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Emerging Adults' Restiveness and National Security Challenges in Nigeria

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Abstract:
This study investigated emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design of quantitative nature. The population for this study consists of 300 Nigerian youths residing in Ibadan Oyo state and Osogbo Osun state. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 emerging adults' consisting of 150 male and 150 female youths. Two research questions were answered and Emerging Adults' Restiveness and National Security Challenges in Nigeria Scale was used for data collection. The instrument is self-constructed by the researchers and it was validated using test-retest method. It has an internal consistency of 0.86. The data of the study was analyzed using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tools to answer the research question at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The result of the study revealed that negative relationship exists between emerging adult restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria; r (298) = -0.24, p<.05. Also, it was found that boys are more involved in emerging adult restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria (x = 6.87) than girls (x = 5.35). Therefore, it was recommended that Government needs to come up with people friendly policies that would enhance the potential development of its youth for them to have the capacity to support development and safety of the society.

Keywords: Boys, Girls, National Security Challenges in Nigeria, and Emerging Adults' Restiveness.

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Introduction

The expression of act of restiveness among emerging adults in Nigeria has become a catastrophic phenomenon and a significant psycho-socio-political and economic issue of discourse. This is because at the height of emerging adult violent restiveness, the socio-economic security and peaceful corporate existence of Nigeria is at risk and its sovereignty threatened. This is consistent with the assertions of Garba (2024) that it is a fundamental truth that no society thrives and progresses significantly with a restive population of emerging adults who are prone to violence, unrest, wanton destruction and involvement in social vices. Contemporary involvement of emerging adults in the act of violent restiveness has become one of the greatest security challenges confronting Nigeria particularly in the 21st century. The menace has posed serious threats to the human development and corporate existence of the country across different parts of the country with significant effects on social, psychological, political, economic, and educational spheres of our lives.

Akpokigbe and Ejovi (2020) affirmed that the inability of emerging adults in Nigeria to adjust to the tasking demands of their environment, crave for wealth and lust for recognition are problems they are confronted with. Hence, emerging adults have become involved in kidnapping, vandalization of oil pipelines, increase rate of armed robbery, bomb attacks, thuggery, murder, destruction of properties, increased insecurity and crude oil theft (bunkering) to mention but a few. Nigeria is facing numerous national security threats, including terrorism, banditry, inter-communal conflicts, and the activities of criminal networks. These security challenges have resulted in the displacement of millions of Nigerians, continuous loss of lives, and significant economic losses. These incidents have been associated with violence triggered by emerging adults' restiveness (Maiyaki, 2022). Thus, Akpokigbe and Ejovi (2020) described emerging adults restiveness as a function of one's emotional and temperamental reactions to events or situations, due to wrong cognitive perception, appraisal and interpretation of such events with resultant state of nervousness, restlessness, uneasiness, obstinacy and uncontrollable behaviour. Thus, emerging adults' restiveness encompasses all forms of youth activisms that pose or have the tendency of posing threat to the orderliness and security of life and property.

However, it is of interest to note that emerging adulthood is a particularly important stage in human developmental life-span. It is a life stage besieged with the showcase of resilience because of the need to meet up with the important changes in functional capacity, educational achievement, and social roles that appears to have significant influence on this stage of life experience. Emerging adulthood is proposed as a new conception of development for the period from the late teens through the thirties, with a focus on ages 18-35 (Arnett, 2014). Societal expectations on emerging adults have placed heavy burden on them and as such they tend to strive for economic independence and sense of self-identity at all cost. Some of this group of individuals are likely to be preparing for marriage and family life as a developmental task. Thus, financial autonomy and economic independent remain the key ingredients in the adult world which they look forward to. However, attaining these strides in the face of socio-economic uncertainty is dependent on their developmental drive, initiative and intention to appropriately utilise available human and non-human material either positively or negatively. This have made lots of emerging adults in Nigeria to engage in criminal act of kidnapping for ransom, oil pipe line vandalization, terrorism, banditry, etc, just to make ends meet. This life experience is a major source of interest to sociologist, counselling psychologist and behavioural managers (Isiwu & Onwuka, 2017).

In the words of Brown Ogbeifun (2007) emerging adult restiveness comes under different headings as the motivation and orientation of actors differ. He identified their forms of

restiveness based on actors, motivation and interests as youths engaged in genuine agitation for their rights and restoration of the dignity of their group or race; youths engaged in self-seeking and criminal activities such as kidnapping or hostage taking in exchange for levied ransom; youths seeking revenge for the oppressive attitudes toward members of the elite class or a manner of responding to a repressive state. In all there is a unifying factor in the rationalizations of their actions as expressed in their definitions, which is not being satisfied with their present's state. For Chukeuzi (2009), restiveness expressed by emerging adults is a despicable act perpetrated by a significant portion of the youth in various communities that can no longer be ignored. As the name implies, it is a combination of any action or conduct that constitutes unwholesome socially acceptable and unworthy, while activities engaged in by youths in any community. It is a phenomenon which in practice has led to a near breakdown of law and order, low productivity due to disruption of production activities, increasing crime rate, intra ethnic hostilities, and harassment of prospective developers and other criminal tendencies. Thus, emerging adults' restiveness becomes a national crisis going by its disruptive destructible tendencies

Several studies have been conducted to determine the causes of restiveness among emerging adults. For instance, the study by Agbaji et al. (2018) found that emerging restiveness engenders political instability, creates general insecurity and militates against investment by local and foreign investors. The study also found that emerging adults restiveness was caused by high rate of unemployment, poverty, exclusion of the youth from mainstream political participation, corruption, bad governance, inequitable distribution of goods and services among youths. Other writers like Chukwuemeka, Anazodo and Nzewi (2011) attribute emerging adults restiveness to family (home) grievances, school, society and the perception of and the youths' relationship with the Church/Mosque.In another study, Mezieobi, Nwaubani, and Anyanwu (2012) found that in South Eastern States of Nigeria, emerging adults restiveness was caused by factors such as sponsorship by interested groups, inadequate possession of skills for life sustenance, gangsterism, influence of hard drugs,and economic purpose of enrichment, among others. A study by Agu and Eke (2021) examined the landscape of inequality and social injustice through the lens of restiveness among the youth of Ohaji/Egbema communities in Imo State. The study found that emerging adults had rejected the existing power structure and injustice in handling of oil and gas business in their communities. The study found generally that emerging adults restiveness is predicated mainly on socio-economic factors, inequality and social injustice. The unjustifiable use of resources like land, labour and capital forms the basis for social contention and stratification (Agu & Eke, 2021). This has led to communal clashes and other social vices like cybercrime, drug abuse, drug peddling, youth unrest, armed robbery, advanced fee fraud and militancy (Akujo & Jack in Agu & Eke, 2021). Again, economic marginalization, corruption and unfavourable distribution of resources in the Niger Delat, a region of Nigeria, have led to militant activities. The militancy in many cases leads to sea piracy, hooliganism and pipeline vandalization (Ubleble, 2019).

Agbaji and others (2018) are of the view that lack of youth participation in Nigerian politics, peer pressure, poor attitudinal disposition and wrong youth mindset are some of the causes of youth restiveness. Youth restiveness breeds lawlessness as it disrupts social order. This gives rise to increase in social vices like gangsterism, rape, hooliganism, cultism, kidnapping and armed robbery (Agbaji, et al., 2018). Also, Dominic & Chinyere (2023), stated that kidnapping for ransom is now a familiar concept and blooming business in Nigeria and a serious threat to national security. The pattern, trend and the challenges it poses to human and national insecurity have had a devastating effect in all ramification. The sophisticated nature of kidnapping which involve the openly use of sophisticated weapons with disdain has taken

a frightening dimension in Nigeria. Also, youth restiveness has plunge Nigeria into a state of insecurity associated with terrorism, armed robbery, political assassination, kidnapping, inter/intra communal conflicts among ethnic groups, and other forms of violent crimes that have made Nigeria unsecured and deprived of development(Dominic & Chinyere, 2023).

Furthermore, Samuel (2022) posits that the continuing state of insecurity in Nigeria have generally endangered the safety and health of its citizens. Within Nigeria's South-West area, ritual killings, domestic crime, cybercrime, abduction, armed robbery, banditry, extra judicial executions, and herder-farmer conflicts are all on the rise. Ritual killings, secessionist agitation, commercial crime, herder-farmer disputes, kidnapping, and attacks by unknown gunmen are all widespread in the south-east, which serves as a safe haven for all of these risky activities. The north-east region has been in the grip of a humanitarian catastrophe for more than a decade, exacerbated by the insurgency of Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Province. Militancy, kidnapping, environmental agitation, and oil bunkering or theft continue to menace the south-south region. The northern region is rife with banditry, illegal mining, and assassinations committed by members of ethnic religious groups. As a result, Nigeria's condition of insecurity has become a prominent topic in the country's political discourse, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives as well as huge property damage and destruction (Samuel, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT). The major postulation of relative deprivation theory is that people often compare their socio-economic and political standard or level with that of others in a subjective manner. Relative deprivation is more critical when predicting individuals' conduct, compared with “objective” measures of hardship, such as, poverty and inequality. RDT refers to the disenchantment people feel when they compare their positions to others and realise that others in the group possess something that they do not. When this feeling persists, it may lead to frustration, stress and aggression, which may result to violence (Gurr, 1970). This is observed presently as a major cause of emerging adults’ restiveness and insecurity in Nigeria. Gurr (1970) stated that in any given society, emerging adults that feel deprived are usually pushed to the edges of society. While, in response to their social, monetary and political deprivations, greater numbers of emerging adults would momentarily enter the world of violence and created criminal sub-cultures that consequently wreak destruction on the security of lives and property. Gurr (1970) argues that people rebel because they were frustrated and angered by the enormity of the socio-economic and structural inequalities, which are inextricably entrenched in the fabrics of societies. From the theory, it can be argued that emerging adults engaged in crime-oriented activities that have served as security threat in Nigeria are disadvantaged and lack legitimate means of achieving their goals and therefore engage in different form of violence and restiveness in order to achieve them. This context makes Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) germane for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The state of emerging adults’ restiveness and insecurity in Nigeria has taken an alarming proportion and a major issue discourse. Within Nigerian societies, it has become an everyday affair to hear of people being kidnapped for ransom, assassinated, robbed, women and girls raped, etc. These crimes are perpetuated by emerging adults, Boko Haram sect, bandits or Fulani terrorists or unknown gunmen in all parts of the country is in an alarming rate. As a result, the country's progress has been hindered, and tens of thousands of people have lost their homes, families, and jobs. After losing husbands or other family members, many house wives have been made widows, and their children have grown up without parents. This

development calls for concern and makes investigating emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria a necessity.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to empirically investigate emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria and to specifically:

1. Ascertain the relationship between emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria
2. Determine the involvement of emerging adults' (boys and girls) in youth restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria

Research Questions

1. What relationship exists between emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria?
2. What difference exists between boys and girls in their involvement in emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design of quantitative nature. The population for this study consists of 300 Nigerian emerging adults' residing in Ibadan Oyo state and Osogbo Osun state. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 youths consisting of 150 male and 150 female youths.

Instrument

The study used Emerging Adults' Restiveness and National Security Challenges in Nigeria Scale for data collection. It is researchers self-constructed likert scale of strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). This instrument is divided into three sections comprising of section(s) 1 (Bio-data), 2 and 3 are in clusters of 6 questions each and it was validated using test-retest method. It has an internal consistency of 0.86.

Procedure

The researchers obtained the consent of the participants used for the study. Having sought and obtained the consent of the participants, the researchers personally administered copies of the instruments with some explanation on how to complete them and the purpose of the research to the participants.

Data Analysis

The data of the study was analyzed using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tools to answer the research question at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What relationship exists between emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria?

Table 1: PPMC Table Showing relationship that exist between youth restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Df	P
Emerging Adults' Restiveness	300	3.51	1.18	-0.24	298	Sig
National Security Challenges in Nigeria	300	2.48	1.06			

The highlighted results in table 1 indicates that negative relationship exist between emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria; r (298) = -0.24, p<.05. This indicates that emerging adults' restiveness has devastating effect on national security as its occurrence plunges Nigeria into a state of insecurity.

Research Question Two: What significant difference exist between boys and girls in their involvement in emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria?

Table 2: Showing T-test comparison of boys' and girls' involvement in emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria

Emerging Adults' Restiveness and National Security Challenges in Nigeria	N	Mean	SD	T-value	Df	Sig
Boys	150	6.87	0.81	2.74	298	.066
Girls	150	5.35	0.69			

The highlighted results in table 2 indicates that boys are more involved in act ofemerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria (x = 6.87) than girls (x = 5.35). This difference is also found to be significant (t = 2.74: df = 298; p<.05). This indicates that boys are more involved in emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria that has made Nigeria to become a state of insecurity.

Discussion of Findings

The answer to research question one indicates that negative relationship exists between emerging adults' restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria; r (298) = -0.24, p<.05. This indicates that emerging adults' restiveness has devastating effect on national security as its occurrence plunges Nigeria into a state of insecurity. This implies that restiveness among emerging adults in Nigeria has become a catastrophic phenomenon and a significant psycho-socio-political and economic issue of great concern. This is because at the height of emerging adults' restiveness, the socio-economic security and peaceful corporate existence of Nigeria is at risk and its sovereignty threatened. This is consistent with the assertions of Garba (2024) that it is a fundamental truth that no society thrives and progresses significantly with a restive population of emerging adults' who are prone to violence, unrest, wanton destruction and involvement in social vices. Emerging adults' restiveness has become one of the greatest security challenges confronting Nigeria particularly in the 21st century. The menace has posed serious threats to the human development and corporate existence of the country across different parts of the country with significant effects on social, psychological, political, economic, and educational spheres of our lives. Akpokigbe and Ejovi (2020) affirmed that the inability of emerging adults in Nigeria to adjust to the tasking demands of their environment, crave for wealth and lust for recognition are problems they are confronted with. Hence, emerging adults have become involved in kidnapping, vandalization of oil pipelines, increase rate of armed robbery, bomb attacks, thuggery, murder, destruction of properties, increased insecurity and crude oil theft (bunkering) to mention but afew.Nigeria is facing numerous national security threats, including terrorism, banditry, inter-communal conflicts, and the activities of criminal networks. These security challenges have resulted in the displacement of millions of Nigerians, continuous loss of lives, and significant economic losses. These incidents have been associated with violence triggered by emerging adults'

restiveness (Maiyaki, 2022). Thus, Akpokigbe and Ejovi (2020) described emerging adults restiveness as a function of one's emotional and temperamental reactions to events or situations, due to wrong cognitive perception, appraisal and interpretation of such events with resultant state of nervousness, restlessness, uneasiness, obstinacy and uncontrollable behaviour. Thus, emerging adults' restiveness encompasses all forms of youth activisms that pose or have the tendency of posing threat to the orderliness and security of life and property.

The answer to the second research question indicates that boys are more involved in youth restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria ($x = 6.87$) than girls ($x = 5.35$). This difference is also found to be significant ($t = 2.74$: $df = 298$; $p<.05$). This indicates that boys are more involved in youth restiveness and national security challenges in Nigeria that has made Nigeria to become a state of insecurity. The reason for this could be that the pattern and trend of youth restiveness and national security challenges in has taken a devastating and sophisticated dimension that requires the strength of masculinity. This corroborates the assertion of Dominic & Chinyere (2023), stated that kidnapping for ransom is now a familiar concept and blooming business in Nigeria and a serious threat to national security. The pattern, trend and the challenges it poses to human and national insecurity have had a devastating effect in all ramification. The sophisticated nature of kidnapping which involve the openly use of sophisticated weapons with disdain has taken a frightening dimension in Nigeria. Also, youth restiveness has plunge Nigeria into a state of insecurity associated with terrorism, armed robbery, political assassination, kidnapping, inter/intra communal conflicts among ethnic groups, and other forms of violent crimes that have made Nigeria unsecured and deprived of development(Dominic & Chinyere, 2023). Furthermore, Samuel (2022) posits that the continuing state of insecurity in Nigeria have generally endangered the safety and health of its citizens. Within Nigeria's South-West area, ritual killings, domestic crime, cybercrime, abduction, armed robbery, banditry, extrajudicial executions, and herder-farmer conflicts are all on the rise. Ritual killings, secessionist agitation, commercial crime, herder-farmer disputes, kidnapping, and attacks by unknown gunmen are all widespread in the south-east, which serves as a safe haven for all of these risky activities. The north-east region has been in the grip of a humanitarian catastrophe for more than a decade, exacerbated by the insurgency of Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Province. Militancy, kidnapping, environmental agitation, and oil bunkering or theft continue to menace the south-south region. The northern region is rife with banditry, illegal mining, and assassinations committed by members of ethnic religious groups. As a result, Nigeria's condition of insecurity has become a prominent topic in the country's political discourse, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives as well as huge property damage and destruction (Samuel, 2022).

Conclusion

The outcome of this study has revealed that when emerging adults are dissatisfied with their developmental experience, they can become restive and take to kidnapping, vicious crimes, destabilize the safety, growth and development of the society. And it is of note that national and societal development requires the positive support, commitment and contribution of the youths. Therefore, Nigeria as a nation should invest in human capital development as a measure to help youths maximize their potentials and be productive and functionally fulfilled.

Recommendations

1. Government needs to come up with people friendly policies that would enhance the potential development of its emerging adults for them to have the capacity to support development and safety of the society.

2. The government needs to create opportunity for employment and provide channel for skill acquisition and entrepreneurial development.
3. The government should set up active and functional guidance and counselling centres to provide counselling intervention programmes to the benefit of emerging adults. This would help to reduce incidence of restiveness and national insecurity

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