

YOUTH BULGE AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: A THEORETICAL DISCOURSE WITH FOCUS ON SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper examines youth bulge and insecurity in Nigeria with a focus on South East Region. The objectives of the study were to discover if rising youth population (youth budge) is responsible for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria, find out the effect of youths bulge on socio-economic development of the region and to suggest measures to contain youths involvement in insecurity in South East Nigeria. Youth bulge theory was adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis. The research design adopted for the study is survey research design while data were collected through questionnaire instrument. The study used purposive sampling technique to select a sample size of 156 participants/subjects. The study found that the rising youths population (youth budge) accounts for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria as majority of the activities that triggers insecurity in the zone are committed by youth; that youths involvement in insecurity has adverse effect on the socio-economic development of South Eastern Nigeria and often lead to closure of markets, destruction of lives and properties and undermine developmental activities. The paper recommends ethical revolution among the youths, reversion to Igbo value system of learning handwork, apprenticeship, and agricultural production, birth control policy as well as policies that empower the youths to sustain themselves without reliance on none existing white collar job as measures to contain rising insecurity occasioned by youth bulge in the Eastern Nigeria.

Keywords: Youth Bulge, Insecurity, South East Nigeria, Socio-economic development, youth population

Introduction

The precarious security situation in Nigeria ranging from insurgency and terrorism in the North East, ethnic militancy and agitation in the South-South banditry, kidnapping for ransom and even assassination and armed robbery in the North Central and North Western heightened in recent time with South Eastern Nigeria becoming a theatre of war between youths and the Military as well as policemen. The business and trading nerve Centre of the country have been turn into a war front following onslaught by the security agencies against the activities of some youth criminal elements some of whom goes by the name Eastern Security Network, Unknown Gunmen. This situation has posed a big challenge to the security of lives and properties in the zone. Since majority of those involved in the insecurity problem are mainly youths who are in their active age which they are supposed to contribute to economy of the zone, it is important to carry out a study to interrogate whether it is the growing population of the youths that makes them to be involved in conducts causing insecurity in the zone.

Nigeria, regarded as the giant of Africa, has experienced an unprecedented array of security challenges, including the actions of Fulani herdsmen, Boko Haram insurgencies, armed robbery, kidnapping, political and religious crises, murder, the destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants, and child abduction and trafficking (Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu, 2019). Ozoigbo (2019) identifies the causes

of insecurity in the country as illiteracy, unemployment, ineffective leadership, porous borders, proliferation of weaponry, and non-compliance with the rule of law, among others.

South Eastern Nigeria is the domicile of the Igbo people and has been contending with a high rate of insecurity for nearly a decade. This level of instability has resulted in the loss of several lives and assets. The cause of this insecurity is multi-dimensional, including the increasing population of young and unemployed individuals in the region. The inhabitants of South-East Nigeria find themselves ensnared between a rock and a hard place (Agbo, 2021).

Insecurity, as defined by Achumba *et al.* (2013) is the antithesis of security, impacting human life and existence. It generally denotes a condition characterised by dread, threat, danger, molestation, intimidation, and harassment across various dimensions. Obarisiagbon and Akintoye (2019) observed that Nigeria is currently entangled in a security crisis that has evolved into a persistent challenge, undermining security measures and ridiculing the endeavours of law enforcement agencies, as well as the substantial annual financial allocations designated for security by the government.

Udoh (2015) observed that insecurity, in addition to being a pervasive dread among Nigerians, has become a prevalent topic of conversation whenever two or more Nigerians convene. This phenomenon denotes a condition of vulnerability to peril or harm. It is the apprehension experienced when one feels exposed and insecure. Numerous illegal armed factions, ethnic militias, and religious extremists exemplify the insecurity in Nigeria. These have resulted in a series of bombings, homicides, arson, armed robbery, and kidnapping, among other crimes. Adeleke (2013) observed that insecurity has evolved into a complex menace that security forces in Nigeria seem unable to manage, as evidenced by its various expressions such as bombings, kidnappings, property destruction, and the instillation of fear. He further stated that insecurity adversely affects the overall well-being of individuals, resulting in sicknesses, reduced life expectancy, diminished quality of life, and even mortality. Insecurity has resulted in the devastation of enterprises, assets, and equipment, as well as the relocation and cessation of operations.

Omede and Omede (2015) noted that the insecurity in Nigeria has escalated to more intricate levels, characterised by an increase in the frequency and severity of lethal assaults. This insecurity permeates urban and rural areas alike, leaving few safe havens for refuge. Both urban and rural inhabitants face threats to their lives and properties, resulting in a pervasive sense of fear on a daily basis. Numerous variables have been proposed as contributing to unrest in Nigeria. Some writers attribute culpability to the government, while others assign the majority to parents.

Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) asserted that insecurity is a significant challenge that has impeded industrialisation and sustainable development in Nigeria specifically and Africa broadly. Chukwu (2021) noted that South-Eastern Nigeria is experiencing assaults from three primary sources: commercial crimes including kidnapping, ritual killings, and internet fraud; herdsmen attacks that devastate entire villages; and, currently, agitators. He also stated that “the disturbances have resulted in disruptions to economic activities, revenue losses, and capital flight.” The region appears to be overwhelmed by everyday violent assaults. The previously prevalent security issues in the region, including armed robbery and inter-communal conflicts, appear to be diminishing; nevertheless, they have been supplanted by criminal activities such as kidnapping, ritual killings, internet fraud, and militant secessionist agitations (Chukwu, 2021).

Oyemwinmina and Osazuwa (2016) noted that both foreign investors and local individuals are apprehensive about conducting business in Nigeria, particularly in the South East, due to the prevailing insecurity, which hinders investment, exacerbates unemployment, and precipitates economic decline in

the region. Okorie *et al.* (2018) observed that “kidnapping and hostage-taking have hindered the socio-economic development of southern Nigeria and have adversely affected some unemployed youths and graduates who perceive these activities as profitable alternatives for generating income, attaining economic power, and gaining social recognition.”

Abaenogba (2021) said that the identification of those responsible for the increasing insecurity, including assaults on police installations and personnel in the South-East geopolitical zone, remains a significant concern for Nigerians. He stated that since the onset of the gunmen's activity, their identities have remained undisclosed, with allegations directed towards various parties, accompanied by conflicting assertions. Abaenogba (2021) said that the situation in the South-East is increasingly concerning, following what appears to be systematic and organised assaults on security agencies, particularly the police. In Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Ebonyi, and Abia, the police appear to be an endangered entity, with both the government and security agencies struggling not only to contain them but also to identify the culprits.

Despite numerous security measures implemented to tackle the significant difficulties of insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria, governmental efforts have failed to provide the intended good outcomes, adversely impacting the nation. The increasing population of unemployed youth in the region has prompted an examination of the impact of the youth bulge on the area's security. Against this backdrop, the study examines upon with interrogation of insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria using youth bulge theory. To the best of the knowledge of the researcher, literature is scanty on the effects of the rising population of the youths on the security of the zone. In consequence this study examined youth bulge and insecurity in Nigeria with a theoretical discourse and focus on South East Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine youth bulge and insecurity in Nigeria with a theoretical discourse and focus on South East Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain if rising youth population (youth bulge) is responsible for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria.
2. Find out the effect of youth involvement in insecurity on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria.
3. Suggest measures be adopted to stop rising youth involvement in insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Youth Bulge

The phrase 'youth bulge' was introduced by German social scientist Gunnar Heinsohn in the mid-1990s. This problem is prevalent in numerous emerging nations. It denotes a scenario in which the ratio of the youth demographic rises in comparison to other age cohorts. A nation experiences a youth bulge when its youth population surpasses that of all other age demographics, a phenomenon ascribed to elevated birth rates, reduced infant mortality, and general health advancements (Ishiaka *et al.*, 2018). Olaniyan *et al.* (2012) posited that an increasing proportion of the youth population compared to other age groups would catalyse economic growth and development, a phenomenon referred to as the demographic dividend. The

demographic youth bulge possesses the capacity to stimulate economic expansion and enhance human development. Nonetheless, this is not automatic.

Justin (2012) observed that the youth bulge is a prevalent occurrence in numerous emerging nations, especially in the least developed countries. This phenomenon typically occurs during a developmental phase in which a country successfully lowers newborn death rates while moms continue to exhibit elevated fertility rates. A significant portion of the population consists of children and young adults, with today's children becoming tomorrow's young adults. He asserts that in a nation experiencing a youth bulge, as young persons reach working age, the dependence ratio—the proportion of the non-working age population to the working age population—will decrease. If the rise in the working-age population can be entirely engaged in productive endeavours, everything else being equal, the average income per capita is expected to increase accordingly. The youth bulge will transform into a demographic dividend. Nonetheless, if a substantial cohort of young individuals is unable to secure job and attain adequate income, the youth bulge will transform into a demographic crisis, as a significant population of discontented youth is prone to becoming a possible catalyst for social and political unrest (Justin, 2012).

Beehner (2007) examined the elements contributing to violence associated with the youth bulge such as rapid urbanization; heightened expectations among job seekers; and environmental stresses.

Security and Insecurity

Security is the absence of, or resistance to, possible injury or other undesirable forced alterations inflicted by others (Gee, 2016). Beneficiaries (technically referents) of security may include individuals and social groups, objects and organisations, ecosystems, or any other item or phenomenon susceptible to undesirable change. Security primarily denotes protection from adversarial forces, yet it encompasses various interpretations: for instance, the absence of harm (e.g., freedom from want); the presence of a fundamental necessity (e.g., food security); resilience against potential damage (secure foundations); confidentiality (e.g., a secure telephone line); containment (a secure room or cell); and a psychological state (emotional security).

Udoh (2015) defined insecurity as the condition of being exposed to danger or harm. The apprehension experienced when one perceives vulnerability and insecurity. Insecurity, beyond being a prevalent dread among Nigerians, has become a ubiquitous topic of conversation whenever two or more Nigerians convene. This phenomenon denotes a condition of vulnerability to peril or harm. It is the apprehension experienced when one feels exposed and insecure. Numerous illegal armed factions, ethnic militias, and religious extremists exemplify the insecurity in Nigeria. These have resulted in a series of bombings, homicides, arson, armed robbery, and kidnapping, among other crimes. Adeleke (2013) observed that insecurity has evolved into a multidimensional menace that security agents in Nigeria seem unable to manage, evidenced by its various expressions such as bombings, kidnappings, property destruction, and the instillation of fear. He further stated that insecurity adversely affects the overall well-being of individuals, resulting in sicknesses, reduced life expectancy, diminished quality of life, and even mortality. Insecurity has resulted in the devastation of businesses, assets, and equipment, as well as the relocation and closure of enterprises (Udoh, 2015).

Omede and Omede (2015) noted that the insecurity in Nigeria has escalated to more intricate levels, characterised by an increase in the frequency and severity of lethal assaults and violence. This insecurity permeates cities, towns, and villages, leaving few safe havens for refuge. Both urban and rural residents

face threats to their lives and properties, resulting in a pervasive sense of fear on a daily basis. Numerous variables have been proposed as contributing to unrest in Nigeria.

Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) asserted that insecurity is a significant challenge that has impeded industrialisation and sustainable development in Nigeria specifically and Africa broadly. Nigeria, regarded as the giant of Africa, has experienced an unprecedented array of security challenges, including the actions of Fulani herdsmen, Boko Haram insurgencies, armed robbery, kidnapping, political and religious crises, murder, the destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants, and child abduction and trafficking (Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu, 2019). Ozoigbo (2019) identifies the causes of insecurity in the country as illiteracy, unemployment, inadequate leadership, porous borders, proliferation of weapons and non-compliance with the rule of law, among others.

Nnamani (2015) noted that for more than a decade, the persistent societal issue in the South-East regions of the country is the prevalence of kidnapping. He noted that the incidence of kidnapping in the South East was emulated from the Niger Delta region, where militants abducted primarily foreign oil workers to attract global attention to the dire circumstances in the oil-rich Niger Delta; since then, the prevalence of kidnapping has proliferated rapidly in the South East Nigeria. He further observed that affluent and influential Nigerians along with their immediate relatives and dependents are experiencing terror. The direst scenario involves the perpetrators demanding a ransom for the release of their victim(s), and in certain instances, even after the ransom is paid they proceed to execute their victim. Bello and Jamilu (2017) contend that kidnappings perpetuate a climate of insecurity in the South East, where militiamen employ abduction as an insurgent tactic to extort ransom and finance their violent activities.

The prevailing insecurity crisis in Nigeria is escalating to a concerning degree that necessitates heightened attention. This arises from minor civil unrest, widespread violence, armed insurrection, or terrorism against citizens or the state's institutions and infrastructure (*Leadership*, February 1, 2013). In this context, Security constitutes N921.91 billion, the predominant portion of Nigeria's 2012 budget (African Examiner, December 13, 2011). Factors contributing to insecurity loopholes include unemployment, resulting in joblessness and poverty among the youth. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) noted that job opportunities are diminishing while the number of unemployed youth is rising. In 2005, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) defined youth as individuals aged between 18 and 35 years. This suggests that over 67 million young Nigerians are unemployed (Ochong, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

This research employs the youth bulge theory. The hypothesis was formulated by German sociologist and economist Gunnar Heinsohn. The theory posits that numerous historical instances of social unrest, devoid of external catalysts (such as abrupt climatic shifts or other environmental catastrophes), as well as many genocides, can be effectively attributed to a burgeoning youth demographic, exemplified by the Palestinian uprisings from 1987 to 1993 and from 2000 to the present, alongside terrorism. The idea was further developed by U.S. political scientists, Jack Goldstein and Gary Fuller (Ishiaka *et al.*, 2018). The idea posits that an overabundance of young adult males predictably results in social turmoil, warfare, and terrorism, particularly among the “third and fourth sons.” The youth bulge has long been a significant worry in development due to its consequences for labour markets, government budgets, cultural norms, and overall economic growth in nations facing economic stagnation and high unemployment (Jimenez & Murthi, 2006). The youth bulge may heighten the possibility of more structured kinds of political violence, such as internal armed conflict.

Urdal (2007) elucidated that in the early 1990s, the recognition of the security implications of the youth bulge gained significant prominence as policymakers expressed concern regarding the potential unrest stemming from a substantial population of unemployed young individuals—especially young men—becoming apathetic and estranged from their society. Ishiaka *et al.* (2018) corroborated that Nigeria's substantial youth population faces a lack of economic opportunities, which could lead to a demographic bomb. A significant number of unemployed youth may become a potential source of social and political instability, adversely affecting economic development. Olumide *et al.* (2021) contended that a youth bulge arises when 30 to 40% of a nation's male population falls within the fighting age demographic of 15 to 29 years. The widening disparity between the rise of essential social amenities, such as employment, food, and infrastructure, and the rapidly increasing population compels discontented young men to channel their adolescent rage into political violence.

The tenets of the theory are that:

- The prevalence of idle and unemployed adolescents in the developing world, referred to as the “youth bulge” is becoming a fuel for internal conflict.
- Rapid urbanisation is significant as cities in the developing world lack the infrastructure, resources, and employment opportunities to support the inflow of rural labourers. This engenders favourable conditions for illicit market operations, which frequently promote the emergence of gangs and paramilitary organisations.
- Large number of educated individuals lacking employment may incite social instability.

This study applies the theory to explain youth violence in South Eastern Nigeria, which has resulted in various criminal activities, including kidnapping, the Unknown Gunmen Syndrome, self-determination agitation, armed robbery, and ritual killings, among other violent acts contributing to insecurity in the region.

Youth bulge and insecurity

Examining the trends and patterns of youth criminality in Ibadan, South-western Nigeria, Chinedu *et al.* (2015) employed social learning theory and the cultural theory of crime as its theoretical framework. A descriptive survey design was employed. The sample comprised one hundred and eighty (180) youths selected from six (6) cluster zones in the Ibadan city, Nigeria. The respondents were chosen using a multi-stage selection strategy that encompassed purposive, stratified, and quota sampling procedures. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and examined. The quantitative data were analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics, while the qualitative data were examined using content analysis and direct quotations. The findings indicated that educational attainment, residential location, family dynamics, substance abuse, association with criminal peers, and idleness greatly affect the incidence of youth criminal involvement in Ibadan. The research additionally revealed that the predominant crime perpetrated by adolescents in Ibadan is rape.

In his book, *The Demographics of Political Violence: Youth Bulge, Insecurity and Conflict*, Urdal (2007) elucidates that substantial adolescent populations diminish recruitment expenses for rebel organisations by providing a plentiful labour supply. This is especially true when the advantages of participation surpass alternative income-generating prospects. He also found that when young individuals have

restricted opportunities beyond unemployment and poverty, they are more inclined to engage in rebellion as their frustrations escalate. Socio-economic issues create a conducive environment for terrorist recruiting, and widespread unemployment among highly educated individuals can lead to anger and resentment. Elevated unemployment rates among educated youth constitute one of the most destabilising and violent socio-political phenomena within any government. The researcher determined that the presence of a youth bulge substantially heightens the likelihood of conflict.

Ejukwa (2019) analysed the societal repercussions of overpopulation in Nigeria. The methodology employed was qualitative, utilising secondary sources. The theoretical framework was grounded in the Malthusian theory of exponential population rise. The results demonstrated proof of overpopulation and its severe repercussions. The issues include endemic poverty, challenges in providing sustenance for large families, overcrowding in markets, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities, inability to afford medical care, fierce competition for limited job openings, elevated unemployment and underemployment rates, insufficient housing for millions, violent crimes such as kidnappings for ransom, and communal conflicts arising from diminishing farmlands and grazing reserves due to overpopulation.

Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020) investigated Youth Restiveness in Nigeria: Implications on Sustainable National Development and concluded that youth restiveness has emerged as a significant topic of discourse within Nigeria's social, economic, and political spheres, asserting that the nation cannot achieve substantial progress with a restive youth population. The study revealed that Nigeria's peace, security, and national integrity are jeopardised due to the prevalence of this problem, with contributing factors including unemployment, insufficient basic infrastructure, and inadequate social amenities, among others. The study concluded that the escalating impact of youth restiveness is manifest in Nigeria through ethnic militias, kidnapping, cultism, armed robbery, agitations, and participation in social insecurity, which have fostered uncertainties resulting in failure, fear, and underdevelopment across various sectors in Nigeria.

Effect of youth involvement in insecurity on the economy

Ishiaka *et al.* (2018) studied the impact of the youth bulge on Nigeria's economic environment. The research utilised the youth bulge theory and employed a secondary data collection strategy. The study identified that the difficulties confronting Nigerian young encompass youth unemployment, restricted access to education, insufficient economic prospects, inadequate basic education, elevated HIV prevalence, and significant poverty rates. The study additionally indicated that, contrary to expectations, a rise in the youth population may hinder development if the difficulties confronting the youth are not resolved.

Akpan *et al.* (2015) investigated the correlation between insecurity and youth unemployment in Nigeria, specifically in the Niger Delta region. The research utilised a survey methodology and predominantly depended on secondary data. The study indicated that national insecurity, a significant barrier to Nigeria's business existence and ongoing peace and stability, is attributed to youth unemployment.

Adebayo (2013) analysed the relationship between youth unemployment and crime in Nigeria, along with its consequences for national development. The study indicated that unchecked population expansion is a precursor to catastrophe, as it will inevitably generate a multitude of unemployed individuals who may resort to crime as a means of survival. The frustration and desperation experienced

by the unemployed fosters an environment conducive to crime. Recently, Nigeria has witnessed significant adverse social, economic, and political developments, largely attributable to youth unemployment and underemployment, as evidenced by rising militancy, violent crimes, kidnapping, civil unrest, and political instability.

Nkwatoh and Nathaniel (2018) examined the impact of insecurity on economic growth in Nigeria. The vector autoregressive model utilised quarterly data from the first quarter of 2009 to the fourth quarter of 2016. The principal findings of the study indicated that economic development and investment activity generally rise during times of instability. The research additionally revealed that the unemployment rate diminished during times of insecurity. This suggests that insecurity solely endangers economic operations without adversely impacting the overall economy, as suggested by numerous economic theories. The report advised that to consistently maintain Nigeria's economic growth rate, the government must safeguard both local and foreign investments by enhancing national security.

Ezeajughu (2021) studied the pertinent topic of insecurity in Nigeria and its impact on socioeconomic growth. The study revealed that the persistent increase in insecurity and the decline in economic development in Nigeria constitute significant challenges for nations globally. Furthermore, Nigeria has experienced unparalleled security issues due to militant activities in the South-South region, kidnappings in the South East, widespread violent armed robbery, political assassinations, ritual killings, and, more recently, the actions of Boko Haram in certain areas of the northern region, particularly the North East. The study determined that these societal threats together affect the safety of lives and property of both Nigerian nationals and foreign individuals residing in or seeking to invest in the country.

Measures to stop rising youth involvement in insecurity

In order to stop the rising youth involvement in insecurity, Chinedu *et al.* (2015) advocate for government support in establishing technical institutions that engage adolescents in acquiring skills in trades such as carpentry, fashion design, mechanics, electrical work, and painting, so preventing idleness among the youth. Akpakan *et al.* (2015) advocated for the establishment of employment opportunities predicated on merit and the provision of social security in the form of unemployment compensation, whereby unemployed graduates receive N30,000 monthly for first-degree holders, N20,000 for National Diploma (ND) and National Certificate in Education (NCE) holders, and N10,000 for holders of First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) and Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE). The government should urgently implement the Alaska model for paying the Niger Deltans and prioritise human security to alleviate poverty in the country.

Ishiaka *et al.* (2018) advised that the government should generate employment and economic opportunities, enhance educational and healthcare facilities, and address poverty to ensure that the burgeoning youth population contributes to economic growth and development. Failure to heed this warning and implement the study's recommendations may lead Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa to experience a situation akin to the "Arab Spring."

Akpokighe and Ejovi (2020) proposed that to manage young in Nigeria, their abilities, talents, and education must be acknowledged, fostered, and directed towards appropriate sectors in society for progress, sustainable development, and national harmony. This article examined the discourse on young restiveness in Nigeria and proposed ideas for enhancing governmental organisation and accountability to address the escalating incidence of youth unrest in the country.

Ezeajughu (2021) advocated for multiple strategies to mitigate insecurity, including preventive community policing, a human development-centred growth approach, equitable resource distribution, and the allocation of resources to critical economic sectors, among others. This has become concerning given Nigeria's aspiration to be rated among the twenty developed countries globally by 2020. These societal menaces provoke a troubling sense of insecurity that undermines Nigeria's endeavours for national economic development and, consequently, its vision. It also deters foreign investment and their contributions to economic progress in Nigeria. This article advocates for effective leadership and sound governance as a solution to issues such as insecurity, unemployment, poverty, hunger, and disease, among other adverse indicators.

Gap in Literature

The literature examined insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria through the lens of youth bulge theory. The study examined scholarly literature concerning the causes of insecurity. Literature indicates that for more than a decade, a persistent societal issue in the South-East region of the country has been the prevalence of kidnapping, armed robbery, and militancy. Literature indicates that the insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria was emulated from the Niger Delta region, when youths and militants abducted foreign oil workers to attract global attention to the dire circumstances in the oil-rich Niger Delta. The examined research indicates that unemployment, resulting in joblessness and poverty among the youth, is a factor contributing to the security vulnerabilities in the region. All the scholars whose work was assessed exhibited a strong understanding of the problem from their individual viewpoints; nevertheless, none employed youth bulge theory to analyse insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria. This study aims to address the gap by examining insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria through the lens of Youth Bulge theory.

Methodology

This study adopted survey research while the population of the study is 159 participants selected from the five States in South Eastern region. Data were collected by administering the questionnaire to the respondents directly. The study used purposive sampling a non-probability sampling technique to select the sample size of 159 participants who were administered with the research instrument (questionnaire) out of which 120 were returned and used for data analysis while 39 questionnaires were not returned. Data generated were presented in tables and percentages. The hypotheses formulated in the study were tested with Chi-Square (χ^2).

Data Analysis and Results

The gender of the respondents showed that 99(82.5%) were male while 23(17.5%) were females. The age distribution of the respondents showed that 32 respondents were between the ages of 20-24 and representing 26.7%, 17 respondents were between 25-29 and representing 14.2%, those between the ages of 30-34 were 12(10%), those between the ages of 35-39 were 13(10.8%), those between 40-44 are 6(8.8%), 45-49 were 11(9.3%), those between 50-54 were 4(3.3%), those in the age bracket of 55-59 are 17(14.2%) while those whose age is 60 years and above are 6(5%). On the marital status of the respondents, the Table showed that among the respondents, 44 representing 36.6% were single, 56(46.6%) were married, 6(5.1%) were divorcee, 11(9.2%) were widows while those separated were 3 representing 2.5%.

On the employment status of the respondents Table 4 showed that those who were applicant were 14(11%), those who are in business were 23(19%), civil servants were 15(14%), students were 22 (18%), artisans were 46(38%).

Table 1: Youth bulge and insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria

	Questionnaire Item	Frequency	%age
1	Youth bulge is a challenge to the peace of the zone	114	(97%)
2	Killing in the Zone is perpetrated mostly by the youths	96	(80%)
3	Rising incidence of population of unemployed youths taggers agitations and violence	77	(64.2%)
4	kidnapping and hostage taking are perpetrated by the youths	109	(95%)
5	The Unknown Gunmen Syndrome is the product of youths	106	(88.3%)
6	Youths are often recruited by the elite to cause mayhem	86	71.6
7	The number of youths in the zone has risen beyond control	99	82.5
8	The involvement of the youths in insecurity has caused untold hardship in the zone.	111	92
9	Socio-demographic characteristics of youths in the zone influence their prevalence to involve in crimes	101	84.1
10	Youth are easily recruited for violence related activities	105	84
11	Young people with limited opportunities for unemployment /poverty are more likely to join a rebellion	76	63
12	Overpopulation by youths in Nigeria led to violent crimes including kidnappings for ransom,	77	66.2
13	Youths are easily recruited for political agitation	116	97

Data in Table 1 showed that on whether youth bulge responsible for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria, 114(97%) respondents responded that youth bulge is a challenge to the peace of the zone, 109 (80%) respondents said that killing in the Zone is perpetrated mostly by the youths, 77(64%) responded that rising incidence of population of unemployed youths triggers agitations and violence, 109 respondents (95 kidnapping and hostage taking are perpetrated by the youths, 106(88.3%) responded that he Unknown Gunmen Syndrome is the product of youths, 86(71.6%) responded that youths are often recruited by the elite to cause mayhem, 99 (82.5%) said that the number of youths in the zone has risen beyond control. In the same manner, 111(92%) respondents that the involvement of the youths in insecurity has caused untold hardship in the zone, 101(84.1%) responded that Socio-demographic characteristics of youths in the zone influence their prevalence to involve in crimes, 105(86%) respondents responded that youth are easily recruited for violence related activities, 76(63%) young people with limited opportunities for unemployment and poverty are more likely to join a rebellion, 77(66.25) respondents responded that overpopulation by youths in Nigeria led to violent crimes including kidnappings for ransom, 116(97%) respondents responded that the Youths are easily recruited for political agitation.

Table 1 .1. Test of Hypotheses One: The rising youths population (youth bulge) accounts for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria

Category of responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$(oi-ei)^2$	$(oi-ei)^2/ei$
Youth bulge is a challenge to the peace of the zone	114	93.3	428.29	4.6
Killing in the Zone is perpetrated mostly by the youths	96	93.3	7.29	0.09
Rising incidence of population of unemployed youths taggers agitations and violence	77	93.3	-256.69	-2.8
kidnapping and hostage taking are perpetrated by the youths	119	93.3	660	7.1
The Unknown Gunmen Syndrome is the product of youths	106	93.3	161.29	1.7
Youths are often recruited by the elite to cause mayhem	86	93.3	53	-0.6
The number of youths in the zone has risen beyond control	99	93.3	32.49	0.35
The involvement of the youths in insecurity has caused untold hardship in the zone.	111	93.3	313	3.6
Socio-demographic characteristics of youths in the zone influence their prevalence to involve in crimes	101	93.3	59	0.65
Youth are easily recruited for violence related activities	105	93.3	136.89	1.5
Young people with limited opportunities for unemployment and poverty are more likely to join a rebellion	76	93.3	229	-3.2
Overpopulation by youths in Nigeria led to violent crimes including kidnappings for ransom,	107	93.3	187	2.0
Youths are easily recruited for political agitation	116	93.3	515	5.5
	1213		X^2	20.49

Critical value of (X^2) at 0.05 level of significance; Critical or Table value (t_{tab}) value ($(X^2) = 3.84$;
Calculated (t_{cal}) value (X^2) = 20.49

The calculated Chi Square value is 20.49 while the critical or table value at $p = 0.05$ significance level, with 1 *degree of freedom* is 3.84. The result showed upheld our hypotheses which states that the rising youths population (youth bulge) accounts for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria is upheld because our calculated value is higher than the table value. The result indicated that rising youths population (youth bulge) accounts for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria.

Table 2: Effect of youth's involvement on insecurity on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria

	Questionnaire Item	Frequency	%age
1	Poverty	101	84.2
2	Unemployment	91	75.8
3	Closure of markets and other economic activities	109	90.8
4	Lack of economic opportunities,	107	89.1
5	Youth involvement in insecurity undermine development in the region	111	92.5
6	Insecurity leads to fall in economic growth and investment activities	101	84.
7	Continuous rise in insecurity and deterioration in the economic development in the zone.	109	90.8
8	Insecurity threatens investors in the zone	99	82
9	It reduces the per capital income of the people in the zone	113	94.1
10	Insecurity by youths affects agricultural production and sale in the zone.	93	77.4

Data on Table 2 on the effect of youth involvement on insecurity on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria showed that 101(84%) respondents responded that the effect is poverty, 91(76.8%) said it is unemployment, 109(90.8%) respondent said that it is closure of markets and other economic activities, 107(89.1%) responded that it is lack of lack of economic opportunities, 99(82%) said that youth causes insecurity that threatens investors in the zone 111(92.5%) said it is youth involvement in insecurity undermine development in the region, 101(84%) responded that insecurity leads to fall in economic growth and investment activities, 109(90.8%) respondents responded that continuous rise in insecurity and deterioration in the economic development in the zone, 99(82%) respondents responded that Insecurity threatens investors in the zone, 113(94.1%) said that It reduces the per capital income of the people in the zone and lastly 93(77.4%), said that Insecurity by youths affects agricultural production and sale in the zone.

Table 2.1: Hypothesis Two: Youths involvement in insecurity has adverse effect on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria

Category of responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$(oi-ei)^2$	$(oi-ei)^2/ei$
Poverty	101	96.1	24.01	0.25
Unemployment	91	96.1	26.1	-0.27
Closure of markets and other economic activities	109	96.1	166.41	1.7
Lack of economic opportunities,	107	96.1	118.82	1.23
Youth involvement in insecurity undermine development in the region	111	96.1	3.61	0.04
Insecurity leads to fall in economic growth and investment activities	101	96.1	146	-1.5
Continuous rise in insecurity and deterioration in the economic development in the zone.	109	96.1	26.1	-0.27
Insecurity threatens investors in the zone	99	96.1	8.41	0.09
It reduces the per capital income of the people in the zone	113	96.1	285.61	3
Insecurity by youths affects agricultural production and sale in the zone.	93	96.1	9.61	-0.1
	1346			3.96

Critical value of (X^2) at 0.05 level of significance; Critical or Table value (t_{tab}) value (X^2) = 3.84; Calculated (t_{cal}) value (X^2) = 3.96. The calculated Chi Square value is 3.96 while the critical or table value at $p = 0.05$ significance level, with 1 *degree f* is 3.84. The result showed our hypothesis which states that the youth involvement in insecurity has adverse effect on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria is upheld as the result was in accordance with our decision rule.

Table 3: Measures to stop rising youth involvement in insecurity in South East Nigeria

Variables	Frequency	%age
1. Provision of technical institution for youths to learn trade	116	97
1. Creation of employment opportunities and social security for the youths	119	99
2. Population control measure such as birth control.	113	94
3. Combating poverty in order to ensure that the bulging youth population translates into economic growth and development,	102	85
4. Ethical revolution by the youths and the people of the zone skills.	104	87
5. Religious leaders as well as all political leaders should launch a campaign against youths involvement in insecurity	108	89
6. The youths of the zone should embrace agriculture as means of livelihood.	91	76

Data on Table 3 showed that on the measures to be adopted to stop rising youth involvement in insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria 116(97%) responded that it is provision of technical institution for youths to learn trade, 119(99) said that the measure is creation of employment opportunities and social security for the youths, 113(94%) responded that the measure is population control measure such as birth control, 108(85%) combating poverty in order to ensure that the bulging youth population translates into economic growth and development, 104(87%) responded that is ethical revolution by the youths and the people of the zone skills, talents and education must be recognized, 108(89.9%) responded that religious leaders as well as political leaders should launch a campaign against youths involvement in insecurity, 91(76%) said that the youths of the zone should embrace agriculture as means of livelihood,

Findings of the Study

The study found that:

1. The rising youths population (youth bulge) accounts for insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria as majority of the activities that triggers insecurity in the zone are committed by youths from the zone.
2. Youths involvement in insecurity has adverse effect on the economy of the South Eastern Nigeria as it often led to closure of market, destruction of lives and properties as well as undermine development.
3. Measures such as ethical revolution among the youths, reversion to Igbo value system as well putting institutions to empower youths from the zone can be adopted to stop rising youth involvement in insecurity in South Eastern Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study used youth bulge theory to provide theoretical insight into the involvement of the youths in insecurity in the zone. The study concluded the youths from the zone should revert back the Igbo values system which the entire South East had been known for which involves handwork, craftsmanship and respect for human lives and properties and thus shun being recruited for any activity that will threaten the peace of the zone.

Recommendations

- The population explosion among the youths of South East should be controlled through a birth control policy so that the resources available can be able to cater for the youths.
- The Youths in the zone should revert back to Igbo Value System of learning handwork, apprenticeship, and agricultural production.
- Government of the State in the Zone should initiate common programmes and policies that empower the youths to be able to sustain themselves without reliance on none existing white collar job.

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