© IIJP 2026 | Volume 2, Issue 2, pp. 1237-1246 | ISSN: 2636-4484

ECONOMIC FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF YOUTH RESTIVENESS IN SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA

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ARTICLE INFO
Article No.: 0362
Accepted Date: 18/05/2026
Published Date: 10/06/2026
Type: Research

ABSTRACT
This study examined the connection between some economic factors and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. This study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised all the youths in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample consisted of 1166 youths selected through multistage sampling procedure. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire designed by the researcher titled "Questionnaire on Economic Factors and Youth Restiveness" (QEFYR). Face and content validity of the instrument were determined by experts in Social Studies Education as well as Tests, Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha reliability testing method. Overall reliability co-efficient of 0.97 was obtained and this was considered appropriate for this study. The data generated were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The findings showed that there were significant relationships between economic policies, availability of social amenities, unemployment, corruption and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. Based on these findings, it was recommended that government at all levels should formulate and implement favourable economic policies that can tackle unemployment, poverty, inflation and economic hardship so as to reduce youth restiveness. Government and service providers such as electricity distribution companies and water cooperation are encouraged to provide adequate and ensure maintenance of social amenities to reduce youth restiveness.

Keywords: Economic Policies, Social Amenities, Unemployment, Corruption.

Introduction

The human economic environment is expected to be friendly for peace and meaningful resources and human development to take place. Unfavourable economic factors could discourage, frustrate and anger the citizens thereby resulting into agitations, showing of dissatisfaction and worry which could hinder peace, stability and prolonged development.

However, it is observed in the recent time that, the Southwest, Nigeria seems to have experienced a lot of demonstration or protest by the youths. The youths in the zone have demonstrated to show anger, frustration, agitations, worries and dissatisfactions possibly due to the economic factors in Nigeria through protests and demonstrations. According to Osaji (2023), Aliyu (2023), there was violent demonstration in Lagos over the naira redesign and scarcity which affected citizens' health and economic lives.

Youth restiveness can be seen as regular violent demonstrations by the youths in attempt to force demands to be met by the constituted authority. Ibiteye and Awomoyi (2023) explained that youth restiveness is a form of protest staged by the youths in attempt to force constituted authority to grant their desires. According to Eze-Michael (2020), youth restiveness is a challenging issue. Further, Zambwa (2022) submitted that the youths become restive whenever their well-being is sidelined and are kept out of the scheme of things. Meanwhile, it is felt that some economic factors in Nigeria such as economic policies, availability of social amenities, unemployment and corruption could have correlation with youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria

Economic policies is one of the factors considered in this study is to be connected to youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. In every organized society, there are constituted authorities saddled with responsibilities of formulating and enforcing meaningful policies that are expected to enhance people's well-being. However, making and implementing unfavourable economic policies without consideration for the needs of the masses may spell hardship and discomfort that may be difficult to bear by the people. This could result into massive demonstrations. Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020) posited that when the masses feel oppressed as a result of government bad policy, the situation can warrant opposition that can cause violence.

In the recent time, Adegoke, Adeyemi and Ojo (2023) carried out a research on youth restiveness in Nigeria: An evaluation of Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State. It was found that 58.3% (70) of the respondents agreed that hardship as a result of economic circumstances was responsible for youth restiveness in the study area. Arowolo (2016) carried out a research on factors facilitating youth restiveness in Lafia metropolis of Nasarawa State, Nigeria and found that 58% of the respondents in Nasarawa State agreed that youth restiveness was in connection to government policies that go against the welfare of the masses. Meanwhile, Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020) submitted that masses would feel oppressed, unsatisfied and forced to raise opposition when government makes unfavourable policy. Zambwa (2022) referred to such situation as one of the indices of bad governance.

Recently, Williams, Ashon, Omidina, Agiri and Jatto (2024) conducted a study on predisposing factors of youth restiveness among young adults in Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos State. In attempt to find out the personal income affected by economic policies on youth restiveness in the study area, 39.5% of the respondents strongly agreed while 34.0% agreed totaling 73.5% of the respondents agreed that personal income as a result of economic policies was a predisposing factor to youth restiveness in the area.

Availability of social amenities is another factor that is observed to trigger restiveness among the youths in Southwest Nigeria. Some of the amenities include good roads, electricity,

water system, good markets, infrastructure and conducive environment. In Southwest Nigeria, it is observed that there are problems of roads network, shortage of safe water supply for drinking and use, ineptitudes power supply and irregularity in the schools' academic calendars of higher institutions due to strike and insufficient infrastructural facilities which the youths are currently facing in the struggle to pursue careers and achieve set goals. The inability of Government and relevant agencies to address the problems of social amenities and infrastructural development may be seen as government/constituted authorities' deliberate attempt to make life miserable for the youths by not enhancing the living conditions. Eloma (2021) stated that inadequate infrastructure and social amenities contributed to youth restiveness in Cross River State, Nigeria. Ezebuilo (2023) also stated that inadequate infrastructure among other factors cause youth restiveness.

In attempt to find out influence of social amenities on youth restiveness, Mba, Ihejirika and Deekor (2021) carried out a research in Adoni and Opobo/ Nkoro Local Government Areas of Rivers State on influence of youth restiveness on community development. The study revealed that the male respondents with a mean of 2.82 with standard deviation of 0.93 and female respondents with a mean of 2.95 with standard deviation of 0.87 agreed that lack of basic infrastructure caused youth restiveness in local council areas. Furthermore, unemployment is another factor that may to contribute to restiveness among the youths in Southwest, Nigeria. According to Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020), unemployment has made youths to become instruments in the hands of politicians, religious fanatics and greedy people to perpetrate unlawful activities just for a token.

In relation to the above, Ojobah, Chima and Emina (2020) conducted a research in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria on youth restiveness and its sociological implications on the development of education in the local government area. It was found that mean of 39.4348 with a standard deviation of 6.76103 among the respondents believed that unemployment was one of the causes of youth restiveness in the Local Government Area. Similarly, in Ukanafun Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Ezebuilo (2023) conducted a research on youth restiveness and sustainable development in the local government area and found that 65% (169) and a mean of 3.6 of the respondents in the Local Government Areas believed that high rate of unemployment was the cause of youth restiveness in the area

Corruption in Nigeria may be another factor having relationship with youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. Corruption involves bribery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, misappropriation of funds and malpractice. Damijan (2023) stated that corruption involves the misuse of public office for political or economic gain. Similarly, some leaders have been observed to have stolen public money and falsified records; the acts which believed to have negative impacts on the future and indeed the youths in the country.

Meanwhile, Godwin and Yakubu (2021) carried out a research in Kaduna State to determine public perception on whether or not corruption can lead to youth restiveness. It was found that, 68.8% (128) of the respondents believed that corruption leads to youth restiveness while 31.2% (58) objected that corruption leads to youth restiveness in the State.

Thus far, youth restiveness appears becoming alarming in Southwest, Nigeria. There seems to be connection between the identified Nigeria's economic factors and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. Therefore, the study attempts to investigate the economic factors in Nigeria and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of frustration-aggression propounded by Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer and Sears (1939) which was further developed by Miller (1941) and Berkowitz (1969) is adapted as the theoretical framework to understand the relationship between the Nigeria's economic factors and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. The theory explains that some feelings of frustration could lead to aggression and consequently violent reaction-restiveness between parties. The parties in this study represent the economic factors that tend to affect the economic well-being in the society and the youths. Frustration is seen as the feeling of annoyance and discomfort when some hitches tend to obstruct one's planned goal. Aggression on the other hand, is a demonstration of violent behaviour or attitude towards a particular person or thing as a result of the encountered frustration. The theory puts that frustration comes in when there is negative interference on set goal.

The theorists believed that behaviour of individuals when relating with one another may be determined by different factors at a particular time. It is therefore assumed that unfavourable economic policies, shortage of social amenities, unemployment and corruption in the public and private sectors could bring some negative reinforcement to make youths become angry, wild and sad. Consequent to the theoretical position of Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowerer and Sears (1939), it could be deduced that the youths who feel that economic policies are not favourable and that the level of corruption, unemployment and inadequate provision of social amenities in Nigeria are unbearable to the attainment of their planned goals may become frustrated and display restiveness or violent behaviour. The showing of displeasure, anger or dissatisfaction could suggest unfavourable economic factors that need improvement

Statement of the Problem

Every citizen of a country usually desires to pursue and enjoy favourable economic factors. Favourable economic factors in a country could bring about better standard of living, improved health, attainment of set goals and peace. On the opposite, unfavourable economic factors such as unfavourable economic policies, lack of social amenities, unemployment and corruption may bring discomfort, frustration, aggression, protest, agitation and other violent behaviour among the citizens especially the youths. Observation reveals that the youths in Southwest, Nigeria are engulfed with frustration, aggression, worry and unhealthy altercation probably due to the economic factors and hardship in Nigeria thereby leading to restiveness on regular basis.

Youth restiveness appears to have become common and caused alit of disruption, damage and destruction of some social and economic well-being in Southwest zone of Nigeria at one point or the other. Many lives seem to have been lost and properties vandalized as part of negative effect of youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Series of strategies have been applied to checkmate or defeat youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. Policies that aimed at improving youth well-being like the introduction of Nigeria Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) programme where students can borrow loan to facilitate the payment of school fees, review and restructuring of some public agencies like the disbandment of Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) have been made by government in attempt to calming youth restiveness. However, the aforementioned efforts seem not to put an end to youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. Some researchers have conducted study on aspects of youth restiveness in Nigeria, but it seems that much effort have not been made towards examining the economic factors that could be having relationship with youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between some economic factors such as economic policies, availability of social amenities, unemployment, corruption and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria;

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between economic policies and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between availability of social amenities and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between unemployment and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.
4. There is no significant relationship between corruption and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The descriptive design was adopted for this study because it enabled the researcher to describe the facts and characteristics of existing situations of prevailing economic factors and youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. The population for this study consisted all youths, male and female between sixteen and thirty-five years in Southwest, Nigeria. The States include Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo in Nigeria.

The sample for this study consisted of 1166 youths in Southwest, Nigeria. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. The first stage involved the use of a simple random sampling technique to select three States out of the six states that make up Southwest geo-political zone. The second stage involved the use of proportionate random sampling technique to select some Local Government Areas based on the available number of Local Government Areas in the selected States. The third stage involved the use of stratified random sampling technique to select communities both urban and rural areas, while the fourth stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select respondents within towns and villages from Local Government Areas.

A questionnaire titled 'Questionnaire on Economic Factors and Youth Restiveness" (QSFLYR) was used to collect data for this study. The face and content validity of the instrument were done by the experts in Social Studies Education, and Tests, Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti. The experts ensured that the items contained in the instrument were correct and appropriate to measuring what it is purported to measure on economic factors and youth restiveness and also ensured that the items cover all the variables of the study.

The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha reliability testing method. In doing this, the copies of the questionnaire were administered on 50 respondents within the population but outside the sampled area. The overall reliability co-efficient of 0.97 was obtained and this was considered highly reliable for this study. The instrument was administered on selected respondents in Southwest, Nigeria by the researchers with the help of some research assistants who assisted in the distribution and retrieval of the instrument from the respondents. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between economic policies and youth restiveness.

Table 1: PPMC showing relationship between economic policies and youth restiveness

Variables	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	r_{cal}	*p-value*
Economic Policies	1166	30.14	7.318		
Youth Restiveness	1166	68.82	8.977	0.574*	0.000

p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

It was discovered from the information contained in Table 1 that $r_{cal} = 0.574$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was a significant relationship between economic policies and youth restiveness.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between availability of social amenities and youth restiveness.

Table 2: PPMC showing relationship between availability of social amenities and youth restiveness

Variables	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	r_{cal}	*p-value*
Availability of Social Amenities	1166	14.71	4.402		
Youth Restiveness	1166	68.82	8.977	0.426*	0.000

p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

The information contained in Table 2 revealed that $r_{cal} = 0.426$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was a significant relationship between availability of social amenities and youth restiveness.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between unemployment and youth restiveness.

Table 3: PPMC showing relationship between unemployment and youth restiveness

Variables	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	r_{cal}	*p-value*
Unemployment	1166	14.51	4.285		
Youth Restiveness	1166	68.82	8.977	0.480*	0.000

p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

The result in Table 3 showed that $r_{cal} = 0.480$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was significant relationship between unemployment and youth restiveness.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between corruption and youth restiveness.

Table 4: PPMC showing relationship between corruption and youth restiveness

Variables	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	r_{cal}	*p-value*
Corruption	1166	14.78	4.243		
Youth Restiveness	1166	68.82	8.977	0.522*	0.000

p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

Table 4 showed that $r_{cal} = 0.522$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there was a significant relationship between corruption and youth restiveness.

Discussion

The finding of this study showed a significant relationship between economic policies and youth restiveness. This indicates that the type of economic policies formulated and implemented may not be unconnected to restiveness among the youths. Consequently, the economic policies that create hardship, inflation, job insecurity and scarcity, poverty, hunger, inequality, marginalisation, social and economic disparities may lead the youths to be frustrated

and restive. This finding corroborates Arowolo (2016) who found that 58% of the respondents in Nasarawa State, Nigeria agreed that youth restiveness was in connection to government policies that go against the welfare of the masses. This finding is equally in line with that of Williams, Ashon, Omidina, Agiri and Jatto (2024) whose finding showed that youth restiveness was heightened by income which may be affected by economic policies in Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

This study equally showed that there was a significant relationship between availability of social amenities and youth restiveness. This implies that provision and access to adequate social amenities and infrastructure can promote physical, economic and social wellbeing and likelihood to reduce restiveness while inadequate or shortage supply of social amenities and services may likely spur frustration and restiveness. The reason for this may be that the presence or availability of the social amenities enables the youth to pursue their daily living while inadequate supply of social amenities hampers their struggle to live comfortable life and also making earning and living difficult for them. This finding affirms that of Mba, Ihejirika and Deekor (2021) who found that lack of basic infrastructure was one of the factors responsible for youth restiveness in Andoni and Opobo/Nkoro Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

The findings from this study further showed that there was a significant relationship between unemployment and youth restiveness. This suggests that youths who are not gainfully employed are likely to be more predispose to engage in restiveness. This could be as a result of the feelings of frustration, unfulfillment of purpose and aspirations, disconnection and inability to meet basic needs thereby degenerating into restiveness. This finding agrees with the report of Ojobah, Chima and Emina (2020) that unemployment was one of the causes of youth restiveness in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. It equally affirms the study of Ezebuilo (2023) which found that 65% of the respondents in Ukanafun Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State believed that high rate of unemployment was responsible for youth restiveness in the area.

In addition, this study revealed a significant realtioship beween corruption and youth restiveness. This indicates that the youths' exhibition of restiveness may not be unconnected with prevailing cases of corruption in the society. This may be that corruption in forms of injustice, stealing of public funds, dishonesty and resources mismanagement by different institutions and public office holders tend to make youths feel frustrated and show restiveness when trust and hope have been given up. The finding is in agreement with Godwin and Yakubu (2021) who found that 68.8% of the respondents believed that corruption leads to restiveness among the youths in Kaduna State. On the other hand, 31.2% of the respondents objected that corruption leads to youth restiveness in the same study. The differences in the perception may be due to factors such as personal experiences and locations.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study, it is concluded that majority of youths in Southwest, Nigeria are not satisfied with present economic factors in the country and that economic policies, availability of social amenities, unemployment and corruption, contributed to youth restiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Government at all levels are encouraged to formulate and implement favourable economic policies that can tackle unemployment, poverty, inflation and economic hardship so as to improve the living standard of youths and reduce restiveness

2. Government and service providers such as electricity distribution companies and water corporation should ensure adequate supply and maintenance of social amenities to reduce youth restiveness
3. Government and private organizations are encouraged to create employment opportunities for unemployed youths
4. Government at all levels and institutions should be more sincere in allowing anti-graft agencies to perform optimally by punishing corrupt individuals and that the institutions should be more reformed to ensure transparency and accountability for young ones to believe in order to reduce youth restiveness.

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