

A critical assessment of the rising wave of criminal activity and perceptions of social work roles among Nigerian Youth

Nijeryalı Gençler arasında artan suç faaliyetleri dalgasının ve sosyal hizmet rollerine ilişkin algıların eleştirel bir değerlendirmesi

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Crime is an ongoing phenomenon since the existence of human beings and can be seen in every society. When left unchecked, it becomes worrisome and creates fear in people's minds and causes untold suffering. Especially in developing countries, crime is present in every society, regardless of its level of development, which even hinders the socio-economic development of countries. This study aims to focus on the recently increasing crime rates in Nigeria, especially among the youth, to reveal the possible causes of this alarming trend, to point out the impact on Nigerian society and the pursuit of socio-economic development when left unchecked, and then to propose solutions to this anomaly. **Methodology:** This study reads both social learning theory and cultural crime theory as a theoretical guide for the reader. A generative questionnaire design was used. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis were used to address the relationship between youth and crime in Nigeria. The Nigerian who manages to run this wins. The recruitment was from one thousand eight hundred (1800) youth selected from six (6) geopolitical regions in Nigeria, selected through a multifaceted recruitment technique that included purposeful, stratified and quota exploitation methods. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis and direct citations, while quantitative components were analyzed using microorganisms and inferential statistics. **Results:** The gender of participants was found that 66.7% were male and 33.3% were female. Also 20% of the responders are unemployed or graduates. The questions were asked on reasons for the rising numbers of crimes committed by youths, indicate to the not enough policies of the federal to ameliorate this, youth unemployment and ways this menace can be tackled. **Conclusion:** These results showed it discovered that unemployment and lack of meaningful empowerment by government, among others, are responsible for high crime rates among youths. It recommends urgent efforts on the part of government to gainfully engage unemployed youths for decent means of livelihood while pointing mostly commensurate penalties and proper rehabilitation/mentorship to perpetrators of crimes to serve as deterrent to others.

Key Words:

Crime, Nigerian Youth, Criminal Activities, Young Unemployment, Criminal Justice Social Worker

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Suç, Nijeryalı Gençler, Suç Faaliyetleri, Genç İşsizliği, Ceza Adaleti Sosyal Hizmet Uzmanı

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DOI:

10.52880/
sagakaderg.1222056

Received Date/Gönderme Tarihi:

20.12.2022

Accepted Date/Kabul Tarihi:

11.01.2023

Published Online/Yayımlanma Tarihi:

01.03.2023

ÖZ

Amaç: Suç, insanoğlunun varoluşundan bu yana süregelen bir olgudur ve her toplumda görülebilir. Kontrol edilmediğinde endişe verici bir hal alır ve insanların zihninde korku yaratır, anlatılmamış acılara da neden olur. Özellikle gelişmekte olan ülkelerde ülkelerin sosyo-ekonomik gelişimini engellemeye kadar varan suç gelişmişlik düzeyine bakılmaksızın her toplumda mevcuttur. Bu çalışma, Nijerya'da özellikle gençler arasında son zamanlarda artan suç oranlarına odaklanmayı, bu endişe verici eğilimin olası nedenlerini ortaya koymayı, kontrol edilmediğinde Nijerya toplumu ve sosyo-ekonomik kalkınma arayışı üzerindeki etkisine işaret etmeyi ve ardından bu anomaliye çözüm önerileri sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. **Metodoloji:** Bu çalışma hem sosyal öğrenme teorisini hem de kültürel suç teorisini teorik bir rehber olarak kullanmaktadır. tanımlayıcı bir anket tasarımı kullanılmıştır. Nijerya'da gençlik ve suç arasındaki ilişkiyi ele almak için çalışmada hem nicel hem de nitel analiz kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın evrenini Nijeryalı gençler oluşturmaktadır. örneklem, amaçlı, tabakalı ve kota örnekleme yöntemlerini içeren çok aşamalı örnekleme tekniği ile seçildi ve Nijerya'daki altı (6) jeopolitik bölgeden seçilen bin sekiz yüz (1800) gençten alındı. Nicel veriler, tanımlayıcı ve çıkarımsal istatistikler kullanılarak analiz edilirken, nitel veriler, içerik analizi ve doğrudan alıntılar kullanılarak analiz edildi. **Bulgular:** Katılımcıların cinsiyetinin %66,7'sinin erkek, %33,3'ünün kadın olduğu saptanmıştır. Ayrıca yanıt verenlerin %20'si işsiz veya mezundur. Gençler tarafından işlenen suçların artmasının nedenleri, federalin bunu iyileştirmeye yönelik politikalarının yeterli olmadığına, genç işsizliğine ve bu tehdidin üstesinden gelinme yollarına ilişkin sorular soruldu. **Sonuçlar:** Çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlar işsizliğin ve hükümet tarafından anlamlı bir şekilde güçlendirilmemesinin, özellikle gençler arasındaki yüksek suç oranlarında etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlar doğrultusunda hükümetin, özellikle işsiz gençler arasındaki işsizliğe bir çözüm getirmesi önerilirken, diğerlerine ise caydırıcı olması için suç işleyenlere çoğunlukla orantılı cezalar ve uygun rehabilitasyon / mentorluk verilmesini önermektedir.

INTRODUCTION

Criminal activities are social problem which disturbs the social worker and the need to proffer solutions. There is no denying that the recent uptick in crime throughout the nation is concerning. There are a number of security issues that affect every part of the nation. Increasingly frequent violent crimes like terrorism, abduction, armed robberies and banditry, suicide bombings, religious killings, ethnic confrontations, politically motivated killings, and other criminal acts are becoming a norm for life in the country.

The problems of crime among Youths in the country seem to have grown beyond government capacity. Various Nigerian scholars have argued or pointed out some factors that are responsible for the spate of crimes in Nigeria to include poverty, unemployment, declining income and low savings which has pushed many retrenched people into a struggle for survival, high rate of inflation, and political intolerance on the part of the ruling parties.

Thus the researcher aims to proffer solutions to these questions

- What are the nature and causes of crimes being perpetrated among Nigerian youths?
- What is the implication on sustainable security for Nigerian Society?
- What has been government policies been in tackling this worrisome menace?
- What are the roles of Social workers in the fight against the growing crime rates among Nigerian youths?

THE FIGHT AGAINST THE GROWING CRIME RATES AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

Crime In Nigeria

Nigeria's crime rate has grown to alarming proportions. Nigeria might be said to have a crime problem in light of the deteriorating crime situation and the inefficiency of the crime control mechanisms. Nigeria, one of the world's developing nations, is plagued by escalating crime waves, criminal ambitions, and various degrees of delinquency. Since the 1980s, Nigeria has shown on maps of worldwide crime (1). Armed robbery, murder, rape, car theft, burglary, fraud, bribery, and corruption, as well as adulteration of food and drugs, gambling, smuggling, human trafficking, kidnapping, and other unlawful operations are among the crimes that fall under this category. A "training school" for armed robbery for unemployed youngsters was reportedly operating in the Lagos neighborhood of Ajegunle. According to

that source, the aforementioned training school teaches students how to coordinate attack plans, launch attacks, and flee with the booty. They are between the ages of 18 and 28 years old. Additionally, recruit interviews are held within the training facility. It was also made known that the training school is where the thieves organize their raid strategy and learn how to use various firearms and ammo. The suspects were apprehended while practicing techniques on a number of the homes that would be the target of this week's raids during their morning training session (2). Sadly, there are reports of crimes, usually committed by young people, almost everywhere in the nation. The nation's daily life is now deeply ingrained with crime.

Conceptualizing Youths And Crime

Youth is described by the United Nations as "a period of transition from the reliance of childhood to the independence of adulthood." Youth is a more fluid category than other established age groupings. Apart from utilizing age as a category, youth are defined by comparable emotional behavior patterns, odd thinking, and attitude, and their responses to problems differ significantly from those of other categories. However, age is the most straightforward method to categorize this group, particularly in connection to education, work, and particular character traits. Without regard to other definitions by member states, the term "youth" for statistical purposes refers to the group of people. Nonetheless what constitute and define 'youth' has evolved over time.

One of the most important things Secretary Kurt Waldheim pointed out when conceptualizing youth is that the term "youth" differs in many countries around the world. According to UNICEF, adolescents are those between the ages of 10 and 19; according to the WHO, young people are those between the ages of 10 and 24; and according to UNFPA, young people are those between ages 15 and 24.

The definition of crime is as ambiguous as that of other social science terms. "A crime is regarded to be an offence, which goes beyond the personal and into the public realm, breaking prohibitory regulations or laws, to which valid consequences or sanctions are connected, and which necessitates the intervention of a public authority;" (3). Crime needs to be detected and dealt with by an administrative system or law enforcement agency in order to be recognized as such. It must be reported and documented by the police, after which it may or may not be investigated, and become a part of criminal statistics, and result in a court case.

Crime is governed by four major principles; public wrong, moral wrong, law, and punishment for the

criminal. Crime is also considered as a breach of the social norms that everyone in the community has agreed to uphold, for which the community as a whole imposes punishment on the offender.

The Concept Of Unemployment

The definition of unemployment appears to be in agreement. Simply expressed, the term “unemployment” refers to the state of those without jobs (4). The labor force of a nation is defined by the National Bureau of Statistics (5) as a group of persons or citizens willing and able to devote their time to finding gainful employment at any given time. The unemployed are defined as people who are not employed but are looking for work at the time of any study. Scholars have recognized a number of different types of unemployment. These include structural, cyclical, frictional, and seasonal unemployment (1, 6).

Youth Unemployment In Nigeria

The National Unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009, as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics (5, 7), revealed that the number of unemployed people was 13.1% in 2000, 13.6 % in 2001, 12.6 % in 2002, 14.8 % in 2003, 13.4 % in 2004, 11.9 % in 2005, 13.7 % in 2006, 14.6 % in 2007, 14.9 % in 2008, and 19.4 % in 2009. Regarding age, the research reveals that as of March 2009, in Nigeria, 41.6% of those between the ages of 15 and 24 and 17% of those between the ages of 25 and 44 were unemployed. In addition, 14.8 percent of people with only primary education, 23.8 percent of those with only secondary school, and 21.3 percent of people with only higher education were unemployed. 21.0 and 22.3 percent of people with less than a primary education and those who never attended school were unemployed, respectively.

According to Osawe (8), Nigeria has experienced an encouraging growth rate of 7% annually since 2001, but the country’s crippling high unemployment rates continue to have a significant negative impact on its socioeconomic prospects. Most of sub-Saharan Africa lacks reliable data on this count, although Abuja acknowledges that in 2007 there were 70% of the population without jobs. Since then, the Federal Government has updated the statistic to reflect fresh World Bank findings, bringing it down to little under 29 percent. Despite the staggering percentage decline, there are still more than 40 million unemployed people in the 148 million-person nation.

The Concept Of Crime And Criminality

Different viewpoints have been used to define crime by academics and social scientists. As a result, academia has

struggled for years to come up with a general definition of the idea. Tambari and Imoh-Ita (9) offered a more thorough definition when she stated that a crime or offence (or criminal offence) is an act that causes injury to a community, society, or the state in addition to some individual or individuals, calling it “a public wrong”. It refers to behaviors that are against the law, offenses against the state, such as murder, theft, evading arrest, driving while intoxicated, and possessing or selling illegal drugs; an act of a single person acting from a personal motive; or may be organized activity where gangs of mobsters seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the general public; and finally, it refers to behaviors that are against political or moral principles (10). Crime can be linked to the creation of groups by people with similar interests in order to build a strong network. Babalola, for instance, notes that “terrorism, drug use, and cultism all have an unbreakable connection to one another. Once a person becomes dependent on a specific brand of drug, he develops a craving for it and develops an easy bond with anyone who also holds the same psychosomatic beliefs. Together, they create organizations with clear objectives. They use a variety of weapons, including broken bottles, knives, cudgels, and more recently, firearms and handguns, to carry out their coordinated aims.

It is particularly important for this social work study to concentrate on the Non-Killing Theory because of the nature of crime incidents in Nigeria. This theory describes the “framework for research and action involving conscious efforts that are made to comprehend the practices, policies, institutions, cultures, politics, and behaviors that promote killing of humans and non-humans in society and to assess what is needed to transition from a killing state to a none killing one.” Understanding the acts and attitudes that drive crime would ideally encourage a culture of non-killing, which would significantly advance human rights. The theory is anticipated to direct policy and individuals’ and institutions’ cultural, political, and socioeconomic conduct in the direction of establishing a non-killing society (11). When the forces that fuel armed banditry, physical and structural violence, competition for power and resources, jealousy, and social inequities are reduced, non-killing can be achieved and sustained. It is critical to pinpoint the causes of violent fatalities in order to comprehend why and how people become involved in violent acts in order to reduce crime-related homicides. Crime poses a threat to a country’s economic, political, and social security and is a major contributor to underdevelopment because it deters both domestic and foreign investment, lowers the standard of living, destroys human and social capital, ruins relationships between citizens and the states, and undermines

democracy, the rule of law, and a nation's capacity to foster development.

Youth Unemployment And Criminality

When compared to unemployment, the function that work plays in people's lives may be simply comprehended. The majority of people work to support themselves, to make money, and to feel accomplished, according to Uddin (11). In other words, having a job helps one feel needed, wanted, and happy by society. Unemployment is the opposite. Not only does it immediately dehumanize the victim, but it also makes him or her a burden on society. According to Uddin (11), youth unemployment may be characterized as the collection of young people from a variety of backgrounds who are ready and competent to work but are unable to do so or find the kind of occupation for which they have been trained and are proud of their field of expertise. Such a circumstance has strong socioeconomic ramifications that have the potential to erode and harm the moral foundations of the young people and society involved (10). Because it is one of the cheapest options available to young people in unpalatable situations in countries with flawed social ideals, there is a symbolic connection between teenage unemployment and criminality in this context.

Due to the severity of youth unemployment in Nigeria, some young people have a tendency to compromise their moral code in order to provide for their fundamental needs. These groups of young people frequently view themselves as the "lost generation" and experience psychological dejection over their inability to make a positive contribution to society. Due to this circumstance, adolescent crime such as armed robbery, murder, assassination, and arson has increased (10).

An analysis of police crime records in Nigeria between 2006 and 2012 revealed 2,184 cases of kidnapping. It is seen that these kidnapping cases are especially carried out by unemployed youth in the country. (12). This heinous crime is seen as a means of earning ransom, especially by the unemployed youth in the country (13). It can be said that the most important reason for this is the failure of the government to effectively manage employment at local, state and federal levels in the country. In short, the lack of proper execution of policies related to unemployment in the country pushes unemployed youth to crime.

The Role Of Criminal Justice Social Worker

Criminal justice social workers or forensic social workers are often the professionals who assist clients in the criminal justice system, such as criminals and their families. They may work with prisoners, recently

exonerated felons, or individuals chosen for specialized secondary prevention or intervention programs like drug court. Social workers are in charge of locating the rehabilitation programs that the criminal justice system originally planned to provide through prisons or to assist families who have been adversely affected by an offender's activities (14).

Unmet social, emotional, financial, psychological, or developmental requirements are the main causes of criminal behavior. To determine the underlying problems that led a client to your clinic, you would probably undertake psychosocial assessments. Then, you will work with them to identify the resources required to address those needs. Through case management, home visits, the development of life skills, and coping skill training, a criminal justice social worker assists their clients in resolving these problems (15).

Working with those who are affected by an individual's incarceration may likewise be charged against you. This can involve conducting abuse and neglect assessments, organizing the placement of displaced children outside of their homes, advocating on their behalf in court, or organizing the adoption of convicts' children by other family members. Additionally, you might help connect clients who used to depend on the now-incarcerated person's income with financial and basic needs services (16).

The daily responsibilities of a criminal justice social worker vary depending on where in the system they are allocated. You would most likely be a member of an interdisciplinary team that includes judges, attorneys, court advocates, probation and parole officers, and other assisting professionals if you work in a court diversion program like Drug Court. If you work in a correctional prison, you might lead psycho-educational groups for inmates that concentrate on building anger management or coping skills, job preparedness, and addressing addictions in order to assist them get ready for life after release. You might even find yourself arguing for your client in front of a judge or testifying as an expert witness in court. Being an advocate for those in society who have long been ignored, rejected, or forgotten is one of the most fulfilling aspects of forensic social work (17).

METHOD

To get the perceptions of the general public as regards the subject matter of this project, the researcher produced 1800 copies of the questionnaire and was randomly distributed. A sample of 1800 respondents was selected randomly as participants using purposive sampling technique from the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. In each of the selected geo-political zones, availability and

willingness to respond were the overriding factors used as criteria for inclusion in the sample. The population of this study is drawn from youths from all works of life from the six geo-political zones of Nigeria who were randomly selected in order to have multiple opinions on issues related to social problems of youth unemployment and criminality.

Out of the 1800 copies of the questionnaires administered by the researcher, 1760 copies were retrieved and found usable for analysis with a response rate of 97.8%. The main part of the questionnaire comprised 20 questions to be answered in Likert scale format in which responders specify their level of agreement to a statement.

This study was carried out in six (6) different geo-political zones in Nigeria namely: the North Central (NC), North West (NW), North East (NE), South West (SW), South East (SE) and South (SS) to give adequate representation of Nigeria. Responders were drawn randomly from all works and spheres of life and drawn from a wide range of age brackets with the least age being 18.

For the Primary data for this study, questionnaires as the major research instrument were used by the researcher Within the scope of the research, 1760 questionnaires, which were considered to be suitable from the questionnaires collected from 1800 participants, were included in the analysis. The survey participation rate is 97.8%. The questionnaire consists of 20 statements in 5-point Likert type (1-strictly disagree, 5-strictly agree). In the research, information on socio-demographic characteristics was also collected from the participants and the participants were informed about the confidentiality of the research. In this context, it can be said that ethical principles were complied with in the research.

Secondary data within the scope of the research were collected from police crime records, statistical records and print media sources. In this context, content analysis was used to analyse the records (18).

The data obtained within the scope of the research were analysed using SPSS package programme. Descriptive statistical methods were used for this purpose. In addition, parametric analyses were performed in order to ascertain causes of youth criminality in Nigeria.

RESULTS

In line with the findings obtained in the study, it was found that the ages of the participants were between 18-54 years and the average age was 36 years. When the gender of the participants was analysed, it was found that 66.7% were male and 33.3% were female.

As regards the occupational distribution of respondents, data collated from the 1760 returned questionnaires showed that 20% of the responders are unemployed or graduates, 12% were Artisans who specialized in skilled work. 18% were students or schooling, 10.6% are Civil Servants at Federal, State and Local Government levels respectably. 13.6% engaged in Private practice i.e. law, architecture or Laboratory Sciences. 6.8% were Religious Priest, 6.5% were security personnel, 7.5% were into Business and Commercial, while 5% were staff of private establishments.

Analysing the educational attainment of the respondents, it was observed that 24.4% of the respondents had an educational qualification below tertiary education at the time of the study. The findings also showed that a significant proportion of the respondents (75.6 per cent) had at least a first university degree or a Higher National Diploma.

As regards the marital status of responders, majority of the responders (57.7%) were married, 28.7% were single, 5% were widows/widowers and 8.5% were divorced. Thus most of the responders are married.

Questions were asked on reasons for the rising numbers of crimes committed by Youths, its causes, the policies of the federal to ameliorate this, youth unemployment and ways this menace can be tackled.

Table 1 shows that 492 responders representing 27.9% of the sample population strongly agree to the assertion that the desire for the finer things in life is a driving force for criminality among Nigerian Youths, 560 representing 31.8% agree with this assertion, with 418 representing 23.7% undecided, 241 representing 13.6% disagreeing with the assertion and 49 representing 2.7% of the responders strongly disagreeing.

Table 2 above shows that 805 of the sample population representing 45.9% strongly agree with the assertion that poor home bringing plays a major role in encouraging criminality among Nigerian Youths, 567 representing 32.2% of the population agree with the assertion, 118 representing 5.7% of the sample population are undecided with a further 231 representing 13.1% disagreeing and 39 representing 2.2% strongly disagree with the assertion.

Table 3 shows responder's opinion on the role of poverty on criminality among Nigerian Youths with 805 responders representing 45.7% strongly agreeing with the assertion, 119 representing 6.7% strongly disagreeing with the assertion while a further 128 representing 7.2% were undecided. Meanwhile 464 representing 26.3% agree while 231 representing 13.1% disagree with the fore assertion.

Table 1. Shows responder’s opinion as regards the desire for the finer things of life as a driving force for criminality among Nigerian Youths

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Responders	49 (2.7%)	241 (13.6%)	418 (23.7%)	560 (31.8%)	492 (27.9%)

Table 2. Shows responders opinion to the assertion that poor home training is a leading cause to Youth criminality in Nigeria

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Responders	39 (2.2%)	231 (13.1%)	118 (6.7%)	567 (32.2%)	805 (45.9%)

Table 3. Reveals responders opinion on the role of Poverty on criminality among Nigerian Youths

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Responders	119 (6.7%)	231 (13.1%)	128 (7.2%)	464 (26.3%)	805 (45.7%)

Table 4 above reveals that 691 representing 39.2% of the sample population strongly agree with the researcher’s assertion that Peer Pressure is a major cause of the growing youth criminality in Nigeria. A further 514 representing 29.2% agreed with the assertion, 228 representing 12.9% were undecided, 219 representing 12.4% disagree with this assertion while 108 representing 6.1% strongly disagreed with this postulation.

Respondents were able to identify the following as other cause of Youth Criminality in Nigeria apart from those captioned in the Questionnaire.

Responders identified Population Growth as a salient cause of growing criminality among Nigeria Youths as it borders down on job scarcity with percentile distribution as follows, 879 responders representing 49.9% of the sample population strongly agreeing to this narrative. 670 representing 38.0% of responders agreed, 118 representing 6.7% were undecided, 61 representing 3.4% Disagreed while 32 representing 1.8% Strongly Disagreed. A growth in population causes a strain on the already scarce job opportunities available for the Youths. Universities are churning out graduates at an alarming rate while Government has failed to provide adequate employment opportunities to Youths. This doesn’t look like slowing down as the population growth of Nigeria

is expected to surge with a 2.55% increase from 2020 (MacroTrends.net).

Another salient cause identified by responders is Inflation and the high cost of living. 841 representing 47.7% responders expressed Strong Agreement to this posit, 420 representing 23.8% of responders agreed to this posit, 167 representing 9.4% responders were undecided, 220 representing 12.5% of the sample population Disagreed with this posit while 112 representing 6.3 Strongly Disagreed to this Posit. The inflation rate of Nigeria was 15.99% as of October 2020 as against 13.25% in 2020, 11.4% in 2019 and 12.09% in 2018 (TheCable.net)

The quest for better life, access to better education and the search better health care facilities has seen a massive movement of Youths from rural settlements to urban settlements. This has been identified by responders as another salient cause of Youth criminality in Nigeria. Shortage of job opportunities, high cost of bills in urban areas growing demands of dependents have driving Youths into crime. 135 representing 7.6% of responders Strongly Disagreed with this assertion, 219 representing 12.4% of responders Disagreed with this assertion, 300 representing 17.0% of responders were Undecided, 369 representing 20.9% of the sample population Agreed

Table 4. Represents responders take Peer Pressure as a major cause of growing crime among Nigerian Youths

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Responders	108 (6.1%)	219 (12.4%)	228 (12.9%)	514 (29.2%)	691 (39.2%)

Table 5. Shows other percentile causes of crimes among Nigerian Youths as identified by the responders

Causes of Criminality among Nigerian Youths	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Population Growth	32 (1.8%)	61 (3.4%)	118 (6.7%)	670 (38.0%)	879 (49.9%)
Inflation and High cost of living	112 (6.3%)	220 (12.5%)	167 (9.4%)	420 (23.8%)	841 (47.7%)
Rural to Urban Migration	135 (7.6%)	219 (12.4%)	300 (17.0%)	369 (20.9%)	737 (41.8%)
Nepotism	15 (0.8%)	41 (2.3%)	187 (10.6%)	698 (39.6%)	819 (46.5%)
Corruption	69 (3.9%)	34 (1.9%)	62 (3.5%)	520 (29.5%)	1075 (61.0%)
Embargo on Recruitment by the Federal Government	117 (6.6%)	184 (10.4%)	111 (6.3%)	720 (40.9%)	628 (35.6%)
Foreign Cultures	208 (11.8%)	301 (17.1%)	204 (11.5%)	412 (23.4%)	635 (36.0%)

with this postulation while a further 737 accounting for 41.8% of responders Strongly agreed with this assertion.

Nepotism is said to be a practice usually among those with power or influence of favoring relatives or friends (allies, party faithful) especially by giving them jobs (Oxford Languages). This is a common practice in Nigeria with many denied job opportunity because they have no one in authority or any affiliation to a top government official. 15 responders representing 0.8% Strongly Disagreed with this position, 41 representing 2.3% of responders Disagree with this postulation, 187 representing 10.6% responders were Undecided, 698 accounting for 39.6% of responders Agree and a further 1075 amounting for 46.5% of responders Strongly Agreed to this assertion.

As regards Corruption, 1075 representing 61.0% of responders Strongly affirm this posit, 69 representing 3.9% of the sample population Strongly dispute this posit, while 62 representing 3.5% of responders were undecided. A further 34 representing 1.9% disagree with this assertion while 520 accounting for 29.5% agree with this assertion. Corruption is said to be a dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery (Oxford Languages). According to a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2019 survey and report assert that more than 63% of Nigerian citizens have come in contact with at least one public official and about 30% of paid at least one bribe either in cash, food items and valuables (UNODC 2019). This gives a sense of the state of affairs in the nation. To be able to secure jobs, one must be willing to pay or bribe his or her way except for grace.

Federal Government of Nigeria in May 2020 placed an embargo on employment amid soaring wage

bill (Saharareporters.com). This has in no little way increased the shortage of jobs and opportunities. This adversely means Youths have to look elsewhere in an attempt to survive and meet their needs. 117 responders representing 6.6% Strongly disagree with this assertion, 111 representing 6.3 % of responders were undecided and 628 accounting for 35.6% of responders Strongly agree with this assertion. A further 720 representing 40.9% responders Agree with this assertion while 184 representing 10.4% responders Disagree with this position.

Responders pointed influence of foreign cultures as reason for Youth Criminality in Nigeria as represented by the following percentile representation. 208 representing 11.8% responders strongly disputed this assertion, 301 representing 17.1% responders disagree with the assertion, 204 representing 11.5% responders were undecided, 412 representing 23.4% responders Agree with this assertion while a further 635 representing 36.0% of responders Strongly affirmed this assertion.

CONCLUSION

In an environment of violent crime, no country can grow. Nigeria's government must have a role in developing policies and laws that would increase the economic and social well-being of its citizens while also deterring criminality. There is a pressing need for more jobs to be created through small businesses and poverty alleviation programs. Economic growth is not the sole way to reduce unemployment in Nigeria, as government figures show that earlier unemployment did not slow down economic progress. Other options, such as providing children with the necessary skills, should be prioritized. According to the findings, feelings of deprivation cause frustration, which can be expressed through aggression. As a result, if the reasons that cause youth unemployment in Nigeria are addressed, violent crimes will decrease.

From all indications, lowering youth unemployment will lead to a reduction in crime and long-term national growth. Youths are an important part of society who should be encouraged to redirect their energies toward national development by being actively involved in the system and prevented from engaging in activities that are harmful to the country's growth. As a result, any move taken to increase adolescent employment is a step toward reducing crime and improving national development.

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