

UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRIME NEXUS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NIGERIA'S SITUATION

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Abstract: The paper discussed the level of crime rate in Nigeria as a result of unemployment. It gave a statistic figure to show that 60% of the Nigerian youth and workable adults are idle due to unemployment, while the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria continue to turnout graduates year in and out without Jobs waiting for them. The paper observed that the higher aspect of this phenomenon is that the governments of the Nigerian states both present and past have not done anything serious to combat this dangerous situation. The paper attempted to show the reasons why unemployment results to crime in that Job Loss and unemployment lowered self-esteem, sense of purpose, heightened apathy, idleness isolation and breakdown of social personality and loss of positive derivatives. The paper was of the opinion that nothing so frustrating like when a youth after spending quite a long time in the university only to find themselves jobless. This often leads to crime since they must eat and settle their bills and when this is not forth coming crime is the only answer. The paper concluded that since joblessness is a very provocative term that opens doors for crime. It thus recommended that Government of Nigeria both federal and the state should look inward to discover a way to integrate these Jobless youth parading themselves everywhere to reduce the rate of crime; secondly the Nigerian Universities system should be over hauled in order to be made more practical in the choice of courses and finally, the electoral system should be amended so that the peoples mandate are not denied of them, it is when the peoples mandate are denied them that the angry jobless youth take to crime.

Keyword: Corruption, Lack of accountability, Poor service delivery and cumbersome administrative procedure Unemployment and Crime

INTRODUCTION

The level of unemployment in Nigeria today has been on the increase and very alarming. The statistics given is that more than 60% of the Nigerian youth and workable adults is International Labour Organisation are unemployed. (ILO) report (2007) stated that more than 200 million people globally or 6% of the world's work force was without a job in 2012. This rate of unemployment continues to increase on a daily basis.

Every year the universities and institutions of higher learning in Nigeria continue to turn out graduates in a very large number without jobs waiting for them. The consequence of this is very dangerous for our National development and for peace and security in the Nigerian State.

The most surprising fact about this ugly phenomenon is that the government of the Nigerian state both past and present are not doing anything seriously to combat this ugly and dangerous situation. In the midst of this, the Nigerian political elite continue to live in affluence as if there is no problem in the economy. All the policies announced by the federal government are no longer working. The sacrifice which the masses are told to make have not succeeded in helping or salvaging the situation, while they themselves the leaders continue to embezzle and loot the Treasury, most of them have been convicted of all sorts of crimes, including money laundry stealing and false declaration of assets etc (Lewis (2006) and Elendu (2004).

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There were so many reported cases of depression and anxiety among jobless and displaced persons in Nigeria. Burgard Brand and House (2007), Catalano et al (2011) and Moser (2009) showed and explained why Job loss and employment negatively impact well-being including lowered Self-esteem, Sense of purpose and control. According to them it heightened apathy, idleness, isolation and the breakdown of social personality structure, and a loss of the positive derivatives of participating in a work environment, such as skill use, time structure economic security, interpersonal socialization and valued societal position (Darity and Goldsmith (1996), Mckee-Pyan et al (2005).

All the above reasons and conditions have contributed to high incidence of crime and criminality in Nigeria, “an idle mind is the devils workshop they say. The fact remains that people must eat and take care of themselves and their families, settle their bills etc. There is nothing so frustrating like when the youth after spending quite a long time in the university only to find themselves jobless after school, or the parents after borrowing money and investing their meager resources to train their children in schools with the intension that when they come out of school they will settle down, and for them to have a breathing space and equally with the hope that these children of theirs will take care of them and the younger ones and for them to sit back to enjoy the outcome of their labour and resources they have invested in training their children.

However, the opposite is the case. These youths who are jobless have no option than to engage in all sorts of illicit things and crimes. This is the reason why the rate of crime in Nigeria and our society have increased on a daily basis. Moreover, when they noticed how these political elites or politicians in our society parade and display their ill-gotten wealth, they have no option than to kidnap some of them to collect this money from these elite, and if they resist them, death becomes the only answer.

As a result of the high incidence of crime and corruption in Nigeria, the (ICPC) was inaugurated on 29th

September 2000 by the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo. It was established to tackle corruption in public sector; also the corrupt practices and other related offences act 2000 was also established for this regard. The cases of crimes and criminality have a long history in Nigeria. For example, Adeyemi (2002) gave evidence of how in February 26, 1952 when the Emir of Ewandu moved a motion in the Northern House of Chief that the increasing wave of corruption and crimes in the society was increasing on a very dangerous rate and that effort should be made to trace it and punish offenders.

In a paper presented at the conferences of Attorney General Abuja 11-13 October 2003, Gboyega (2003) replicated the same case of crimes in the Northern Nigeria. Gboyega (2003) looking at the cases of crimes in Nigerian State one would discover that this is the reason why the country is not developing at all or moving ahead. There is no country in the world that can grow and develop when crimes and unemployment is the order of the day. The case of Nigeria is a very sorry situation. It is as if it is the only language many people understand. You can hardly listen to any media report without hearing the cases of crimes being committed in the society. In it you hear cases of kickbacks from the high flying members of the parliament and of government officials. This includes cases of bribery, extortion, lying and deception by those in government. These have negatively affected the distribution of wealth and contributed to malfunctioning of the institutional structures. It has also exacerbated the problems of poverty, ignorance and underdevelopment in the country. The worrisome situation is that the institutions and mechanisms created by the Nigerian constitution and government to fight these contagious diseases seem not to be free from the plague. It has affected the government establishment in the form of inflation of government contract in return for kickbacks, frauds and falsification of accounts in the public service, examination malpractices in our educational institutions including universities (as cited in Akindele 2005). It also manifests in the abandonment of projects and gruesome neglect of constitutional roles assigned to the



legislators by the constitution in pursuit of personal gains and gratification while those in judiciary are not left out. Some schools of thought are of the opinion that the youth and the Jobless seeing all these, cannot fold their hands and watch the resources that is meant for all of us being hijacked by the privileged few in the society to enjoy all alone with their wives, children and girlfriends. The resultant effect is the proverbial saying that “if you cannot beat them you join them”. The only but unjustifiable option left for the Youth is to resort to arms and criminality such as robbery and kidnapping.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Both the encyclopedia Americans 1999 and Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2000) see crime to include disguised payment in the form of gift, legal fees employment favour to relations, social influence or without the implied payment or money, all these are considered as crimes and corruption. The effects of these are that the National development and progress in our society is slowed down. If the rate of development in the society is slowed down growth is affected and creation of job will be absent when there are no jobs for people to work and earned their living the crime rate increases; and this thus becomes a cyclical role. (Guobadia, 2000:15)

Many different schools of thought have defined corruption in different ways. The ICPC (2000:1) states that corruption includes bribery, fraud and other related offences. Nye (1967:417, 2010:15) describes abuse of office or corruption as behaviour which deviates from the normal duties of a public officer, while Johnston and Pelizzo (1991:3) define it as the misuse of office for private ends. In general terms, lack of integrity means corruption. Thus, the conduct of individuals in government and instruments of policy, both constitute important segments in the moral dimension of government.

According to (Ifadia, and Ifadia 2009: 548) “corruption means deliberate and intentional exploitation of one’s position, status or resources, directly or indirectly, for personal aggrandizement, whether it be in terms of material gains or enhancement of power, prestige or

influence beyond what is legitimate or sanctioned by commonly accepted norms to the detriment of the interests of other persons or the community as a whole.”

Lewis (2006) sees crime as money laundering, any crime be it extortion, Terrorism, drug, arms and human Trafficking, fraud, bribery and corruption etc. that generate huge proceeds or create the need for laundering, while Webster Dictionary (1913) defines crime as an act to conceal a theft. Thus, Government official who are induced financially to do their work is a crime. Those who convert government money to their own or a clerk who takes bribe constitute crime. Generally, a crime is a dishonest violent or immoral action that can be punished by law. It is an activity that involves breaking the law, an illegal act or activity that can be punished in any law court.

The EFCC was established in 2003 partially in response to pressure from the financial action Task force on money Laundering (FATF) which named Nigeria among the 23rd non cooperative countries frustrating the efforts of the international community to fight money laundering (EFCC Establishment Act, 2002).

The reasons for their establishment include (a) great inequality in the distribution of wealth, (b) political office as the primary means of gaining access to wealth (c) conflict between changing moral codes (4) the weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanism, and (5) the absence of strong sense of National Community (EFCC Act 2002). The EFCC defines crime as “nonviolent criminal and illicit activity committed with the objective of earning wealth illegally either individually or the group or organization in manner whereby violating legislation, governing legislation, economic activity of government and its activity any form of fraud narcotic drug Trafficking, money laundering embezzlement, bribery looting and by form of corruption (EFCC Act 2004). It also went on to include Forgery, Fraudulent conversion of money. A person may be guilty of offence for being in possession of a property intended for someone and fraudulent depriving that person from the use of or enjoying of it. It includes



falsification of account or a servant employed by a person or an organization.

On the other hand, White (2001) makes a dysfunction between two types of unemployment V12 voluntary unemployment includes workers who reject low wage jobs whereas involuntary unemployment includes workers fired due to an economic crisis, industrial decline, company bankrupts or organizational restructuring. The clearest cases of involuntary unemployment are those where there are fewer job vacancies than unemployed workers even when wages are allowed to adjust so that even if all vacancies were to be filled, some unemployed workers would still remain. This happens with cyclical unemployment, as macroeconomic forces cause micro-economic unemployment which can boomerang back and exacerbate these macro-economic forces (Math 2012).

International Labour organization (ILO) (2007) defines unemployed workers as those who are currently not working but are willing to work for pay, currently available to work, and have actively searched for work. Individuals who are actively seeking job placement must make the effort to be in contact with an employment, have job interviews and contact job placement agencies. In the United States for example, the unemployment rate does not take into consideration those individuals who are not actively looking for employment such as those still attending colleges.

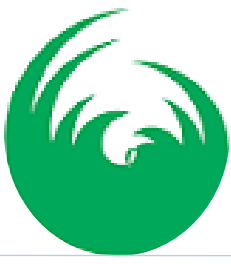
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem here is that the presence of massive unemployment has given room to so many vices of different crimes rate. The problem is not the rising prices of oil in the 1970s which is described by many as the windfall from oil export which was wasted and was not properly utilized for the expansion and development of the physical infrastructure but was looted and shared among the ruling elite. This development led to the emergence of a special class of the ruling class who took advantage of the lucrative riches to manipulate the nation's public policies to amass personal fortunes. The consequences have been a rise in the crises to gain access to the oil

resource without thinking about tomorrow of the rising youth and development.

Thus, oil became inextricably with public policy in Nigerian State. According to Arolowo Adebola (2006), this process can be seen from the crisis in the oil producing areas in the Niger Delta areas and the current rise in unemployment rate in the country. The Nigerian State relies on oil in the region to the tune of 70% of its annual revenue and over 90% of its foreign exchange earnings (Ebeku 2005). Also, the central bank of Nigeria Report for the year 2005 stated that Nigeria received up to 99.6% of its total export revenue from oil, making it the most oil dependent economy in the world. According to this report of the ₦5.547 trillion earned in 2005, ₦4.75 trillion came from oil, while only ₦785 trillion came from non-oil sources.

Unfortunately, there is little or nothing to show for this as poverty is ravaging the people. In fact, the oil producing areas in Nigeria remain the poorest in the country. Also, according to a (2006) Niger Delta Human Development Report (2006) compiled by Alfred S. Fawundu and co for the United Nations Development Program, this oil producing regions are now suffering and the most severely hit by this unemployment rate. The situation in the country now is a very pathetic and pitiable situation. Nearly every community you see in Nigeria is fighting one form of communal fight or the other. It has led to the emergence of all kinds of freedom fighters in the form of both political and economic marginalization. The crime wave in the country now is very alarming it has given room to the activity like Boko Haram, and other movements, like movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta volunteer force (NDVF), movement for the survival of Ogoni people (MOSOP) Odua people's congress (OPC) etc. (Ogunde 2006), and Boko Haram in the North East of Nigeria sponsored by some element in the guise of religion. It also led to political issues, such as the Sharia riots in Kano, Kaduna 2004 etc, the religious riots and clashes in Jos in 2008, the attacks on churches including



the burning of Saint Theresa’s Church in Abuja in 2012. No wonder Ronke (2008) sees these kinds of activities as a form of violence carried out by individuals, non-governmental organizations, or covert government agents or units that specifically target civilians using clandestine attack methods, such as car bombs, hijacking airlines and attempt to influence policies.

The total outcome is lack of development which gave rise to all sorts of crimes, and increased unemployment. It increases and made people to be led susceptible to cardiovascular diseases, stigmatization, anxiety, depression and wars in various homes because they could not meet up with their family needs and demands. Paul and Moser (2009) repeated the fact that the effects of unemployment include idleness, isolation, depression, lack of self-confidence and increased the rate of anger, hatred and crimes. Burgard Betal (2007) were of the opinion that the increase in reported symptoms of depression and anxiety among displaced workers compared to non-displaced workers is roughly 15 to 30 percent.

CRIME RATE AS A RESULT OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN EDO STATE NIGERIA

2002	April – June	794	number of crimes
2003	March – April	291	“
2004	July	980	“
2005	Feb	165	“
“	Feb – March	248	“
2006	Feb – March	264	“
2007	June – July	1081	“
2008	March – April	543	“
“	August	1132	“
“	July – August	1016	“
“	October – August	1407	“
“	December – August	1730	“
“	November	1641	“
2009	September – October	1580	“
“	November – December	1889	“
2010	January – December	128	“

“	July – September	872	“
“	May – September	380	“
“	December – January	1231	“
2011	December	1231	“
2012	February – March	171	“
2013	August – September	832	“
2014	June – August	598	“
“	November – December	960	“
“	January – March	163	“
2015	April – May	600	“
2016	September – October	826	“
2017	June – July	741	“

Source: Nigerian Police Head Quarters, Benin City (2017)
The above figures show the rate of crime in Edo State of Nigeria as a result of unemployment. The figure shows that the rate of crime is higher in the month of November to December 2009 while it is lower from January to March 2014. All these show that unemployment is the major course of crimes in Nigeria.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 2003-2011

Table 2: unemployment Rates for Youths (15-24) and Adults (25-44;45-59;60-64).

Year	15-24	25-44	45-59	60-64	National Aggregate
2003	32.1	14.7	10.7	13.4	14.8
2004	28.9	11.4	7.7	10.1	13.4
2005	34.2	11.3	6.6	9.7	11.9
2006	30.8	8.8	4.8	7.3	12.3
2007	30.7	8.5	4.5	7.1	12.7
2008	32.6	9.4	7.6	8.3	14.9
2009	41.6	17.0	11.5	16.7	19.7
2010	35.2	20.7	19.9	21.3	21.4
2011	37.7	22.4	18.0	21.4	23.3

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2011): Annual Socio-economic report (various years)

The unemployment rates of youths (aged 15-24) is consistently higher than those of adults (aged 25 years and over) as shown in table 2 for all the years. This is however not only peculiar to Nigeria as according to ILO (2011), youth unemployment rates are typically higher than adult



rates in all regions of the World (ILO 2011). Some reasons have been advanced for these phenomenon.

According to Adeloye (2010), the unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 14.2 percent in the last quarter of 2016 from 10.4 percent a year earlier. It is the highest jobless rate since 2009 as the number of unemployed went up by 3.5 million to 11.549 million while employment rose at a slower 680.8 thousand to 69.6 million. Adeloye went on to state that the labour force increased by 4.194 million to 81.151 million and those detached from it declined by 625.7 thousand to 27.439 million. The unemployment rate was higher for persons between 15-24 years old (25.2 percent), women (16.3 percent) and in rural areas (25.8 percent). In the previous quarter, according to him, the jobless rate was 13:9 percent. Unemployment Rate in Nigeria averaged 9.76 percent from 2006 until 2016, reaching an all-time high of 19.70 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009 and a record low of 5.10 percent in the fourth quarter of 2010.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS CONFLICT THEORY AND CRIME

In the world today, conflict and crime rate are on the increase, majorly as a result of unemployment and other factors. The term conflict according to NC Dougherty and Faltzamat (1981) refers to a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings (whether tribal, ethnic, Linguistic, Cultural religions, socio economic, political or others) is engaged in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable human group because these groups are pursuing what appear to be incompatible goals. While Coser (1996) sees it as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rival. Conflict occurs as a result of the lack of abundance economic resources. It occurs whenever there is struggle due to competition for the available scarce resources. This competition and struggle always lead to conflict because the parties involved will try to enhance their own position against the other. It intensified whenever one group tries to outsmart the other groups by thwarting others or preventing others from gaining their own ends. Sometimes it can lead to destruction.

According to Pauland Moser (2009) conflict may be violent or nonviolent or uncontrollable. The situation in Nigeria is the conflict that has led to all sorts of crimes rate due to struggle for scarce resources, ethnic agitation, resource control, marginalization and unemployment. Conflict is using destructive judging from the Nigerian case.

A lot of people have lost their lives through different kinds of conflicts. Most of these conflicts that have led to crimes occur in a bid to revenge or when group tries to dominate other groups. There are tension and near closer to wars in some areas. The government of the day in Nigeria is not helping matters. How do you explain the high rate of unemployment in an area where 70 percent of their economic resources of the nation is produced? In the Niger delta region of Nigeria that is referred to as the “fowl that bears the golden egg” where the oil that Nigeria is depending on, lacked development, mean while the areas where nothing and completely nothing is produced have development going on in those regions.

These issues have given rise for the agitation for resource control and others. The rate of unemployment in the area is unimaginable because of lack of development. The leaders are quite insensitive to the plight of the people. In spite of this, there is high level of corruption and massive looting of the treasury. The youth having discovered that the government is corrupt and have no plan for their future, have resorted to pipeline vandalism, kidnapping, illegal mining and other forms of vices. Anybody who tries to challenge them will be the object of attack cum murder.

MARXIAN THEORY OF UNEMPLOYMENT

For Karl Marx (1863), unemployment is inherent within the unstable capitalist system and periodic crises of mass unemployment are to be expected. It is in the very system of capitalist mode of production to overwork some workers for the interest of the few capitalists while allowing the rest as a store house army of unemployed poverty striking group. Marx shares the Keynesian viewpoint of the relationship between economic demand and employment, but with the view that market systems propensity to slash wages and reduce labour participation on an enterprise level carries a requisite decrease in aggregate demand in the economy as a whole, causing crises of unemployment and period of low economic



activity before the capital accumulation stage of economic growth can continue.

The function of the proletariat within the capitalist system is to provide a reserve army of labour that creates downward pressure on wages. This is accomplished by dividing the proletariat into surplus labour and under-employment. These reserve army of labour fight among themselves for scarce jobs at lower and lower wages. To the capitalists, unemployment is profitable since it lowers wages which are costs from the perspective of the owners. Lower wages benefit the system by reducing economic rents. According to Marx, the only way to permanently eliminate unemployment would be to abolish capitalism and the system of forced competition for wages and they shift to a socialist or communist economic system. Based on the above analysis, as long as the Nigerian Leaders continue to acquire wealth and Loot and still, development will be a thing of the past while unemployment will continue to increase and crime wave will rise unabated. The poor will always be the affected ones and Nigerian state will continue to be unsafe for everyone.

SPECIFIC CRIME CASES IN NIGERIA

Although crime is a sin committed against humanity and should be so treated as such – Alawiye (2012), stated that the Government should be concerned about the factors which gave rise to each specific case and take concrete steps to address cases of demonstrated denials of rights of the people concerned. If it is accepted that the current situation where much blood is shed by Boko Haram is a result of the economic deprivation of some element or those who claimed that they were marginalized, frustration Aggression theory could be an answer for their action. Frustration Aggression theory is used to explain the situation of such kind. Rourke (2008), was of the opinion that what makes some people or group to become aggressive is when certain rights were denied of them to the situation that they become very poor. Thus, in the midst of such Extreme poverty, they can become very aggressive such as the case of Boko Haram crime cases in Nigeria. According to Chief Solomon Lar, the former and second republic Governor of Plateau State, Boko Haram members were not just Religions body that were out to fight for religious cause, rather they are spent politicians who had lost elections but think that they can come to power by destroying Nigeria, (Akhaine and Abdulsalami, (2012).

LISTS OF CRIME CASES AND ATTACKS BY BOKO HARAM AND OTHER CRIMINAL ATTACKS.

DATE	LOCATION AND PLACE	NO OF DEATH
July 27, 2009	Potiskum Yobe, State	4 people killed
Dec. 31, 2010	Mammy Market Mogadishu, Abuja	10 people killed
Oct. 1, 2010	Eagle Square Abuja	12 people killed
March 13, 2010	Jos, Plateau State	300 people killed
April 8, 2011	INEC Office Suleja Niger State	8 Corps members killed
May 30, 2011	Maiduguri Bornu State	13 people killed
June 7, 2011	Maiduguri Bornu State	5 persons killed
July 9, 2011	Maiduguri, Bornu State	35 persons killed
July, 25, 2011	Maiduguri, Bornu State	8 persons killed
August 26, 2011	Un building, Abuja	23 persons killed
Sept. 12, 2011	Misan, Bauchi State	11 people killed
Nov. 4, 2011	Damaturu, Yobe State	150 people killed
Nov. 27, 2011	Geidam, Yobe State	7 people killed
Dec. 25, 2011	Madella, Niger State	50 people killed
Dec. 24, 2011	Jos, Plateau State	80 people killed
Dec, 30, 2011	Maiduguri, Borno State	7 people killed
Jan. 5, 2012	Gombe State	6 people killed
Jan. 6, 2012	Yola, Adamawa State	17 people killed



Jan 20, 2012	Kano State	250 people killed
Jan 22, 2012	Bauchi State	11 people killed

Source Adeyemi, (2012)

From the above list of cases, it is obvious that the Nigerian State is a fragile state. A situation where people are no longer secure and cannot move freely. Both the conflict and state fragility theory explain the situation why the crime wave is on the increase. People who are marginalized, deprived and frustrated can join any group to perpetuate evil in order to express their grievances. The earlier those in authority in Nigeria change their style for the betterment of Nigeria and provide jobs to reduce unemployment the better.

CONCLUSION

Looking at the cases and the rate of crimes in Nigeria, it is very clear that unemployment constitutes a greater part of the reasons why people indulge in crime. How do you explain a situation where Nigeria is the 6th world largest producer of oil and the Nigerian oil is the second best in the world mean while the people are poor and the rate of unemployment is unimaginable? The recent studies carried out by many observes in Nigeria have proved that greater part of the increasing rate of crimes in Nigeria are due to unemployment or job lost, which has given rise to all sorts of crimes and criminality. When people are jobless and have nowhere to get food to eat, they will take to crimes at the least provocation. So Joblessness is a very serious reason for crimes in Nigeria.

THE WAY WORD

The government in Nigeria both federal and state should look inward to discover a way to reintegrate these jobless youth who are parading everywhere without a job. The university system in Nigeria should be over hauled in order to be made to be more practical in the choice of courses. It should not use the present educational curriculum which only prepares and graduates youth for white caller jobs which are unavailable, but rather prepare them to be self- sustaining.

The Nature of our electoral system should be amended and controlled to check the do or die process inherent in elections in Nigeria. This is not supposed to be so, this is the reason when the people’s choice and mandate is demand them, the angry youth will take to crime and destruction of lives and property to show their grievances and equally when the wrong persons emerged they will only be there to service their godfathers who fought to bring them to power, whatever is the problem and need of the masses does not concern them. This is because the wrong choice and wrong person are brought to power, who only are there to loot and immerse wealth.

One of the most important way-forward is to amend the constitution so that the equity and justice will settle the serious agitation and marginalization that lead to crime in this country. The constitution should be amended to make sure good governance should be in place serious thing should be done to reduce or combat this disease called corruption. Nigeria celebrates corruption and offenders are allowed to go scout free.

The Nigerian government should strengthen the institutional structures to reduce crime wave and the judiciary should equally not be left out because the level of corruption in the judiciary is equally very disturbing. The law count should make sure those who are involved in crimes should be punished severely to serve as deterrent to others. Finally, if the case of joblessness is not seriously tackled all the whole effort will be in vain. Since the idle mind is the devils workshop. People who come out of school system should find job to do otherwise they will take to crime no matter what ever the law says.

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