

Perceived Causes of Youth Restiveness by Security Personnel in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract. The study examined the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria. Three objectives, three research questions and two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study; it was a survey research design. The sample size was 150. A self-developed instrument titled “Perceived Causes of Youth Restiveness by Security Personnel in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria. (PCYASNEN)” was used to collect data. The face and content validity of the instrument was established by an expert in Guidance and Counselling in the Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University Mubi. The test–retest reliability method was adopted and the reliability co-efficient of 0.91 was obtained. Data were analysed using mean, standard deviation and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The study revealed that there was a significant difference among security personnel in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness based on type of agency. Also, gender has little or no influence on the youths' perception of the causes of restiveness which include poverty, marginalization, bad leadership, unemployment and religious intolerance. It was therefore concluded that youth restiveness in Nigeria has constituted a security problem and can endanger the peaceful co-existence of the country, in the same manner conflict and insecurity can be very toxic to the sustainable development of the country. The study therefore recommended among other things that counsellors could organize workshops and seminars in higher institutions to expose youths to the ills of youth restiveness. Also, government should try to create employment for its citizens to reduce the unemployment level which gives rise to kidnapping and other forms of youth restiveness.

Keywords: Youth restiveness; security personnel; violence; violation of human rights; corruption and poverty

Introduction

Restiveness among youth has become one of the global phenomena and those in Nigeria has been on unprecedented increase. Since last decade and more there has been a proliferation of unrivalled violence, the cases of kidnapping, abduction and wanton destruction of valuable infrastructures as well as lives and personal properties. These are mostly the activities of youth that are socially unacceptable triggered by enforced desired of outcome from the constituted authority. This negative development according to Igbo and Ikpa (2013) is unfortunate and has become one of the security challenges facing man in the present society.

It is a fundamental truth that no society thrives and progresses significantly with a restive population of youths who are prone to violence, unrest, wanton destruction and involvement in social vices. Youth restiveness has become a popular issue in Nigeria particularly in the recent time. Since the inception of the current democratic dispensation, the country has witnessed series of violence and violation of human rights which were perpetrated by restive youths in different parts of the country, in some cases the act has led to colossal loss of life and properties. The degree to which youth restiveness constitutes a threat to national security has become a worrisome phenomenon that constantly attracts the attention of Nigerians and international communities. The incidence of youths' involvement in political thurgery in the 2015 general

election and some other acts of violence seem to have reduced the hope that youth restiveness will soon end. Thus, different groups of individuals, corporate bodies, agencies, and professional institutions are saddled with the responsibility of proffering solutions to the spate of youth restiveness. Guidance counsellors are professionally trained individuals as well as teachers who have the mandate of assisting people faced with one problem or the other that affect their functionality in the society. Guidance counsellors use various techniques to help change maladaptive behaviours that could constitute menace to the peaceful co-existence in the society. The process of ensuring peace in the society may start with resolving intrapersonal conflict in individual and advance to resolving interpersonal conflicts. Thus, the view of guidance counsellors on solution to youth restiveness becomes imperative. Youths are significant members of the society whose contributions help to effect radical and rapid developments. A law-abiding youth creates a bright hope for any nation because he/she is regarded and perceived as a potential leader who will not only sustain the tradition but also bring innovation to the society.

The total population of youth between 10 and 24 years old in Nigeria was put at 45.4 million. According to the 2006 National Census results, Ahiuma-Young (2016) Inferring from the policy of the National Youth Service Scheme, which stipulated age 30 years as the limit for participating in the National Youth Service programme, it can be said that people within the age limit of 30 years are considered as youth. In any case, the word “youth” describes a person who has not attained the status of an adult but no longer has a child, while restive suggested when one is unable to be still or quiet, difficult to control, especially when not satisfied with something. Amnesty International (AI) (2015) opined youth have natural endowment of raw energy which results to bubbling in spirit, having high hopes, big dreams, aspirations and ideas of what the future owes them, they are not naturally calm often but become anxious and anticipate to know what present situation has to offer in order to fast track the future. Thus, a little disappointment or even misconception on their part, in relation to the fulfillment of aspiration, usually triggers the standby propensity for violence and more often than not turns to restiveness. Restiveness can be viewed as a combination of actions, conduct and behaviour which constitute unwholesome and socially unacceptable response to situations by youths in the society. Such actions could be in form of sustained protestations embarked upon to enforce a desired outcome on a constituted authority by an organized body of youths. Youth restiveness has become a device used by young persons to obtain what they want from relevant authority; the act is usually perpetrated in unlawful manners. It is a deliberate instrument of organized response to perceived grievances that have an increasing potency and capacity for destruction.

According to Elegbeleye (2005), youth resistance to conditions, issues and unwelcomed leadership regimes in Nigeria dates back to 1934 when Herbert Macaulay floated a political party to kick against dependency with fellow elite youths that had contact with the West. Equally in the close of 1950s and early to mid-1960s political parties such as the National Council for Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), the Northern People’s Congress (NPC), and the Action Group (AG) involved the youth in perpetrating coordinated political protests and unrests. The phenomenon has metamorphosed to the use of youths in different protests and counter-protests across Nigeria in recent time. The world renowned insurgent group, Boko Haram in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria also has vast members, majority of who are youths Duke, Agbaji and Etim (2016). In addition, the proliferation of youth association such as Students’ Union and other legal groups and the existence of illegal associations such as cults have turned learning institutions to danger haven where murder, looting and violation of human rights are perpetrated through youth restiveness. In more recent times the emergence of a Group of youth who are called Shillah Boy are on the trend of causing restiveness in Adamawa state especially in Yola town and Jimeta. A number of reasons have been identified as being the causes of youth restiveness. Anasi (2010) identified the following reasons as being responsible for youth

restiveness: bad governance: inadequate educational opportunities and resources; unemployment; poverty, lack of basic infrastructures; and inadequate communication flow. Chukuezi (2009) posited that marginalization, unemployment, exuberance and the involvement of youths in political thuggery are the major causes of youth restiveness

Statement of the Problem

Youth restiveness has become one of the greatest security challenges confronting Nigeria particularly in the 21st century. The menace has posed serious threats to the human development across different parts of the country with significant effects on life, properties and corporate existence of the country. The much celebrated insurgency in the North-East, which is anchored by Boko-haram group, stealing and robbery by Shillah Boys and the incessant kidnapping and conflicts involving armed youths in Adamawa state area are all true pictures of youth restiveness. Anywhere youth restiveness occurs, there is always colossal loss, pains and agony. Elegbeleye (2005) reported that youth restiveness manifests criminal behaviours such as looting, robbery attack, violent demonstrations and tribal conflicts, Oyadeyi (2012) opined that other major causes of restiveness, militancy and terrorism include religious intolerance, buying of votes/election rigging, tribalism and corruption in high places. Enueme and Onyeme (2010) opined that Nigerian youths have for some years developed into what could be regarded as social loafing, non-conformity behaviour, illusions of self and group vulnerability. They also asserted that in Nigeria, it is becoming fashionable to use restiveness, terrorism or militancy as a transactional device to get what they desired from concerned authorities or the government.

Again, lack of social welfares, corruption, misinformation, lack of humanitarian activities and poverty precipitate the trio youthful dangers in our society. These various groups mentioned above are highly obnoxious mostly with or without agenda and or agitations. In fact, because of their facelessness, societal evil men, ethnic groups and or politicians hire them for their selfish aims and agenda to unleash mayhem in society in form of terrorism, militancy, kidnapping, killing during elections, robbery, maiming and ritual killings. The present study therefore seeks to investigate the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa state.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. examine perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State.
2. identify perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State.
3. investigate the techniques for curbing or ameliorating youth restiveness, in Adamawa State.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State?
2. What are the perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State?
3. How can youth restiveness be curbed in Adamawa State?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in security personnel perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa state on the basis of type of agency.
2. There is no significant difference in security personnel perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa state on the basis of gender.

Research Methodology

This research work employed the survey method with the use of questionnaire to elicit responses adequate enough to evaluate the perceived causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria. The survey method was considered most appropriate for the study because of its strengths. According to Fayojonmi (2003), survey is good because they allow collection of data from a larger number of people. However, unlike most qualitative research approaches that involve direct observation of behaviour, surveys rely on individuals' self-reports of their knowledge, attitudes, or behaviours. Thus the validity of information is contingent on the honesty of the respondent.

The target population of this study comprised of Police, Military, National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Security and Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC), Prison Warder/Wardress in Yola North and Yola South Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The sample size was 150. Thirty security personnel were chosen from each of the five security agencies by a stratified sampling technique using sex and agency as strata.

The research instrument for data collection was a Questionnaire titled "Perceived Causes of Youth Restiveness in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria" (PCYRASNEN). The research instrument was adapted from Maciver and Igbojinwaekwu (2019). It was divided into four sections: Section A consisted of four items on security personnel's demographic-data which included name of Agency, Sex, Age, Rank and Local Government; Section B consisted of 20 items on the perceived causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria; Section C consisted of 15 items on perceived effects of youth restiveness in Adamawa State; Section D consisted of 20 items on techniques for curbing youth restiveness in Adamawa State, North Eastern Nigeria.

The validity of the instrument was carried out by an expert in Guidance and Counselling, Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi for face and content validation. The instrument was adopted based on the corrections and recommendation of the expert. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using 20 police officers from Mubi North Police Station, the test-retest reliability method was used and the reliability coefficient of 0.91 was obtained. The researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents and collected them back on the spot. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as Mean, Standard Deviation, and ANOVA.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa state?

Table 1. Perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State

S/N	Items	N	Mean	STD	Remark
1	Lack of family and community counselling in the country	150	3.41	.494	Accepted
2	Slow/casual approach of government to sensitive issues	150	2.73	1.175	Accepted
3	Poverty is a major effect of restiveness	150	3.70	.460	Accepted
4	Corruption	150	3.79	.406	Accepted
5	Tribal and sectional loyalty amongst citizens	150	3.11	.697	Accepted
6	Get rich quick syndrome	150	3.03	1.093	Accepted
7	Inadequate educational opportunity and resources	150	2.91	1.036	Accepted
8	Unemployment	150	3.79	.406	Accepted
9	Marginalization and underdevelopment of some area/sections	150	3.13	.830	Accepted
10	Social inequality	150	3.03	.781	Accepted
11	Inadequate attention to environmental degradation	150	3.02	.456	Accepted

12	Inadequate counselling services for students in schools	150	2.91	.292	Accepted
13	Loop sidedness in the sharing and allocation of national resources	150	3.29	.628	Accepted
14	Youthful exuberance	150	2.99	.618	Accepted
15	Religious intolerance	150	3.19	.391	Accepted
16	Ignorance on the part of citizens	150	2.99	.882	Accepted
17	Inadequate civic and moral instructions in schools	150	3.31	.634	Accepted
18	Denial of Justice	150	3.21	.856	Accepted
19	Social Inequality	150	2.90	.528	Accepted
20	Election rigging and imbalance report by mass media	150	3.33	.986	Accepted
Grand Mean			3.19		

Note: Acceptance ($\bar{x}$ is 2.5 and above); Rejection ($\bar{x}$ is less than 2.5)

In deducing the perception of security personnel on the causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa state, all the responses were selected by the respondents as causes of youth restiveness in the study area. However, some responses had considerable higher mean percentage than others. Majority of the respondents were of the perception that poverty ($\bar{x} = 3.70$), corruption ($\bar{x} = 3.79$) and unemployment ($\bar{x} = 3.79$) were quite significant causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa state with mean values of more than 3.5.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa state?

Table 2. Perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State

S/N	Items	N	Mean	STD	Remark
1	It may bring the nation's economy to a stand still	150	3.19	.872	Accepted
2	Relocation of citizens of their ethnic/tribal locality	150	2.99	.768	Accepted
3	Exodus of foreigners from the country	150	2.88	.542	Accepted
4	Restiveness may lead to breakup of the country	150	2.77	.636	Accepted
5	It may lead to civil war	150	3.12	.542	Accepted
6	People may live in fear and suspicion	150	3.31	.634	Accepted
7	Political instability	150	3.11	.945	Accepted
8	Psychological/emotional torture of victims and relation	150	2.68	.907	Accepted
9	Collapse/closure of industries/companies	150	3.41	.667	Accepted
10	Education backwardness	150	2.99	.768	Accepted
11	Loss of lives and properties	150	3.40	.685	Accepted
12	Famine	150	2.85	1.058	Accepted
13	Maiming (loss of vital organs of the body)	150	3.32	.638	Accepted
14	Breakdown of law and order	150	3.63	.485	Accepted
15	Broken homes	150	3.01	.894	Accepted
Grand Mean			3.11		

Note: Acceptance ($\bar{x}$ is 2.5 and above); Rejection ($\bar{x}$ is less than 2.5)

Table 2 above shows results for the perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa State. The respondents were of the opinion that all the responses were effects of youth restiveness on Adamawa state as shown by a grand mean value of $\bar{x} = 3.11$. However, Breakdown of law and order has a significantly higher mean value compared to the other responses ($\bar{x} = 3.63$), attesting the assertion that breakdown of law and order in the society was a major effect of youth restiveness in Adamawa state.

Research Question 3: How can youth restiveness be curbed in Adamawa state?**Table 3. Perception of security personnel on ways of curbing youth restiveness in Adamawa State**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	STD	Remark
1	Transparent leadership and governance	150	3.38	.917	Accepted
2	Enlightenment in peace building should be embarked upon by government	150	3.70	.460	Accepted
3	Aggressive poverty eradication drive and creation of employment opportunity for the youths	150	3.49	.501	Accepted
4	Community and family counselling should be promoted	150	3.49	.501	Accepted
5	Corruption Eradication	150	3.61	.490	Accepted
6	Negotiation and mediation will yield more positive results	150	3.39	.490	Accepted
7	Religious tolerance and checking the activities of religious extremists	150	3.61	.490	Accepted
8	Free and fair elections	150	3.49	.502	Accepted
9	Government should dialogue with aggrieved groups	150	3.31	.904	Accepted
10	Improved policing	150	3.41	.657	Accepted
11	Civic, moral instruction and peace education should be compulsorily taught in all schools	150	3.22	.750	Accepted
12	Improved living conditions	150	3.01	.634	Accepted
13	Counselling services should be made available in all schools.	150	3.44	.660	Accepted
14	Teachers, parents and community leaders should be role models to youths	150	3.02	.629	Accepted
15	Parents should show interest in the educational pursuits of youths	150	2.94	.943	Accepted
16	Youths should be allowed to participate in governance	150	2.93	1.028	Accepted
17	Creation of job opportunities for youths	150	3.16	1.124	Accepted
18	Parents paying attention to career aspirations of youths	150	3.14	.934	Accepted
19	Parents spending more time with youths at home.	150	3.14	.934	Accepted
20	Plausible acts of youths should be appreciated and encouraged by reinforcements.	150	2.83	.865	Accepted
Grand Mean			3.29		

Note: Acceptance ($\bar{x}$ is 2.5 and above); Rejection ($\bar{x}$ is less than 2.5)

The table above shows the results of analysis of perceived responses of security personnel on how youth restiveness can be curbed in Adamawa state. The result in Table 3 above shows that the security personnel were of the opinion that all the above listed remedies would help curb or reduce youth restiveness in the study area as shown by a grand mean value of $\bar{x} = 3.29$. It is however noted that there were responses with significantly higher mean values such as "Enlightenment in peace building should be embarked upon by government" ($\bar{x} = 3.70$), "Corruption Education" ($\bar{x} = 3.61$) and "Religious tolerance and checking the activities of religious extremists" ($\bar{x} = 3.61$). It is therefore asserted that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the above remedies would go a long way in the fight to curb youth restiveness in the study area.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in security personnel's perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa state on the basis of type of agency.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of perceptions of security personnel on the causes of youth restiveness based on type of agency

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.366	4	.091	.749	.560
Within Groups	17.698	145	.122		
Total	18.063	149			

Note: Not Significant > 0.05

The results in Table 4 shows that the F-ratio value is 0.749 and is not significant at 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in security personnel perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa State on the basis of type of agency is therefore accepted. It can therefore be noted that the result shows that there is a difference in the security personnel of different agency types' perceived causes of youth restiveness.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in security personnel's perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa state on the basis of gender.

Table 5. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of perceptions of security personnel on the causes of youth restiveness based on gender

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.011	1	.011	.089	.016
Within Groups	18.053	148	.122		
Total	18.063	149			

Note: Not Significant > 0.05

The results in Table 5 shows that the F-ratio value is 0.089 and is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in security personnel perceived causes of youth restiveness, in Adamawa State on the basis of gender is therefore rejected. It can therefore be noted that the result shows that there is no significant difference in security personnel of different gender's perceived causes of youth restiveness.

Discussion

In assessing the perceived causes of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa state, the study found that a lot of factors were responsible for youth restiveness in the area. However, poverty, corruption and unemployment were quite emphasized by the respondents as significant causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa state. Results for the perceived effects of youth restiveness by security personnel in Adamawa state included effects such as affecting the country's economy, possibility of a civil war, living in fear and suspicion, political instability, closure of industries/companies and maiming. Respondents however majorly stated "breakdown of law and order" as a significant effect of youth restiveness in the study area. In assessing the perception of security personnel on the techniques for curbing youth restiveness in the study area, it is noted that enlightenment in peace building should be embarked upon by government, corruption in education and religious tolerance and checking the activities of religious extremists were the major remedies/techniques prescribed by the security personnel. This is in line with the results of Mutiba (2011) who added that education is the primary conduit for value formation. Our education must be made to be functional meeting the students' needs. More emphasis should be placed on vocational and technical education which will help

students acquire skills that will introduce them to entrepreneurship development. Enlightenment campaigns against youth restiveness are also important. During this period relevant information is disseminated to the citizens. This fact was collaborated by Ifidon and Ahiauzu (2006) who maintained that information is “structured data that causes a human mind to change its opinion about the current state of real world and contribute to a reduction in the uncertainty of the state of the system”. Information is therefore a change agent that will assist the youths change their misconceived ideas and opinions.

The result of the first hypothesis of this research has shown a significant difference among security personnel in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness based on type of agency. The difference might be due to the difference in areas of specialty to which the various types of security agency were designed to function in. The Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) deals mostly in civilian matters and do not necessarily emphasize the use of excessive force. The army however has more jurisdiction in the use of brutal force and therefore has a different perspective and perception of youth restiveness as shown by the recent crises/massacre at the Lekki toll gate during the EndSars protest.

Result of the second hypothesis indicates that male and female security personnel have the same view about the causes of youth restiveness in Adamawa state of Nigeria. Put in another way, gender has little or no influence on the youths' perception of the causes of restiveness which include poverty, marginalization, bad leadership, unemployment and religious intolerance. This may be so because the security personnel live in the same environment and have similar experience of these violent acts. This finding is supported by Osalor (2012) who opined that youth restiveness can be caused by marginalization. According to him, the youth resort to restiveness because of their perceived marginalization by "selfish" elders with a bid to getting them fair share of benefits accruing to their community. The also corroborates the view of Ofeghe (2008) who opined that youth restiveness is as a result of unemployment and sufferings among the youths of the area which has metamorphosed into various acts of restiveness.

Conclusion

Youth restiveness in Nigeria has constituted a security problem and can endanger the peaceful co-existence of the country, in the same manner conflict and insecurity can be very havoc to the sustainable development of the country. Poverty, unemployment, lack of access to education among others has driven the youth into restiveness in Nigeria, and has degenerated to the extent that everybody is affected. Moreover, the government is not doing enough to stop the phenomenon. It is pertinent that government should adopt a strategy of curbing youth restiveness through empowerment of youth in order to uproot the main causes of social biases and poverty in the country. Until this was done security and sustainable development can never be attained in the country

Recommendations

Based on the revelations from the study, it is recommended that;

- i. Counsellors can organize workshops and seminars in our institutions to expose youths to the ills of youth restiveness.
- ii. Government should try to create employment for her citizens to reduce the unemployment level which gives rise to kidnapping and other forms of youth restiveness.
- iii. Anti-kidnapping, cultism and terrorism campaign by using jingles and posters in our University campuses and other social gathering locations. This might help to reorient our undergraduates of the ills of youth restiveness in whatever form.

- iv. Counselling centres in Nigerian tertiary institutions should on annual basis, organize workshops and seminars for new intakes to intimate them on the ills of youth restiveness so that they can desist from such vices.
- v. The government should also provide loans to unemployed youths who are willing to establish small scale business (such as snail farming and grass-cutter rearing) so that they could be self-sufficient.

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