

# **An Analysis of Unemployment and Political Violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government of Bayelsa State, Southern Nigeria**

**Author1, Dagaci Aliyu Manbe (PhD),  
Author2, Diyoke Michael Chika**

## **Abstract:**

The study examines the nexus of unemployment and violent crimes using political violence as a point of reference in Southern Ijaw Local Government, specifically the objective was to identify the factors responsible for unemployment, factors responsible for political violence, and the cause of youth involvement in political violence and the effects in Southern Ijaw Local Government area of Bayelsa State. Theoretically the study adopted the Conflict theory of crime as its major thrust of the study. A descriptive research design was used in the study. The methodology includes selection and analysis of 220 administered questionnaires to selected study samples. Interview was held with 10 politicians (party leaders and public office holders). Findings from the study reveal (amongst others) that unemployment level is very high in Southern Ijaw Local Government, Furthermore the study identified wide spread violence, increase in social vices, increase in number of dependents, increase in poverty amongst others as the major effects of unemployment. Further to these findings, this study concludes that there is a link between unemployment and political violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government of Bayelsa State. It however recommends (among others) that government at all levels should put in place and sustain programmes and policies geared towards reduction of poverty and unemployment level via massive youth

**IJOBAS**

Accepted 11 August 2019  
Published 13 August 2019

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3367440,

employment and women empowerment agendas such that both problems can be reduced if not completely removed from our society.

**Keywords:** Unemployment, Political Violence and Nigeria, Southern Ijaw Local Government area,

About Author

**Author1**, Department of Sociology, University of Abuja, Abuja Nigeria.  
E-Mail: aliyumanbe2009@yahoo.com

**Author2**, Department of Sociology, University of Abuja, Abuja Nigeria.

(Corresponding Author) **Email:** chikarism1st@yahoo.com

## Background to the Study

Today, unemployment and poverty constitute major challenges facing mankind across known boundaries including the most developed societies like Western Europe and America. However, it remains much more endemic among the Third World countries and particularly Africa with the worst case in Nigeria. According to the United Nations publications (Borode, 2011: 149), over one billion people in the world today live in unacceptable conditions of poverty, mostly in developing countries, particularly in rural areas of low income countries.

The most tragic is the fact that youths within the age bracket of 14 to 50 year old are the worst hit (Ajaegbu, 2012). This makes it more dangerous because this vulnerable group is susceptible to committing and/or perpetrating all sorts of crimes like terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, assassination, thuggery, prostitution, drug and human trafficking and so on. Also, most violent protests, demonstrations and revolutions and several mob actions leading to outbreak of wanton destruction of lives and properties, lawlessness in many societies as we are witnessing in Nigeria.

Again most prevailing political violent conflicts involving youths in Africa and indeed Nigeria are intricately linked to unemployment and poverty. In this regard Ikejiaku (2009) described the absolute poverty in Africa with what he called 'poverty qua poverty', the term used in describing the real poverty in Africa where majority of people find life excruciatingly agonizing largely due to difficulty in meeting or satisfying their basic needs like food, clothing, shelter and qualitative education.

Similarly Ajufu (2013:32) contended that "unemployment has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of Nigerian youths, causing increased militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness and socially delinquent behaviour. Youth unemployment is devastating to both the individual and the society as a whole psychologically socially,

politically and economically". Accordingly, it is apposite to argue that a society bedeviled with the problem of endemic rate of unemployment and poverty especially among its productive segment of the population as it is currently the case in Nigeria, will have its peace and stability endangered with dire consequence of retrogression instead of progress. As noted by World Bank Development Report of 1984 in Washington on Africa, (Onimode, 1988:15), the paradox of the deepening crisis of mass poverty in Africa and the enormous wealth of the continent is very painful.

Despite the above one cannot really conclude that the government at one level or the other has not done anything at one time or the other, to reduce unemployment in Nigeria. For instance, the creation of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its skills acquisition programmes, NAPEP, PAP, the SURE-P, YOUWIN, just to mention a few, are some of the various intervention mechanisms aimed at ensuring economic growth that is rich with job creation opportunities. Besides, the Federal Government over the years has been claiming strong real GDP growth rate measuring at 6% or 6.5% since 2005 till date (Aganga, 2010 and Ogunmade, 2013:44). This is apparently a paradox. A situation whereby, there is a decade of strong real GDP of 6.5% economic growth, and in the same period, unemployment rate continue to rise annually from 11.9% in 2005 to 19.7% in 2009, and over 37% in 2013% (Aganga, 2010 and Ogunmade, 2013:67). The apparent economic growth has not lead to economic development. The rate of poverty is still very high, the industries are still in shambles, technological development is till at rudimental stage, income inequality is high, immortal mortality rate and child mortality rate is high, and in fact, Nigeria development index is still very low.

The consequences of unemployment and poverty are many and notable among the effects of is political violence. That is why Nigeria has been experiencing many security challenges in

forms of criminal activities, violence and conflicts over the years (Mukhtar, Isyaku, & Sani, 2016:19). The formation of youth violent groups like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Avengers in the south-south, Bakassi Boys, in the south-east, Yandaba in the north-west, Yan-kalare and Yan-sara-suka in north-east, as well as the most notorious terrorist group, known as Boko Haram, also in the north-east (Mukhtar, et al. 2016) are all but manifestations of high rate of unemployment among teeming youths and poverty incidences in the country.

While the major cause for the formation of the above violent groups in various parts of Nigeria is either poverty or unemployment among the youth population, these violent groups have many serious implications on the fate of the democratic governance in the country. Violence has taken a severe toll on Nigerian economy, its peoples' political, social, and even spiritual lives. Crime and violence are so palpable, so pervasive and so devastating to many Nigerians (Diyoke, 2013). It is even more disturbing to find that, the country's political leaders are using joblessness and poor living conditions of the youths to employ them as political thugs. This manner in which members of our political class in Nigeria engage the services of jobless youths as thugs for the purpose of intimidating political opponents and their supporters during elections is growing. These youths, who are mainly uneducated or semi-literate, are often encouraged to unleash violence, cause electoral violence, break the law at will, in which virtually nothing can be done to stop them once they have made up their mind to unleash these havocs on their intended targets. Violence has become so common in the Nigerian society; at domestic, community and national levels and it has the tendency for causing national instability. For example, when there is insecurity in a nation, such as those emanating from the Boko Haram and the Niger-Delta Avengers, the prospect of democratization is threatened, as the leaders will shift attention from welfare services and



dispensation of democratic dividend to resolving the violence emanating from the activities of these groups, even if it will affect the wellbeing of the citizens. Hence, the ban of okada rides, curfews, and too much check points are authority's reaction to the. In addition, election processes have been suspended in places like Gombe State and political administrations in Yobe State, Borno State, and Adamawa State, have suffered setback in the towards the end of the year 2015.

Again Diyoke, (2016:61) observed that Politics in Nigeria for the past decades have been characterized by widespread politically orchestrated violence especially during election times and youth militias have been seen as the major perpetrators of political violence. Demographically, youth constitute majority of the population in Nigeria. Majority of these youths in urban areas are failing to secure employment. About 80 % of them are unemployed (Diyoke, 2016).

It is thus because of these problems that we are motivated to search in more directions for empirical evidence that could help to explain the level unemployment on political in Nigeria especially Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

## Literature Review

### Unemployment

There seem to be a consensus on the definition and usage of the concept, unemployment. According to Udu and Agu (2005:64), unemployment is "a situation in which persons capable and willing to work are unable to find suitable paid employment". As defined by International Labour Organisation (2007), unemployed workers are those who are currently not working but are willing and able to work for pay, currently available to work and have actively search for work. Hornby (2010:65) defines unemployment as "the facts of a number of people not having a job; the number of people without a job; the state of not having a job". In the same

vein, an operational definition of unemployment for this work will include the underemployed, hence unemployment occurs when people who are able and willing to work are without jobs, or cannot find work that is effective and productive to do. It also occurs when people undertake jobs that are contrary or lower than their academic qualifications or areas of specialization. For instance, a first or second degree holder that enrolls as a recruit into any of the armed forces or paramilitary or a degree holder working as a clerk in an office is greatly underutilized and as such could be termed as unemployed even when such person is on a job.

According to Adebayo (Akande and Okuwa, 2009) unemployment exists when the labour force wish to work but cannot get jobs. Various forms of unemployment have been identified and elaborated upon by scholars. These include seasonal, frictional, cyclical and structural employment.

According to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2009; 2010) the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009 showed that the number of unemployed person constituted 31.1% in 2000, 13.6% in 2001, 12.6% in 2002, 14.8% in 2003, 13.4% in 2004, 11.9% in 2005, 14.7% in 2006, 14.6% in 2007, 14.9% in 2008 and 19.7% in 2009. Unemployment in Nigeria varies by age group, educational level and sex classification. This is evident from the data provided by NBS (2010). For person between ages 15-24 years, 41.6% were unemployed. And person between 25-44 years 17% were unemployed. For those with primary education, 14.8% were unemployed, while those with secondary education, 23.8% were unemployed. And for those with postsecondary education 21.3% were unemployed. Data for those who never attended school and those with below primary education showed that 21.0% and 22.3% were unemployed respectively. As regards sex, data revealed that 17.0% male and 23.3% females constituted the unemployed (NBS, 2010).



The causes of urban unemployment and under-employment in a developing country such as Nigeria are complex. Firstly, there is the pressure of rapidly growing population and especially of school leavers which means that year by year vast numbers of new job opportunities have to be created. Secondly, there is the growing unemployment of trained people including university graduates. Thirdly, there is defective manpower planning coupled with inappropriate bias in the educational system in which disproportionate numbers of white collar job seekers are turned out at the expense of much-needed technicians, technologist and scientists. And lastly there is the fact of job seekers selectivity of job availability or of location, posting or hankering after jobs unrelated to acquired training and skill.

According to Anifowose (1982) unemployment in Nigeria are with attendant social, economic, political and psychological consequences. One of its social consequences on the Nigerian youths is the high level of youth unemployment. A phenomenon which encourages the development of street youths and urban urchins (“area boys”) that grows up in a culture that encourages criminal behaviour. Unemployment has also contributed to increasing feminization of poverty among young women, which has encouraged prostitution as a means of survival and leads to trafficking of young women across international borders with transnational security implications.

Psychologically, the unemployed usually experience trauma, anger, frustration, low self-esteem, negative life satisfaction, unhappiness and mental disorder including depression and acute stress. Other economic consequence of unemployment include flight of youths and able bodied men from the country in search of better opportunities elsewhere, thereby reducing the labour force and producing capacity in Nigeria (Akande, 2016:10 and Okuwa, 2015:90).



## Political Violence

In order to critically understand the meaning of political violence it will be pertinent that we appreciate the meaning of violence as a prelude. Violence could be an instrument employed by non-governmental organizations, individuals and groups to press forward their demands. However, violence when it is endemic and persistent or unmanageable may become an impediment to political stability and economic progress. In our conceptualization, electoral violence is synonymously used as political violence, looting, arson, thuggery, kidnapping etc. spontaneous or not, which occur before, during and after every election (Diyoke, 2016).

On the other hand Political Violence according to Anifowose (1982:97) is the use of or threat of physical act carried out by individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or groups and property, with the intent to cause injury or death to persons, damage or destruction to property, and whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstance, implementation, and effects have political significances, that tends to modify or change the behavior of others in the existing arrangement for the political system Political violence could take two dimensions that are pre-electoral violence and post-electoral violence (cited in Diyoke, 2016). The pre-electoral violence may occur where electoral laws or provisions are seen to favor a particular candidate at the expense of the other. It could also occur when a particular candidate is over-ambitious and perhaps sees the signals that he may likely lose the election to the opponent. Post-electoral violence on the other hand, may be spontaneous.

It may be engineered by individuals who feel cheated, alienated or deprived by the unfairness of the electoral process. This deprivation may be real or perceived. In Nigeria, the purpose of

such violence apart from seeking redress through illegal means is also to destroy it, if we cannot have it (Aganga, 2010).

### **Factors Responsible For the Rising Unemployment in Nigeria**

The high unemployment situation in Nigeria is real. Even the government (at all levels) has severally admitted to this fact at different forum (Aganga, 2010; Agbaegbu, 2011:87). Nigeria is rich, it has every potential to develop and put poverty and unemployment issues into history. But the paradox now is that Nigerians still wallow in poverty as unemployment rate keep rising at alarming rate due to some factors discuss below:

#### **i. Corruption**

Corruption is not a strange word to an average Nigerian. Simply put, it is a dishonest or illegal behaviour, especially of people in authority. It is an abuse of public office for private gain which usually involves embezzlement of public funds, nepotism and falsification of facts and figures, etc. Corruption has no doubt done incalculable damages to every facets of the country Nigeria. It has undermines democratic institutions, retarded economic growth and development (Diyoke, 2016) and cause poverty in the mist of plenty, it has prevented the country from making political, social and economic progress and ultimately brought about high level of mass unemployment in the country. It has denied millions of Nigerians access to education, housing, health, food and infrastructure (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2012).

It is indeed worrisome for a country like Nigeria, with all the resources having over 61 million (37%) unemployed; and over 70% of the population living below poverty line, whilst its leadership at all levels amasses ill-gotten wealth with impunity. It is a popular belief that ascription and nepotism permeates job placement in both private and public sectors. In the labour market today, 'whom you know' and 'how much you can pay' determines one's

chances of securing employment, rather than merit. These of course, have denied well qualified, determined and energetic Nigerians employment.

### **ii. Poor Management Practice**

Nigerians are known for lack of good management culture. The country is blessed with abundant natural resources. It is believed that if the resources are well harnessed, fully developed and well managed, Nigeria is capable of surmounting the problem of high unemployment and its attendant effects. Harnessing the nation's economy involves assessment of one's resources at present and allocating them to different competing sectors so as to meet some certain goals. In the same vein, Nigeria does not lack good economic plans. What is lacking is proper implementation. The process of implementation has been taken over by corrupt and incompetent implementers failure result. The Public Service is the major implementer of government policies and programmes in Nigeria. Asaju (2010) have asserted that the Nigerian Public Service remains an obstacle to effective implementation of government policies and programmes. This he adduced to the high rate of corruption and dishonesty and indiscipline on the part of the public servants. Studies have shown that since the First National Development Plan (1962-1968), Nigeria has had several other development plans both long and short term. These plans have not resulted to the uplift of the standard of living of the citizenries and overall development in the country.

### **iii. Neglect of Agricultural sector**

Until early 1970s, agriculture remains the mainstay of Nigerian economy. It constitute the major income earning for the country and the largest employer of labour as over 90 percent of the populace worked and earn their daily income from this sector. Following the rise in the price of petroleum (oil boom) in 1970s, and the attendance huge foreign income, the agricultural sector suffered a substantial decline till today. The huge finances from the oil

sector have brought about the growth of public and private enterprises which are concentrated in the urban centres. This later resulted in rural- urban migration in which able body men who were farmers left their farm land to pick up menial jobs in the urban centres which are scarce and inconsistent. Corporate Nigeria (2007) puts the country's labour force statistics as follows: 70% in agricultural sector; 10 % in the industrial sector; and 20 % in the service sector of the economy. Many analysts have argued that there is a strong relationship between the neglect of agricultural sector and high rate of unemployment in the country. Agriculture remains a panacea for reducing the high rate of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria. The monopolistic nature (over reliance on oil) of the economy remains a contradiction.

#### iv. **Infrastructural Decay**

This is yet another dismal factor that has rendered millions of Nigerians unemployed. Haris Dafaranos, a former Greek Ambassador to Nigeria is one of those who believed that if the infrastructure is improved and empowered policies are put in place, people will have opportunity to employment and use their talent in sectors like textile which is capable of absorbing both skilled and semi-skilled workers (Akaeze, 2010:56). No doubt that the inability of successive administration to tackle the problem in power sector has done an incalculable harm to all facets of the economy especially the manufacturing enterprises in the country. Currently, there are barely 200 operators in the real sectors of the economy. For example, Dunlop Nigeria Plc which was a dominant manufacturing enterprise in the country has been shutting shops; Michelin, a tyre manufacturing company followed suit. The last surviving textile mill in Kaduna, the United Textile Mills (UNT) Plc has been shut down for long.

The United Nation Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) statistics indicated that over 170 textile companies have closed shop and 120,000 employees are rendered jobless on account of poor power and water supply, high cost of fuel and massive smuggling of counterfeit products into the country from Asia (Ogunlade, 2007:45).

#### **v. Lack of Purposeful Leadership and Good Governance**

There is a general agreement among political observers of Nigerian politics especially in recent times that the nation has never been lacking in terms of initiating good ideas towards enhancing the welfare of the citizens, what was lacking is the political will to turn these ideas into concrete results. Asaju (2010) affirms that “hardly had any administration come on board without a virgin plan professionally packaged to ease the agonizing pains of the masses, although these plans which come with great expectations are found to be more active on papers”. Successive administrations’ effort to combat the menace of unemployment and its attendant effects over the years ended up in a deadlock and the reason is not far from corruption, lack of political- will to implement government projects, lack of good governance etc which also aggravates political instability.

#### **vi. Unfavourable Government Reforms**

If the nation’s social and economic system is malfunctioning, it calls for reformation. But when economic reform is devoid of human face, the citizen’s welfare will be jeopardized. For example, the public sector reforms embarked upon by the administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo saw the disengagement of 121,731 workers from the Federal Public Service between 2006 and 2007. More so, it was disclosed that a total of 48,037 officers were severed from the civil service in the first year of Late President Yar’adu’s administration 2008 (OSGF, 2008). The reform also hit the banking sector with massive retrenchment of workers. The oil industry was not left out; NNPC alone pruned its work force from 17,000 down to just

9,000. One may ask whether reform paradoxically mean increasing unemployment and wide spread poverty. The reform in Obasanjo's own words will have to wear a 'human face' if they are to gain widespread acceptance (Aluko, 2006:71).

In contrast, government has slimmed applicants chances to fill vacancies available within the same period without creating other opportunity. For instance, out of over 105,000 candidates who applied for employment into Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) in 2010, only 1,858 persons were recruited. The rest were left unemployed (Akeredolu, 2010:23).

### **vii. Unfavourable terms and Conditions Placed on Jobs**

There is no doubt that years of experience brings about efficiency and productivity. However, the issue of stretching years of experience and age limit by the employers as criterion for employment has narrowed chances for employment. A 31-year-old unemployed graduate of economics lamented thus:

I wonder where some of these people want us to get the experience if we are not given the opportunity to even start. In most cases, employers insist on 25 years age limit and five years work experience. But with the challenges people face before graduating in this country, how do you expect a 25 year old to have acquired five years' experience (Akaeze 2011:77).

Similarly, the presence of over-aged workers, those who are due for retirement but (for the fear of the socio-economic insecurity in the country), refused to retire, has left no opening for fresher to come in. A study carried out by the Bureau of Public Service Reform indicates that succession potential into the Civil Service on the basis of age profile is very low. Using 25 year as the optimum age of basic degree graduate into the Civil Service on GL.08 and a maximum 35 years in service to attain age of compulsory retirement age of 60 years; and the FCSC prescribed promotion eligibility, grade level stay of 3 years between GL.08 and 15 and 4 years between GL.15-17, the study shows that 91.5% of the officers were found to be over aged for

their grade levels and position occupied. Thus the succession potential was less than 20% in all cases (Aluko, 2006). The above findings have a great implication for employment opportunities, especially for the youths who are more vibrant and energetic.

### **viii. Systemic Problems in Education**

Most people blamed the falling standard of education in the country for the rising unemployment in Nigeria. It has been argued that many universities and other tertiary institutions shun out half-baked products in their thousands who are hardly suitable for the labour market or gainful employment.

Some educationists refute such assertion, and argued that “where there are half-baked products from our universities, know that the problem is systemic”. Turning the blame back to the government, the curriculum has not been planned to meet with the present society and in most cases there are poor facilities and sometimes non to train the students. In the same vein, dictum that the educational system laid much emphasis on certificate acquisition while neglecting the application of the knowledge and skills acquired to meet the challenges of the contemporary Nigeria.

However, Ogunlade (2007) blamed the systemic problem in Nigeria educational system on the colonial legacy which continues to rub shoulders and even persist as the order of the day in contemporary Nigeria. The negative public attitude or prejudice for agriculture and the dignity of labour during the colonial past still persist. He captured it thus:

The colonial policy of education for agriculture and dignity of labour in Nigeria looked better on paper than in practice, promoting agriculture to feed the nation and make it the cornerstone of the economy in contemporary remains in the realm of the rhetoric”. (Ogunlade, 2007:35)

Similarly, statistics have shown that about three millions youths graduate from our secondary schools annually, but only about one-third (one million) of them proceed to higher

institutions; while about two millions go into the labour market without the basic employability skills. Most of these youths hate going into agriculture or any entrepreneurial jobs. When students are trained to be 'white collar job' seekers rather than job creators or self-reliant, teaming unemployed graduates becomes the consequent.

#### **ix. The Effects of Globalization**

The process of economic globalisation in labour in Nigeria has had a tremendous negative impact on Nigeria economy and subsequently on the reduction of poverty and unemployment (Agbaegbu, 2011).

According to Scholte (2000) reflected in Aluko (2006), globalisation means "internationalisation (cross border relations between countries); liberalisation (removal of government imposed restrictions on movement); universalisation (spread of various objects/experiences); Westernisation or modernisation (dynamism); and deterritorialisation (spread of super territoriality). The process whereby political, social, economic and cultural relations increasingly takes on a global scale and having profound consequences for individuals' local experiences and everyday lives is referred to as globalization (Aluko, 2006:46).

The challenges of globalization on Nigeria have been daunting because Nigeria has since operated an open, externally dependent economy. The presumed benefits of internationalization lured Nigeria into accepting and adopting Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), a neo-liberal policy, with the hope that she will be in a position to benefit from the process. It appears that due to the dependent nature of Nigeria economy, the country has not benefited much from globalization process. The forceful implementation of neo-liberal policies such as SAP whose condition include privatization, trade and capital liberalization, deregulation and removal of subsidy, devaluation of currency etc. are similar to



the components of globalization, which is a neo-liberal ideology. This is couple with other conditions given to Nigeria by IMF, World Bank, Paris Club among other imperialist financial institutions across the world before granting loan facilities or aids to the country. Many of these conditions are unsuitable and anti- progressive to the development efforts in Nigeria.

#### **x. Lack of enabling Environment**

Government does not create enabling environment for the unemployed Nigerians to create job or small scale business for themselves. The hostile business environment precipitated by poor infrastructure, particularly poor power and water supply, and trade policies which allow all kinds of imported goods to flood the country have created high unemployment rate in the country. Many artisans who cannot afford power generators have been forced to remain idle. Successive government has allocated resources to the power sector in last two decades, yet the target 4000 megawatts have not been met. Recently, it was announced that the countries generation capacity have fallen to about 2000 megawatts. This megawatt is grossly inadequate even for domestic proposes. Roads and rail connectivity are in the state of moribund and inefficient. Entrepreneurship has been systematically desensitised because small businesses that have limited access to capital and political connections are forced to collapse. The causes of unemployment in Nigeria are quite inexhaustible.

#### **Causes of Political Violence in Nigeria**

Several studies have been conducted throughout the globe in order to find out some of the major determinants of participation in political violence. The rationale for this is to ascertain whether education, poverty, unemployment deprivation and frustration have any causal link to political violence. In a study conducted by Amaka, (2005) to determine whether education, unemployment, poverty, political violence and terrorist activities have any causal connection, the study found out that the occurrence of hate crimes is largely independent of economic

conditions. Amaka (2005) analyzed data on support for attacks against Israeli targets by the Hezbollah. From the public opinion polls conducted in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the polls indicated that support for violent attacks does not decrease amongst those with higher education and higher living standards. The core contribution from Kruger on political violence from the statistical analysis of the determinants of participation in Hezbollah militant activities in Lebanon suggests that having a living standard above poverty line or secondary school or higher education is positively associated with participation in the Hezbollah - Israel crisis. The study also revealed that Israeli Jewish settlers who attacked Palestinians in the West Bank in the early 1980s were overwhelmingly from high paying occupations. The conclusion speculates on why economic conditions and education are largely unrelated to participation and support for terrorism and political violence in societies. It is in this light that Nwokoma (2005:88) in his own attempt at the determinants of political violence in Nigeria implicated the high rate of unemployment and poverty as the main determinants of political violence in the country. According to him, the chronic shortage of employment opportunities gave the politicians the leverage to mobilize the unemployed youth for personal and parochial purposes. Available statistics show that many of the unemployed youths turned into trained militant sects to intimidate, harass and assassinate political opponents. Nwokoma (2005) further added that the primary determinant of political violence in the Nigerian state from 1999 through 2007 was as a result of the poor and low economic growth in the country. In similar manner Piazza (2006) also carried out a study to determine whether poverty and low education are determinants of political violence activities in societies using the Rooted in Poverty hypothesis. According to Piazza (2006:164) the rooted-in-poverty hypothesis stems from the belief that impoverished countries teeming with poorly educated, unemployed masses qualified by a widening gap between the rich and



poor combined with low literacy rates are fermentation tanks for dangerous and violent militants. The low levels of economic and social development increase the appeal of political extremism and encourage political violence and instability. It is worthy to mention here that empirical evidence refutes this hypothesis. Yet, it continues to be popular and the belief that political violence is a result of poverty, poor education and acute unemployment. To buttress the fact that poverty cannot breed political violence from the data collected by the United States of America Department of State's office of the Coordinator for Counter Terrorism, Piazza (2006) illustrates the disparity between speculation and reality.

In his study over a 15 year period, out of Ten Nations most affected or afflicted by terrorist incidences, only three fit the profile of low levels of socio-economic development. However, from other studies conducted, evidence illustrates a starkly different reality. Research indicates that in less developed nations economic progress is actually negatively related to transnational terrorism. It is not the poor countries but the rich ones that are more prone to transnational terrorism or political violence. Diego and Steffen (2009) also gave their support to the fact that poverty has no relationship with political violence when they advanced that a disproportionate number of violent extremists were highly educated engineers. Piazza's studies revealed that none of the economic indicators are significant predictors of either terrorist incidents or cruelties. His study further revealed that there is no empirical evidence to support the crux of the rooted in poverty thesis. The fallout from such a revelation can be expected to be quite significant. If poverty is the critical failure point, then it also provides an easy answer to the problem of political violence, instability and terrorism in societies. Thomas (2009:90) in his study at the causes, responses, and the framework for discussing and preventing political violence in Kenya implicated poverty, unequal distribution of resources and land issues as the main causes of political violence in Kenya. Wolfenson



(2010:86) has gone on record several times touting poverty as the main variable cause for political violence and terrorism. Underwood (2010:73) also disagrees and points out that most terrorist and those that engage in political violence activities are not impoverished, but rather are well educated and middle class. The case of Algeria's relative wealth and high violence is just one example that contradicts this hypothesis. Therefore, there must be some other motive for political violence outside poverty, being poor is not a sufficient motivator for violent conflict in a society. However, a major misconception still persists in the study of political violence as scholars still argues that poverty is a major determinant of political violence. Many continue to believe that poverty breeds terrorism or political violence and instability. Regardless of evidence that stand out to the contrary, the belief is not just held by the casual observer inundated with sensationalized media, but that it has also taken hold of national leaders and those leading international development agencies. As such, it is imperative to address the notion that poor people are more likely to violently revolt, engage in political violence or engage in terrorist activities. Graeme, Neil, Christine and Jacob (2011) in examining the causes of militant violence in Pakistan frequently focused on poverty as a root cause of support for violent political groups. Moreover, much of United States of America and Western Policies towards Pakistan over the last ten years have been geared toward encouraging economic and social development as an explicit means of diminishing the terrorist threat. Legislation before the U.S House of Representatives in April 2009, for example called for the United States to strengthen Pakistan's public education system, increase literacy, expand opportunities for vocational training and help create an appropriate national curriculum for all schools in Pakistan. Their study also revealed that the Donors Conference in Tokyo, where nearly thirty countries and international organizations pledged some \$5 billion (dollars) in development aid explicitly intended to enable Pakistan to Fight off



Islamic extremism. These policies according to Graeme et al (2011) reflects a belief that poverty is a root cause of support for militancy or at least that poorer and less-educated individuals are more prone to militants' appeals. Despite the strong beliefs about links between poverty and militancy that these aggressive policy best revealed that there is little solid evidence to support this contention as earlier examined through the works of Kruger (2002), Piazza (2006), and Diego and Steffen (2009).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Marxist Theory of Crime**

While some analysts' think of politics primarily as a cooperative act, others think of it primarily as one group of people imposing their values and interests on others. Political scientists of the consensual perspective might look at the low turn-out of election and conclude, "enough people are content with both sides that they did not regard voting as important this time." The second sort of political scientists (i.e. those of the conflict perspective) might interpret the same thing as "the political elite did not offer people the real choice this time so there was no use voting".

Therefore Conflict theory is the ant-thesis of consensus theory explanation of political phenomena. Unlike the consensus theory which argues that the society is based on consensus or widespread agreement among members of society, conflict theory argues that human society is characterized by conflict rather than consensus. The argument of conflict theory is that modern complex society is composed of antagonistic social classes and groups whose interests, values and norms are often divergent and contradictory.

Various kinds of theories are categorized under the conflict theories, so long as it recognizes that there are different groups with interests that may conflict. For our purpose however, it is the Marxist variant of conflict theories that we are most concerned about.

Marxism remains one of the most controversial and ideological theories in political science. Although Karl Marx and his collaborator, Frederich Engels had formulated their theory more than one hundred and seventy years ago, this theory nevertheless has continued to impact contemporary political inquiry.

Although Marxist work were not treatise on crime or violence specifically, but the ideas expressed in those works have direct implications for the study and understanding of crime in capitalist society.

Marxist proceeds from the premise that the manner of ownership of the means of production, divide society into two major antagonistic classes. There is the class that owns the means of production. This class may be called the capitalist, bourgeois, ruling, propertied, parasitic, exploitative, upper or simply the dominant class. The second class do not own any means of production but its members have only their labor to offer for sale to other class. This second class may be called the working, labor, exploited, lower or simply the dominated class (Taylor, etal, 1975 cited in Diyoke, 2016:46).

According to Taylor, etal, (1975) in Diyoke, (2016:47) the class that owns the means of material production, (i.e. machines, land, factories, etc.) also owns the means of mental production, (i.e. mass media, education, religion, etc.). The class also dominates the apparatus. Hence, it is the ruling class. The major objective of this class is to make profit and make more profits. It makes the profit largely by exploiting the lower class. It pays members of the lower class wages which are less than what those workers put into the production process. The surplus goes into the



pocket of the dominant class. While law and the machinery of the criminal justice system are geared towards ensuring that this unjust status quo is perpetuated.

Put differently, the classic Marxist argument is that the economic infrastructure of society (made up of the means/factors of production) determines what happens at the ideological superstructure of the society (made up of production relations to and which politics belongs). In other words, the nature and character of politics is determined by the economy base or substructure of society. Since in the capitalist societies the economic base dictates unequal relationship, it follows therefore, that the politics is shaped to meet the demands of such inequalities (Diyoke, 2016).

The two classes in capitalist society have opposing interest. The capitalist want to preserve the exploitative relationship between the classes; the working classes want to end it. The classes have conflicting interest and values. Law comes in to mediate, but the law cannot at the same time embody opposite values. It ends up taking sides with one of the parties to the conflict i.e. the capitalist or dominant class, in this case whatever action taking by the oppressed class is considered to be crime (Igbo, 2008).

In Marxist parlance the law becomes, simply an aspect of the superstructure twitching to the control of the economic infrastructure. This attribute of law is reflected in other components of the legal system. That is to say the police, courts, prison, and other justice agencies they are on the side of the capitalist class and cannot be impartial, neutral or benevolent as the consensus theories portrays them. Radical Marxist such as Quinney, Taylor and Thompson saw law simply as instrument of the ruling class, while radical scholars, such as Ake, (1986) and Odekunle, (1983:14) subscribed to it. The implication of viewing law and other legal system as instrument of one class is that law must always favor one class.

Applying this theory in understanding unemployment and political violence, Conflict theorists will argue or view political violence as nothing but a reaction to injustice, which is probably created in the minds of the people due to misguidance, illiteracy, or unrealistic goals, and that violent behaviors expressed by people are the result of individual frustration, aggression or showing a readiness to fight. Political conflict makes people look for ways to explain and solve the problems they are facing. If the conflict is deeply rooted, and the current ideology proves unable to deal with the problems, people begin to turn to other ideologies that can often carry a religious theme to them. This is not to say that all forms of violence acts are committed by people that are religious. In 83% of the suicide attackers worldwide, between 1980 and 2003, only 43% were identifiably religious. They make use of violence because they believe that if they did not use violence they would lose a power struggle, which lead many conflict theorists to view it as a weapon of the weak.

Again the theory suggests that who or what is labeled as deviant depends on who has the most power. The relatively small 'power elite' in our society are much less likely to carry the stigma of deviance than anyone else. Even if they are suspected of deviant behavior, the powerful have the resources to resist deviant labels. Consider a scenario where a rich CEO of a company and a struggling factory worker both commit the same crime. We'll say that they were both caught in possession of illegal drugs. Which person do you imagine will be more severely punished? It's likely that the CEO has the resources to get off lightly or at least to keep it quiet. The factory worker, on the other hand, is likely to receive full punishment and have his criminal deviance advertised.

## Methodology



The broad aim of this study was to examine the level of unemployment on political violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State Nigeria. Other specific objectives of the study include:

1. To identify the factors responsible for unemployment in Southern Ijaw local government area of Bayelsa State
2. To identify the factors responsible for political violence in Southern Ijaw local government area of Bayelsa State
3. To identify the cause of youth involvement in political violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State
4. To examine the effects of political violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State
5. To find out the link between unemployment and political violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State
6. To identify the strategies adopted to curb political violence in southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State

Data was obtained through descriptive survey research design (by means of the Questionnaire) and In-depth Interviews.

The population of the study will comprise of individuals (adult male and female) in the local government. However the population of the study was stratified in to civil servants, students (secondary and post-secondary), politicians (party leaders and public office holders), Commercial drivers and Market Men and Women (Traders). The total population of the study is 319,413 at the 2006 census.

250 was the sample size of the study, using confidence level of 95% and a tolerable error unit of 5%, the sample size was determined by W.G Cochran's equation 1963, for populations that



are large. Cochran (1963:75) developed the equation to yield a representative sample for proportions.

For the sampling technique a combination of multi-stage cluster method and systematic random sampling was used to enable the researcher select the area/ward and respondents respectively.

Southern Ijaw local government has 17 political wards namely; Oporoma I, Oporoma II, Olodiana I, Olodiana II, Otuan West Boma, Central Boma I Central Boma II, Amassoma I, Amassoma II, Amassoma III, East Boma I, East Boma II, Foropa, Apoi, Ukubie and Koluama which for the purpose of this study shall be regarded as clusters.

From these clusters, simple random sampling was applied to select five Wards for distribution of the questionnaire. This was followed by application of another simple random sampling technique to select five Towns/Villages from each Ward making a total of Twenty-five (25) Town/Villages. From each of these 5 Towns/Villages 10 respondents was selected randomly using balloting ( $5 \times 5 \times 10 = 250$ ) making a total of two hundred and fifty.

For the in depth interview 10 politicians (party leaders and public office holders) in the local government were purposively selected in the study.

## Findings

The major task of this study was to investigate unemployment and political violence in Southern Ijaw local government area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Analysis of data collected reveals that unemployment level is very high in Southern Ijaw Local Government. Only an insignificant majority (5%) argued that unemployment is low. This finding confirms that fact that the high unemployment situation in Nigeria is real. Even the government (at all levels) has severally admitted to this fact (Daily Trust, March 16, 2009;

Akeredolu, 2010; Aganga, 2010; Agbaegbu, 2011). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), each year, about 1.8 million young Nigerians enter into our labour market and we need to ensure that our economy provides jobs for them (NBS, 2012). The study also reveals that agricultural neglect by the people and the government causes unemployment. Others pointed to corruption, Educational lapses, lack of purposeful leadership, infrastructural decays amongst others. Furthermore the study identified wide spread violence, increase in social vices, increase in number of dependents, increase in poverty amongst others as the major effects of unemployment.

Another important aim of this study was to identify the link between the unemployment and political violence. Results from the study indicate that there is a link between unemployment and political violence in the study area. This finding corroborate with the finding of Usman, (2015) that increased poverty and unemployment rate especially in the northern region and the recruitment of hungry street beggars called the 'Almajiris' who are the alienated ones in the society by the political elites in the north for selfish/sectional and parochial ends are the direct consequences of wide spread violence and Boko Haram.

Equally significant from the findings was the fact that it is because of jobless, youthful exorbitance, frustration, disenchantment, poverty amongst others as reason of youth involvement in political violence. Further to this it also observed that loss of lives and properties, high level of human right abuse, political instability, and unpopular government amongst others as major effects of political violence in the area.

On policy to curb political violence it was observed that majority of the people are not aware of any government policy to eradicate political violence, only few have benefited from such programmes due to poor awareness or campaigns. Further still the programmes were rate to be ineffective. However they observed that investment in urban planning, youth

empowerment, education, and early intervention, amongst others are some of the programmes to curb political violence in the area.

Finally the study reveals that the best policy to curb political violence in the area are that government should embark on grass rooted policy and programmes, credible elections, respect for human rights amongst others.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results from the data, the researcher concludes as follows:

That unemployment level is very high in Southern Ijaw Local Government, that agricultural neglect by the people and the government causes unemployment. Others include corruption, Educational lapses, lack of purposeful leadership, infrastructural decays amongst others, furthermore that wide spread violence, increase in social vices, increase in number of dependents, increase in poverty amongst others as the major effects of unemployment.

In addition this study concludes that there is a link between unemployment and political violence in the study area. That many people are not aware of any policies or programmes to curb political violence in the community and it is usually hijacked by elite the community.

The study also concludes that the best policy to curb political violence in the area are that government should embark on grass rooted policy and programmes, credible elections, respect for human rights amongst others.

### **Recommendations**

Accordingly, the study recommends as follows:

1. That government at all levels should put in place and sustain programmes and policies geared towards reduction of poverty and unemployment level via massive youth employment and women empowerment agendas such that both problems can be reduced if not completely removed from our society.

2. Any empowerment programmes or policy of poverty eradication by the government should be properly advertised to create awareness among the people for full participation. In addition these programmes should trickle from bottom to top approach in other carry the people along.
3. Political parties should be made to play politics according to the rules of the game. There should be internally democratic and refrain from politics of desperation which oscillate the polity and swing it to the precipice of violence.
4. Government and judicial authorities should carry out prosecutions of persons implicated in political violence whatever their political affiliations; those prosecuted should include persons who ordered or organized the violence as well as those who carried it out.
5. Agricultural sector should be given proper attention. Government at all levels should recognize the activities of rural farmers. Agricultural loans and other farm inputs such as fertilizer should be released on time and be made accessible to the rural farmers during farming season.
6. The educational system should be made functional. To achieve this, emphasis should be laid on entrepreneurship education so that students should have acquired the basic skills needed for self-reliant before graduation, from secondary schools.
7. Government should strengthen the appropriate agencies responsible for our border to check mate the proliferation illegal arms particularly during electioneering. Government should develop adequate security mechanism to regulate inflow of arms and formation of gang groups in Southern Ijaw local government area and other host communities



## References

- Aganga, O. (2010). Rising Unemployment Rate is Unacceptable – Goodluck Jonathan. Business Facts and Figures Magazine September, 2010, p. 15
- Agbaegbu, T. (2011) Why Unemployment is High in Nigeria. Newswatch Magazine, 31 Jan: 18-20.
- Ajaegbu OO (2012). “Rising Youth Unemployment and Violent Crime in Nigeria” (September) in Am. J. Soc. Issues Hum. 2:5.
- Ajufo BI (2013). “Challenges of Youth Unemployment in Nigeria: Effective Career Guidance as a Panacea” January. An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia, Afr. Res. Rev. 7(1):28,
- Akaeze, A. (2011). Their Dreams, Their Frustrations. For millions of Nigeria Youths, Paid employment remains a pipe dream many years after graduation. Newswatch Magazine, 31 Jan: 17-21.
- Akande, S.O. and Okuwa, O. B. (2009): “Empowering Nigerian Youths for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. NISER Occasional Paper No.3, NISER, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Ake, C. (1996). Is Africa Democratizing? CASS Monograph, No. 5
- Akeredolu, V. O. (2010). FIRS Jobs: Only 2% of Applicants Make Final List. Economic Confidential, September, 2010, 4:45
- Aluko, Y.A. (2006). Globalisation: Concept and Dimensions. In Ogunbameru, K.A. & Rotimi, R.W. (Ed) Man and His Social Environment, P.316-334.
- Amaka, B. (2005). Electoral Violence: The bare if Democracy. Enugu: Ikenga Press
- Anifowose, R. (1982). Violence and politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience. Enugu: NOK Publishers.
- Asaju, K. (2010). Vision 20:20:20, Realities and Challenges, in Faculty of Administration Conference Proceedings, ABU Zaria, Vol. 1, 162-173
- Borode M (2011). “Higher Education and Poverty Reduction Among Youth in the Sub Saharan Africa”, Ozean Publication. Accessed on 28/01/2015. European J. Educ. Stud. 3:1
- Cochran, W. G. (1963). Sampling Techniques, 2nd Ed., New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Diyoke, M. C. (2016) “2015 General Election and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria” Zuba Journal of Art and Social Sciences (ZUJASS) Vol. 2 No 1, pg. 68 March, 2016.
- Harold, G. (2009). Unemployment. Microsoft Encarta. Redmond: Microsoft Corporation.

- Igbo, E.M (2008) Aetiology of Crime: Perspectives in Theoretical Criminology. Enugu: New Generation Books
- Ikejiaku BV (2009). "The Relationship between Poverty, Conflict and Development" (March) in J. Sustainable Dev. 2:1.
- Mukhtar, J. I., Isyaku, S. M., Sani, I. (2016). Poverty, Unemployment and the Security Challenges in Nigeria- The Nexus. Journal of Political Inquiry, 2 (2): 236-244.
- National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2010): Statistical News: Labour Force Statistics (No.476), Abuja: The NBS Publication.
- National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2012): Statistical News: Labour Force Statistics (No.476), Abuja: The NBS Publication.
- Obadan, M. I. and Odusola, F. A. (2010). Productivity and Unemployment. Ibadan: National Centre for Economic Management and Administration.
- Odekunle, F. (1983) Proceedings of National Seminar on Indiscipline and Corruption and their Adverse Effects on the Nigerian Society and Economy: Zaria: ABU
- Ogunlade, O. F. (2007). British Colonial Education Policy at Home and Abroad: Implication for present day Nigeria Educational System. Journal of Educational Research and Development, 2(3): 24-30.
- Onimode B (1988). Economy of the African Crisis: Institute for African Alternatives and Zed Books Limited, London.
- Udu, E. & Agu, G.A. (2005). New System Economics. Onitsha; Africana First Publishers Ltd.

### Cite this article:

**Author(s), Dagaci Aliyu Manbe (PhD), Diyoke Michael Chika (2019).** “An Analysis of Unemployment and Political Violence in Southern Ijaw Local Government of Bayelsa State, Southern Nigeria”, Name of the Journal: International Journal of Academic Research in Business, Arts and Science, (IJARBAS.COM), N, 200- 231 . DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3367440, **Issue: 2, Vol.: 1, Article: 11, Month: August, Year: 2019.** Retrieved from <https://www.ijarbas.com/all-issues/current-articles/>

### Published by

