

Youth's Unemployment and Oil Pipeline Vandalism: A Study of Warri South-West L.G.A of Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the nexus between youth's unemployment and oil pipeline vandalism using Warri South West Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria as the study locale. With the aid of the study objectives, hypothesis was formulated in the study. The survey research design was adopted in the study. A sample size of 397 was adopted from the population of the study using Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were variously applied in this study at different stages. The summation of all the responses was presented using frequency distribution tables and simple percentages, while the chi-square statistical tool was used to test the hypothesis formulated in the study. The test statistics reveals that there is a significant relationship between youth unemployment and oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State. The study concludes that, incidents of oil pipeline vandalism that is prevalent in our contemporary society is attributed to high rate of unemployment ravaging our teeming youths in Nigeria. The study recommends among others that, philanthropists, corporate bodies, and government at large should endeavour to reduce the increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria by creating job opportunities at the local, state, and national levels as this will enable our teeming youths to be gainfully employed and stay away from engaging in oil pipeline vandalism.

Keywords: Niger-Delta, Oil Pipeline, Unemployment, Vandalism and Youths

Introduction

Youths are very important in any given society. They are one of the greatest assets any nation can have. Apart from youths envisaged as being leaders of tomorrow, they out-number the middle aged and the aged in a given society (Okeke, 2014). According to Adebayo (1999), youths are the foundation of any society. Their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pattern of development and security of a nation. Through the creative talents and labour power of the youths, a country can make giant strides. As the overall population of the youth is growing, government should provide jobs and other incentives to the teeming unemployed youths. In their own reaction, Onwuka, Ugwu, Ejike and Dibua (2015), pointed out that unfortunately, unemployment situation in Nigeria, has been on the increase since mid 1980s when the economy started witnessing a down-turn. Although, unemployment appears to be a global phenomenon but the rate varies across different countries depending on the size and capacity of the economy to provide jobs for its citizens.

Eme (2012) stressed that in Africa, youth unemployment has a geographical dimension as it is higher in the urban areas than in the rural areas and numerous factors have been envisaged to be

responsible for increased rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria, particularly low economic growth, low economic activity and low investment. Eme (2012) stressed further that the associated factors contribute to low employment generation and as a result of continuous population growth, the small labour market is not capable to accommodate the large number of unemployed youths in Nigeria. Similarly, Doreo (2013) maintained that the unemployment rate in Nigeria is growing at the rate of 16 percent per year with the youths impacted mostly and accounting for three times the general unemployment. In effect, due to the increasing rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria, a good number of the Nigeria's most productive manpower is redundant. An enormous majority of youths in Nigeria have the strength as well as possess the ability to work. Yet, they are seen wandering the streets every day, looking for jobs that hardly exist (Obaro, 2012).

According to Bilikis (2013), 80 percent of Nigerian youths are unemployed with secondary school leavers mostly found among unemployed rural population. However, Nigerian tertiary institutions continue to graduate thousands of students yearly and yet, there is lack of job opportunities to keep pace with the ever-expanding army of job seekers. Okafor (2005) stressed that, rapid rural-urban migration, rapid expansion of the educational system, decline in the manufacturing sector, and high level of corruption amongst government and public officials have been identified as the remote causes of youth's unemployment in Nigeria. Okafor (2005) continued that however, Nigerian government has introduced various programmes such as Graduate Empowerment Scheme, Youth Initiative Programme, Graduate Internship Scheme, Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment Programme, The National Directorate of Empowerment Strategy, The National Empowerment and Development Strategy etc. in order to reduce high rate of unemployment.

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria is made up of Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States. They constitute the third largest wetland in the world (UNDP, 2006). Specifically, the oil and gas deposit in the Niger Delta region constitutes 97% of Nigeria's mineral exploitation and exploration (Iyayi, 2003). As a result of the coastal location, and the oil exploration and exploitation activities carried out in the Niger-Delta region, it is highly vulnerable to both natural and man-made environmental hazards. The activities of oil and gas multinational companies in the Niger-Delta are mostly termed to be a blight rather than a blessing as nature intended it to be (Iyayi, 2003). This study therefore, investigates whether youth's unemployment influences youths to engage in oil pipeline vandalism using Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria as the study locale.

Statement of the Problem

Teeming youths in Nigeria appears to have resulted in the engagement of restive criminal acts such as armed robbery, cultism, oil pipeline vandalism, fraud, prostitution, kidnapping, etc in order to meet up with the challenges in life as well as to overcome poverty. The rate at which youth's unemployment is increasing day by day in Nigeria is quite alarming and unbearable and as a result, different social problems emanate in our contemporary society which include oil pipeline vandalism. Several studies have been carried out to ascertain the relationship between youth's unemployment and criminal activities such as kidnapping, armed robbery, drugs trafficking etc. However, little is known on the nexus between youth's unemployment and oil pipeline vandalism. This study therefore, investigates whether youth's unemployment influences youths to engage in oil pipeline vandalism using Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria as the study locale.

Research Questions

In order to fill the gap in the statement of the study problem the following research questions are posed.

- i. Is youth's unemployment prevalent in Warri South-West Local Government Area?
- ii. Does youth's unemployment influence youth to engage in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the nexus between youth's unemployment and oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State. Specifically, this study aims to:

- i. Ascertain whether youth's unemployment is prevalent in Warri South-West Local Government Area.
- ii. Explore whether youth's unemployment influences youth to engage in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between youth's unemployment and youth's engaging in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area.

Conceptual Clarifications

Conceptualizing Youth's Unemployment

According to Anyanwu (2014) youth unemployment is among the utmost global development challenges hampering on countries worldwide and Africa which has more than 60 percent of its population under the youthful age, is the fastest growing and most youthful population in the world. However, in Nigeria, unemployment among the youths is one of the major problems inhibiting the peace and security of the country. Adebayo (1999), stressed that a person is said to be unemployed when he or she is able and willing to work and available for work but does not have work. Youth's unemployment arises when young people within the working age remain without any gainful employment.

Fajana (2000) posits that, youth's unemployment refers to a situation whereby young people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. Youth unemployment can also be seen as lack of employment and idleness of young individuals seeking employment at a prevailing wage rate. Youth's unemployment is a situation whereby young persons who are available, capable, and qualified are seeking for jobs but could not secure job opportunities, including youths who have lost their jobs and those who voluntarily left their jobs for reasons best known to them. Youth's unemployment has continued to be on the increase despite the abundant human and natural resources in Nigeria. Every year, thousands of graduates are produced but there are insufficient job opportunities for them. The Nigerian streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily would have gained employment in government establishments, organizations and non-governmental organizations (Okafor, 2005).

Conceptualizing Oil Pipeline Vandalism

Zinganel (2005) posits that from the Marxian perspective, vandalism could be seen as a productive force that fought against exploitation of the capitalist system. Winter (1992) noted that vandalism includes tactical vandalism e.g. sabotage at the workplace; vindictive behaviour, e.g. form of revenge; play vandalism e.g. breaking of window panels and malicious vandalism e.g. vandalism out of boredom, exasperation, resentment, and frustration. Vandalism is an action involving deliberate destruction of public or private property. Within the civic domain, vandalism entails unruly obliteration of public or government properties in keeping with criminal or political intent. Oil pipeline vandalism therefore implies deliberate breaking of oil pipelines with the intent to steal petroleum products (Vidal, 2011 cited in Mmeje, Bello & Mohammed, 2017).

According to Sanusi, Onovo and Isa (2016), oil pipeline vandalism is envisaged in Nigeria as oil bunkering, which is the act of drilling into the pipelines with the intention to steal oil products. This condition has been made worse by the prevailing socio-economic crisis in Nigeria. Oil pipelines are the medium through which crude oil, natural gas, and industrial chemicals are transported (Obodoeze, Asogwo & Ozioko, 2014). Similarly, Vivan (2012), sees oil pipeline vandalism as unlawful despoliation of oil pipelines by hoodlums mainly members of rural communities in order to display their long-standing grievances against oil corporations or theft to make fortune. In Nigeria, oil pipeline vandalism has been perpetrated mostly by criminal syndicates who are motivated by the aspiration to loot oil products for material gains.

Youth's Unemployment and Oil Pipeline Vandalism

According to Ome-Egeonu and Kinikanwo (2014), unemployment is an unwanted social trend and its effects on the aggrieved youths are geared towards crime. This chronic sense of grievance is created by the highly unequal distribution of resources to and within the Niger-Delta region exacerbated by negligence on the part of oil multinational companies and government with respect to environmental protection and a failure on the multinational companies to create local employment as well as support local entrepreneurship. People's attestations and reactions have shown that, there appears to be linkage between youth's unemployment and violent crime in Nigeria. Their assumption is that, youths that are unemployed appear to be predisposed to crime such as, cultism, kidnapping, armed robbery, fraud, drug trafficking, terrorism, and pipeline vandalization. They contend that, youth's unemployment exerts mental stress and anti-social behaviour thereby propelling the youths to engage in criminal activities in order to actualize their expected desire (Nwosu, 2018).

According to Omole (2000) cited in (Nwosu, 2021), the connectivity of cheerfulness which manifested between the oil multinationals and their host communities within the past has paved way to threatening vibe and savagery. The threatening vibe is on the aspect of oil pipeline vandalism, closing down of oil companies, seizure of oil establishments, militancy, intra and inter community struggle. Okoli and Orianya (2013) stated that, incidences of petroleum pipeline vandalism in Nigeria have spiraled over the years. People who engaged in oil pipeline vandalism in the Niger-Delta did so as an avenue for survival due to adverse socio-economic conditions prevalence in Nigeria. Efetobor (2006) narrated that youths who are involved in oil pipeline vandalism are mostly unemployed and therefore, susceptible to opportunistic living. The youths engage in oil pipeline vandalism as a means for survival and to showcase their grievances against

oil multinational corporations for malicious operations which in turn lead to numerous setbacks and tribulations in the host communities.

Methodology

This study was carried out in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State. Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State is made up of Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic groups in Delta State. The Ijaws inhabit Ogbe-ijoh, Oporoza, Okenrenkoko, Azama, Isaba and Diebiri communities while the Itsekiris inhabit Ugborodo, Bateren, Ogidigben and Madangho communities. The study adopted both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative method was adopted to review literatures for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the phenomena under study while the quantitative method was employed for systematic empirical investigation using statistical computations to ascertain the relationship between youth's unemployment and oil pipeline vandalism. According to National Population Commission (2006) the population figure of the youths in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria is 35,799. So, in order to obtain the population figure of the youths in 2021, we projected the population figure for 2006 with the annual growth rate of 2.85% (growth rate adopted from National Population Commission) and arrived at 54,558. This formed the target population of the study. The reason for the target population which is the youths, is for effectively conduct of the research based on the phenomena under study. The sample size of 397 was chosen for the study using Taro Yamane (1967) formula for sample size determination. On the basis of effective coverage, the simple random sampling technique was applied in this study to select five communities out of ten communities that made up Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic groups in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to determine the number of respondents to be drawn from each of the five selected communities because the population of all the communities in 2006 census population in Nigeria has not been official released. The primary and secondary sources of data collection were applied in this study. The primary sources consist of questionnaire while the secondary sources consist of information gathered from journal articles, seminars and unpublished works. The questionnaire was structured in Likert format with a four-point response scale. In the closed ended questionnaire, the respondents were given response options. These options served as the quantification of the respondent's agreement or disagreement on a particular scale. The designated quantifications that were used in the questionnaire are: Strongly Agree -4, Agree -3, Disagree -2, and Strongly Disagree -1. Out of 397 copies of questionnaire distributed, 316 copies were successfully retrieved. In this study, the frequency distribution tables was used to present the raw data from the field quantitatively for the purpose of easy and accurate interpretation, the simple percentages (%) was used to present the response rate of the questions asked and to convert information collected from the field into a more statistical construction so as to produce a concise report, while the chi-square (χ^2) statistical tool was used to test the hypothesis formulated in the study.

Result of the Findings

Research Question: Does youth's unemployment influences youths to engage in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area?

Table 1: Respondents perception on whether youth's unemployment influences youths to engage oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area

No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1.	Incidents of oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area could be attributed to youths that are poor due to unemployment.	134 (42.4%)	114 (36.1%)	39 (12.3%)	29 (9.2%)	316 100
2.	Lack of job opportunities can influence youths to indulge in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri-South West Local Government Area in order to make money.	108 (34.2%)	113 (35.8%)	54 (20.3%)	31 (9.8%)	316 100
3.	Youths in Warri South-West Local Government Area do not indulge in oil pipeline vandalism irrespective of the fact that they are unemployed.	39 (12.3%)	29 (9.2%)	130 (41.1%)	118 (37.3%)	316 100
	Total	281	256	223	178	948

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 1 shows the respondents perception on whether youth's unemployment influences youths to engage oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area. In question number 1, out of 316 respondents, (42.4%) strongly agreed that incidents of oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area could be attributed to youths that are poor due to unemployment, (36.1%) agreed, (12.3%) disagreed while (9.2%) strongly disagreed. In question number 2, out of 316 respondents, (34.2%) strongly agreed that lack of job opportunities can influence youths to indulge in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area in order to make money, (35.8%) agreed, (20.3%) disagreed while (9.8%) strongly disagreed. In question number 3, out of 316 respondents, (12.3%) strongly agreed that youths in Warri South-West Local Government Area do not indulge in oil pipeline vandalism irrespective of the fact that they are unemployed, (9.2%) agreed, (41.1%) disagreed while (37.3%) strongly disagreed. From table 1 above, it indicates that the respondents responded greatly that youth's unemployment influences youths to engage oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between youth's unemployment and youth's engaging in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between youth's unemployment and youth's engaging in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area.

The hypothesis was tested using the values of responses derived from questions 1, 2 and 3 respectively in Table 1.

Table 2: Contingency Table of Observed Frequencies

Table	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	134 _a	114 _b	39 _c	29 _d	316 _{B1}
2	108 _e	113 _f	54 _g	31 _h	316 _{B2}
3	39 _i	29 _j	130 _k	118 _l	316 _{B3}
Total	281 _{A1}	256 _{A2}	223 _{A3}	178 _{A4}	948 _N

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 3: Calculation of Expected Frequencies

Cell A ₁ B ₁	$\frac{281 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 94	Cell A ₁ B ₂	$\frac{281 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 94	Cell A ₁ B ₃	$\frac{281 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 94	Cell A ₁ B ₃	$\frac{281 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 94
Cell A ₂ B ₁	$\frac{256 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 85	Cell A ₂ B ₂	$\frac{256 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 85	Cell A ₂ B ₃	$\frac{256 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 85	Cell A ₂ B ₃	$\frac{256 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 85
Cell A ₃ B ₁	$\frac{223 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 74	Cell A ₃ B ₂	$\frac{223 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 74	Cell A ₃ B ₃	$\frac{223 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 74	Cell A ₃ B ₃	$\frac{223 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 74
Cell A ₄ B ₁	$\frac{178 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 59	Cell A ₄ B ₂	$\frac{178 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 59	Cell A ₄ B ₃	$\frac{178 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 59	Cell A ₄ B ₃	$\frac{178 \times 316}{948}$ 948 = 59

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4: Placing the Observed and Expected Frequencies for Test of Hypothesis

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
134	94	40	1600	17.021
114	85	29	841	9.894
39	74	-35	1225	16.554
29	59	-30	900	15.254
108	94	14	196	2.085
113	85	28	784	9.223
54	74	-20	400	5.405
31	59	-28	784	13.288
39	94	-55	3025	32.180
29	85	-56	3136	36.894
130	74	56	3136	42.378
118	59	59	3481	59
Total				259.276

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

From the contingency table,

$$DF = (r-1)(c-1)$$

$$= (3-1)(4-1)$$

$$= 2 \times 3$$

$$= 6$$

Thus $DF = 6$

Decision Rule: At 0.05 level of significance with 6 degree of freedom, the table value of Chi-square (χ^2) = **12.592** while the calculated value of Chi-square (χ^2) = **259.276**. Since the calculated value of Chi-square (χ^2_{cal}) is greater than the table value (χ^2_{table}), we accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) which states that there is a significant relationship between youth's unemployment and youths engaging in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area, Delta State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the hypothesis reveals that, there is a significant relationship between youth's unemployment and youths engaging in oil pipeline vandalism in Warri South-West Local Government Area. The finding is in tandem with Nwosu (2018) who maintained that people's attestations and reactions have shown that, there appears to be linkage between youth's unemployment and violent crime in Nigeria. Their assumption is that, youths that are unemployed appear to be predisposed to crime such as, cultism, kidnapping, armed robbery, fraud, drug trafficking, terrorism, and oil pipeline vandalism. The finding is equally in consonance with Efetobor (2006) who narrated that youths who are involved in oil pipeline vandalism are mostly unemployed and therefore, susceptible to opportunistic living. The youths engage in oil pipeline vandalism as a means for survival and to showcase their grievances against oil multinational corporations for malicious operations which in turn lead to numerous setbacks and tribulations in the host communities.

Conclusion

Youths are very important in any given society. The educated ones should be encouraged to channel their talents, skills, energies and knowledge to national development and stability by being positively engaged in innovations and creativities and discouraged from activities that could be detrimental to themselves, communities, and Nigeria as a developing nation. Many educated youths in Nigeria cannot meet up with the basic needs in life because they do not have the resources needed to cater for their needs. By so doing, they are faced with frustration and low self-esteem which can consequently lead to criminal acts such as oil pipeline vandalism, fraud, cultism, armed robbery and internet scam. However, in order to drastically reduce the increased rate of youths unemployment in Nigeria, government at all levels should formulate policies and ensure that the policies are thematically implemented as this would help to alleviate the fillings and aspirations of our teeming youths in Nigeria and make them believe that they are part and parcel of the country and shy away from criminal offences such as oil pipeline vandalism.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered in this study:

- i. Philanthropists, corporate bodies, and government at large should endeavour to reduce the increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria by creating job opportunities at the local, state, and national levels as this will enable our teeming youths to be gainfully employed and stay away from engaging in oil pipeline vandalism.
- ii. Democratically elected representatives at all levels should establish entrepreneurial skills acquisition centres and programmes in their various constituencies as this will enable our teeming unemployed youths to acquire relevant skills and knowledge and establish themselves as well as stay away from vandalizing oil pipeline installations.
- iii. Government at all levels and multinational oil corporations should establish fully funded scholarship schemes and educational programmes targeted at empowering unemployed youths as this would go a long way in drastically reducing oil pipeline vandalism in the Niger-Delta.
- iv. Multinational oil corporations in the Niger-Delta Nigeria should ensure that educated youths in their host communities are gainfully employed in their firms as this would enable the youths to co-operate cooperatively with the corporations and shy away from vandalizing oil pipeline installations in order to make fortune.
- v. Traditional rulers, religious leaders, parents and guidance should endeavour to sensitize the unemployed youths on the socio-economic implications of oil pipeline vandalism as this would help to create a peaceful atmosphere in our contemporary society and drastically reduce oil pipeline vandalism in the Niger-Delta region.

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