

Abstract

For more than five decades since Nigeria attained nationhood, the country has had to grapple with various socio-economic and security challenges with many youth becoming restive. Youth restiveness has implications for the overall development of any society. The objectives of the study is to investigate the implications of youth restiveness on economic development in Lafia metropolis, using General Strain Theory of crime as theoretical framework. The study was a survey, with a sample size of 196 selected using survey software calculator (2014) from a population of 79938. In generating primary data, structured questionnaires were administered through purposive sampling technique. Data were analyzed using graphs and tables. Findings revealed the causative factors of youth restiveness to include poverty, peer influence, unemployment and access to arms and weapons. It was also revealed that restiveness has a disruptive effect on youths' employment and productivity status. The study concludes that the phenomenon has negatively affected the socio-economic fortune of Lafia and contributed to insecurity in the metropolis, besides stifling social life. The study recommends that there should be a national road map for job creation and employment generation, among others.

Keywords: Economic development, Youth restiveness, National security.

Background to the Study

The 21st Century has witnessed unprecedented upsurge in violence with the youth being the major participants (Yomi & Owei, 2006). Owoade and Adam (2015, 2015) submits that within the last decades of our nationhood, there appears to be an upsurge of issues relating to youth bulges, giving rise to human carnage of immense proportion and wanton destruction of valuables of immeasurable cost. Nigeria has witnessed increased spate of violent activities involving the youth since the dawn of the century (Akparanta, 1994). This is particularly so since the country returned to democratic governance in May, 1999 (Osalar, 2014). As a social phenomenon, Youth restiveness has generated huge contributions by foreigners and Nigerians Scholars, interested in restoring genuine peace and stability in Nigeria (Mezieobi, Nwaubani & Anyanwu, 2012). For example, Anasi (2010), argued that youth restiveness is a national challenge with unprecedented consequences, such as arms proliferation, oil theft, and kidnapping-for-ransom among others especially in the Niger Delta region. This challenges the huge expenditure by government on public infrastructure such as schools and centers for skills acquisition, which were intended to mitigate such negative responses from the population. With many youth not realizing their productive capacities, Abinbola (2006, cited in Agah & Ikenga 2007) observed that frustration became the outcome with the desire to hurt or injure others. This in their opinion justifies the involvement of youth

in restive activities. However, Anifowose (1982 cited in Tenuche 2009) argued that prevailing explanations often advanced for the unscrupulous attitude of some young persons include near absence of means of survival, increasing needs and inability to provide for themselves. In his opinion, youth violence is a result of unmet needs which accumulate over time.

Youth and restiveness are two separate words that have often been used consistently by scholars, researchers and the public to the extent that they cannot stand independently (Owoade & Adam, 2015). The youth is generally defined as that active and young segment of the population which is within the age bracket of 15-35 years. Although age limit varies according to culture, the United Nations (UN) often use the age range of 15-24 as the youthful population (UNESCO, 1989, FRN, 2001). However, this age bracket falls short of the age limit set by the National Youth Policy of Nigeria (NYPN, 2009). The NYPN states that the youth shall be made up of young persons (male and female) who are between 18 and 35 years of age.

There has been arguments concerning the causes of youth restiveness. For example, Albert (1994) argued that the causes of youth restiveness include population growth, poor living conditions and unemployment. Ogidi (2008) believed that youth restiveness was as a result of their level of education. In recent times, communal clashes and inter-ethnic rivalry has been on the increase within the communities around Lafia (Newswatch, 2014). This

has precipitated the influx of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) into the urban area of Lafia. Angwe (2015) observed that Nigerians have indeed become stateless due to insurgency resulting in the displacement of youth. The youth segment of the IDPs is suspected to add to the restiveness of Lafia.

Nigeria as a nation has been at the receiving end of the effect of the activities of restive youth. This no doubt, is in line with the opinion of Anasi (2010), who noted that the effect of restive youth activities in Nigeria include poor infrastructure, low investment potentials, poor revenue generation and destruction of public and private property. This effect has also been noted by Chunwate, Sani and Ishaya (2016), who asserts that one of the features of a growing economy is the level of development of the real estate sector, but sadly, they observed, that the real sector in Lafia is slow due to an array of factors including violent activities of restive youth. Scholars also argue that "the massive quantities of small arms in circulation have greatly influenced ethnic, sectarian, and criminal violence. (Hartung 1998, cited in Ayuba, 2016). This no doubt, has dire impact on the activities of the youth and their economic makeup.

The basic concern of this study therefore is to empirically investigate the challenge youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis poses to economic development in the metropolis.

2. Statement of Problem

Youth restiveness has been a recurrent issue since the turn of the century (Owoade & Adam, 2015). This is why global attention is now more than any other time being focused on issues concerning the youth (Anasi, 2010). Rapid urbanization coupled with rising cost of living, and palpable insecurity has made many idle youth in the neighbourhood to be suspected as culpable.

Scholars like Okoli and Iortyer (2014) and Nwanna-Nzewunwa (2008) believed that unemployment, poverty and socio-economic exclusions were the major spurs of youth restiveness and violent uprisings in the North-East and elsewhere in Nigeria. However, the scholars did not state to what extent youth restiveness affect economic development.

In a bit to rescue the youth for the future, governments have articulated various policies and programmes aimed at addressing their challenges. Among such programmes was the vision 20: 2020 with the mandate to achieve among other objectives, gainful employment opportunities for the teeming youth, uncompromised national peace, and security. However, the non-realization of these objectives appears to have a negative effect on the economy of Lafia.

In their separate studies, Ishaya (2014) Adam (2015) and Michael, Inyang and Ojeka (2016) all agreed that youth involvement in criminal activities was caused by the lack of gainful employment, and that this destroys the creative ingenuities of the youth.

This study investigated the factors responsible for youth restiveness in Lafia, and its implications for economic development

Objectives of Study

The research has as its major objective, to investigate the challenges youth restiveness pose to economic development in Lafia metropolis. The specific objectives are;

- i. examine the factors responsible for youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis,
- ii. ascertain the socio-economic implication of youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is General Strain theory of crime and delinquency popularized by Robert Agnew in the early 1990s. General strain theory was developed in response to the orientation of Merton's (1910-2003) Anomie or Strain Theory of crime. Merton argued that the reasons for, or driving force for criminality, is the failure of individuals to achieve material goals. He asserts that the disparity between goals and means provides pressure for individuals who daily toil to achieve them, even though the institutional means are not equally available to all classes. He concluded that since they all subscribe to the cultural aspirations or goals but institutionalized means are not necessarily equally given, frustrations are bound to set in in form of strain. Merton called this strain-producing frustration *anomie* (Adler, Mueller & Laufer, 1995, p.111).

Scott and Marshall (2005) argued that anomie as a theoretical conceptualization originated with the works of Emile Durkheim, who first sought to explain the transition of society from mechanical to organic solidarity in his '*the division of labour in society*'. In Merton's writings, he made a further development of the concept of anomie or normlessness where he sorts to use it in the explanation of deviance in society. Many at times the youth are lured into a condition where the only escape becomes normlessness. During political rallies, strikes or protests, etc., the youth are always the first victims. This is true to the fact that on either side, it is the youth that are the foot soldiers. They carry out protests in response to the whims and caprices of their masters.

Agnew (1995 cited in Igbo 2008) argued that the imperatives for deviance or crime causation are not necessarily tied to material goal attainment, but could

be a result of anger and frustration which people suffer in a social relationship. It is often argued that modernization which results in many physical changes have far reaching consequences on social structures. Scott and Marshall (2005) believes that physical changes triggered by technology, communication or values, are most likely to result in the obstruction of the order, which results in society. As a State Capital, Lafia has continued to influence and experience rapid development in the real estate sector, industrial sector, etc., which has high population growth as a critical component (Chunwate, Sani & Ishaya, 2016). Etoke (2003) identified some of the consequences of urbanization to include population growth, unemployment and inequality, which he noted contribute to delinquency among the youth.

Agnew (cited in Igbo 2008) summarized strain producing factors to include the following:

A. The failure of individuals to achieve socially valued success goals. The materialistic society we live in expects individuals to acquire material wealth, not necessarily minding the means through which such wealth is got. Over two decades ago when Lafia was still largely a rural settlement, life was still rudimentary to a large extent, and materialism was very minimal. But as time passed by, and with agriculture (farming) which use to provide employment opportunity for over 70% of the population taking the rear seat in the economy, youth are finding it so difficult to earn a living.

Removal of positively valued stimuli. Many youth in Lafia are detached from their parents or guardian either due to ethnic crisis, wars, or other factors. For example, the Almajiri phenomenon where children are often left to fend for themselves on the street (UNICEF, 2013). In the course of struggling to eke out a living, with no responsible leverage, such youth are faced with a myriad of challenges ranging from hunger, starvation, difficulty in realizing set targets and dreams. These challenges can be analyzed in terms of the absence of positive stimuli, which should have guided such youth in the right direction. The removal or absence of this positive stimuli (parent, guardian, mentor, and succor) is what, in the conception of general strain theory, amounts to frustration where restive outcomes are usually inevitable. In their attachment theory, Bowlby (1998) and Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (2015) for example, argued that children who experience parental deprivation, and thus does not form a secure attachment, subsequent development is apt severely atypical. Attachment the scholars submit, provides a secure emotional base from which mature

relationships develop.

B. The presentation of negative stimuli. Igbo (2008) contended that adverse events or life situations can cause negative stimuli. Most youth have had difficult encounter with law enforcement agents of society, others have had abusive relationships in their families, and yet some have had very negative peer influence, all of which can create negative stimuli in them and make them become restive. This assertion of general strain theory is also heavily supported by Matza (1964) in his Drift theory of delinquency, wherein he noted that the youth of society may go against societal norms not as a result of the rigidity of social rules and regulations, but on account of ineffective regulatory mechanism which is rather not spontaneous. (Igbo, 2008).

Frustration, anger, and abandonment would inevitably lead to more frustration and anger, and then strain would set in. The society suffers in the long run due to the fact that rather than uphold the moral code of society, a drifted youth could become anomic as a result of a seemingly closed end. The argument of Wilson and Kelling (1996 cited in Iwerimie-Jaja 2012) that in a community where the youth experience such limited means to achieve societal goals, there is the tendency for criminal or restive outcomes to be on a steady or frequent increase, fits the situation of youth restiveness in Lafia.

4. Methodology

This study was conducted in Lafia, the capital of Nasarawa State. Nasarawa state is located in the savannah belt of Nigeria and has a landmass of 120,000 square kilometers. With a geography of latitude 7° and 9° North and longitude 7° and 10° East, the state is accessible through Benue State to the South, Kogi State to the West, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja to the North-West and Kaduna and Plateau States to the North-East while through Taraba State to the South-East. It is reported to have significant proportion of the state's landmass covered by rocky terrains with mountains rising to an average height of about 11400m above sea level. (Nasarawa State Investor's Guide, 2010).

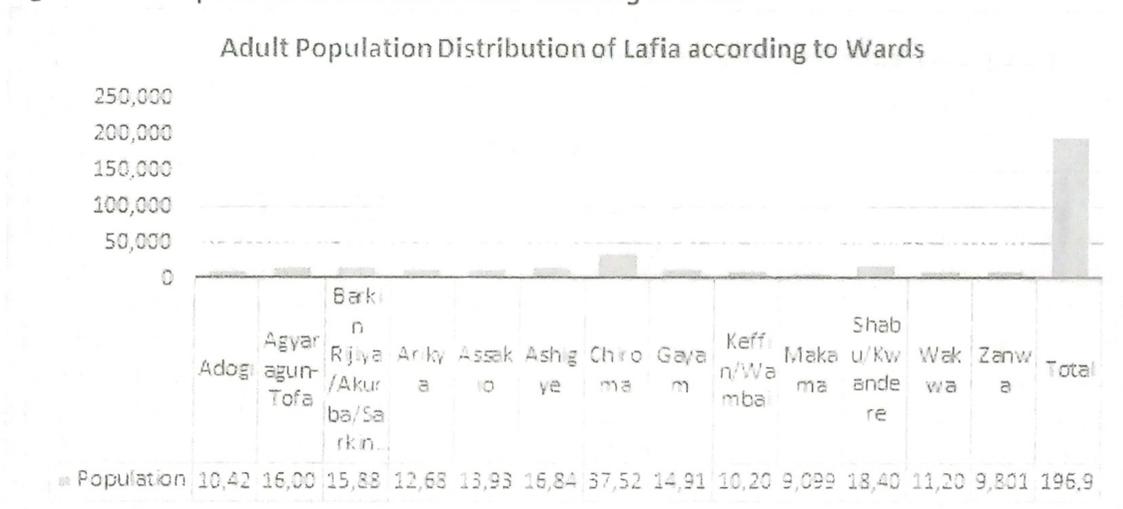
Although Lafia is rich in cultural heritage with a multiplicity of ethnic languages, Hausa and English languages are predominantly spoken in the area. Religion also form a vital part of the people as they are adherents of Christianity, Islam and African traditional religion (FMWA&SD, 2008). Lafia Metropolis today is home to many economic and social activities. These include financial institutions, electronic and electrical warehouses, health, hospitality and recreational facilities, among others. Educational institutions such

as nursery, primary and post primary schools are also not in short supply in Lafia. Among the tertiary institutions of learning found in Lafia include the Federal University Lafia, the Nasarawa State Polytechnic and Nasarawa State College of Agriculture.

Industrial activities and real estate development is also on a steady increase. Bakeries, mills, smelter plants, and beverage producing industries are now a common sight in Lafia. A network of commercial transportation activities also abound in Lafia such as the popular *goyin* (commercial motorcycle riders), keke NAPEP or keke TA'AL (a tricycle used for public intra city transport), taxi cabs which are not so popular in Lafia, and an array of intercity/interstate transport companies. As the seat of government, Lafia politically is part and

parcel of the Southern Senatorial District of the state, and is comprised of Lafia/Obi Federal Constituency, and two (2) State Constituencies. Lafia Local Government Area has thirteen (13) electoral wards. The electoral wards include the following: Adogi, Agyaragun-Tofa, Arikya, Ashigye, Assakio, and Bakin Rijiya/Akurba/Sarkin Pada. Others are Chiroma, Gayam, Keffin/Wambai, Makama, Shabu/Kwandere, Wakwa, and Zanwa (INEC Office, Lafia, 2014). However, this research study is conducted using four wards out of the thirteen. They include Chiroma, Gayam, Makama and Shabu/Kwandere. The choice of the wards used for the study was purposive. The design was a survey, and the instrument was a structured questionnaire distributed to the sample population.

Fig 1.1: Adult Population Distribution of Lafia according to Wards



Source: INEC Office Lafia, 2015

The figure 1.1 above is a diagrammatic representation of the adult population of Lafia.

The population of Lafia is given as 165,631 males and 164,291 females, totaling 329,922, which is 17.64% of total population of Nasarawa State (NPC Census, 2006). Using the population growth rate of 1.966%, and a birth rate of 36.07 births/1,000 people (Nigeria at 50: A Compendium, 2010. p18), calculated on a nine year period, the projected population of Lafia is 390818. However, the study involved only the adult population of the study area from the age of eighteen years and above.

Figure 1.2 is a pie chart showing the population spread of the four (4) selected wards which forms the population for this study

The population of the selected four wards total seventy nine thousand, nine hundred and thirty eight (79,938), from where the study sample was

drawn.

Sample Size

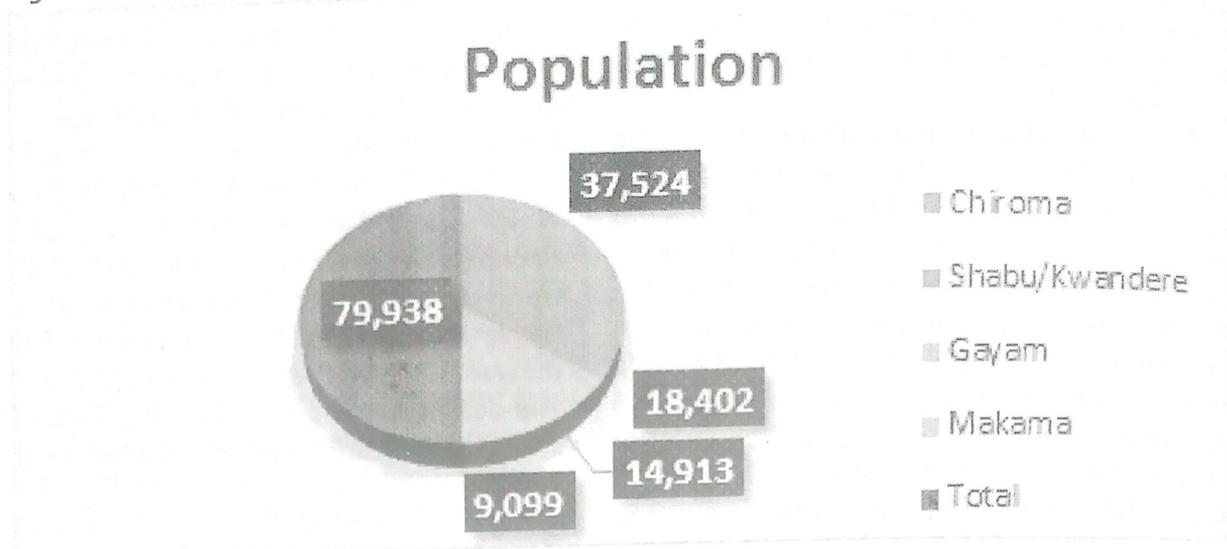
The sample size for this study was one hundred and ninety six (196) respondents drawn from the study population of seventy nine thousand, nine hundred and thirty eight (79938) at a confidence level of 95% at 0.07 interval. This was arrived at using the Creative Research Systems Survey Software Calculator for Sample Size Determination (2014) (Fig 1.3).

Sampling Techniques

Two basic sampling techniques were employed in selecting respondents for this study. First, purposive sampling procedure was used to select four wards from the thirteen wards of Lafia metropolis. Secondly, accidental sampling procedure was adopted to pick respondents from each of the areas selected.

Population of Study Area

Fig. 1.2: Population of the Study Area



Source: INEC Office Lafia, 2015

Fig 1.3: Sample Size Determination Calculator

Determine Sample Size

Confidence Level: 95% 99%

Confidence Interval:

Population:

Calculate:

Sample size needed:

Source: <http://www.sample> March 12, 2015

Sources of Data and Method of Data Collection

The sources of data for this study was primary and secondary sources. While the primary data was sourced through field study, the secondary source involved published works. The instrument used for data collection in this study was the structured questionnaire. Part A of the questionnaire provided demographic information of respondents, whereas Part B dwell on specific information relevant to the subject matter under investigation.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics involving frequency distributions and simple percentages was employed. Data generated on the Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were however

analyzed by means of charts. Each of the variables that have direct and consequential bearing with the phenomenon of youth restiveness and its implication for economic development in Lafia was given elaborate analysis on the basis of respondents' opinion.

Likert scale format (Osuala, 2013) was adopted in the design of the questionnaire

Study Limitations

The study was however methodologically limited by epileptic power supply for e-sourcing of materials, cost of research assistants, the possibility of sampling error and the possibility of respondents giving false or inappropriate responses.

Results

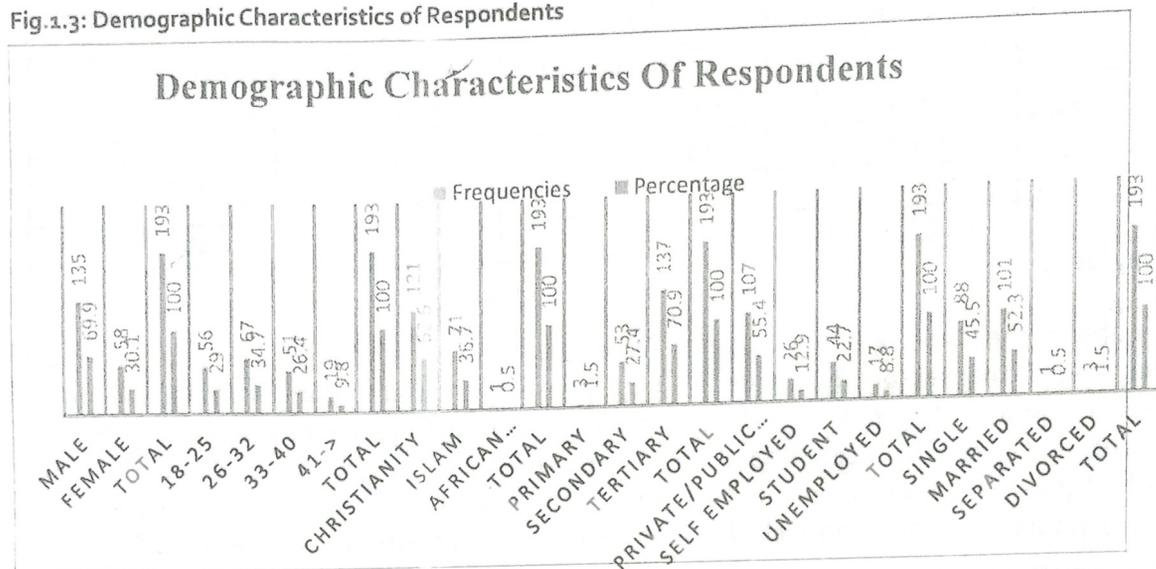
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Results of the study participant was analyzed based on the variables contained in the research instrument. The characteristics is as shown in the graph captured in the Fig. 1.3 below:

26.4% and 9.8% respondents came from those aged between 33-40 and 41 and above respectively.

On religious affiliation, 62.6% respondents were Christian, while 36.7% were Muslims. Only a 0.5% indicated membership of ATR. Educational attainment of respondents show that

Fig.1.3: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents



Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Fig 1.3 above indicated that the respondents were made up of more males than females as the males accounted for 69.9% as against 30.1% of female respondents. Many reasons may have been responsible for this wide disparity ranging from accessibility of the males more than the females, to a withdrawn attitude of females towards public discourse on issues of restiveness.

The data analysis show that respondents within the age bracket of 18-25 made up only 29.0%. While 34.7% were those aged 26-33 years. About

those who attained tertiary education constituted 70.9 percent. 27.4% have attained secondary education, while 1.5% respondents indicated that they had acquired only primary education.

For the professional/occupational variable, the following frequencies and percentages were recorded from the graph. 107 or 55.4% respondents were engaged in either private or public service employment. 26 or 12.9% were self-employed while 44 or 22.7% and 17 or 8.8% were students and unemployed respectively. Whereas on marital status,

Table 1: Factors responsible for Youth Restiveness

Factors	Response Frequency/Percentage			
	SA	A	D	SD
Poverty	79 (40.9)	74 (38.3)	23 (11.9)	17 (8.8)
Unemployment	92 (47.6)	88 (45.5)	9 (4.6)	4 (4.0)
Peer influence	78 (40.4)	76 (39.3)	21 (10.8)	18 (9.3)
Lack of education	63 (32.6)	59 (30.5)	41 (21.2)	30 (15.5)
Bad governance	89 (46.11)	97 (50.2)	4 (4.0)	3 (1.5)
Unequal distribution of resources	87 (45.0)	96 (49.7)	4 (4.0)	6 (3.10)
Poor child upbringing	79 (40.9)	100 (51.8)	6 (3.10)	8 (4.1)
Lack of skills	99 (51.2)	75 (38.8)	7 (3.6)	12 (6.2)
Access to arms and weapons	43 (22.2)	55 (28.4)	55 (28.4)	40 (20.7)

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

married men and women were more in terms of frequency in this research. They accounted for 52.3% as against the Singles 45.5%, separated 0.5% and divorced 1.5% respectively.

As revealed in the table 2, majority of the respondents identified acts that constitute restiveness in Lafia metropolis to include street fights, riots, burglary cultism and vandalism.

Table 2: Acts that constitute Youth Restiveness

Acts	Response Frequency/Percentage			
	SA	A	D	SD
Street fights	88 (45.5)	93 (48.1)	3 (1.5)	9 (4.6)
Cultism	85 (44.0)	81 (41.9)	15 (7.7)	12 (6.2)
Riots	102 (52.8)	70 (36.2)	10 (5.1)	11 (5.6)
Burglary	90 (46.6)	84 (43.5)	7 (3.6)	12 (5.6)
Vandalism	73 (37.8)	89 (46.11)	9 (4.6)	21 (10.8)

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

From table 1 above, the study revealed that majority of respondents agree that factors that leads to youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis include poverty, unemployment, and peer influence. Others are lack of education, bad governance, and unequalled distribution of resources, poor child upbringing, lack of skills and access to arms and weapons.

Table 3 analysis indicate frequencies and percentages of responses to the statements on the socio-economic implication of youth restiveness in Lafia Metropolis. The response pattern indicates that majority agreed that youth restiveness threatens/cripples economic investments; youth restiveness can displace population and settlements; acts of restive youth

Table 4.7: Socio-Economic Implications of Youth Restiveness in Lafia

Statement	Response Frequency/Percentage			
	SA	A	D	SD
Youth restiveness threatens/cripples economic investments	94(48.7)	75(38.8)	9(4.6)	15(7.7)
Youth restiveness can displace population and settlements	82 (42.4)	90 (46.6)	8 (4.1)	13 (6.7)
Acts of restive youth leads to waste of resources	89 (46.1)	84 (43.5)	17 (8.8)	3 (1.5)
Restive youth also put undue pressure on public/private utilities	97 (50.2)	80 (41.4)	7 (3.6)	9 (4.6)
Youth restiveness increases poverty rates	78 (40.4)	99 (51.2)	5 (2.5)	11 (5.6)
Restive youth does Escalates unemployment	89 (46.11)	92 (47.6)	4 (2.07)	8 (4.1)
Activities of restive youth also Retards development	102 (52.8)	81 (41.9)	6 (3.10)	4 (2.07)

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Source: Field survey, 2015.

leads to waste of resources; Restive youth also put undue pressure on public/private utilities; youth restiveness increases poverty rates; restive youth does escalates unemployment; activities of restive youth also retards development; youth restiveness depletes investment potentials of Lafia and spiral unemployment.

3. Discussion of Findings

The study involved respondents of all economic strata, thereby giving the researcher a balanced opinion of respondents on the situation of youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis.

Findings show that unemployment and low level of education constitute factors of youth restiveness in Lafia. It has been acknowledged that knowledge and education most often help individuals in their levels of patriotism, value orientation and healthy lifestyles. Population Reference Bureau (2006) observed that between 2000 and 2004, about 30% of Nigerian youth were not enrolled in secondary schools. Hence, the findings agree with Onekpe's (2007 cited in Igbo and Ikpa 2013) assertion that most youth that did not have access to formal education are easy tools for restiveness.

This study identified upsurge of social vices and crimes among others, to be on the increase in Lafia in recent years. Zakaria (2006 cited in Igbo and Ikpa 2013) agrees that youth restiveness increases youth unemployment. Poverty as identified in this study constitutes a major challenge to the economic wellbeing of the family system in Nigeria. This conforms to the objectives of the study which seeks to ascertain the factors responsible for, and the socio-economic implications of youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis. Majority of the respondents indicated that restiveness has strong influence on youth criminality in Lafia. The implication of this is that economic activities thus nosedive, and this affect house-whole incomes and impede development

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that the phenomenon youth restiveness is prevalent in Lafia metropolis. This leaves a heavy burden on the well-being of families, government institutions and social infrastructure. Reviewed literature indicated that although much has been done elsewhere in the past on the issue of youth restiveness no studies is known to have been undertaken on the challenge of youth restiveness and socio-economic development in Lafia metropolis Agnew's (1992) General Strain theory was adopted. The study was a survey, and findings revealed that the phenomenon of youth restiveness does impact negatively on the socio economic activities of Lafia

Metropolis. This corroborates the opinion of Vadackumchery (1998), Anasi (2010), and Abaka (2012) that a restive youth is potential threat to the economic potentials of any society.

The study concludes that youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis is due to societal responses, and is avoidable. Youth restiveness has negatively affected the economic fortune of Lafia and contributed to insecurity in the metropolis, beside stifling social life. The research is therefore a wakeup call on all to see the phenomenon of youth restiveness as a social problem that requires urgent and critical attention.

5

Recommendations

The study based on the findings makes the following recommendations.

Investment in education, entrepreneurship development, skills acquisition and employment generation for the youth is key in an effort to curb youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis. Researches show that once there is a reduced unemployment percentage of the youth, there is likely going to be a downward reduction in the frequency, volume and spontaneity of youth restiveness

Security agencies should synergize and enlist the cooperation of the public on security alertness in order to protect the economic sector of Lafia from activities of restive youth and other social vices. This would no doubt assure the business community in Lafia that their investments are protected and by extension, attract more businesses and economic ventures into Lafia

Government, in collaboration with the private sector and other stakeholders should develop a holistic approach to fight poverty thereby reducing the consequences that come with the scourge. This can be achieved through credit facilities to small scale business enterprises, establishment of vocational centers, and increased participation in the agricultural sector among others.

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