

**IFE JOURNAL OF
EDUCATIONAL
STUDIES**

ISBN 978 31985 80

**VOLUME 13, NUMBER 1,
2007**



IJES

**A JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION
OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERISTY
ILE-IFE, NIGERIA.**

**CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE AMONG YOUTHS IN
CALABAR SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE**

**REBECCA U. ETIUBON
SCIENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF UYO**

AND

PAUL E. ETIUBON

**POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR,
CALABAR**

Abstract

Violence stemming from youth activities is becoming a defining characteristic of the Nigerian Society. Many indicators suggest that continued exposure of youths to violence is risky and indeed a great threat to their mental health and development, and thus our future civilization. This study examined the behavioral variables of youth violence using relevant primary and secondary data which were analyzed with chi-square (x^2) statistical methods. It was empirically established that the political class manipulate youths into violent activities for selfish reasons in order to attain political office. The result also indicated that societal and parental factors played no significant role in youth violence. To check the current trend of youth violence it is imperative for youth improvement schemes and sustainable human development programs geared towards youth empowerment be put in place so as to stem the tide of violence and help the youths achieve strategic benefits for life-long careers.

Introduction

The frequent occurrence of chaotic and sometimes criminal behavior depicted in the activities of many youths in recent times is a cause for concern particularly to families, churches, schools, guidance counselors, behavioral therapists and professional psychologists. In every society there are norms or behaviors to which individuals are expected to conform and established norms in the community to which every youth must conform (Asuquo 1997, Alao, 2003). The adult class cannot be exonerated from the present upsurge in violent behavior of youths as their carefree lifestyles have negatively impacted on our youths.

The causes of youth violence are yet little understood. The deviant behavioral pattern of

youths has for so long been taken for granted. Broadly speaking, this may be attributed to poverty, broken homes and permissive homes which breed spoilt children. In many cases, antisocial behavior is thought to arise from family conflicts such as poor home management, immorality, drunkenness criminality and irresponsible child rearing practice during the first five years of the child (Odumosu, 1999).

Violence arising from youths revolutionary activism, extremism, family disintegration, poverty, peer influence, smoking and drug abuse, political rivalry and thuggery among others are becoming a problem of increasing dimensions in the Nigerian society today. Ekpe (1996) opined that although youth violence varies dramatically from community to community; in many communities across the nation

today youths experience violence as a matter of regular occurrence as victims, participants and/or observers. It is intriguing to observe that some youths who perpetuate violent acts do not even show remorse for their actions but regard them as fashionable and necessary ingredients in preparing them to become tough and hard guys (Alao, 2003).

In many countries today, various deviant behaviors prevail such as aggressiveness towards peers and juniors, little regard for the right of others, lack of respect for elders, lack of concern for rules and regulations even when they are for their own good and lack of interest in school work (Omotor; 2000). Most worrisome is the criminal tendency of some of these youths going the extra mile in hostage taking, armed robbery, kidnappings, assassinations, rivalry youth group killings and maiming, sporting hooliganism, cult activities, burning of public and private buildings, vandalization of oil pipelines and other sophisticated facilities (Inoni, 2001; Ekanem, 2001).

Etiubon (2007) observed that security personnel employed to protect oil facilities sometimes come under attack from criminal youth who overwhelm them by their large numbers and end up disarming the security agents, a dangerous precedent that places everyone especially field workers at risk (SPDC, 2000). They show little or no respect for constituted authority in endless agitations, for a better deal from their perceived opponents.

The Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State has become synonymous with youth violence, the situation in recent times has so degenerated that the mere mention of Calabar South sends shivers down the spines of Calabar residents. Several

groups and gangs have sprung up in different parts of Calabar South. They include Bayside Boys, Idang group and the Itak Udara group. These groups exist for various reasons either as political thugs for political rivals or claim to act as security network in a given area. The common factor among these groups is that they are unemployed school dropouts who are involved in smoking, alcoholism and indiscriminate sexual perversion.

Youth violence will result in rising irresponsible youths. The educational future of the youth will be jeopardized. There will be a gap in manpower capacity in the near future. The potentialities and the talents of the youths will be wasted. There will be leadership vacuum. If not checked, youth violence will be recycled through generations.

Given that violence is becoming a defining characteristic of the youth vis-à-vis its implication on our development as well as our future civilization, there is an urgent need to arrest this state of affairs. It is the interest of this study to highlight the attendant effects of youth violence as well as proffer suggestions that will reduce this social malaise.

Research Question

The study was guided by a research question: What are the attendant consequences of these incessant acts of violence on youths in Calabar South Local Government Area?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses will test

H01: There is no significant role played by societal factors such as unemployment and exposure to crime related film/videos in precipitating violence among youths.

Ho2: There is no significant role played by non-challant attitude of parents to the violence among youths.

Ho3: There is no significant role played by the political class in the increasing violent activities among youths.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To establish the validity of the instrument, two lecturers from test and measurement went through the construct for content validation.

The questionnaire was administered to thirty (30) residents who were not among the sample used for the study. Responses confirmed that the instrument tested what it was meant to test and its reliability was ascertained using a test-retest method of degree of consistency. Reliability coefficient yielded a high correlation which ranged from 0.84 to 0.92. chi-square analysis was used to test the hypotheses.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed in keeping with the research question. Any item response with a mean of 2.5 and above is interpreted as a favorable factor (Agree), while an item having a mean below it was a negative factor (Disagree).

Instrument and Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The instrument consisted of two parts. Part A dealt with demographic variables such as gender, age, qualification and marital status. Part B contained a total of 30 items which measured role played by societal factors, non-challant attitude of parents and political class. The response categories used were the Likert type scale: Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD). All scoring was done with the use of scoring keys and the scoring technique was reversed for negatively worded items.

TABLE 1: Mean score summary of perception of role of variables on the causes and consequences of youth violence.

Causes/Consequence	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Role of social factors	51	58	35	16	160
Non-challant attitude of parents	33	41	43	43	160
Role of political class	51	36	38	35	160

Results on Table 1 shows the mean score of the perception of the role of social factors, non-challant attitude

and political class in causes and consequences of youth violence.

Results

HYPOTHESIS1: There is no significant role played by societal factors such as unemployment and exposure to crime related film/videos in precipitating youth violence

Table 2: Analysis of roles played by societal factors

SEX	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
M	36(31.9)	37 (36.3)	18(21.7)	9(10)	100
F	15(19.1)	21(21.8)	17(13.1)	7(6)	60
TOTAL	51	58	35	16	160

Alpha Level of significance = 0.05, df =3, $\chi^2 = 3.65$

The calculated χ^2 value is 3.65 less than χ^2 table value 6.25 required for significance at 0.05 degree of freedom. This means that societal factors such as unemployment and exposure to crime related films/videos play no significant role in youths violence in Calabar south local government

area. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant role played by the non-challant attitude of parents towards youth violence.

TABLE 3: Analysis of role played by non-challant attitude of parents

SEX	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
M	24(20.6)	23(25.6)	30(26.9)	23(26.9)	100
F	9(12.4)	18(15.4)	13(16.1)	20(16.1)	60
TOTAL	33	41	43	43	160

Alpha level of significance = 0.05, df = 3, $x^2 = 4.41$

The calculated x^2 value of 4.41 is less than the table x^2 value of 6.25 required for significance at df = 3. Hence, the non-challant attitude of parents towards their children play no significant role in youth violence in Calabar South Local Government

Area. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained at 0.05 level of significance

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant role played by the political class to the increasing violent activities among youth.

TABLE 4

SEX	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
M	30(31.9)	12(22.5)	26(23.8)	32(21.9)	100
F	21(19.1)	24(13.5)	12(14.3)	3(13.1)	60
TOTAL	51	36	38	35	160

Alpha level of significance = 0.05, df = 3, $x^2 = 24.69$

The calculated x^2 value of 24.69 is greater than the table x^2 value of 6.25 required for significance at 3

degree of freedom. This means that the political class played a significant

$$X^2 = 3.65$$

X^2 table = 6.25 at 0.05 level of significance.

The calculated X^2 value is less than X^2 table value 6.25 required for significance at 0.05 level with 3 degree of freedom. This means that

societal factors such as unemployment and exposure to crime related films/videos play no significant role in youth violence.

Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

The calculated X^2 value is less than the X^2 table (6.25) required for significance at 0.05 level with 3 degree of freedom. This means that non-challant attitude of parent towards their children play no significant role in youths violence. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis 1 revealed that societal factors play no significant role in youth violence. This is rather surprising because the youths are members of the society and are bound to be influenced by the prevailing societal ills. This finding is consistent with that of (Asuquo, 1997 and Odu 1997) though it is of interest to know that the current craze for watching home videos, violent western films and adoption of Western lifestyles at the expense of our traditional values is taking a toll on the behavioral pattern of our youths. Hypothesis 2 showed that the non-challant attitude of parents towards their children play no significant role in the character development of their offspring.

This finding is inconsistent with the findings of (Omotor, 2000; Ekanem, 2002) who found that broken homes in the form of complete divorce, separation, insatiable desire for material wealth, instability or incessant squabbles in the family have impacted negatively on the children. Results of hypothesis 3, revealed that the political class manipulate the youths into violent activities for selfish reasons in order to attain political office. Since most of these youths are idle

The calculated X^2 value 24.69 is greater than the X^2 table value 6.25 required for significance at 0.05 level with 3 degree of freedom. This means that the political class play a very significant role in manipulating youths into violent activities in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State Hence, the null hypothesis that the political class makes no contribution to the increasing violent activities among youths is rejected of 0.05 level of significance.

as they are not gainfully employed they become ready instruments to be used for violence. This finding corroborates (Ekanem, 2000) who asserted that disheveled youths are not the only threat to oil companies, as the unstable political terrain also has a fair share of the blame.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

Although societal factors such as unemployment exposure to imported western films, breakdown of traditional social control mechanisms, does not contribute substantially to the incidence of youth violence policy makers should make conscious effort to create job opportunities for the youths.

Educational policies should include focusing on rehabilitating school dropouts that form the bulk of the violent youths.

Parents should act as ideal role models for the youths and should themselves be involved in finding solutions to deviant behaviors.

The political class should develop interest in raising a responsible crop of youths that will

help to sustain democracy and human development in the county.

If we are not to jeopardize the future of our nation, we must

adopt integrated frontal attack on the problem of violence among youths for herein lies the hope for a prosperous Nigeria.

References

- Alao, O. (2003), "Dons Parley over Security, Politics", New Nigeria, January 19.
- Asuquo, P. N. (1997), Curbing students violent behavior through group counselling: A practical approach, Journal of Counseling of Nigeria; Calabar branch, 1(1), 72-78.
- Ekanem E. U. U. (2002), Corporate Innovation and Strategy, Port Harcourt, Pearl Publishers.
- Ekpe, G. O. (1996), "Indices of adolescents' deviant behaviors in Cross River State". Unpublished research report. M. Ed, Thesis, University of Calabar. Calabar.
- Etiubon, R. U (2001), Educational facilitators and examination malpractice in secondary schools in Calabar Municipality. Journal of Research in Education, 4(1), 6-11.
- Inoni, O. E; Omotor, D. G and Iogis, D. G. (2001), "Energy supply and the environment in Developing countries. An economic policy perspective," African Journal of Business and Economic Research 2(1)
- Odu, A. B. (1997), Counselling and delinquency in schools. Journal of the Counseling Association of Nigeria, Calabar Branch, 1 (1) 86-90
- Omoleke, O. I. (2000), The Energy crisis and Nigerian Economy. A contemporary Analysis, African Journal of Business and Economic Research, 1(2).
- Omotor, D. G. (2000), "Environmental Problems and sustainable Development," African Journal of development studies, 2(1).
- SPDC (2002), Sustainable Development Strategy, February.(2002).