

YOUTHS' UNEMPLOYMENT AND RURAL CRIME IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA (2015 – 2023)

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ABSTRACT: This study focused on youths' unemployment and rural crime in Imo State. The study was conducted to determine the extent to which unemployment leads most youths to engage in criminal activities. Three research questions, three research objectives, and three research hypotheses guided that study. The researcher adopted anomie theory to analyse the subject matter. Some empirical studies were consulted and analysed. This study adopts a descriptive and qualitative research method. Based on that, only secondary data were collected through books and journals. The study concludes that Nigeria's development depends on the extent to which youths are well engaged in productive employment or ventures, thereby reducing crime. The study recommends that the Nigerian government should provide employment for the youths to make them positively engaged and reduce the incidences of kidnapping, armed robbery, and cultism. Additionally, there is a need for the reorientation of Nigerian youths through families, religious leaders, and the national orientation agency on the importance of acquiring skills and engaging in positive ventures, which will enable them to contribute positively to Nigeria's development and avoid all forms of crime.

Keywords: Youth Unemployment, Rural Crime, Kidnapping, Armed Robbery, Cultism

INTRODUCTION

One of the socio-economic problems facing the global world, which threatens the unity and progress of many countries today, is unemployment. This is true because unemployment as a social problem has continued to increase globally as the world population continues to increase (Ebbena & Johnson, 2016). In Nigeria, the issue of unemployment was not known during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. This is because people skilfully engaged in agriculture and trade to earn a living. There was little or no dependence on any formal institution. The challenge of unemployment became pronounced in Nigeria in the 1970s and has continued to increase since then. According to Eneji, Mai-Lafia and Weiping (2019), unemployment in Nigeria was not a serious problem before and after the civil war.

This is because skilled manpower was in short supply at the time, hence expatriates were recruited to fill some technical and professional jobs. However, the situation changed greatly from the late 1970s because of the increase in the number of educational institutions (secondary schools and higher institutions) that have continued to produce graduates, with much emphasis on government jobs and abandonment of agricultural occupation and government policies (Agu, 2017). According to Oye, Ibrahim, and Ahmad (2021), unemployment in Nigeria poses a significant challenge both

economically and socially. Unemployment in Nigeria has resulted in a growing number of people lacking purchasing power. Lower consumption has led to reduced production, and economic growth has been hindered.

Unemployment also has social consequences as it increases the rate of crime and deviant behaviour. Therefore, the major factor contributing to the high level of crime in Nigerian society today is unemployment. According to Chukwu (2010), the challenges of insecurity and crimes like the activities of Boko Haram, IPOB, Eastern security network, armed robbers, kidnapping, drug abuse, cultism, and so on are high because of the high level of unemployment in our society. Therefore, if the problem of unemployment could be drastically reduced, the problem of crime would be a thing of the past. This is because the majority of youths who engage in various criminal activities are those who lack serious employment opportunities; hence, the need for job creation. This study, therefore, focused on youths' unemployment and rural crime in Imo State, Nigeria (2015 – 2023).

Statement of the Problem

There is no gainsaying the fact that youth unemployment has become as pervasive as it is, a persistent problem in most of our rural communities, particularly in Nigeria as a whole. Most often, the youths graduate from either primary, secondary, or university levels without actually being gainfully employed. This social malady has constituted a serious concern to policy planners, the government, and the general public. Additionally, the various rural communities are also associated with the issue of rising crime levels. Hence, there is a need for this research to establish whether a relationship exists between the rising level of unemployment and crime in various rural communities.

There appears to be a paucity of research on the various factors that contribute to the rising and new dimensions of crime in our respective rural communities. For instance, crimes such as internet fraud, cultism, prostitution, kidnapping, and the like have reared their ugly heads in our different rural communities. One then wonders if it has anything to do with the level of unemployment, the changing nature of society, that is, modernisation, unbridled quest for materialism, or some other factors. It is against this backdrop that this research is anchored on youths' unemployment and rural crime in Imo State, Nigeria (2015 – 2023).

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine youths' unemployment and rural crime in Imo State, Nigeria (2015 – 2023). Specifically, the study is designed to:

1. determine the relationship between youth unemployment and kidnapping in Imo State,
2. examine the relationship between youth unemployment and armed robbery in Imo State; and
3. Find out the relationship between youth unemployment and cultism in Imo State.

Significance of the Study

This work will be both practical and theoretically beneficial to different categories of people.

Theoretical significance: Theoretically, the study will enable youths to understand the importance of avoiding crime and strive to be as productive as possible as members of society. Moreover, the study will contribute to reorienting parents on the importance of allowing their children to engage in entrepreneurship, thereby reducing crime and promoting development in Nigeria. Additionally, the results of this study will enable the government to invest more in human capital for reducing unemployment in our society. The government in this direction will understand the need to establish skill acquisition centres for youth entrepreneurship, grant loans and offer grants to young people, and encourage agricultural occupations for Nigeria's sustainable development, which will positively engage the youth and deter them from all kinds of crime.

Practical significance: The study will also be useful to further researchers, as it will enable them to gain a practical understanding of what has been covered and what remains to be covered on the subject matter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Unemployment

Like many social science concepts, unemployment is a phenomenon that has no universally accepted definition. The definitions normally depend on the researchers' environment, school of thought, and orientation. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the unemployed population comprises persons above a specified age who are available to, but do not provide labour for, the production of goods and services (Iwuji, 2020). When measured for a short reference period, it relates to all persons not in employment who would have accepted a suitable job or started an enterprise during the reference period if the opportunity had arisen, and who had actively sought ways to obtain a job or start an enterprise in the recent past. This definition rests on what can be termed the "labour force framework", which at any point in time classifies the working-age population into three mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories according to a specific set of rules.

The categories are: the employed, unemployed, and out of the labour force, where the former two categories constitute the labour force, i.e., essentially a measure of the supply of labour at any given time. A person is to be considered unemployed if they, during the reference period, simultaneously satisfy being:

- a) 'without work', i.e., was not in paid employment or self-employment as specified by the international definition
- b) 'currently available for work', i.e., was available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and
- c) 'seeking work', i.e., had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment (Olubukola, 2013).

To him, the ‘without work’ condition serves to distinguish between the employed and the unemployed, and thus guarantees that these are mutually exclusive categories of the working age population, whereas the latter two criteria separate the non-employed into the unemployed and the out of labour force. The purpose of the availability for work condition is to exclude individuals who are seeking work to start at a later date, and thus, it serves as a test of current readiness (Agu, 2017). The intention of the seeking work criterion is, on the other hand, to ensure that a person will have taken certain ‘active’ steps to be classified as unemployed. In this direction, we can state that unemployment means the opposite of employment; a condition of joblessness; and a situation where those who are capable of working and who are qualified (by law, age, custom, and other factors) to work cannot find a job or cannot get the kind of work they want.

Crime

Crime is like other concepts in social sciences, which have no generally accepted definition. According to Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2019), a crime is held to be an offence, which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority... for crime to be known as such, it must come to the notice of, and be processed through, an administrative system or enforcement agency. It must be reported and recorded by the police (or other investigator); it may then become part of criminal statistics; may or may not be investigated; and may or may not result in a court case. Ugwulebo (2011) defined crime as an act or omission against public interest and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation. It involves four major principles, which are public wrong, moral wrong, law, and punishment for the criminal.

It is all about offence against the state or people, including issues like kidnapping, robbery, killings and other unconstitutional acts. Crime is someone's or people's involvement in criminal and illegal activities against themselves, other people, or the state (Ubah, 2021). Crime is an unlawful act that contradicts the law. According to Ugwulebo (2011), there is no universally accepted definition of crime. All definitions of the concept depend on the author's background and profession. He defined crime as “an illegal behaviour or act punishable by law”. This is to say that any act or behaviour of a person that is contradictory to state law is a crime. Therefore, criminals commit crimes against the people and the State.

The crimes include kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, embezzlement of public funds, stealing, killing or murder, prostitution, internet fraud, and assault, among others.

Furthermore, crimes are criminal behaviour and activities that people, institutions, and organisations commit against others for personal advantage or gain. Anybody who commits a crime in a state may be arrested, persecuted, and punished by the officers of the criminal justice system. Crime is an act that is harmful to human beings and is committed knowingly or unknowingly by a person or group of persons (Chukwu, 2010). In all, crimes are behaviours and actions that violate accepted norms. Any person who commits such a crime is a criminal and such action is punishable by the law of the state. The laws are made to regulate human behaviour and

control the rate of crime in society; hence, there will be a state of anarchy if people's behaviour were not regulated by law.

Unemployment and Kidnapping

According to Murphy (2018), kidnapping is the taking away or transportation of a person against that person's will, usually to hold the person in false imprisonment, a confinement without legal authority. This may be done for ransom or in furtherance of another crime. Most unemployed youths are likely to engage in criminal activities, including kidnapping. For Osuala (2019), kidnapping occurs when a person without lawful authority physically moves, abducts, or seizes another person without that other person's consent, with the intent to use the abduction in connection with some other nefarious objective. According to Ugwulebo (2011:57), youths who are idle, unskilled, jobless, and alienated are more likely to take up arms in exchange for a small amount of money; they are also more likely to join any gang in the hope of gaining employment. It has been empirically proven that people opt for kidnapping because of two major reasons: greed and lack of employment.

These are two factors that can cause this mess: the provision of employment and stringent laws. However, the present government in Imo State does not see the need to create jobs for the jobless youths in the state. This is why Agu (2017) has argued that the problems of joblessness, idleness, poor economy, poverty, bad governance, and declining social and cultural value are the root causes of kidnapping. If somebody is gainfully employed, how can he think of risking his life by venturing into kidnapping and other crimes (Newsmagnet, December 2000)? The kidnapping menace started with the abduction of only expatriate staff of oil companies and demanded heavy ransoms for their release. As the practice gained momentum, most of the expatriate staff members closed their shops. The mass exodus of those expatriates has profound consequences on the oil industry. This is because most of the technical areas of oil exploration and production were staffed by skilled expatriate staff.

With their exit, several problems have begun to snowball in the industrial sector of the state (Ugwu, 2020). According to Ugwueze (2022), kidnapping has led to the collapse of several businesses, while others have been forced to relocate to more conducive environments. Kidnapping activities have forced many businesses to close shop while residents of Aba stayed indoors. It has also caused hiccups in the execution of several development projects in the state. A sequel to the above is that many people find it difficult to locate industry in any area where kidnapping is rampant. Investors see such areas as a hostile and insecure business environment. After all, no one would like to be a victim of losses or to be preyed upon. This is why people are most unwilling to invest or do business in these areas, as they are uncertain about the future.

Unemployment and Robbery

There are several reasons to suspect that the available evidence understates the effect of unemployment on robbery. Chronic youth unemployment has made many youths carry weapons and engage in robbery during the day and at night (Tanya, 2022). Young people engage in robbery because every year, thousands of graduates are produced, but there are no jobs for the majority of

them. Nigerian streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprise (Okafor, 2021). The large number of youths who are unemployed is capable of undermining democratic practice, as they constitute a serious threat if engaged by the political class for clandestine and criminal activities. The Nigerian robbery problem is multidimensional and has the potential to undermine its corporate existence as well as efforts towards sustainable development. The Nigerian corporate sector's existence and development can be undermined by several factors, among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem. Examining individual-level employment experiences and characteristics provides a more comprehensive understanding of how work at the individual level influences criminal behaviour.

Treating community and individual characteristics simultaneously as important predictors of criminal behaviour permits the separation of the individual and contextual effects through which labour markets influence crime. Unemployment appears to be the root cause of violence in Nigeria (Okafor, 2021). Research suggests that unemployed youths are disproportionately more likely to be perpetrators, as well as victims of crime and violence. The growing gap between the rich and the poor affects society through increased violence. The self-employed face a quandary, as limited infrastructure makes it impossible for them to ply their trade (Okafor, 2021). Robbery is on the increase across Nigeria, and the unemployed youths view the business as lucrative. They are available for recruitment by politicians. In the Northern part, they are recruited both by politicians and religious groups to be used in political, religious, and terrorist acts.

Unemployment and Cultism

Most youths who belong to different court groups are essentially unemployed (Nwaru, 2021). This is because youths of different ages, in most cases, want to identify themselves with other people for fraternity purposes. Various definitions have been given to the term cultism. The word "cultism" can be understood as the acts of individuals, groups, or parties displaying or engaging in violence usually for the sake of fraternity and other social reasons. Cultism is a state or condition of being combative or disposed to fight for a cause or belief.

It has also been defined as a violent response by an individual, group, or sect in a region, community, state, or nation due to claims of underdevelopment, political oppression, religious beliefs, and segregation. According to Ayinde (2018), the motive is that people want their rights. If they are not going to get it by negotiation, they simply will then have it by violence against the "powers that be." Ikeme (2016) defined militia as an organized group of people comparable to a military force. Ocho (2016) held the view that the contemporary sense of the term "militia" refers to a paramilitary force motivated by religious or political ideology.

Consequences of Unemployment and Crime in Nigeria

Empirical studies like that of Eneji, Ma-Lafia and Weiping (2013), Olubukola (2013), Alugbuo and Akpanabia (2013), and Osakwe (2013) have identified many consequences of unemployment and crime, including:

- a. **Poverty, unemployment, and inequality:** The three variables are consequences of each other. This means that anybody who does not have a job (unemployed) has the consequence of being poor. Not only that, but anybody poor and unemployed in most cases is marginalised in society; hence inequality (Ocho, 2016).
- b. **Insecurity:** Some scholars believe that a high level of unemployment, underdevelopment, poverty, and inequality in Nigeria are the major reasons for the Boko Haram insurgency, insecurity, and many other challenges. Not only that, but many scholars also believe that unemployment and inequality are the primary reasons for the country's high level of insecurity.
- c. **Prostitution:** Unemployment, poverty, and marginalisation are the major causes of female prostitution within Nigeria and other countries. In an effort to earn a living, some women go into prostitution in Nigeria (Tanya, 2022). Some even travel to other parts of the country for that purpose.
- d. **Brains drain:** Many Nigerians in the work of life have left the country for other countries because of the problem of unemployment, poverty, and inequality in Nigeria (Akangu, 2019). Some of them become the best brains and help in developing the country where they are; hence, having little or no contribution to Nigeria's development effort.
- e. **Weakness of development potentials:** Poverty, unemployment, and inequality reduce the level of development potential in Nigeria today. The selective outflows of capital and skilled manpower resources from poor to prosperous regions create an acute labour shortage for agricultural development and reduce the population threshold that can support economic investments in the former (Garba, 2020). Therefore, the ability of the poor regions to attract economic investments and basic infrastructural facilities to compete for development is greatly weakened due to the massive outmigration of the able-bodied people.
- f. **Over-population of the developed regions:** Poverty, unemployment, and inequality lead to over-population because people believe that if they cannot have a comfortable life, they can produce more children who will bear their name and assist them in their old age; hence, one of the children may be lucky and overcome the problem of poverty and therefore contribute well to the family. The influx of human resources from poor regions to rich regions will significantly increase the population sizes of the latter, thereby creating complex socio-economic problems, including unemployment, overcrowding in residential accommodation (Oyeleye, 2013), and undue pressure on transport networks, electricity, and other resources. A good example here is the urban centres in Nigeria (Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Port Harcourt, among others), which have a high number of youth population without jobs, and the majority of whom still cling to the cities, seeing menial jobs and committing crimes as alternatives.
- g. **Varying per capita income:** The per capita income of a particular region is one of the indicators of its affluence and prosperity. Economically depressed regions typically experience low per capita income, whereas more prosperous regions have relatively high per capita income. The accompanying effects on the former are a low standard of living, limited opportunities for self-development, and widespread poverty.

Means of Eradicating Unemployment and Crime in Nigeria

1. **The government should create a culture of industrial production and management in rural areas for rural needs:** Let each local government establish certain unique firms to produce the relevant needs of the community. It could be palm oil, rubber, cotton, skin, rice mill, and so on. The government should establish pilot schemes for viable and appropriate industries (Alugbuo & Akpanabia, 2013). Over 70% of Nigerians live in rural areas; rural development will help alleviate problems associated with urbanisation and, Ipso facto, reduce poverty. Income-generating projects should be encouraged by all concerned. A poverty alleviation programme that stresses the provision of credit/loan to micro-enterprises and access to loans for employment-generating projects is highly misplaced.
2. **Using both sides of the budget:** The government makes a budget for the expected money and expenditure, and the government can make a budget to favour those in the rural areas and also to improve their lives, like the provision of some amenities, infrastructures, and other things that make life meaningful (Heintz, 2015).
3. **Sectoral priorities:** This strategy provides priorities, which particularly favour the development of smaller holders in agriculture and other informal sectors over the formal sector.
4. **Factorial priority:** This favours labour intensity, employment creation, and economic development raised on the use of capital and foreign exchange (Joseph, 2022). Employment creation programmes are likely to be crucial in addressing poverty among groups without sufficient land, as well as the urban unemployed and underemployed.
5. **Rural development and land reform:** This is aimed at creating new productive employment and also at creating new productive employment and also raise the productivity of labour that is already employed in agriculture. In many African or third-world countries, the minimum income and standard of living (Ubah, 2021).
6. **Integration of sectoral planning with spatial planning:** Sectoral allocation of resources and a free market economy have been observed to not only lead to an increase in gross domestic product and national income but also widen the disparity among regions in terms of economic development (Nzelibe, 2016). In other words, while sectoral planning targets sectoral growth, spatial planning ensures development across regions. To correct this anomaly, therefore, a spatial allocation of resources should be employed to equitably distribute development funds among the various regions that comprise Nigeria.
7. **Good implementation of regional planning policies:** For regional disparity to be eliminated or at least reduced, regional planning as a midway between national and urban planning should be holistically implemented. This policy aims to ensure equity in the distribution of resources across the various regions that comprise the country. In this case, all regions are seen as an entity that should enjoy overall development rather than being selective.
8. **Integrated Rural Development:** Integrated rural development involves the development of a set of strategies that generate a series of qualitative and quantitative changes within a rural population through improved living conditions and increased production capacity, and also through the creation of social infrastructure necessary for increased production (Osuala, 2019). It encompasses activities such as mechanisation of agriculture, provision

of electricity, clean potable water, decent housing, marketing and storage facilities for farm products, improvement of networks of feeder and access roads, and the organization or re-organization of human settlements. Integrated rural development programmes are very numerous in Africa. Some examples are Tanzania's mechanised settlement scheme at Nachingwea, the Gezira and Zande Schemes in the Sudan, the Mwea Irrigation Scheme, as well as the Million Acres Settlement Scheme in Kenya, the Senegal River Valley, the Upper Valley Operation in Mali, and the Bandama Valley Authority in Côte d'Ivoire. Similar programmes were introduced in Nigeria in the past administration, but are ailing now. They include the River Basin Development Authority (RBDA), Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP), and Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), among others. Such programmes, if reinvented, will go a long way in addressing the issue of regional inequality.

Empirical Review

Okafor (2021) researched youth unemployment and its implications for the stability of democracy in Nigeria. The study was conducted due to the significant impact on democratic sustainability in Nigeria. The researcher employed a survey research design, and a questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentages.

Based on the data analysis, it was identified that youth unemployment is one of the major challenges to sustainable development in Nigeria. The issue has contributed to youth restiveness, including activities such as kidnapping, militancy, and terrorism. Despite its significant impact, the problem of youth unemployment has not been a primary focus of the Nigerian government.

Ugwu (2020) investigated the impact of entrepreneurship on poverty reduction in Isukwuato LGA, Abia State. The study was conducted to determine the impact of youth involvement in skill acquisition for unemployment reduction in the study area. Five research questions and five research objectives were formulated in line with the problem statement. A survey research design was adopted, as the questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The data collected from the study area were presented in a table and analysed using simple percentages and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result indicated that youth unemployment in Isukwuato has decreased due to increased youth involvement in skill acquisition. Additionally, entrepreneurship has a significant impact on employment and occupational engagement. Entrepreneurship also has a notable impact on poverty reduction. It is further recommended that the government and other stakeholders should encourage youth entrepreneurship to sustain these positive outcomes.

Ikeme (2016) researched the challenges and prospects of unemployment in Nigeria, focusing on Imo State as the case study. The study was conducted to identify the challenges of unemployment and the progress made in addressing the issue. Only secondary sources of data were used, and the researcher formulated three research questions, three objectives, and three hypotheses. The researcher employed structural functional theory, based on literature sources, and discovered that the major challenges of unemployment in Nigeria include prostitution, youth restiveness, poverty, hunger, and economic underdevelopment. The prospects of unemployment from 2011 – 2016

include the establishment of SURE-P, that is the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme, by the President Goodluck administration, and the employment of some youths in federal government establishments in 2015/2016 of the Buhari administration. This study recommends that, to reduce youth unemployment, Nigerian youths should be reoriented towards employment in agriculture that can empower them, thereby reducing unemployment in Nigeria.

Oye, Ibrahim, and Ahmad (2021) researched unemployment in Nigeria, examining its implications for the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the years. The researchers focused on the effects of unemployment on Nigeria's GDP; hence, only secondary data were sourced and used. An exploratory research design was employed, and the researchers used regression statistics to analyze the collected data. The researchers discovered that the high level of unemployment in Nigeria has negatively impacted the GDP, resulting in a high level of poverty, a low level of productivity in the sector, neglect of the agricultural economy, and high levels of imports/low export levels. They recommended that the Nigerian government should effectively create jobs and attract investors to enhance economic growth and reduce unemployment in Nigeria. The research gap here is that numerous studies have been conducted on entrepreneurship, unemployment, and related fields. Not only that, but many works have also been carried out on education-related disciplines. Most of the works were not centred on Imo State and higher institution students specifically, but there is no specific research study on the impact of entrepreneurship education in employment creation for tertiary institution graduates of Imo State; hence the need for this study.

Monsuru and Rafiu (2020) examined an alternative approach to policing for crime prevention in Nigeria, utilizing the community policing system. The study employed only secondary sources of data, utilizing an ex-post facto research design. The study examines the general philosophy of community policing and its implementation in Nigeria, aiming to identify areas of deficiency in its operation. In fulfilling the objectives of this study, the research explores the conceptual definition of community policing, analyzes community policing as an alternative security option, examines community policing practices in Nigeria, and recommends ways to meet the nation's security needs. It was recommended that community policy enhance the achievement of security objectives.

Agu (2017) researched community policing, crime, and the Nigerian Constitution and Police Act. The study used both secondary and primary sources of data. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument, and 50 staff of the Police Service Commission were used as the population/sample. The study found that community policing aligns with the Nigerian constitution and the Police Act; however, the operations and activities of vigilante groups often contradict the constitutional powers of the police and the group. The research recommends for better reorientation of vigilante group members.

Research Gap

Many researchers have been working on related areas of this work. The gap is that most of the past studies did not use the exact subject matter. The areas of coverage of this work differ from those covered by past research. The indices in the objectives also differ; hence the gap.

Theoretical Framework

Anomie Theory

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is the Anomie theory, as developed by Durkheim and Merton. Durkheim opted that the source of anomie is the collapse of the social structure caused by rapid social change (Wosu, 2013). The social structure normally regulates the infinite human drives. If the social structure collapses, these drives are no longer regulated. Thus, valid regulations and norms of behaviour lose their function, which eventually leads to deviant behaviour in one form or another. At the same time, Morton asserted that it is not the breakdown of the social structure that is responsible for anomie, but that anomie is an inherent part of a society itself. Anomie emerges when a society's culture prescribes specific goals to the majority of its members, but its social structures do not provide the legitimate means to achieve these goals for a portion of them. Hence, anomie results from the discrepancy between goals and means.

Justification of the Theory

Therefore, deviant behaviour or action (behaviour that is considered illegitimate by the respective society) is often caused by social pressure, as people are expected to reach certain goals but lack the means to do so. The predisposition to anomie depends on a person's specific position in a particular society, defined by age, sex, ethnicity, religion, etc. Anomie can occur at different systemic levels (i.e., within different subsystems to which an individual belongs) and can also vary in degree. This theory was employed because the system of abnormality/anomie in society led to the establishment of community policing, aiming to achieve internal security control within the society. It is therefore the abnormal problem, which includes armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping, Boko Haram, and other challenges (which are anomie in nature), that led to the establishment of community policing. In this direction, community policing is a product of anomie; hence, the theory was employed to analyse the subject matter.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive and qualitative research method. Based on that, only secondary data were collected through books and journals (ie, published information) and used for the study. The secondary data collected were discussed qualitatively.

Summary of findings

It was discovered that:

1. Youth unemployment contributes to kidnapping, armed robbery, and cultism in Imo State,
2. The consequences of unemployment and crime in Nigeria include poverty, unemployment and inequality, insecurity, prostitution, brain drain, weakness of development potentials, overpopulation of the developed regions, and varying per capita income.
3. Means of eradicating unemployment and crime in Nigeria include the government creating a culture of industrial production and management in rural areas for rural needs, using both

sides of the budget, sectoral priorities, factorial priority, rural development and land reform, integration of sectoral planning with spatial planning, good implementation of regional planning policies, and integrated rural development.

Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that the Nigerian state is fragile, weak, and/or soft with overdeveloped structures without commensurate functions. This situation has led to a high level of poverty, inequality, and youth unemployment. Poor youth engagement has also led to some of the youths engaging in crime and criminal ventures. Such crimes include, but are not limited to, kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, internet fraud, and many more. Crime committed by youths has therefore led to the collapse of several businesses, while others have been forced to relocate to more conducive environments. Crime activities have forced many businesses to close shop while residents of different cities stayed indoors.

It has also caused hiccups in the execution of several development projects in the state. A sequel to the above is that many people find it difficult to locate industry in any area where kidnapping is rampant. Investors see such areas as a hostile and insecure business environment. The Nigerian corporate existence and development can be undermined by a number of factors, among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem among the youths, which has negatively affected Nigerian society. This study concludes that Nigeria's development depends on the extent to which its youths are well engaged in productive employment or ventures, thereby reducing crime.

Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations:

1. The Nigerian government should employ the youths to make them positively engaged and reduce the incidences of kidnapping, armed robbery, and cultism.
2. There is a need for the reorientation of Nigerian youths through the families, religious leaders, and the national orientation agency on the need to learn skills and engage in positive ventures, which will enable them to contribute positively for Nigeria's development and avoid all kinds of crime.
3. There should be very stiff punishment for people who engage in all kinds of crime to serve as a good example to others.

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