

# Effect of Economic Empowerment on Youth Restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *The study examined the economic empowerment and youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to determine the effect of employment, education, recreation and social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba. The study adopted descriptive survey design. This study was conducted in Aba, Abia State Nigeria. The metro population of Aba is put at 1,230,407, according to Google (2024). However, following Ekwueme (2014), the population of the youth in Aba is about sixty (60%) percent of the entire population. Hence, 60% of 1,230,407 (Aba population) is 738,244.2. On the strength of this, the population of the study, which makes up the youths is 738,244. With a known population, the sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamane statistical formula. We adopted simple random sampling techniques. Structured questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. The data were analyzed with descriptive statistics such as mean, simple percentage and frequency, and the result shows that all the economic empowerment variables have positive effect on youth restiveness. The four stated hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regression model and the result revealed*

*that, there is significant effect of employment, education and recreation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State. However, there is no significant effect of social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria. In conclusion, economic empowerment significantly affects youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria. We, therefore, recommended that the government should create jobs to give employment to job seekers as a way of keeping them busy and out of idleness, because an idle brain they say, is the devil's workshop. Also, entrepreneurship skills acquisition training that produces skilled manpower, innovative and self-reliant citizens should be part of youth trainings than resorting to the palliative and unsustainable approach to attacking hunger, among others.*

**Key words:** economic empowerment, youth restiveness, education, employment, recreational activities, and social orientation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is currently experiencing extraordinary challenges that are adversely affecting national growth and development. One of these challenges to national development is high rate of insecurity of life and property caused by youth restiveness (Ekwueme, 2014). Indeed, this social vice known as youth restiveness in the country has been at increase and works against the social, political, economic and academic progress since the beginning of the new millennium. Nigerian youths are involved and most often, the architects of violent crises that are carried out in various parts of the country, attributed to social, economic, political, ethnic or religious motives. Youth restiveness in Nigeria is not a new thing, in the past, it was either the economically motivated Niger Delta militants in the South-South geopolitical milieu as well as the Tiv Youth Organization (TYO), in the north central region, and Area boys and girls activities in major cities particularly Lagos, All started through agitations due to unemployment, deprivation of one need or the other, and bad governance. Today, youth restiveness is in a greater height such as the Boko Haram insurgence in North East which has spread to almost every part of Nigeria, the new wave of ritual killings and kidnapping with the associated ransom payment in every part of the country and many others. In all these, many lives and properties of uncountable and unquantifiable value are lost as a result of youth restiveness. This social problem has reached a critical stage, and no meaningful growth can occur in the midst of these crises. Growth is a function of people plus peace plus progress, no society can be said to have attained growth or is growing when the majority of its citizenry are restive or where the security of its people are being threatened by violently armed agitators. The situation is worsened considering the fact that the youths who are involved constitute over 60% of the national population. Social critics and political analysts are of the view that Nigeria is sloping toward a ferias due to the inability of those in authority to honestly and carefully manage this social menace (Ekwueme, 2014). Youth restiveness results to political instability, general insecurity of lives and properties and also works against economic growth as it hampers investments from local and foreign investors. Youth restiveness is a social problem that has grave consequences on the overall national growth in Nigeria. This problem has almost displaced Aba from the place of pride

it occupied as the “Japan of Africa” due to several unrests that had adversely affected every facet of life in Aba, and made industrialists as well as big businesses to flee from the city in search of better enabling environment for their businesses. Those in governance appear to be insensitive to youth development and empowerment programmes and this seem to have throne our youths into the dungeon of unemployment, inadequate skill acquisition programme, poor funding of education, inadequate recreational facilities where the youths could ease off stress and engage in one sporting activity or the other. It also appears that poor implementation of existing youth programmes and inconsistent social orientation to educate the public especially our teaming young ones on the policies and activities of the government, might lead them to indulge in youth restiveness in Aba just like any other city or state in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to determine the effect of economic empowerment in curbing youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the effect of employment on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria
2. Ascertain the effect of education on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria
3. Evaluate the effect of recreation on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria
4. Investigate the effect of social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria

The research questions raised to guide the conduct of the research are:

1. What is the effect of employment on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria?
2. What is the effect of education on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria?
3. What is the effect of recreation on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria?
4. What is the effect of social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba., Abia State, Nigeria?

The hypotheses of the study are formulated in null (Ho) forms as follows:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: Employment has no significant effect on youth restiveness Aba., Abia State, Nigeria
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: Education has no significant effect on youth restiveness Aba., Abia State, Nigeria
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: Recreation has no significant effect on youth restiveness restiveness Aba., Abia State, Nigeria.
- Ho<sub>4</sub>: Social orientation has no significant effect on youth restiveness Aba., Abia State, Nigeria

## **Theoretical Review**

Many scholars have attempted to explain the problem of youth restiveness using various theories. This study presents some of these theories as follows:

### **Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT)**

According to American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (AJHSSR) (2018) and J.W. Ryan, cited in Duke, et al (2017), the relative deprivation theory was articulated by Samuel Stouffer and his colleagues – Edward, et al in their book, while studying the social psychology of soldiers during the Second World War, to explain series of unexpected relationships between feelings of satisfaction and one's position in the army. They hinted that the theory of relative deprivation assumes that individuals or groups feel relatively deprived when there is an inconsistency between their expectations and outcome. The individuals or groups are able to identify the differences due to the availability of references for comparison because there are some persons who have what they (the restive group) require, and they know getting what they want is realistic, but it can only be taken by force through violence. They identified four preconditions of relative deprivation (involving object A and person X). These preconditions include:

1. Person X does not have A
- 2 Person X knows of other persons who have A (what he needs)
3. Person X wants to have A
4. Person X believes obtaining A is realistic.

Consequently, they experience feeling of deprivation and apply all the resources they can muster to remove everything that is a blockade to their expectation (Offiong, 1980). These resources they muster are their youthful energy which should have been deployed for positive productivity should they have been economically empowered, and the use of dangerous weapons to perpetrate violence, kidnapping, vandalizing of oil pipelines, armed robbery, indiscriminate bombing and killing of innocent citizens, terrorism, etc.

**Entrepreneurship Skill Development:** An initiative to change the attitude of Youth in an Underpowered Society. In the paper presented at Rivers State Higher Education summit at Portharcourt on March 2-3 2006, Ogwo in (Agu, et al (2024)pointed that among the youths, the feeling of helplessness are obvious, and this makes our situation potentially most critical. He lamented that if our youths who are the hope for a better tomorrow confront the present and look onto the future with indifference, what else is left? He also asserted that it could be said that our young people are right to adopt this attitude of indifference and to demonstrate through various means their loss of hope for the future due to the prevailing careless attitude of the political class to the needs of the entire people predominantly the youths. And that any interaction with our young

people especially in our various institutions, will receive complaints bordering on issues like political marginalization and disappointment with leadership. Other of their complaints include unemployment especially of the well educated, seeing no link between hard work and material success, a generally uncaring society, a culture of instant gratification, corruption and entronement of mediocrity and a negation of merit. He stressed out that the result of the above complaints are the negative attitudes and behavioural manifestations such as deep frustration and absence of the desire to excel, proneness to violence, various vices and acts of criminality. Other consequential negative attitudes of the youths are acts of disobedience, civil unrest, disdain to constituted authorities, deep feeling of worthlessness, etc. This scenario is horrible and situation with our youth is serious. In Agu, et al (2024),Ogwo passionately but despondently asked a clarion question-"what should we do to rescue our youth or at least begin to restore their confidence and discipline?" This is the very question that this study is poised to answer. He however, tried to proffer one out of many solutions to the problem of youth restiveness, that is, development of Entrepreneurship skills as a way of creating employment to empower our teeming jobless and job seeking youths.

### **Causes and effects theory**

A number of factors have been identified to be responsible for youth restiveness. According to Ogbeifun (2007), youth restiveness often are caused by various inhumane vices like inadequate infrastructural development, poverty, high cost of living, unemployment, economic mismanagement and abuse of power on the part of those in governance. Other causes include poor implementation of life affecting programs, ethnic marginalization and insensitivity to the plights of the masses, suffering the adverse effects of the destruction (and non-rehabilitation) of their environment through oil exploration, gas flaring and oil spillage that destroys farmlands and aquatic lives to the extent of negatively affecting the people's means of livelihood. Also, inadequate educational provisions, illiteracy, as well as epileptic power supply, and others too numerous to mention. According to Elegbeleye (2005), there are three major factors of youth restiveness, which include; peer pressure and its relative excitement, perceived victimization arising from economic exploitation and the bias pursuit of patriotic ideas.

Ofem and Ajayi, in Anasi, (2010)pointed that the factors range from lack of humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, unemployment, lack of quality education, inadequate training programs, to inadequate recreational facilities, etc. In the view of Saro Wiwa (in Chukwuemeka &Aghara, 2010), the root causes of restiveness in the Niger Delta are inequitable distribution of revenue, uneven development among the Niger Delta region –a region which ideally should be one of Nigeria's most developed, being "the goose that lays the golden egg."Saro Wiwa in (Chukwuemeka and Aghara 2010)attributed other factors to include the poor economic conditions and infrastructural facilities such as roads, hospitals, schools, and power supply, the dilapidation of farmlands and contamination of rivers by the activities of the oil companies within the Niger Delta region, the reduction of the Federal allocation, political-

fatherism and favouritism without regards to youth participation, and discrimination against minority groups in the Niger Delta region.

Also, high Rate of Youth unemployment and under-employment have been identified as major causes of youth unrest in Nigeria. The high and increasing incidence of youth unemployment within the Nigerian society could be described as one of the root causes of youth restiveness in the country. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2017),the combined unemployment and underemployment rate for the entire youth labour force 15-35 years, was 52.65% or 22.64 million 10.96 million unemployed and another 11.68 million underemployed), compared to 45.65% in Q3 2016, 47.41% in Q4 2016, and 49.70% in Q3 2017". According to Zakaria (2006), the rising tide of unemployment and the fear of a miserable future among youths in Nigeria have made them vulnerable to the manipulations of agents of social crises. These jobless youths, when showered with some cash with promise for more, are prone to be used as thugs and assassins by aggrieved politicians, insurgent fighters and suicide bombers. There are severe consequences of youth restiveness to economic and social development in Nigeria. According to Nlerum (2012), consequences of youth restiveness in this study can be broadly categorized into three, namely security, social and economic consequences as elaborated below;

### **Security consequences**

Youth restiveness creates national insecurity and political instability. The insecurity has incensed incessant cases of kidnapping, restriction of movement and proliferation of arms and explosives (Nlerum, 2012). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (2016), it is estimated that there were about 2,152,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigeria as at 31 December, 2015. Also, according to former Governor, Kashim Shettima of Borno state, insurgency particularly in the North eastern region of Nigeria by Boko Haram has led to the death of about 100,000 persons (Tukur, 2017).

Restiveness also creates room for human right abuses. According to Amnesty International (A.I) (2015), the Nigerian military extra judicially executed more than 1200 people; they have arbitrarily arrested at least 20000 people; and at least 7000 people have died in military detention in the course of security operations against Boko Haram. Also, the Nigerian Human Rights Report (N.H.R.R) (2016) shows that there exists little or no respect for the integrity of the human persons as Nigerians are being carelessly deprived of life and freedom. For instance, on February 9, 2016, police and military personnel reportedly used live ammunition to disperse protesting members and supporters of the Indigenous People Of Biafra, IPOB movement at a school in Aba, Abia State, killing at least nine youths (U.S.D. S, 2016).

### **Economic consequences**

Youth restiveness retards economic development in Nigeria(Chukwuezi,2009). In the words of Duke and Agbaji (2018),”it ravages the requisite human capital for producing the nation’s



economic fortunes and leads to the disruption of the economic activities of production, distribution and consumption which are sine-qua-non for generating wealth for the state.” On that note, it can be said that restiveness perpetrated by the Boko Haram in the North East, militants in the Niger Delta region and the Fulani Herdsmen crisis in the Middle Belt region are causative factors that plunged the Nigerian economy into hyper inflation and recession after the nation experienced a sharp drop in crude oil production and sales. The Sit at home saga in the South East, which is a clear type of politically motivated youth restiveness has crippled economic activities in the region and diverted many suppliers and customers to neighbouring regions. To show the economic consequences of youth restiveness in Nigeria, Duke et al (2016) purports that the Nigerian economy lost a whopping sum of N1.33 Trillion Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) due to Boko Haram attacks. FDI flows to Nigeria have been depleting over the years. FDI flows fell to 4693.83 million USD in 2014 from 5608.45 million USD in 2013, and further fell to 3064.17 million USD in 2015. These statistics are quite similar to the World Bank’s where FDI flows fell from 8841.11 million USD in 2011 to 7069.93 million USD in 2012, 5562.87million USD in 2013, and to \$4655.85 million USD in 2014. Thus, a downward slope in the FDI flows is the only available reality. Also, businesses have been closed, abandoned or destroyed in affected states. Former Minister of Information, Mr. Labaran Maku, purported that Boko Haram’s attack on Kano State especially is so significant because it affected the multi-billion naira Kano Textile Market, otherwise called the Kanti-Kwari Market, regarded to be the oldest and biggest textile markets in sub-Saharan Africa, and as such it affected the foundation of economic and social well-being of the northern region. (Duke et al 2016).

### **Social consequences**

Restiveness disconnects the youth from their expected role as leaders of tomorrow, and some meet their untimely death, where as many citizens are displaced from their homes. It disrupts social order and breeds social confusion. With youth restiveness there is increase in social vices and crimes like cultism, rape, kidnapping, armed robbery, delinquency, etc. It prepares a good ground for the human right abuses to thrive and widens tribal or ethnic and cultural differences. Youth restiveness engenders political instability, creates general insecurity of lives and properties. It also militates against economic development as it hampers investment by local and foreign investors (Nlerum 2012).

### **Empirical Review**

Numerous literatures exist on the effect of economic empowerment on youth restiveness with diverse outcomes and submissions as we can see from the following studies:

Abubakar, et al (2024) conducted a study to ascertain the perceived entrepreneurial innovation and communication skills needed to combat youth restiveness in Nigeria. The research was guided by two specific objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of three hundred and twenty-four (324) Business Education lecturers in Eleven (11) tertiary institutions in North

Western region of Nigeria. The sample size of the study comprised of 179 Business Educators (123 males and 56 females). A 4-point rating scale questionnaire titled "Perceived Entrepreneurial Skills Rating Scale" (PESRS) developed by the researcher was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts and further tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient test. The result showed an overall reliability coefficient of 0.88. Data was analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings revealed that the respondents strongly agreed that innovation and communication are entrepreneurial skills needed to combat youth restiveness.

Elegbeleye (2005) studied Recreational facilities in schools; a panacea for youth restiveness and focused on the palliative effect of available and well applied recreational facilities in schools. The conceptual definition of recreation was given as a guide to the analytical review of when, how and why some recreational materials possess restorative constituents capable of mitigating work induced stress in the school environment. The searchlight of the analysis highlighted such salient construct as youth restiveness being a manifestation of anxiety, the dysfunctional effects of anxiety on the human body, the description of the physiological activities of the body that gives expression to anxiety, the facilities and the recreational goals for which they are adapted to achieve. Recommendations as to how to optimize these recreational facilities to create useful part times for students were given.

Jegede, et al (2019) examined Youth empowerment as catalyst for sustainable development in Nigeria. The general objective was to review youth empowerment in Nigeria with a view to identify the challenges working against it and find solutions to it. The study adopted survey design and analyses of data was done using frequency tables and percentages. The study found that greater percentage of the population is made up of youths who are unemployed and poor. The study recommended that the government should focus on youth empowerment and involve the youths in decision making.

Yusuf, et al (2009) studied on informal financial institution and poverty reduction in the informal sector of Offa town in kwara State. The study used a set of household data, p-alfa class poverty measurement and a multiple regression analysis. The study found out that informal financial sector helps to alleviate poverty thereby curbing restiveness of the youth.

Otikor, (2022)examined the perception of residents of Andoni in the media coverage of youth restiveness and cult killings in the area between 2008 and 2021.The study was anchored on the perception and media systems dependency theories. The survey design was adopted for the study with a population of 299,646 and a sample size of 384. The quota and accidental sampling techniques were used for the study. From the findings, residents perceived that the extent of media coverage of youth restiveness and cult killings in Andoni was low, and that the newspaper was the most used medium in the coverage of the restiveness. They also perceived that the coverage



contributed in the restoration of calmness in the area. Among others, the researcher recommended that media organisations should establish more presence in the local areas to cover events in the communities and accord rural dwellers a sense of recognition in societal issues.

Chukwuemeka, and Aghara, (2010) examined youth restiveness and socio economic development in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, and the challenges it posed to Nigeria democracy and foreign investment. Non-parametric statistical and content analyses were essentially used as tools of analysis. The results showed that dissatisfaction of the people of Niger Delta especially the youths on the level of attention given to the development of their region and the damages to their ecology by oil spillage are the major causes of the alarming youth restiveness. Surprisingly, the Niger Delta region constitutes about 80% to the revenue of Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the paper suggests an immediate review of the current revenue sharing formula. The new formula should be made to address poverty, and neglect of the Niger Delta region. Oil companies operating in the region should pay a greater percentage of their royalty directly to the host communities in the Niger Delta region.

Nlerum, (2012) reviewed the youth restiveness in Niger Delta rural areas as lesson for the contemporary Nigerian society. The study was based on secondary sources of information. The study identified youths in the area as people between the ages of 15 and 40 years. Youths possess viable characteristics for rural development which if mismanaged results into restiveness. The result showed that the primary causes of youth restiveness in the area were proliferation of arms, misuse of the military to suppress protests, misappropriation of benefits from crude oil, youth unemployment and environmental degradation. In order to eradicate youth restiveness, the contemporary Nigeria society should check the rate of arm proliferation, misuse of the military to suppress youth protests, misappropriation of benefits accruing to the communities, youth unemployment and environmental degradation.

Johnson, and Igbojinwaekwu, (2019) examined the causes and effects of Youth Restiveness and Militancy in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, as perceived by the Niger Delta University undergraduates in Bayelsa State of Nigeria: Implication for counselling. The design adopted for the study is the descriptive survey design. One thousand Six hundred and ninety (1690) undergraduate students of Niger Delta formed the population of the study. While the sample size comprised 338 undergraduates selected through random sampling technique from the population. The researchers developed the Youth Restiveness and Militancy (YRM) Questionnaire with 21 items and used it for the study. For the two hypotheses, there were no significant differences on the basis of gender in the perceived factors responsible for youth restiveness and militancy in the Niger Delta Region and the perceived causes of youth restiveness and militancy on religious issues. The following recommendations were made as fallouts from the study which included peace education at all levels of schools and colleges, job creation for all youths and the provision of counselling services in the universities, secondary schools and the communities among others

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted Descriptive design to ascertain the relationship between the dependent variable (Youth restiveness) and the independent variables of empowerment (Employment, Education, Recreation and Social orientation). Survey method was adopted to obtain data from the respondents by the use of well structured questionnaire. Simple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. The population of Aba is put at 1,230,407, according to Google (2024). However, according to Ekwueme (2014), the population of the youth in Aba is about sixty (60%) percent of the entire population. Hence, 60% of 1,230,407 (Aba population) is 738,244.2. On the strength of this, the population of the study, which makes up the youths is 738,244.

The study adopted Taro Yamani Sample size formula;  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

Where n = Sample size,  
N = Population,  
e= error term of 5% (0.05)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, applying the formula} &= \frac{738244}{1+738244(0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{738244}{1+738244(0.0025)} \\ &= \frac{738244}{1+1846} \\ &= \frac{738244}{1847} = 399.7 \end{aligned}$$

Sample size = 400

The simple random sampling technique was adopted for this study in order to give equal opportunity to the youths in Aba, Abia State, and to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be accurate representative of the population. The study made use of both primary and secondary information sources. Primary data were collected through the administration of four hundred (400) copies of a five likert structured questionnaire to the youths in Aba, while the secondary data were sourced from goggle network. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two parts (parts A and B), part A focused on respondents' demographic characteristics while B focused on statements related to the objectives of the study. In designing the questionnaire we used 5-point likert scale, such as; Strongly Agree (SA=5), Agree (A=4), Neutral (N=3), Disagree (D=2) and Strongly Disagree (SD=1). In the questionnaire design,

we adopted multiple choice questions, where respondents are given opportunity to choose from a set of optional answers.

Face and content validity of the instrument were carefully done by the experts who vetted the items of the questionnaire and made necessary corrections and comments on the relevance of the items to the objectives and research questions of the study. Their comments and corrections were integrated into the final draft of the instrument and the instrument was approved for production and administration to the target respondents. To test for the reliability of the instrument, the test re- test (pilot survey) method was employed and they produced the same result, hence the instrument was declared reliable. Cronbach Alpha analysis was also carried out to determine the coefficient of reliability. According to Anyanwu, (2016), an instrument is considered reliable if coefficient of reliability obtained is 0.70 and above. From Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis 0.771 coefficient value which is greater than 0.70 was obtained. Since the coefficient value calculated was higher than 0.70, the instrument was tagged reliable for the study. Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 were tested with multiple linear regression analysis model.

#### . Model Specification

Since the stated hypotheses (1-5) have a common dependent variable (youth restiveness), the hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regression model Therefore structural form of the model is specified as follows:

For Null Hypothesis, which is  $H_0$ : There is no significant effect of employment, skill acquisition, education, recreation, social orientation on youth restiveness, multiple linear regression analysis model is:

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5) \dots\dots\dots 3.1$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e_i \dots\dots 3.2$$

Where;

Y = youth restiveness

$X_1$  = employment

$X_2$  = education

$X_3$  = recreation

$X_4$  = social orientation

$\beta_0$  = Intercept

$\beta_1 - \beta_5$  = Parameter estimate

$e_i$  = error terms (@5% probability level)

**Data Analysis****Effect of employment on youth restiveness****Table 4.1: Effect of employment on youth restiveness**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1. There is high level of unemployment among the youths in Aba	120 31.3%	84 21.9%	87 22.7%	45 11.7%	48 12.5%	384 100	3.47
2. The attitude of employed youths is so peaceful in Aba	184 47.9%	85 22.1%	34 8.9%	73 19.0%	8 2.1%	384 100	3.94
3. Employment status helps to build good character in the youths	88 22.9%	69 18.0%	124 32.3%	40 10.4%	63 16.4%	384 100	3.20
4. Employment enhances peaceful co-existence among the youths	96 25.0%	82 21.4%	64 16.7%	74 19.3%	68 17.7%	384 100	3.16

**Source: Field Survey, 2024** Decision rule: mean >3.0 accepted, mean <3.0 not accepted

The effect of employment on youth restiveness was examined in Table 4.1. From the result, 47.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that, attitude of employed youths is so peaceful in Aba and supported by 31.3% of the respondents who strongly agreed that there is high level of unemployment among the youths in Aba. Also, 25.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that employment enhances peaceful co-existence among the youths while 22.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that, employment status helps to build good character in the youths. On the other hand, 32.3% of the respondents were uncertain on the effect of employment on building good character in the youths. Following the mean value decision rule that, a mean value > 3.0 be accepted while a mean < 3.0 be rejected, and judging from the table result, mean value of 3.47, 3.94, 3.20 and 3.16 were recorded showing that all the items are above 3.0. We therefore conclude that employment significantly affects youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State.

**Effect of education on youth restiveness****Table 4.2: Effect of education on youth restiveness**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1. Youth educational level could reduce crises in Aba	176 45.8%	123 32.0%	65 16.8%	12 3.1%	8 2.1%	384 100	4.16
2. Education will help the youths to maintain peaceful environment	154 40.1%	61 15.9%	90 20.1%	77 20.1%	2 0.5%	384 100	3.75
3. Youth level of education will positively influence economic restoration in Aba	104 27.1%	124 32.3%	39 10.2%	96 25.0%	21 5.4%	384 100	3.50
4. Formal education of youths affects restiveness positively	70 18.2%	119 31.0%	48 12.5%	76 19.8%	71 18.4%	384 100	3.10

**Source: Field Survey, 2024** Decision rule: mean >3.0 accepted, mean <3.0 not accepted

Table 4.2 examined how education affects youth restiveness and the result revealed that, 45.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that youth educational level could reduce crises in Aba. This was followed by 40.1% of the respondents who strongly agreed that education will help the youths to maintain peaceful environment, 32.3% agreed that, youth level of education will positively influence economic restoration in Aba and 31.0% of the respondents agreed that formal education of youths affects restiveness positively. Judging from the result with the rule that a mean value > 3.0 is accepted while a mean < 3.0 is rejected and the fact that all the results have mean value greater than 3.0, we concluded that, education affects youth restiveness significantly

**Effect of recreation on youth restiveness****Table 4.3: Effect of recreation on youth restiveness**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1. The level of recreational activities in Aba is high	154 40.1%	136 35.4%	28 7.3%	61 15.9%	5 1.3%	384 100	3.97
2. Recreational activities could stop youth unrest in Aba	167 43.5%	109 28.4%	48 12.5%	42 10.9%	18 4.7%	384 100	3.95
3. Recreational activities will enhance social co-existence in Aba	111 28.9%	92 23.9%	55 14.3%	75 19.5%	51 13.3%	384 100	3.35

4. Recreational activities will improve good health of the youths in Aba	152	98	43	31	60	384	3.65
	39.6%	25.5%	11.2%	8.1%	15.6%	100	

**Source: Field Survey, 2024** Decision rule: mean >3.0 accepted, mean <3.0 not accepted

Table 4.3 examined the effect of recreation on youth restiveness. The descriptive result shows that 43.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that recreational activities could stop youth unrest in Aba. This was followed by 40.1% of the respondents who agreed that the quest for recreational activities in Aba is high, supported by 39.6% who agreed that recreational activities will improve good health of the youths in Aba and 28.9% of the respondents who also agreed that recreational activities will enhance social co-existence in Aba. However, 19.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that recreational activities will enhance social co-existence in Aba. The results of mean value above 3.0 were 3.97, 3.95, 3.35 and 3.65 respectively, showing that all the items have mean value above 3.0 mean value benchmark of decision rule. Hence, recreation significantly affects youth restiveness.

**Effect of social orientation on youth restiveness**

**Table 4.4: Effect of social orientation on youth restiveness**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
Active social orientation campaign could curb youth unrest in Aba	87 22.6%	103 26.8%	44 11.5%	81 21.1%	69 18.0%	384 100	3.15
Social orientation campaign will enhance youth participation in government policies	81 21.1%	88 22.4%	53 13.8%	60 15.6%	102 27.1%	384 100	2.94
Public awareness of government programmes will help to curb youth crime wave in Aba	76 19.8%	102 26.6%	60 15.6%	75 19.5%	71 18.5%	384 100	3.09
Social orientation programme inculcates patriotism in the youths in Aba.	109 28.4%	90 23.4%	42 10.9%	83 21.6%	60 15.6%	384 100	3.27

**Source: Field Survey, 2024** Decision rule: mean >3.0 accepted, mean <3.0 not accepted

Table 4.4 examined the effect of social orientation on youth restiveness and the descriptive result shows that 28.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that social orientation programme inculcates patriotism in the youths in Aba. This was followed by 26.8% who agreed that the active social orientation campaign could curb youth unrest in Aba and supported by 26.6% of the respondent who agreed that public awareness of government programmes will help to curb youth crime wave in Aba. However, 27.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that social orientation campaign will enhance youth participation in government policies with a mean value of 2.94<3.0. The result of mean value above 3.0 with 3.15, 2.94, 3.09 and 3.27 respectively shows that three (3) out-of-four



(4) items' mean value were above 3.0 mean value benchmark or decision rule. Hence, social orientation positively affects youth restiveness.

### Youth restiveness and economic empowerment

**Table 4.5: Youth restiveness and economic empowerment**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	$\bar{x}$
1. Restiveness level of youths changes due to employment	151 39.3%	95 24.7%	61 15.9%	44 11.5%	33 8.6%	384 100	3.74
2. Educational level restricts youth from restive activities	120 31.3%	104 27.1%	72 18.8%	57 14.8%	31 8.1%	384 100	3.58
3. Recreational activities could stop youth unrest in Aba.	101 26.3%	90 23.4%	76 19.8%	61 15.9%	56 14.6	384 100	3.30
4. Social orientation campaign limits youths' restiveness in Aba	75 19.5%	73 19.0%	88 22.9%	76 19.8%	72 18.8	384 100	3.00

**Source: Field Survey, 2024** Decision rule: mean >3.0 accepted, mean <3.0 not accepted

Based on the review of youth restiveness and economic empowerment on Table 4.5, the result revealed that, 39.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that restiveness level of the youths change due to employment. This was followed by 31.3% who strongly agreed that educational level restricts youth from restive activities and also, 26.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that recreational activities could stop youth unrest in Aba. Against the majority, 22.9% of the respondents were uncertain that social orientation campaign limits youths' restiveness in Aba. From the mean value of the result, all of the items agreed with the decision rule, (that is, accept mean value >3.0), with this, we therefore conclude that economic empowerment has positive effect on youth restiveness in Aba.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>0</sub>:** there is no significant effect of employment, skill acquisition, education, recreation and social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State.

**Table 4.6: multiple regression analysis on effect of economic empowerment on youth restiveness**

Variable	Parameters	Coefficient	Std error	Tcal – value
Constant	$\beta_0$	2.790	0.412	6.774***
Employment( $X_1$ )	$\beta_1$	-0.714	0.038	-18.701***
Education ( $X_2$ )	$B_2$	-0.226	0.122	-4.036***
Recreation ( $X_3$ )	$B_3$	-0.112	0.053	-2.122**
Social orientation( $X_4$ )	$B_4$	0.038	0.056	0.496
R-Square ( $R^2$ )		0.762		
Adjusted R-Square ( $R^2$ )		0.758		
F – Statistics		172.579		
F – Probability		0.000		
Durbin-Watson stat		2.051		

Decision Rule: If  $F_{cal} > F_{tab}$  accept the alternate and reject Null hypothesis. Otherwise accept the null hypothesis. (\*\*\* = 1%), (\*\* = 5%), and (\* = 10%) denotes significance of coefficient at level respectively ;t-tab value = 1.966, df = 378, Dependent Variable: youth restiveness, Predictors: (Constant), employment, education, recreation, social.

**Source: Field Survey, 2024 (SPSS Version 23 computation)**

**Hypothesis 1:** The result shows that, employment ( $X_1$ ) was statistically significant and negatively related to youth restiveness in Aba at 1 percent significant level. The coefficient of employment ( $X_1$ ) of -0.714, shows that a unit increase in use of employment, holding other variables constant, will decrease youth restiveness in Aba by -0.714unit. From the result, the t-cal value of employment was -18.701\*\*\* while the T-table value was 1.966, since the t-table value is less than t-calculated value in absolute terms, we rejected the null hypothesis that, employment has no significant effect on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 2:** The estimate value of education ( $X_3$ ) was statistically significant and negatively related to youth restiveness in Aba at 1 percent significant level (4.036\*\*\*). This implies that a unit increase in educational level of youths leads to decrease on youth restiveness in Aba by 0.226 units. From the result, the t-cal value of education was 4.036\*\*\* while the T-table value was 1.966, since the t-table value is less than t-calculated value in absolute terms, we reject the null hypothesis and affirm that education has significant effect on youth restiveness in Aba.

**Hypothesis 3:** The result shows that recreation ( $X_4$ ) was statistically significant and negatively related to youth restiveness in Aba at 5 percent significant level. The coefficient of recreation ( $X_4$ ) of 0.112, shows that a unit increase in recreation, holding other variables constant, will increase youth restiveness in Aba by 0.112unit. From the result, the t-cal value of recreation was -2.122\*\* while the T-table value was 1.966, since the t-table value is less than t-calculated value in

absolute terms, we accept the alternative hypothesis as against null hypothesis which states that, recreation has significant effect on youth restiveness in Aba.

**Hypothesis 4:** The estimated value of social orientation ( $X_5$ ) was statistically insignificant and positively related to youth restiveness in Aba at 5% level. This implies that one unit increase in social orientation leads to 0.038 unit increase in youth restiveness in Aba, although insignificant. As reflected in the result, social orientation has a t-cal value of 0.496 which is less than 1.966 tabulated value at 0.05 degree of freedom. In effect, since the t-calculated value is less than the t-tabulated value in absolute terms, we accepted null hypothesis and maintained that, social orientation has no significant effect on youth restiveness in Aba.

The coefficient of multiple determination ( $R^2$ ) was 0.762, which implies that 76.2% changes in the dependent variable was explained by changes in the independent variable, while 23.8% was unexplained by the stochastic terms in the model. Thus, the independent variables (employment, education, recreation and social orientation) can only explain 76.2 percent of changes in youth restiveness in Aba, leaving 23.8% unexplained. The  $R^2$  adjusted was 75.8% indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 5% probability level. The Durbin-Watson statistical value of 2.051 was observed which is within 1.8 to 2.5, implying that there is no evidence of autocorrelation. More so, the f-statistical (calculated) value of 172.579 which is greater than 1.966 t-table value; and f-probability value of 0.000 was observed from the analysis which is less than 0.05 (95% of freedom), indicating that estimated regression model adopted in this study is statistically significant at 5% level. With this, the researcher rejected the null hypotheses and accept alternative hypothesis hence, there is significant effect of employment, education, and recreation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State. However, there is no significant effect of social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

**There is significant effect of employment on youth restiveness in Aba.** The result agreed with the study of Abubakar, et al (2024) which is basically on the causes of youth restiveness and its relation to the perceived entrepreneurial innovation and communication skills to combat youth restiveness in Nigeria. Applying descriptive survey research design, the findings revealed that the respondents strongly agreed that innovation and communication are entrepreneurial skills needed to combat youth restiveness. This is curative and palliative measure to restiveness.

**In addition, education has significant effect on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State.** The result agreed with the findings of Johnson and Igbojinwaekwu (2019) which examined the causes and effects of Youth Restiveness and Militancy in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, as perceived by the Niger Delta University undergraduates in Bayelsa State of Nigeria: Implication for counselling. The result showed that there were no significant difference on the basis of gender in the perceived factors responsible for youth restiveness and militancy in the Niger Delta Region and the perceived causes of youth restiveness and militancy on religious issues are laziness, unskilled labour,

education. Also, Jegede, et al (2019) examined youth empowerment as catalyst for sustainable development in Nigeria. The study adopted survey design and found that the greater percentage of the youths are unemployed and poor, hence, are prone to restiveness and cannot enhance sustainable development in Nigeria.

**There is significant effect of recreation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State.** The result agreed with the findings of Oluwatobe Elegbeleye (2005) which examined the palliative effect of available and well applied recreational facilities in schools, and found that recreation has restorative ability to mitigate stress and anxiety, thereby preventing restiveness among students. The study is proactive and offers preventive measures to youth unrest.

Ogwo in Agu, et al (2024) emphasized on the need to use entrepreneurial skill acquisition programmes to empower our youths, as a way of redirecting their focus from violent unrest to productivity for economic growth.

### **Summary**

The result revealed that, there is significant effect of employment, education and recreation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State. However, there is no significant effect of social orientation on youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria. However, economic empowerment significantly affects youth restiveness in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria.

### **CONCLUSION**

The greatest resource any society should strategically harness and regularly motivate for greater productivity is the human resource, both skilled and unskilled. The youth in Nigeria constitute the greater bulk of this human resource endowment and should not be taken for granted if we are to achieve sustainability in economic growth and belong to the league of developed nations as envisaged by every government that comes to power at any point in time. Youth restiveness is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the social fabrics of the Nigerian nation and has negatively affected every sector. Nigeria is currently experiencing unprecedented challenges that are adversely affecting national development. One of these challenges to national development is high rate of insecurity of lives and property that is very inimical to national growth and development. Youth restiveness engenders political instability, creates general insecurity of the inhabitants and militates against economic development as it hampers local and foreign investments. Destruction of lives and infrastructure inhibits growth and hinders development, as Nigerians and foreign investors are afraid to invest their resources in the country. Tackling to eradicate the problem of youth restiveness is a formidable task, but can be achieved if and only if the government would determine and be committed to actualize it. Economic empowerment through functional education, job creation and employment, entrepreneurship education for skill acquisition, recreational facilities, consistent social orientation to educate the public about the policies of the government, equity and social justice in the distribution of the gains of democracy and youth inclusiveness in governance, among others, are the possible panacea to youth unrest.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the major findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. The government should create jobs to give employment to job seekers as a way of keeping them busy and out of idleness, because an idle brain they say, is the devils workshop.
2. Entrepreneurship skills that produce skilled manpower, innovative and self-reliant citizens should be part of youth trainings than resorting to the palliative and unsustainable approach of attacking hunger.
3. The government should invest in the education of the masses especially our teaming youths as the future leaders than to relegate them to political thugs and armed touts..
4. Recreational facilities should be put in place in various centers to help people ease off stress and tension, while some will through it find means of livelihood like in sports.
5. Social orientation should be revived and counselling units in all levels of academic institutions in Nigeria should be restructured and diligently handled to chart proper attitudinal course for the youths from child hood.

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