

YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

By

¹USANG ETENG ELOMA (PhD)
¹CENTRE FOR GENERAL STUDIES
CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (CRUTECH)
CALABAR

ABSTRACT

The study examined how youth restiveness influences socio-economic development, in Cross River State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to determine the extent to which youth involvement in drug abuse, cultism and armed robbery influences socio-economic development. Related literature was reviewed based on the variables of the study. The research design for this study was the survey research design. The sampling techniques that were adopted for this study were the multistage sampling technique using clusters, systematic, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. The study sample consisted of ten thousand, eight hundred (10,800) youth selected from the study area. The instrument used in collecting data was a questionnaire tagged Influence of Youth Restiveness on Socio-economic Development Questionnaire (IYRSEDQ). Based on the research questions, a simple percentage was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that drug abuse, cultism and armed robbery affect socioeconomic development. It was recommended among others that parents, guidance counselors, schools and religious bodies should intensify efforts at the propagation and re-orientation of morals and values to the youths. This will help to reduce the intake of drugs and other harmful substances. The government should formulate strategies or policies that can reduce and if possible eliminate cultism-related activities. The government should create more jobs and also make the environment to be business-friendly for youths that may want to venture into entrepreneurship. This will help to keep them eliminate armed robbery activities.

Keywords: *Youth restiveness, Drug abuse, Cultism, Armed robbery, Socio-economic development*

INTRODUCTION

Young people make up the highest population around the globe. Their existence is unique with numerous characteristics that can either enhance or mar the socioeconomic state of the society. Youths have flexible personality and a psychological perception that can easily be influenced by internal and external factors. They are indeed a vital segment of the society in which they live. According to (Anansi, 2010), a disciplined, focused, and law-abiding youth can create a bright future for any nation. Conversely, a lawless, indulgent, and violent youth is a great threat to a nation's peace and security. Restiveness is one psychological variable that most young people easily give to and in turn causes them to exhibit ill or anti behaviors that portray indiscipline and poses a threat to security, thereby causing a decline in a country's economy.

Anansi (2010) asserted that Youth are the foundation of a society. Their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pace of development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour power, a nation makes giant strides in economic development and socio-political attainments. In their dreams and hopes, a nation finds her motivation; on their energies, she builds her vitality and purpose. And because of their dreams and aspirations, the future of a nation is assured. This assertion tends to be true since youth makes up the highest population of any nation. The United Nations General Assembly and World Bank defined the youth as

people between ages 15 to 24, while the National Youth Development Policy, Nigeria (2001) defines youth as people aged 18-35.

Restiveness according to (Ejumudo, 2014) has to do with the anxious feeling you have when you have the jitters and is characterized by nervousness and quickness to take flight. Elegbeleye (2005) defined youth restiveness as a sustained protestation embarked upon to enforce desired outcomes from a constituted authority by an organized body of youths. Youth restiveness has been a device used by the youth to get what they want from the relevant authority. Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020) stated that youth restiveness has become a topical issue for discussion in the social, economic and polity domain in Nigeria. It is a fact that Nigeria cannot thrive and progress significantly with youths who are restive. Nigeria's peace, security and corporate existence as a nation are threatened because of the prevalence of this phenomenon. The causes of youth restiveness are connected to unemployment, lack of basic and inadequate infrastructural facilities and inadequate social amenities amongst others. The spiraling effect of youth restiveness is evident in Nigeria as ethnic militia, kidnapping, cultism, armed robbery, agitations and involvement in social insecurity. The causes and effects of youth restiveness have promoted uncertainties which have led to failure, fear and underdevelopment of most sectors in Nigeria.

Youth restiveness has over the years posed as a determinant to the socio-economic development of any nation. This restiveness among youth has generated some ill behavioral involvement among youth such as drug abuse, armed robbery, and cultism, and such is believed to influence the socioeconomic development of the society. Thus, this paper tends to investigate the effect of youth restiveness on socio-economic development in Cross River State, Nigeria.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW ON YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Eze-Michael, (2020) conducted a study to examine youth restiveness and economic development in Nigeria. The study used relative deprivation and broken window theories as the theoretical framework. The research adopted a qualitative method. The population was the youths in Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta. This part of the country was purposively selected because the youth in this area constituted the major restive behaviors witnessed in Nigeria between 2010 and 2018. Data were collected through documentary review (of publications on youth restiveness) as well as journals, and materials from the internet. Findings showed that the nature of most youths that engage in youth restive activities in the Niger Delta do not have access to formal education; these youths are majorly unemployed and poor. Also, the institutional effort of the government in eradicating youth restiveness has proven incapable of alleviating the critical situation and the government's lack of leadership and discipline has hindered the eradication of youth restiveness. The study concluded that youth restiveness is a serious issue that has affected Nigerian states negatively. It caused a drastic reduction of per capita increase of the nation's production which forms the basis for economic development.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2020) revealed that the adverse health consequences of drug use are more severe and widespread than previously thought. Globally, some 35 million people are estimated to suffer from drug abuse and drug use disorders. In 2017, an estimated 271 million people, or 5.5 percent of the global population aged 15-64, had used drugs in the previous year. David (2016) conducted a research study titled *The Impact of Drug Abuse on the Socio-Economic Development of Youths in Kanyaryeru Sub-County, Kiruhura District, Kenya*. The purpose of the study was to establish the extent to which drug abuse has affected the youths socioeconomically especially in the aspects of marginalization, poverty, crimes and unemployment. The study was descriptive and analytical in nature where both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used through Questionnaires, interviews and observation. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS and were presented in the form of frequency tables, percentages and graphs. The findings established that youths constituted a large segment of drug abusers and it was discovered to have a direct influence on socioeconomic development.

Ukachukwu and Obulor (2018) investigated the impact of cult activities on the socioeconomic well-being of rural dwellers in Orashi region of Rivers State, the work sought to identify the socioeconomic characteristics of rural dwellers, ascertain the factors that pre-dispose youth to cultism, and determine the nature of cult activities perpetrated by cult groups in Orashi region of Rivers State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the adults (male and female) in the study area. From this population, a sample of 800 adults (400 males and 400 females) was purposively sampled from the four local government areas of Orashi region. Four research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The instrument used for the study was a survey

questionnaire tagged “Impact of Cult Activities on Socio-economic Wellbeing of Rural Dwellers (ICASWR). Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, and a z-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. It was found that cult-related activities in Orashi region were pre-disposed by parents’ death, separation of parents, ignorance, peer pressure, interest in crime and many more. It was also observed that cult activities that involved armed robbery, kidnapping, looting, raping, killing and others affected the socio-economy of the study area.

Abanyam, Bauchi, and Tormusa, (2013) investigated the effects of armed robbery on Nigerian society. The findings of this study reveal that armed robbery is associated with insecurity of lives and properties, loss of human resources, reduction of the level of development, unemployment, poverty, permanent disability of the victims and wastage of state resources on security agents.

Okolo, (2002), reported that armed robbery in Nigerian society is one of the most common crimes that young people indulge in. It is a prevailing social phenomenon that negatively affects the lives and social functioning of a significant number of people in contemporary Nigerian society. It involves stealing, during which force and violence or the threat of violence are employed. Armed robbery is as old as mankind itself, and it characterizes all known societies (both developed and developing societies. However, variations exist not only from society to society but also from time to time, as well as from strict enforcement to none. Armed robbery is becoming a routine for most Nigerian youth. The practice is so common that their operations are observed even in the daytime.

Theoretical framework

The Psychosocial Theory of Personality by Eric Erickson (1968) is the theoretical framework that this study will be based upon. Erickson places importance on the quality of parent-child relationships. He stressed that the family is the child’s brush with society. He believes that parents can discipline children in a way that makes them feel loved or hated or in a way that constitutes going into crime cultivation. Erickson came up with eight stages of a child’s development and how society and family can influence this development. The stages are listed thus:

Basic trust vs mistrust	-	0-1years
Autonomy vs shame and doubt	-	2-3years
Initiative vs guilt	-	4-5years
Industry vs inferiority	-	6-11years
Identity vs role confusion	-	12-20years
Intimacy vs isolation	-	20-40years
Generatively vs stagnation	-	45-64years
Ego integrity vs despair	-	65 and above

The implication of this theory to the study is that the formation process (nature-nurture) of a child significantly influences the child’s personality which may later get the child restive or not. When a child becomes restive, such a child will begin to indulge in crime-related activities such as drug abuse, cultism, or arm robbery.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Socio-economic development which is meant to be the progressive reinforcement of a nation both in quantity and quality across all nations is a different thing in Nigeria. Socioeconomic development in Nigeria seems to be at the lowest level. This has caused many young people to be involved in anti-socioeconomic activities. It is believed that the personality exhibited among youth in any given society is correlational to the development of such society. Youths are the foundation of any society. They are therefore the determiners or frontiers of society’s growth

thus; their attitude greatly determines socio-economic growth. Youth restiveness has become a major cause of socio-economic underdevelopment. This restiveness among youths has generated different behaviors that are tantamount to the values of the nation. Some of the noticeable anti-societal behaviors exhibited among youths within Cross River State are drug abuse, cultism and armed robbery.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to determine the extent to which youth restiveness affects socioeconomic development. Specifically, the study will determine the extent to which:

- i. Youth involvement in drug abuse affects socioeconomic development
- ii. Youth involvement in cultism influence socioeconomic development
- iii. Youth involvement in arm robbery on socio-economic development

Research questions

The following research questions were posed to give direction to the study:

1. To what extent does youth involvement in drug abuse influence socioeconomic development?
2. How does youth involvement in cultism influence socio-economic development?
3. To what extent does youth involvement in armed robbery influence socio-economic development?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the method used in carrying out the study. The survey research design was adopted for the study. This is because the study variables are not subjected to manipulation and can be generalized to a larger population. The population was all young people (age 18-35) in Cross River State. This was followed by random sampling to get the respondents that participated in the study. Six hundred youths were selected from each Local Government of the State, making it a total of ten thousand Eight Hundred Youths (10,800) as the sample size. An instrument titled “Youth Restiveness on Socio-economic Development Questionnaire (YRSEDQ)” was used to collect data. The instrument was divided into three sections ‘A-C’. Section ‘A’ addressed the bio-data of respondents, Section ‘B’ contained questions asking respondents to state their opinions on youth Restiveness (drug abuse, cultism, arm robbery) and Section ‘C’ response on socio-economic development. Data was analyzed in frequencies and percentages. This was best to explain respondents’ opinions on these issues.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results are presented below.

Table 1: Bio-data of Study Participants

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Data

Variable	Frequency	Percentages%
Gender		
Male	6804	63
Female	3996	37
Age		
18-25	3600	33.3
25-30	3900	36.1
30-35	3300	30.6
Educational levels		
Nonformall	2700	25.0
Primary	2500	23.1
Secondary	3300	30.6
Tertiary	2300	21.3

Research Question One:

To what extent does youth involvement in drug abuse influence socio-economic development?

Table 2: Percentage score of Youth restiveness (drug abuse) and socio-economic development

S/N	ITEM	N	F	%
1	The intake of illicit drugs by youth is high in my area	10800	8000	74.07
2	Intake of drugs enhances productivity within my area	10800	400	3.70
3	Those who take drugs sometimes feel like fighting or destroying properties after the intake of any hard drug	10800	9800	90.74
4	Drug intake is becoming a major problem among youth in my area	10800	10100	93.51
5	Intake of hard drugs can cause low job performance or total loss of job	10800	9020	83.51
6	Almost all drug addicts in my area are jobless	10800	7250	67.12

Research Question Two

How does youth involvement in cultism influence socioeconomic development?

Table 3: Percentage score of Youth restiveness (cultism) and socio-economic development

S/N	ITEM	N	F	%
1	Cult members engage in violent behavior like killing.	10800	10260	95.00
2	Members of my community are often in hide-outs because of cultists	10800	6990	64.72
3	Cult groups have caused numerous destruction in my area	10800	8569	79.34
4	Cultists have no time for personal development and skill acquisition	10800	7349	68.04
5	Cultism has sent away investors from my area	10800	10620	98.33
6	Cultists bring development to a place	10800	921	8.52

Research Question Three

To what extent does youth involvement in armed robbery influence socioeconomic development

Table 4: Percentage score of Youth restiveness (armed robbery) and socio-economic development

S/N	ITEM	N	F	%
1	Arm robbery is a serious social problem in my community	10800	9898	91.64
2	Members of my community have lost their properties to armed robbers	10800	8794	81.42
3	Properties are destroyed in most robbery operations	10800	6555	60.69
4	People are afraid to establish businesses in my area because of the fear of robbery	10800	7456	69.03
5	There is a high level of fear among citizens in my area because of arm robbery related activities	10800	6998	64.79
6	We are disappointed because of government negligence, thus we give to crimes such as armed robbery	10800	10111	93.62

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

The result from research question one shows that youth restiveness (drug abuse) influence socio-economic development. The result is in agreement with Eze-Michael, (2020) who conducted a study to examine youth restiveness and economic development in Nigeria. Findings showed that the nature of most youths that engage in

youth restive activities in the Niger Delta do not have access to formal education; these youths are majorly unemployed and poor. Also, the institutional effort of the government in eradicating youth restiveness has proven incapable of alleviating the critical situation and the government's lack of leadership and discipline has hindered the eradication of youth restiveness. The study concluded that youth restiveness is a serious issue that has affected Nigerian states negatively. The findings also agree with David (2016) who investigated the impact of drug abuse on the socio-economic development of youths in Kanyaryeru Sub-County, Kiruhura District, Kenya. The findings established that youths constituted a large segment of drug abusers and it was discovered to have a direct influence on socioeconomic development.

The findings from research question two establish that youth involvement in cultism-related activities influences socioeconomic development. The finding is in line with Ukachukwu and Obulor (2018) who investigated the impact of cult activities on the socio-economic well-being of rural dwellers in Orashi region of Rivers State. It was discovered that cult-related activities in Orashi region were pre-disposed by parent's death, separation of parents, ignorance, peer pressure, interest in crime and many more. It was also observed that cult activities that involved armed robbery, kidnapping, looting, raping, killing and others affected the socio-economy of the study area.

Question three result also agrees that youth restiveness (armed robbery) greatly influence socioeconomic development. The finding is in tandem with Abanyam, Bauchi, and Tormusa, (2013) who investigated the effects of armed robbery on Nigerian society. The findings revealed that armed robbery is associated with insecurity of lives and properties, loss of human resources, reduction of the level of development, unemployment, poverty, permanent disability of the victims and wastage of state resources on security agents. It, therefore, has a direct effect on socioeconomic development.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents, guidance counselors, schools and churches should intensify efforts at the propagation and re-orientation of moral and cultural values to the youths. This will help to reduce the intake of drugs and other harmful substances.
2. The government should formulate strategies or policies that can reduce and if possible eliminate cultism-related activities.
3. The government should create more jobs and also make the environment to be business-friendly for youths that may want to venture into entrepreneurship. This will help to keep them away from armed robbery or possibly reduce or eliminate armed robbery activities.

REFERENCES

- Anansi N.I. (2010) Curbing Youth restiveness in Nigeria: The role of information and libraries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.com>
- David, M (2016). The impact of drug abuse on socio-economic development. *African Journal of Psychiatry*, 1(3): 52-57
- Ejumudo, A. (2014) Youth restiveness: Nigeria's security and sustainable development. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.com/youth-restiveness>.
- Elegbeleye, O.S. (2005). Recreational facilities in schools: A panacea for youths' restiveness. *Journal of Human Ecology*. 18 (2): 93-98.
- Eze-Michael, N (2020). Implications of Youth Restiveness on Sustainable Development in Nigeria. *South-South Journal of Culture and Development* vo. 19 (1)
- Okolo, R. (2002). Violence in the citadel: The menace of secret cults in the Nigerian Universities. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 14 (1), 79-98

Ukachukwu, A. & Obulor, C. (2018). Impact of cult activities on the socio-economic well-being of rural dwellers in Orashi region of Rivers State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Social Sciences & Humanities Research* 6(1):56-63, Jan-Mar., 2018

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime UNODC (2020). World Health organization. Expert committee on dependence-producing drugs. Fourteenth Report Urban Adolescent Child Development 61, 2032-2046.

