

## Undergraduates' Perception of Causes of Youth Restiveness in Delta State of Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study investigated undergraduates' perception of causes of youth restiveness in Delta State of Nigeria. Four research questions were asked and four hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The study employed a descriptive survey design. A sample of 275 undergraduates drawn through multi-stage random sampling technique was used. A thirty item questionnaire titled "Undergraduates' Perception of the Causes of Youth Restiveness Inventory" UPCOYR was designed by the researchers and used for the study. The instrument had a Cronbach alpha co-efficient value of 0.76. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results revealed the following: that there was no significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State, there was no significant difference between younger and older undergraduates in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness. But there was significant difference between the perception of younger and older undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness. Lastly, there was significant difference among undergraduates in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness based on discipline. Recommendations were made based on the findings.

**Keywords:** Undergraduates, Youth Restiveness, Causes of Youth Restiveness.

### Introduction

The development of youths who are the potential leaders of any given country the world over, ought to top the goals of any nation. It is simply because the youths constitute a formidable force and if their energies are properly channelled, there will be immense growth and development. However, when such energies are dissipated on activities that are detrimental to national development, such a country will definitely experience myriads of problems.

This is what Nigeria as a country is presently going through. A good number of Nigerians believe that unemployment, poverty, bad governance and religious intolerance may have driven the youths into becoming perpetrators of violent crimes such as terrorism, cultism, militancy and kidnapping. National newspapers in Nigeria are replete with reports of indiscriminate killings and wanton destruction of properties. Lives are snuffed out of victims through incessant bombings by members of the Boko Haram sect. According to Lamido (2012) this bombing of targets in occupied public buildings or in the open areas where people congregate has resulted into a situation of great insecurity for Nigeria.

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012, Saturday Vanguard reported that a family of six including a six-month old child and a 70 year old grandmother were brutally murdered by gunmen in Plateau State. Again Iwok (2011) narrated that sixteen explosions were carried out by the same terrorist group. There are also incidence of kidnapping and the victims are usually close relations of well placed members of the society such as commissioners, ministers and former governors. Undoubtedly, the aim is to demand huge ransom from victims' relations thereby making life unbearable for them. Still on acts of violence, activities of cultists in institutions of learning are no longer nocturnal but carried out in broad daylight and many members have lost their lives during inter-cult shoot outs. The problem of secret cults has actually constituted a serious challenge to university authorities as well as other stakeholders in the education sector. The notoriety of individuals perpetrating the injurious activities with fatal consequences on innocent citizen has become worrisome in this society.

Consequent upon the prevalent acts of violence, anxiety, fear and panic have become regular "experiences" of Nigerians. The situation has so degenerated to the extent that any little noise along the street can cause pandemonium and people will be seen dashing to safety.

Restiveness simply refers to the ways youths use in making their demands which includes demonstration, protest, riot and civil disturbance. In this cultism and kidnapping are component of youth restiveness. This has given rise to different militant groups and in extreme cases they resort to kidnapping, assassination, insurgency, counter insurgency and war. Aladeyelu (2001) decried that youth restiveness in the Niger Delta is very rampant and has taken different forms like cultism and kidnapping.

There seem to be many causes of youth restiveness such as gross marginalization by different Nigerian governments, level of environmental degradation, unemployment, lack of education, lack of health facilities, lack of infrastructure and lack of social amenities. The question is "Do youths to be precise, university undergraduates perceive the causes of youth restiveness differently? Or the same?"

Literature abounds as to the causes of youth restiveness

Omumu (2007) cited in Ozo-Eson (2008) see kidnapping in the Niger Delta as a cheap source of making money

since ransome are always demanded. A high court judge in Delta State was kidnapped and a ransom of 50 million naira was being demanded, Vanguard, Sunday 12, 2012. Alechenu and Ibanga (2007) quoted Senator Folarn as saying that this is unacceptable. There is so much waste of wealth, a lot of lands are destroyed. This statement is with reference to the level of environmental degradation by oil producing companies as one of the causes of kidnapping.

Also, Ogoni elders according to Shaibu as quoted by Enueme and Onyene (2010) attributed youth restiveness to lack of access to quality education due to collapse of facilities resulting from neglect and activities of multinational oil corporations. This neglect made Ofeghe (2007) to say that the restiveness has been expressed' in the forms of bombing of oil installations and kidnapping of foreign workers.

Another form of youth restiveness is cultism. Stown (2012) stated that economic conditions in the area make cults intriguing for students who want security against enemies and substance. Ofeghe (2008) opined that youth restiveness in the Niger Delta is as a result of employment and sufferings among the youths of the area which has metamorphosed into various acts of restiveness.

Elegbeleje (2005) observed that some restive acts are peer motivated jamboree and perceived victimization arising from economic exploitation. Another cause of youth restiveness is the intellectual class as suggested by Shill, 1978. He is of the opinion that thorough view of the areas where youth restiveness thrives, there must always be an intellectual class.

Yet another cause of youth restiveness is indoctrination as suggested by Shill (1978). When youths are taught from early age that certain groups of people are their enemies or not good. There is no doubt that the seed of hatred had been sown from that early age.

Youth restiveness can also be caused by marginalization Osalor, (2012). According to him, the youth resort to restiveness because of their perceived marginalization by 'selfish' elders. It means they resort to it in order to get their own share of the national wealth.

Unemployment is another contributing factor to youth restiveness. Osalor, (2012) gave the figure of Nigerians who are unemployed in the first half of the year to about 3.9 percent of the entire population. The choice of undergraduates was made because these are the youths, many of whom are the brain behind youth restiveness. Also, Delta State is used as it comprises many ethnic groups whom the researchers have used with ease instead of travelling to other states.

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State of Nigeria. The following questions were raised to guide the study. What is the difference between the perception of male and female undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State?

1. What is the difference between the perception of 100 level and 400 level undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State

2. Is there any difference between the perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on age in Delta State?

3. What is the difference among the perception of students of Faculties of Science, Education and Social Sciences of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State?

Again, the researchers formulated the following null hypotheses to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State.

2. There is no significant difference between the perception of 100 level and 400 level undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State.

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of undergraduates of the causes of youth restiveness based on age in Delta State.

2. There is no difference on the perception of undergraduates across the Faculties of Science, Education and Social Sciences on the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State.

### **Methodology**

This study is survey, it adopted expo-facto design. It examines the undergraduates' perception of youth restiveness in Delta State. The multi-stage random sampling technique was used to sample size of 275 students.

The target population for this study were 400 level and 100 level students of Delta State University, Abraka. 30% of the faculties were randomly selected; Faculties of Social sciences, Sciences and Education were randomly selected from the Faculties. Two departments were randomly selected from the selected faculties and 25 students were randomly selected from each of the six selected departments totalling 300 respondents but 275 copies were retrieved and used for the analysis.

The sample comprise of 136 respondents (49.1%) males and 139 respondents (50.5%) females, whose age ranged between >20 to <25 years. 100 level is 53.1 % while 400 level is 46.9%. There were 100 and 400 level students from (below 20 = 63, 20-25 years (161) and above 25 (51) the faculties of science, social science and education.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study is titled "Undergraduates perception of the causes of youth restiveness inventory (UPCOYRI). The questionnaire consists of two parts; the first part measured some demographic variables as sex, age, level while the second part measured components of youth restiveness namely; cultism 10 items, militancy 10 items, and terrorism 10 items totalling 30 items.

The instrument was designed such that the participants could respond to the items on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). Cronbach alpha reliability procedure was used to assess the reliability value of .76. The procedure confirms with construct validity inter items analysis and reliability. A one-way Anova, and descriptive statistics were used to find out the difference in variability among students' perceptions based on gender, faculties and age respectively.

### Presentation of Data

**Question 1:** What is the difference between the perception of male and female undergraduate of the causes of youth restiveness?

**Table 1:**

Sex of student	N	Mean	SD
Male	136	97.66	7.72
Female	139	97.83	9.80

Table I shows mean difference between male and female undergraduate perception on the causes of youth restiveness to be .17 which is very insignificant. This is further confirmed by the result from the hypothesis.

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State.

**Table 2:** Summary independent t-test showing the perceptions on the Causes of youth restiveness based on gender

Sex of student	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sign.
Male	136	97.66	7.72	2	.542	.097
Female	139	97.83	9.80	273		
Total	275					

The results presented in table 2 above shows that the t - observed of 0.0542 is not significant at 0.05 alpha level [t-eal = 0.542, df = 273; P>0.05). Based on the result, the hypothesis that there is no significance difference between male and female undergraduates in their perception on the causes of youth restiveness is accepted.

**Question 2:** What is the difference between the perception of 100 level and 400 level undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State?

**Table 3:** Mean difference on undergraduates' perception on the causes of youth restiveness based on level of study

Level of study	N	Mean	SD	Std Error Mean
100	149	90.34	10.81	89
400	126	89.36	8.88	79
Total	275			

The above table 3 shows that the difference in perceptions of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on level of study is 0.98 (less than 1%) which is very minimal and is insignificant.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is significant difference between the perceptions of causes of youth restiveness by undergraduates based on level of stud.

**Table 4:** Summary independent t-test showing the perceptions of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on level of study (100 and 400)

Level of study	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sign.
100	149	90.34	10.81	273	.816	.238
400	128	89.36	8.88			
Total	275					

The results displayed in table 4 above shows that the t- observed of .816 is significant at alpha level (t-eal = .816, df = 273), P>0.05.

Based on the result, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in perception of undergraduates' perceptions on the causes of youth restiveness is accepted.

**Question 3:** Is there any differences in the perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on age in Delta State'?

**Table 5:** Mean differences on undergraduates' perception on the causes of youth restiveness based on age.

Level of study	N	Mean	SD	Std Error Mean
Below 20 years	63	90.78	11.47	1.45
20-25 years	161	89.94	9.75	.79
Above 25 years	51	88.05	8.67	1.21
Total	275	88.89	9.97	.60

The difference in the perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on age between below 20 years and 20-25 years is 0.84 while between 20-25 years and above 25 years is 1.29.

The average difference based on the three age brackets is maximum of 1.29. This is less than 2% and is insignificant.

**H03:** There is no significant difference in perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on age,

**Table 6:** Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of perception on the causes of youth restiveness based on age

Sources	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	Sign.
Between groups	128.812	2	64.41	.646	.525
Within groups	27123.915	272	99.72		
Total	27252.727	274			

Table 6 shows that there is no significant difference in the perception of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on age ( $F = .646$ ,  $df = 2/272$ ,  $P = .525$ ). The null hypothesis is accepted.

**Question 4:** What is the difference in perception of undergraduates on causes of youth restiveness based on faculties?

**Table 7:** Mean differences on the causes of youth restiveness based on faculties

Age	N	Mean	SD	Std Error Mean
Science	100	87.77	8.94	.89
Social science	99	89.89	9.36	.94
Education	76	92.68	11.39	1.31
Total	275	89.89	9.97	.60

The mean difference in their perception on the causes of youth restiveness based on faculties between faculties of social science and sciences is 2.12 while mean difference between social science and education is 2.79. These are marked mean differences based on faculties.

**H04:** There is no difference on the perception of undergraduates across the Faculties of Science, Education and Social Sciences on the causes of youth restiveness in Delta State.

**Table 8:** Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of perceptions of undergraduates on the causes of youth restiveness based on faculties

Sources	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	Sign.
Between groups	1042.818	2	521.409	5.411	0.005
Within groups	26209.91	272	96.360		
Total	27252.7	274			

The results in table 8 shows that the F -ratio value is 5.41 and is significant at 0.05. The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in undergraduates' perception on the causes of youth restiveness based on faculties is rejected.

### Discussion of Result

Result of the first hypothesis indicates that male and female undergraduates have the same view about the causes of youth restiveness in Delta 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 undergraduates 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 in the Delta State is as a result of unemployment and sufferings among the youths of the area which has metamorphosed into various acts of

restiveness.

The second finding has revealed that there is a significant difference between 100 level and 400 level students in their perception of youth restiveness. The explanation that can be proffered is that the 100 level students are freshers whose minds have not been thoroughly tuned to events around them. It could also be argued that the new undergraduates have not been intellectually stimulated (like the 400 level students) so as to be conversant with happenings in their environment.

Another result of this study has shown that there is no significant difference based on age of students in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness. The likely reason for this result is that youth restiveness has become so rampant in Nigeria that everybody irrespective of age is feeling the impact.

The last finding of this research has shown a significant difference among students in their perception of the causes of youth restiveness based on faculties. The difference might be due to the different programmes of undergraduates in the three faculties. While students in the faculties of social sciences and education focus on the behaviour of human beings and how they interact in their environment, students in the faculty of science focus on things and consequently have a myopic understanding of human behaviour.

### Recommendations

1. Anti kidnapping, cultism and terrorism campaign by using jingles and posters in our University campuses. This might help to reorient our undergraduates of the ills of youth restiveness in whatever form.
2. Counsellors can organize workshops and seminars in our institutions to expose students to the ills of youth restiveness.
3. 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.
4. Counselling centres in our universities should braze up to their responsibilities of counselling students and provide follow up for students who renounces.
5. Our leaders should lead by good example and provide basic amenities for the citizens.
6. 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.
7. Counselling centres in Nigerian universities 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.
8. Since science students have a different perception of the causes of youth restiveness because they deal mostly with things (chemicals), it is hereby recommended that courses that will make them (science students) to be more conversant with human behaviour be introduced into their programme.

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