence-era attempts at nation building in Africa, interrogating the ideals, objectives and methodologies by which the objectives were pursued. The successes and weaknesses of these approaches will be investigated. This paper will draw comparisons between the approaches taken by countries that gained independence relatively early and the more recently independent states. The specific objectives of the research are:
- To identify and outline nation building policies and processes in Africa, through seven case studies of countries in Southern, East and West Africa.
- To undertake a comparative study of the nation building approaches across selected countries evaluating the successes and weaknesses thereof.
- To recommend points for further discussion and interrogation of appropriate nation building strategies by young leaders.

The selection of the countries from different African regions as study sites will provide a comparative analysis across different geographic areas and independence timelines. The regions have witnessed interesting evolutions of nation building strategies. This paper therefore landscapes the varying nation building strategies across the continent in order to understand their purposes and success rates. It further narrates citizenry's acceptance of the way these strategies have been implemented. This paper will, therefore, lay the foundation for discussions amongst young leaders on nation building and its development and enable them to identify ways they can participate in nation building processes across the continent.

1.2 Study Approach and Methodology

Whilst the study relied intensively on literature review it also undertook a Mixed Methods Research approach. Quantitative research methods were combined with qualitative research methods in collecting field data. The range of data collection techniques that was applied include a mix of the following:
- Literature review,
- A rapid online survey,
- One-on-one interviews and focus group discussions.

A literature review of the country specific policies and other supporting literature was carried out. The review looked at the following countries as case studies: Botswana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Eritrea and Nigeria. A rapid survey was done using Survey Monkey with respondents completing the questionnaire online. A total of 117 responses were received. Whilst the sample size is not representative enough to generalise the findings, key conclusions can be made from the analysis of this data. Three focus group discussions, in the form of a half day workshop were held with youth in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Three key informant interviews, were conducted with a selection of key stakeholders in both countries. The

interviewees included a government official responsible for implementing the National Youth Services (NYS) in Zimbabwe, a youth leader from Zimbabwe as well as a graduate from the Nigerian Youth Service Corps who is residing in South Africa. The data collection was limited by both resource and time constraints. Resources permitting, a more in-depth study is recommended in order to obtain a sound understanding of the nexus between nation building and youth development in modern day Africa.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: the literature review findings on nation building and key policies applied across Africa are presented in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 the case studies analysed and research findings are summarized. In the 4th chapter, conclusions based on the study findings are drawn. The final chapter offers recommendations pertaining to youth and nation building.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Contextualising African nation building

For us to grasp African nation building it is important to understand the drivers of early post-independence African nationalism and its links with Pan-Africanism. Although Pan-Africanism has its roots in America, when blacks living there in the 18th century tried to identity with their roots, it was important in galvanising early day African nationalists (Esedebe 1994). According to Minkah (2011) Pan-Africanism is a phenomenon aimed at promoting black consciousness across the globe especially amongst Africans in the Diaspora. Its components differ across movements and is dependent on whether a particular movement's focus is on politics, ideology, organizations, or culture. Pan-Africanism proved very popular among African nationalist leaders of the 1950s like Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Haile Selassie, Albert Luthuli, and Nnamdi Azikiwe. It offered a way for these leaders to overcome both regionalism and ethnic divides by stressing commonalities and a common oppression (Net Industries 1999). As the Net Industries (1999) submission states, Kwame Nkrumah is regarded as the father of "Africanized" Pan-Africanism, who argued that African workers and peasants needed to reclaim their independence, and advocated the use of force if necessary. Nkrumah believed that for this to happen, Africans had to do away with their tribal or religious identities.

African nationalism focused on self-determination and unification in Africa. Nationalists were spurred by a number of catalysts that included colonialism, World War II, missionary schools and studies abroad (Thompsell 2015). Experiences during colonialism and taking part in the World War II helped enlighten the war veterans that fighting for their own freedom was very possible. Missionary schooling and studying abroad contributed to the enlightenment of the educated elites who spearheaded nationalists movements (Ubaku, Anyikwa and Emeh 2013). The African nationalists main drive therefore was to decolonise Africa, bring about political independence as well as promote the participation of Africans in public administration.

It is key to note that the independence of African states from colonial rule did not eliminate challenges that were entrenched during the colonial era. A, a number of modern day African states are plagued by challenges inherited during the colonial era such including ethnic strife, authoritarianism, foreign interference in governance, political intolerance and human rights abuse (Aminzade 2013; Ubaku, Anyikwa and Emeh 2013). African states are also battling high levels of corruption, unemployment, brain drain, despondency and hopelessness amongst the younger generations which makes modern day nation building a difficult task (Giorgis 2010).

2.2 What is nation building?

Nation-building can be defined as constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. For the purpose of this study, the following definition given by Von Bogdandy *et al.* (2005: 586) is adopted:

> Nation building "is the most common form of a process of collective identity formation with a view to legitimizing public power within a given territory. This is an essentially indigenous process which often not only projects a meaningful future but also draws on existing traditions, institutions, and customs, redefining them as national characteristics in order to support the nation's claim to sovereignty and uniqueness."

According to (Stephenson 2005: 3) the term is often used simultaneously with other terms such as "state-building, democratization, modernization, political development, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacebuilding; but each concept is different, though their evolution is intertwined". Stephenson (2005: 3) further asserts that the "concept of nation-building was applied among American political scientists, after World War II, to describe the greater integration of state and society, as citizenship brought loyalty to the modern nation-state." Bendix (1977) focused on the expansion of citizenship and of rights to political participation. Whilst, Deutsch (1963) focused on the role of social communication and national integration in nation-building in Western societies.

Modern day nation building will only succeed if policy makers and academics return to what early theorists developed their theories on (Stephenson 2005). The theories to be revisited include valuing democratic values, the civic culture and civil society that develop and sustain these values, the importance of increasing socio-political and economic equality as well as human development, rather than just economic development or state-building. For nation building to be a sustainable force for peacebuilding, political and civic leaders must incorporate more than just the Western appendages of democracy. They must recognise the context within which it is applied and the contribution of indigenous culture and knowledge. Stephenson (2005) argues that nation-building is important when trying to address the intractable conflicts that many African states are experiencing because of the theory that a strong integrated community state is necessary in order to provide sustainable security and development.

2.3 Key nation building processes

A wide range of processes and policies have been followed by political leaders in trying to achieve national integration (Harris 2007). In their analysis of the consequences of nation building policies Bandyopadhyay and Green (2013) identified nine key processes and policies that have been implemented across most of Africa since the 1960s. These are:

1. Changing state names
2. Changing capital cities' names and locations
3. Changing national currencies
4. Conscription and National Service
5. Religious and linguistic homogenization
6. Declaration of Republican and centralization of policies
7. Declaration of one-party states
8. Conducting non-ethnic censuses
9. Land nationalization

Apart from the above mentioned common policies, some countries have introduced other policies that include the following:

1. Daily flag-raising ceremonies at public institutions
2. Display of portraits of national leaders in public offices
3. State symbols such as flags, mascots, postage stamps
4. National identity cards
5. National pledges
6. National dress
7. National dances

Amongst all these policies education, ethnicity and language policies have been noted to contribute to the developing patriotism and national pride. The implementation of all of these policies has been done with varying degrees of vigour, enthusiasm and enforcement that has mainly been linked to the leaders of the day. This has led to nation building contributing more to conflict than the intended integration as there may be differences is accepting the proposed policies (Ubaku, Anyikwa and Emeh 2013). A good example is the conflict that resulted between citizens and the government in Zimbabwe as some parents resisted the introduction of a Schools National Pledge in April 2016 (Bhulla 2016).

The report done by Bandyopadhyay and Green (2013) provides a rich source of information on how these policies were implemented across Africa. In the following paragraphs ten policies and some examples are cited directly from this study.

1. Renaming countries

Several governments renamed countries whose names derived from extant indigenous ethnic groups and were thus seen by post-colonial rulers as divisive, In these cases governments carefully chose more indigenous African state names which could appeal to the pre-colonial past but which had no contemporary ethnic relevance, for example Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe after the Great Zimbabwe Ruins whilst Ghana, the former Gold Coast was renamed after the Kingdom of Ghana (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013).

2. Relocating capital cities

Some governments have changed the location of their capital city to locations that are centrally located so as to make their governments more accessible to and representative of its entire citizenry (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013). For example, Tanzania relocated its capital to Dodoma from coastal Dar es Salam, Nigeria relocated it from coastal Lagos to centrally-situated Abuja.

3. National currency

Helleiner (1998), among others, has argued that national currencies can contribute to nation-building in a variety of ways, both through the imagery present on notes and coins but also through the stable management of currency that can help to provide for stable governance. Colonial African governments had used currencies linked to their colonisers such as the Franc and Pound in Francophone and Anglophone colonies. As a sign of independence some postcolonial governments changed their national currency names to indigenous ones. For example, the Ghanaian Pound was changed to Cedi and the Zambian Pound became the Kwacha (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013).

4. Conscription/ National Service

National service or conscription have been used as tools to promote nationalism. Some African countries have promoted obligatory military conscription and/ or national service for secondary school or university students as a means to integrate their citizens (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013; Kibreab 2013). Eritrea introduced conscription after its independence in 1994, to "foster national unity among our people by eliminating sub-national feelings" (Kibreab 2009: 44). Since this policy impacts on youth, a section has been set-aside in this paper to give a comparison of this practise in different countries around Africa.

5. Religion

As Bandyopadhyay and Green (2013) advances governments "have attempted to promote a national or state religion as points of homogenisation". For example Islamic State declaration in Mauritania made in 1985 and Zambia was declared a Christian nation in 1991 (Phiri 2003; Lister 2014). South Africa and Zimbabwe are examples of countries that did not identify themselves on religious grounds when they enacted their new constitutions. Instead they chose to promote religious pluralism (Ranger 1995; Chidester 2014).

6. Language

While most African states have continued to use their former colonial language as their *lingua franca*, a small number of African regimes have promoted a new, indigenous *lingua franca*. Most famous in this regard was President Nyerere's declaration of Swahili as Tanzania's national language in 1967, which involved "promoting its use in government, schools and in the media" (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013: 110). President Nyerere also personally translated several of Shakespeare's plays into Swahili (Bandyopadhyay and Green 2013). In a bid to overcome the challenge that could have arisen from the usage of its 21 languages, Zambia set English as its official language in its 1991 constitution(Marten and Kula 2008). English is consequently supported by seven designated African languages drawn from the 21 local languages spoken by Zambia's 72 tribes.

7. Ethnic identities

Some leaders viewed the maintenance of local ethnic identities as a hindrance to the creation of new national identities. President Samora Machel of Mozambique, for instance, declared that, "for the nation to live, the tribe must die" (Mamdani 1996: 135). Many African leaders therefore, abolished colonial systems that were put in place to promote ethnic identities.

8. Political parties

Historically political parties were seen by both governments and political thinkers like Hume and Rousseau as factional and not conducive to nation-building (Przeworski 2009). Some leaders across Africa banned opposition parties in and declared one-party states immediately after their independence. These declarations were aimed at reducing political factionalism and cancelling out ethnic-based associations. Examples as given by Bandyopadhyay and Green (2013) include Guinea (1958), Niger (1960) and Zambia (1972).

9. Land

The fact that land has been historically held unequally and that such inequality can potentially disrupt nation-building policies as formerly marginalised citizens lay demands for land redistribution. The need for equitable land ownership has been a common reason to promote land reform policies in modern day Africa. Challenges have arisen on how it can be done fairly and in respect of the rights of current land owners. In Zimbabwe, land redistribution created a conflict as white farmers were evicted from their farms without

compensation (Moyo 2000). Land reform needs to be done in line to property rights as well as working out fair compensation plans for evicted owners.

10. Census

Various government have used their censuses as tools of nation-building, not only in Africa. This has been done through conducting censuses that capture data on other demographics other than ethnicity or origin. Such moves help to do away with identifying regions on tribal or ethnical grounds as was the norm during colonial times. By 2000 only 44% of African states asked questions about ethnicity in their censuses (Morning 2008: 246).

2.4 The future of nation building

In an analysis of national building in Eritrea, Giorgis (2010) argues that postcolonial Africa remains weak and lacks relevance by failing to provide "for the needs, promote the wellbeing, cater to the aspirations and safeguard the security of the people". Nation building needs to be revisited to ensure that it caters for the needs and aspirations of Africans while keeping alive the visions of the founding fathers and mothers of independent Africa (Klasa 2014). The founding parents had a vision of an independent, united and prosperous continent with citizens controlling and directly benefiting economically from its resources and wealth. Miguel (2004) and Collier (2009) have argued for nation-building as a policy to promote state building in a continent now notorious for political instability. As proffered by Giorgis (2010), nation building needs to promote peace and security, democratic governance and economic development. However, in order for it to become relevant to modern day youth it is important that the youth themselves develop an understanding of what it entails and how it has been implemented in the African context.

Chapter 3: Findings

This section outlines the research findings on how nation building has unfolded in certain countries on the African continent. The section comprises a few case studies on successful nation building processes and a comparison of some national youth service programs. The findings from the data collection exercise carried out as part of this study are presented.

3.1 Case studies

3.1.1   Nation Building in Tanzania

The most famed African nation building policies took place in Tanzania in 1967, when President Julius Nyerere introduced the Ujamaa (Swahili for familyhood) philosophy (Ibhawoh and Dibua 2003). This concept is touted for bringing about peace, unity and education with a purpose across Tanzania, especially in the rural areas (Kessler 2006). Ujamaa was pinned on three pillars, namely: a) freedom, b) equality and c) unity(Bjerk 2015). Premised on African traditional values of familyhood, it was Nyerere's version of African Socialism that promoted self-reliance and non-exploitative development (Ibhawoh and Dibua 2003). It's main thrust was towards education for national self-reliance supported by government control of the economy and the promotion of rural development (Wabike 2015). Hence, communities were mobilised towards the efficient exploitation of resources for the good of the nation. Ujamaa employed two key approaches namely nationalisation and villagisation. Nationalisation was where economic activities were grouped into (a) those that were state owned, (b) those in which the state had a major stake and (c) those

that were privately owned. Villagisation focused on rural development and therefore education and investments programs as well as political thought where adapted to the need of rural areas.

Whilst the nationalisation and villagisation approaches of Ujamaa failed to bring about economic prosperity they increased literacy, reduced infant mortality, united citizens and left them unaffected by the tribal and political tensions that affected the rest of Africa (Eritrea 1995; Miguel 2004; Boddy-Evans 2005; Kessler 2006). This has contributed to the relative peace that Tanzania has enjoyed for close to 55 years of independence (Bjerk 2015). This peace that Tanzania enjoys is ironic given the countries low economic performance and the high levels of instability in its neighbouring countries. It would have been expected that Tanzania could have broken down into conflict or civil war given the economic failure of Ujamaa.

President John Magufuli, Tanzania's current president has embarked on his own nation building drive which has endeared him with Tanzanian citizens as well as those from other African countries (Ndii 2016; Shaw 2016). The "Magufuli Effect" is centred on reducing government expenditure and corruption whilst pushing for Tanzania's economic transformation and community development. Magufuli has so far done this through cancelling what he saw as unnecessary expenditure by, for example, cancelling Independence Day Celebrations, reducing by 90% the budget for a state dinner, reducing his cabinet size, reducing ministerial salaries and cutting on foreign trips as well as advocating for the usage of government facilities for workshops, meetings and trainings (Gaffey 2016). The saved funds have been directed towards community and infrastructure development initiatives. With this having been done within his first six months in office, Tanzania is poised to show good socio-economic results through infrastructure development and improved service delivery from the new nation building policies. For this to be attained Magufuli can maintain the momentum throughout his term of office.

3.1.2 Nation Building in Botswana

Since gaining independence in 1966, Botswana has witnessed a tremendous economic turnaround buoyed by peace and stability (Samatar 1999). At independence, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of $70, little infrastructure and heavily dependent on South Africa for trade (World Bank 2016). The latest recorded per capita GDP was at $7080.11 in 2015 (Trading Economics 2016a). Its transformation into an economic success was not only spurred by the discovery of diamonds but by the nation building policies implemented after independence. As highlighted by Brucken (2015: 1192) ;

> "Botswana transitioned into a multi-party democracy and prosperous open economy due to the utilization of traditional democratic structures, enlightened and accountable leadership, and an educated technocratic civil service. With these political foundations already in place when the discovery of diamonds occurred, the resulting revenues were spent wisely on projects that grew the economy, improved basic living standards, and attracted foreign investment."

Botswana also tried to introduce a national youth service program as part of its nation building strategy. The now defunct Tirelo Setshaba was established to integrate youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds into society and the national economy (Rankopo 2011). From its launch in 1980 to 1990 the program was run on a voluntary basis. It was then made compulsory for all "O" Level graduates and became a prerequisite for their progression to tertiary education or employment in civil service (Molefe 1998). It was eventually terminated in 2000 on the realisation that it was "not cost-effective, and as such unsustainable" (Rankopo 2011: 3).

3.1.3 Nation Building in Rwanda

Post-conflict Rwanda is a good example of how nation building can bring about economic growth reconciliation and peace. Emerging from the catastrophic genocide of 1994, the nation building was focused on healing wounds and promoting co-existence (Purdeková 2008). Rwanda's successful economic transformation was laid upon a bedrock of justice, reconciliation, healing and forgiveness (Nantulya 2006). According to Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, the country's transformation had no short cuts and it succeeded because it was internally generated and led (Kagame 2015). The first priority was stabilisation and security, which required strong internal political leadership, systems and institutions (Kagame 2010). Rwanda had to overcome divisions and sectarianism before undertaking the second priority of poverty alleviation and economic transformation. As Kagame (2010) further explains Rwanda had to promote inclusive politics through power sharing and consensus building. This promotion was supported by setting up strong institutions of governance, at all levels, which recognised the state's role in service delivery and as an enabler of economic productivity. Not only is present day Rwanda enjoying peace, it is recording good GDP figures and attracting a lot of investors to its borders. Its per capita GDP has risen from a record low of $485.12 in 1994 to a high of $1655.18 recorded in 2015 (Trading Economics 2016b). Rwanda is becoming a hub for innovation and development in East Africa as tech hubs and universities are setting up programs in the country (Hecketsweiler 2016).

3.1.4 National Youth Service (NYS)

This section highlights four examples of national youth service programs that have been implemented in Africa in a bid to instil nation building and discipline amongst youth. The programs highlighted are from Nigeria, Kenya, Eritrea and Zimbabwe. These programs were introduced for various reasons that include reactions after periods of war, community development and the requirement to address skilled manpower gaps. For example, the Nigerian program was introduced, after a 30-month civil war, in a bid to instil a sense of nation building, patriotism and loyal service into youths.

A number of national youth service programs have had a fair share of challenges and criticism over forced participation, corruption, militarisation of citizens, production of militia and a waste of resources. The Kenyan program, which was re-launched in 2014 as a compulsory community service program, has been hit by scandals of corruption and resource wastage such that barely two years down the line a Bill on its abolition is currently being debated in the Kenyan parliament (Njagi 2016). The Zimbabwean version has been heavily criticised for being ill-timed, politicised and being a training ground for militia that in-turn has been unleashed on opposition linked citizens (Solidarity Peace Trust 2003). Whilst, according to Eritrea (1995), in the Eritrean program one is expected to serve for 18 months the reality is that the period is until the age of 50. This has led to many young Eritreans fleeing the country to escape the forced military conscription (Kibreab 2009; Giorgis 2010; Kibreab 2013; Hepner 2015).

Table 1: National Youth Service programs in Nigeria, Kenya, Eritrea and Zimbabwe

Country	Nigeria	Kenya	Eritrea	Zimbabwe
Inception Date	22 May 1973	1 September 1964	16 March 1994	July 2001
Type of service	Community development	Community development	Military	Community development
Length of service	1 year	2 years	1.5 years	20 weeks
Target group	Tertiary institution graduates (aged up to 30 years)	"A" Level graduates (pre-university) No age limit specified	18 – 50 years	All youths (18-35 years)
Mode of participation	Compulsory for target group	1964 -1984 Voluntary 1984 – 1990 Compulsory for pre-university students 2014 – voluntary for school leavers	Compulsory	Voluntary
Remuneration	Paid	Paid	Food, lodging, uniform and medical service paid for	No pay
Current Status	Ongoing	Terminated in 1990 Re-launched 10 September 2014	Ongoing	Terminated in 2008 Re-launched on 11 September 2015
Objectives	*Source (National Youth Service Corps 2016) 1. To inculcate discipline in Nigerian youths by instilling in them a tradition of industry at work, and of patriotic and loyal service to Nigeria in any situation they may find themselves.	*Source (National Youth Service 2015) To catalyse transformative youth empowerment in Kenya The Service undertakes major projects which are part of the national development plan and all servicemen and servicewomen make an	*Source (Eritrea 1995) 1.To establish people based strong defence force to assure the existence of free and sovereign Eritrea. 2.To preserve the courage and culture of heroism that the people of Eritrea have shown during the armed struggle in the past 30	*Source (Ministry of Youth Development & Employment Creation 2008) 1. National Identity The National Youth Service programme seeks to create a symbolic identity for the Zimbabwean youth and all nationals with respect to national philosophy, cultural

2. To raise the moral tone of the Nigerian youths by giving them the opportunity to learn about higher ideals of national achievement, social and cultural improvement

3. To develop in the Nigerian youths the attitudes of mind, acquired through shared experience and suitable training. which will make them more amenable to mobilisation in the national interest

4. To enable Nigerian youths acquire the spirit of self-reliance by encouraging them to develop skills for self employment

5. To contribute to the accelerated growth of the national economy

6. To develop common ties among the Nigerian youths and promote national unity and integration

7. To remove prejudices, eliminate ignorance and confirm at first hand the many similarities among Nigerians of all

important contribution to the project work while at the same time gaining personal skills that will be of use to them in their own lives.

1. Integrated Dam Construction Units
2. Integrated Road Construction Units
3. Vector Control Unit
4. Slums Civil Works and Public Environment
5. Huduma Kitchens Unit
6. Traffic Control Unit
7. Public Security Unit
8. Agriculture

Institutional principles or values are integral part of the National Youth Service culture which in turn creates a sense of identity, belonging, direction and purpose among its members.

In pursuit of timely provision of quality services and instant response to national emergencies, the Service will be guided by the following

years and pass them to the next generations.

3. To create hard working, disciplined and an ever ready new generation that participate in reconstruction,

4. To enhance the economic development of the country using its human resources in a trained and organized manner.

5. To provide regular and continuous military training and vocational training in training centres to alleviate vocational skills and promote physical fitness.

6. To cement the unity of our people by promoting unity and nationalism and eradicating sub-national attitudes.

identity and a sense of belonging to one's own people.

2. Unity and Oneness
The National Youth Service programme seeks to create a 'united people' who still identify with each other over and above party politics, perceptions and affiliations. Zimbabwean citizens who are wary of foreign influence and intervention in issues affecting their sovereign state.

3. Patriotism
The National Youth service programme is inspired by the desire to defend one's country and to protect the historical heritage as Zimbabweans.

4. Self-Reliance
The programme seeks to create a generation of youths equipped with a

	ethnic groups 8. To develop a sense of corporate existence and common destiny of the people of Nigeria. 9. The equitable distribution of members of the service corps and the effective utilisation of their skills in area of national needs 10. That as far as possible, youths are assigned to jobs in States other than their States of origin 11. That such group of youths assigned to work together is as representative of Nigeria as far as possible 12. That the Nigerian youths are exposed to the modes of living of the people in different parts of Nigeria 13. That the Nigerian youths are encouraged to eschew religious intolerance by accommodating religious differences 14. That members of the service corps are encouraged to	core values as articulated in its strategic plan - Integrity - Patriotism - Discipline - Selflessness - Reliability - Fairness - Team Spirit		mental capacity and skills to look after and sustain themselves. This is enhanced by the teaching of a culture of productivity and innovativeness. 5. Discipline Driven by the desire to create a disciplined generation who are respectful and principled voluntary service to the nation aimed at producing youths who are always ready to offer free services to the nation in terms of disaster prevention or management, natural resources management, security and crime control.

	seek at the end of their one-year national service, career employment all over Nigeria, thus promoting the free movement of labour 15. That employers are induced partly through their experience with members of the service corps to employ more readily and on a permanent basis, qualified Nigerians, irrespective of their States of origin		

3.2 Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Interview findings

This section shares the findings from a survey carried out amongst youth as part of this study. The data was collected using a questionnaire that was administered online through Survey Monkey. A total of 177 young people from different African countries took part in the survey. The aim of the survey was to determine the young people's knowledge and understanding of nation building and some of the symbols used in their countries. The survey sought the find out if respondents were proud to identify with their countries of origin and if they knew their national symbols. They were also asked if they would prioritise nation identifiers and national building policies differently. The respondents were also asked if there was a NYS program in their countries and whether they felt if this program was necessary or not. Finally, the respondents were asked to rate the performance level of modern day African states in relation to the visions of the founding parents of postcolonial Africa. Interviews and FGDs were also held with some respondents in order to complement the survey.

3.2.1   Demographics

This section narrates the respondents' demographic composition. All of the respondents were above 21 years of age (**Table 3**) with the majority of them, 98%, being between the ages of 21 and 49 years. 73% of the respondents were male.

Table 2: Respondents age and sex

Age Group	Responses
17 and below	**0%**
18-20	**0%**
21-29	**37%**
30-39	**49%**
40-49	**12%**
50-59	**1%**
60 or older	**1%**
Gender	**Responses**
Male	**73%**
Female	**27%**

3.2.2   Country of origin and national pride

A total of 21 countries were represented through the responses made with 25% being Zimbabweans, 15% South Africans, 10% Nigerians and 9% Zambians respectively (**Figure 1**). When asked if they were proud to be citizens of their country, 61% indicated that they were either proud or very proud to be citizens of their country (**Figure 2**). However, a disturbing 30% were either not certain or not at all proud to be citizens of their country. The one-on-one interviews and FGDs conducted with some participants revealed that the sources of national pride were linked to achievements made by the countries in sports, economic performance, citizens' resilience and a sense of belonging to a great nation. The South African discussants found pride in the country's sports achievements as well as having produced a global icon, the late Nelson Mandela.
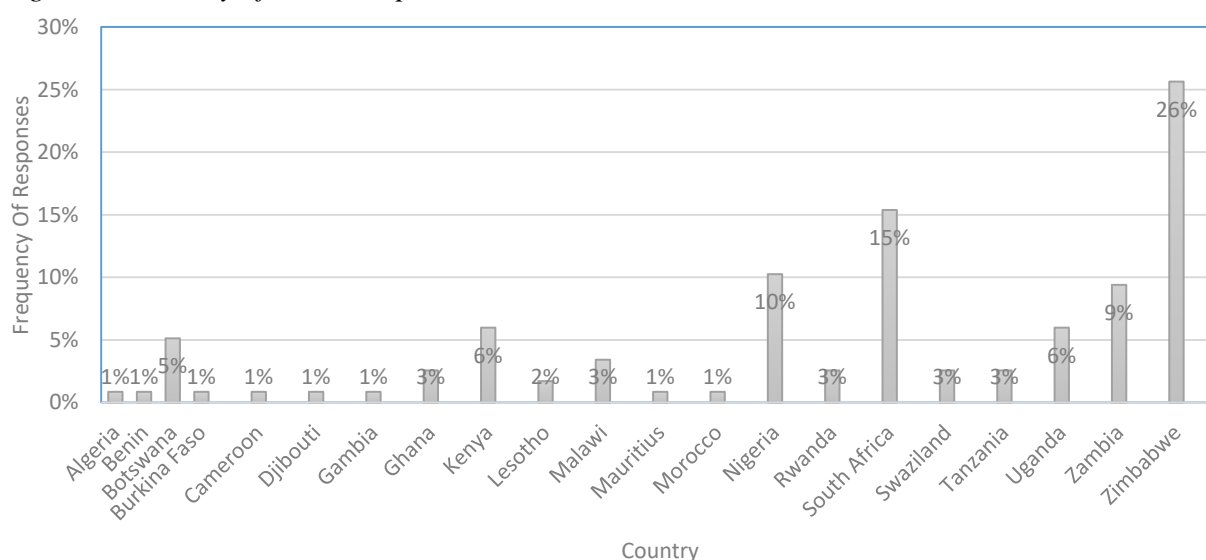
"Uthatha Nelson Mandela, our struggle icon left us a country to be proud of and our sport teams have done well. In actual fact they have united us as a nation." **South African Focus Group Participant.**

"We are a very resilient and enterprising people. Put us anywhere in the world and we will work hard to survive there. That is why I am proud to be a Nigerian, we are entrepreneurs rarely will you find us looking for employment. We create the jobs." **Nigerian Interviewee**
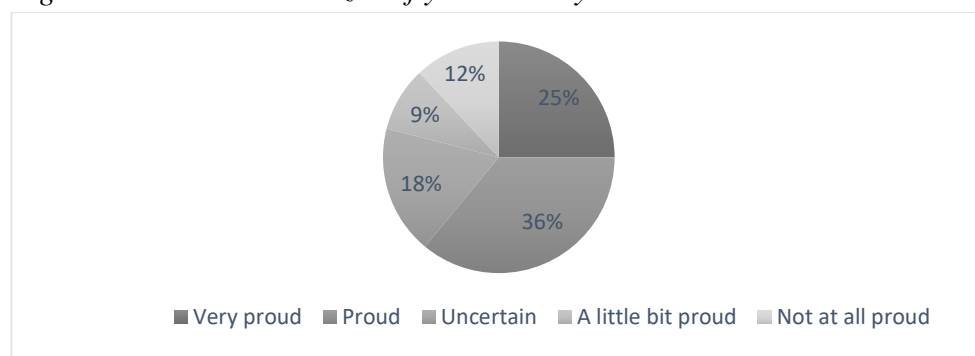
Those who were not at all proud of their citizenship pinned it on their country's failure to create opportunities for youth and the rampant corruption.

"I have no choice to accept that I am Zimbabwean by birth, but my country at the moment offers me nothing to be proud of as a youth. There are no jobs for us and the old guard seem clueless on how to make life better for our generation. I cannot be proud of that at all." **Zimbabwean Focus Group Participant.**
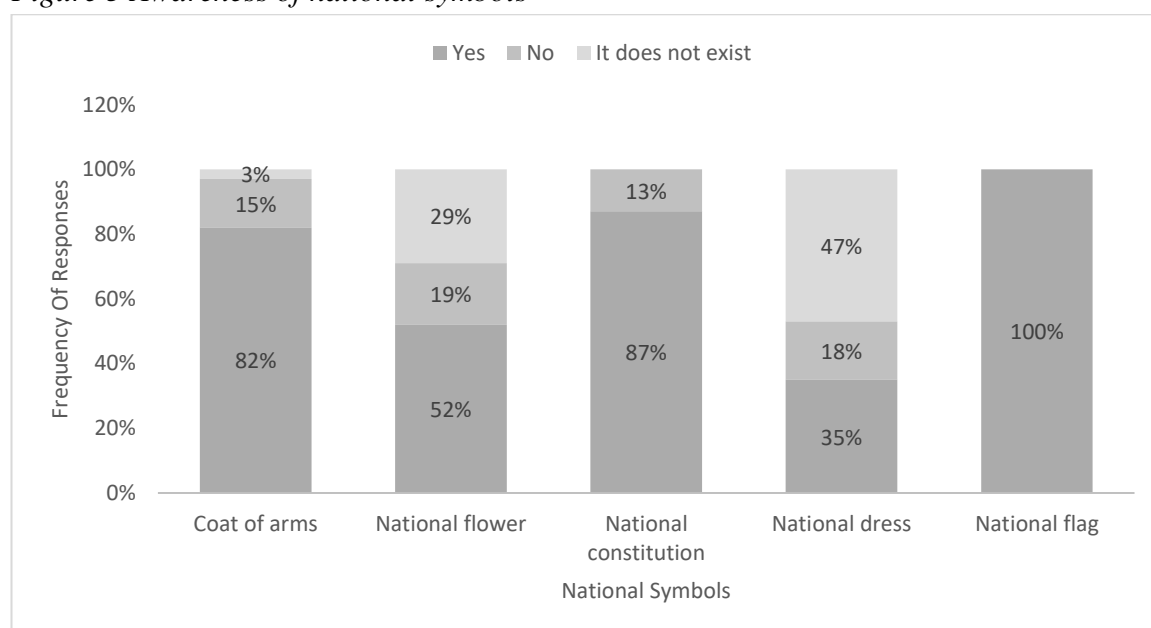
Figure 1: Country of citizenship

Figure 2: Proud to be citizen of your country

3.2.3 National symbols

In order to determine if some nation building policies had been successful in instil national identity amongst citizens' respondents were asked if they knew some of their national symbols. Most of the respondents indicated that they knew or could identify these. The most popular was the national flag, with all respondents indicating knowledge of it **(Figure 3)**. Respondents were also aware of their coat of arms and the existence of a national constitution, 82% and 87% respectively. However, the national dress, at 37%, and the national flower, at 52%, were least popular. In some instances, respondents indicated that some national symbols did not exist at all in their countries.
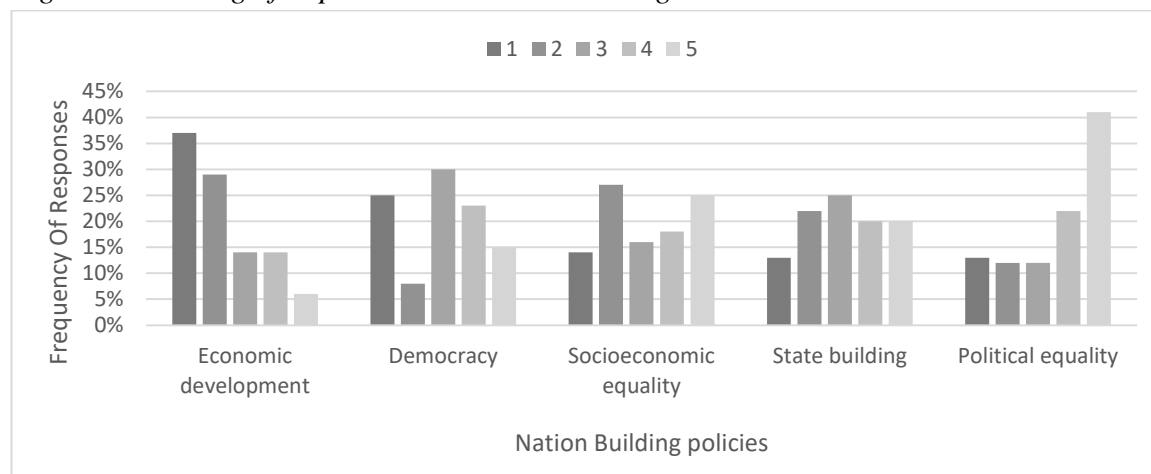
Figure 3 Awareness of national symbols

3.2.4 Important elements of nation building

In order to find out what was important in nation building respondents were asked to rank some identifiers and a group of policies. They ranked the following national identifiers: (i) religious identity, (ii) language, (iii) place of origin/ethnicity, (iv) culture and (v) common national identity. The nation building policies they ranked were (i) economic development, (ii) democracy, (iii) socio-economic equality, (iv) political equality and (v) state building. Their responses are summarised in **Table 4** and **Figure 4,** respectively.

Table 3: Importance in nation building

	Very important	Reasonably important	Uncertain	Reasonably unimportant	Totally unimportant
Religious identity	35%	38%	7%	5%	15%
Language	53%	30%	3%	8%	6%
Place of origin/ethnicity	50%	23%	7%	9%	11%
Culture	56%	24%	9%	3%	8%
Common national identity	53%	28%	10%	6%	4%

Figure 4: Ranking of importance in nation building

These statistics were collaborated by the discussions carried out with respondents. One participant stated that
"For our generation, the government should focus on economic development and ensure that we have jobs and a better future."

Another participant cited that,
"We have long attained political independence but there is a long way to go in achieving economic independence and social justice for the majority."

3.2.5   NYS and its importance

In order to determine the popularity of NYS as a nation building tool we asked respondents to confirm the presence of this program in their country. 53% of the respondents indicated that their countries had voluntary NYS programs **(Figure 5)**. On whether the national youth service program was beneficial only 33% of the respondents thought that it was **(Figure 6)**. Whilst 38% indicated that it was a waste of resources. The mixed sentiments were also reflected in discussions with some respondents.

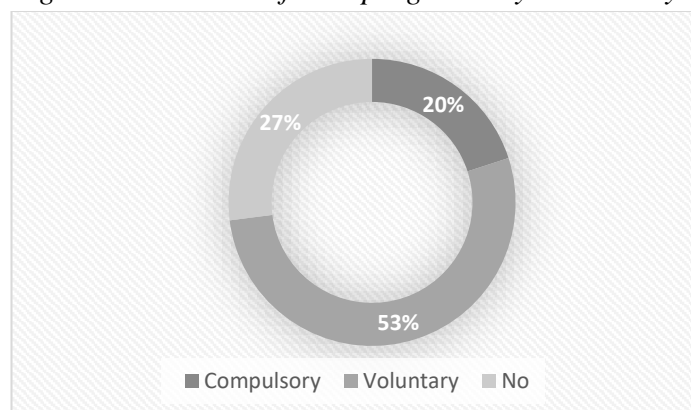*Figure 5: Presence of NYS program in your country*
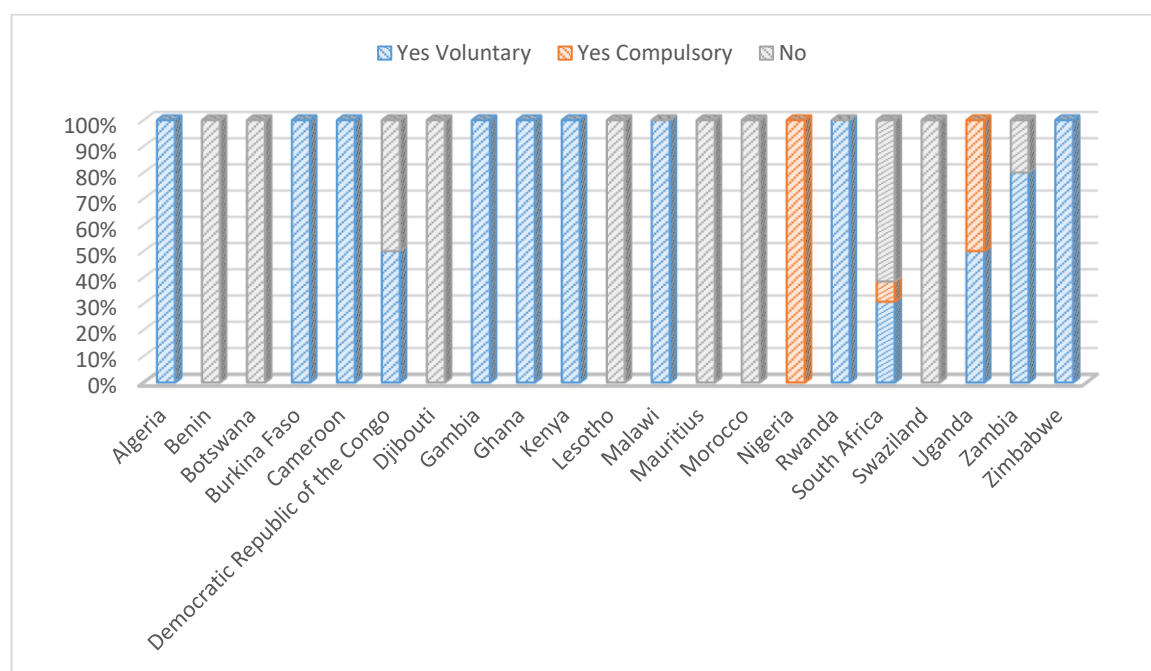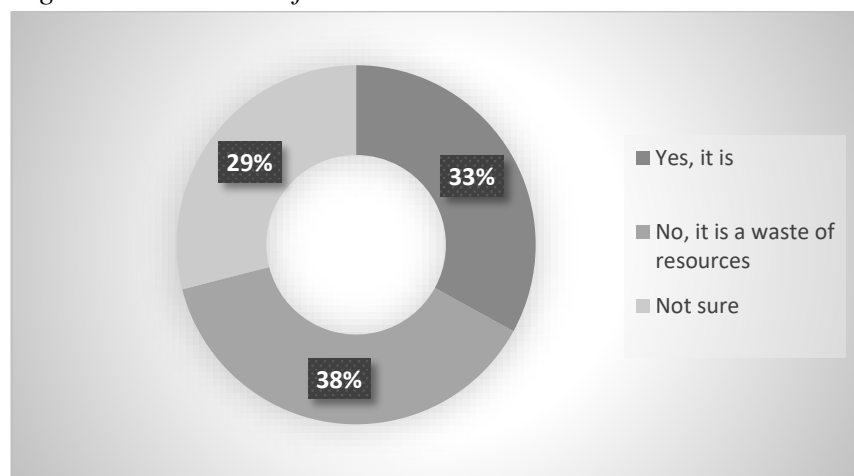
Figure 6 Presence of NYS program in by country

Figure 7: Is NYS beneficial?

A national youth service graduate stated that,

> *"I voluntarily joined the national youth service as I thought it would enable me to get employed as a civil servant and it did not disappoint. I am now working as a Youth Development Officer."*

Another graduate indicated that,

> "I *became a better citizen after serving as a youth corp. I also earned my first salary whilst serving and I felt proud to be paid for making a difference in my community."*
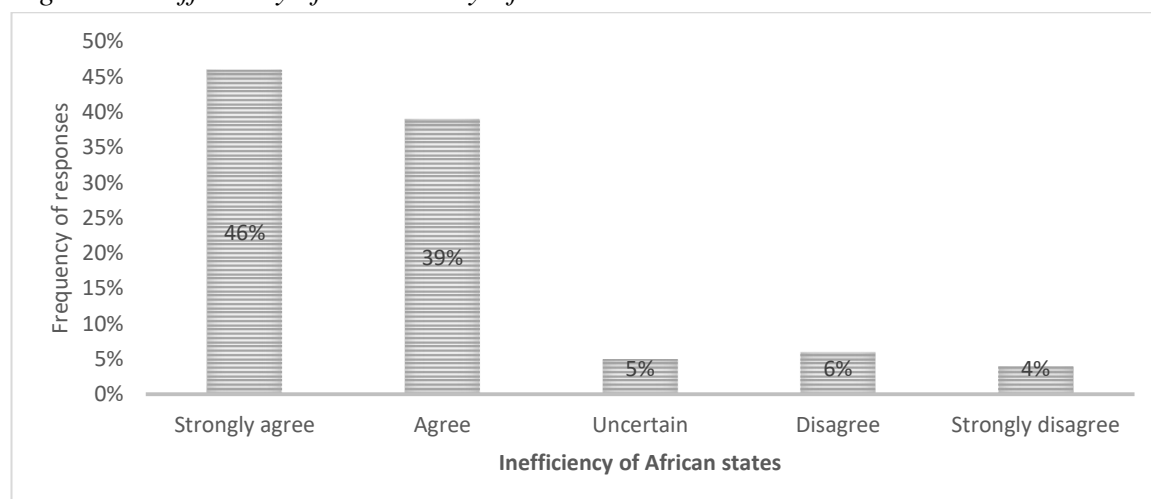
On the other hand, another participant made the following remarks:

> *"The National Youth Service was not good at all. It simply developed a group of militia that have gone on to abuse citizens and be used for political expedience. It was a waste of resources, that money could have been used to make our tertiary institutions better."*

3.2.6 Modern day African states versus early day African states

In a bid to check the performance levels of modern day African state, respondents were asked what they thought about the following statement: "Generally speaking, modern day African states are more repressive, brutal, corrupt, and inefficient entities than envisioned by the founding fathers and mothers of post-colonial Africa." 85% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (**Figure 7**).

Figure 8: Inefficiency of modern day African states

This clear indication that present day states have failed young people was observed during the focus group discussions as well.

One participant aptly put it like,

> "Our leaders liberated us from minority rule but they have become more oppressive and brutal that our colonisers. They are quick to thwart any dissenting voice from the youth"

Another highlighted that,

> "We are more afraid of abductions or arrests for expressing our displeasure at how this country is run. They are afraid of the youth because they know that when they took up arms against our colonisers they were young. They know the youth have the power to unseat them, hence they will silence us as quickly as possible."

In another group one stated that,

> "How can a President celebrate when his cronies defend his corrupt ways? It's a sad reality that makes our forefathers turn in their graves. These leaders are so corrupt and they think about themselves only, they don't have any plans for us young people. We have resigned to fate; what else can we do?"

3.2.7 2016 MINDS Youth Dialogue Discussions and Interviews

Delegates at the 2016 MINDS Youth Dialogue took part in panel discussions on nation building, where they unpacked the subject and deliberated on what needs to be done in order to improve the situation in Africa. Some of the delegates were also selected for in-depth interviews. This section summarises the main themes gleaned from these discussions and interviews. Interviewees were asked the following specific questions:

a) What are the policies and processes you will keep or do away with in your country?
b) What new nation building programs or policies would you introduce in your country?
c) What should be the priority issues going forward?
d) How to youth ensure they get space in on-going nation building processes?
e) How should young leaders lobby governments to prioritize issues that matter to the youth?

3.2.7.1 Existing nation building processes that can be removed

It was agreed that policies that promote divisions on tribal, racial or religious lines should be done away with. Examples of such policies include the Tribal Celebrations held in Malawi, the Federal Character policies in Nigeria and the appointment of the Swaziland Prime Minister only from the Dhlamini clan. Efforts should be made to identify common grounds that unite communities. It was noted that it is the responsibility of civic society and youth leaders, alike, to educate people on being united.

3.2.7.2 Policies that could be introduced

Delegates agreed that in order to improve the efficiency of public service policies need to ensure the appointment of public officers and senior civil servants based competence, qualifications and integrity as opposed to political affiliation. Youth were also urged to demand social contracts with aspiring leaders on how they are going to address youth specific issues. These social contracts can then be revisited from time to time to see if the office bearers are delivering on their promises.

3.2.7.3 The future direction of nation building

Nation building should promote cultural and tribal tolerance. They should open space and create opportunities for youth in all areas from business, community development through to government appointments. One interviewee summarised it as follows:

> *Youth cannot be side-lined anymore, therefore bring them to the table"* Dave Namusanya – Malawi

Government should seriously implement policies that get rid of corruption and promote transparency and accountability. Efforts should also be put in place to promote entrepreneurship, develop internship and affirmative action programs for youth so as to create employment opportunities.

3.2.7.4 The role of youth in nation building

Delegates highlighted that youth should play a leading role in civic education and use technology to share information with their peers. This also entails young leaders to self-develop and increase their knowledge in various areas. This was substantiated by one interviewee who said:

> *"We should look beyond the university degree and add value to it through self-development"*
> Josephine Mwale – South Africa

It was further agreed that young people need to decide and act on addressing the real issues that affect youth across the continent. They should clearly define what needs to be worked on, zoom in and plan the execution well. The youth should not try to do many things at once. Youth were also encouraged to identify or create platforms where they can air their views. They were also urged to take up positions in local and national governments. An interviewee eloquently captured this as follows:

> *"Vision, strategy and capacity are needed to undertake successful nation building projects, and*
> *youth should start by tackling challenges in their immediate sphere of influence. In due course,*

they will have the knowledge, insights, skills and resources necessary to meaningfully engage,
and collaborate with other stakeholders." Ify Ogo – Nigeria

Chapter 4: Conclusions

It can be concluded that present day Africa is replete with challenges and is a no way close to the united and prosperous postcolonial continent that the visionary founding parents espoused. Its states are repressive, brutal, corrupt and inefficient in deal with the needs and aspirations of the younger generation. Citizens have to battle with armed and unarmed conflicts, high levels of poverty and poor service delivery. However, lessons can be drawn from some African states like Tanzania, Botswana and Rwanda that have put in place nation building programs that helped stabilise their nations, spurred economic development, improved service delivery, reduced government expenditure and promoted unity. Lessons can also be drawn from Tanzania where government expenditure can be reduced by doing away with some national events, like Independence Day Celebrations, that were put in place during early days of independence. The saved funds can be channelled towards infrastructure development or service delivery improvements.

Nigeria presents a good lesson on how National Youth Service programs can be good platforms for engaging youth and instil patriotism in them. For them to be effective and successful, these programs need to be well thought out and should not be made compulsory for every one nor be used for military conscription. NYS programs should focus on providing an opportunity for skilled youth to strengthen their knowledge through practical experiences in the community. That way they can contribute to national development whilst learning the ropes in whatever career they have chosen.

Whilst youth will value common national identities such as national anthems or flags they also see the importance of religion, language, ethnicity and culture as key identifiers. Hence, efforts should be made to promote these whilst encouraging tolerance and plurality. Going forward nation building efforts should focus on economic development, democracy and socio-economic development. Programs and policies that address corruption, conflict, unemployment, curtail brain drain and that create opportunities for citizens to thrive within the continent need to be put in place. Youth should take the initiative and take advantage of their usage of social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter to share information on nation building policies and processes with their peers. Young people need to be focused and be sure of what issues they would like to tackle as they claim their space in nation building processes at local, national and continental levels.

Chapter 5: Recommendations

The following recommendations are made as ways of taking this study further:

- African states should be lobbied by youth leaders, through community engagements, to ensure that they prioritise economic development (with strong employment creation and entrepreneurship drives targeting youth), socio-economic justice, democracy and human rights promotion as well as creating access to resources such as land.
- Resources need to be mobilised to help young leaders to carry out community based civic education so that they can amplify the voices of youth as they claim and occupy their space in ongoing processes that will determine the future of the African continent.

- More in-depth studies must be done by researchers and scholars so as to get a sound understanding of the nexus between nation building and youth development in modern day Africa.

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