

**Influence of Skill Acquisition Programmes on Youth Restiveness in Ovia  
North East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the influence of skill acquisition programmes on youth restiveness in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. Five research questions guided the study. The descriptive survey design was adopted, and 120 youths were selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a structured 25-item questionnaire validated by experts, while reliability was established using test–retest technique which yielded a coefficient of 0.75. Data were analysed using mean scores and descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that unemployment, lack of social amenities, poor entrepreneurial capacities, and illiteracy were major causes of youth restiveness (Nsidibe, Emaimo, & Amah, 2017; Ofem & Ajayi, 2008). The study also found a high level of youth participation in entrepreneurship training, vocational programmes, and adult literacy initiatives (Anyanwu, 2002; Oduaran, 1994). Skill acquisition programmes significantly improved youth productivity and reduced involvement in social vices (Ayotunde, 1997; Okeke, 1995). The study concludes that skill acquisition remains a critical tool for curbing youth restiveness. It recommends government-led policies, expanded training access, updated curricula, and post-training support for sustainable youth empowerment.

**Keywords:** Youth restiveness, skill acquisition, Edo State, vocational training

## **1. Introduction**

Youth restiveness has emerged as a major socio-economic and security challenge in many Nigerian communities (Nsidibe et al., 2017). Characterised by violence, disruptive behaviour, drug abuse, political thuggery, and social vices, youth restiveness is largely fueled by unemployment, poverty, low educational attainment, and the absence of meaningful opportunities for personal and economic development (Ogbe, 1996; Ofem & Ajayi, 2008). In Edo State, especially in Ovia North East Local Government Area, youth restiveness has increasingly become a barrier to community stability and sustainable development (Nyerere, 1976).

Skill acquisition programmes have been identified globally as an effective tool for reducing youth vulnerability to crime by equipping them with employable skills, entrepreneurial capacity, and income-earning opportunities (Ayotunde, 1997; Okeke, 1995). This study therefore investigates the extent to which participation in skill acquisition programmes influences youth restiveness in Ovia North East LGA.

To guide the investigation, the study addressed the following key questions: causes of youth restiveness, level of youth restiveness in the area, types of skill acquisition programmes

available, the extent of youth participation, and whether a relationship exists between programme participation and reduction in restiveness.

## **2. Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design appropriate for gathering opinions and perceptions of individuals on the phenomenon under investigation (Oduaran, 1994; Anyanwu, 2002).

### **Population and Sample**

The population consisted of youths enrolled in selected skills acquisition centres in Ovia North East Local Government Area. A total sample of 120 respondents was drawn using simple random sampling.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

A structured questionnaire titled Skill Acquisition and Curbing Youth Restiveness Questionnaire (SACYRQ) was used. It consisted of two sections:

Section A: demographic information

Section B: items addressing research questions, measured on a modified four-point Likert scale (SA–SD)

### **Validity and Reliability**

Validation was carried out by experts in Adult and Non-Formal Education (Anyanwu, 2002). Reliability was established through the test–retest method using 20 respondents who were not part of the main study, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.75, indicating strong stability (Okeke, 1995).

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data were analysed using simple percentages, frequency counts, mean scores, and standard deviation. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used for decision-making (Garmezzy, 1993)

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **Major Findings**

#### **a. Causes of Youth Restiveness**

- Unemployment (Nsidibe et al., 2017)
- Lack of entrepreneurial ability (Ayotunde, 1997)
- Lack of social amenities (Ofem & Ajayi, 2008)
- Illiteracy (Oduaran, 1994)

#### **b. Level of Youth Restiveness**

- The area experiences a high level of youth restiveness, driven primarily by economic hardship and limited opportunities for skill development (Nyerere, 1976).

c. Types of Skill Acquisition Programmes Available

- Entrepreneurship training (Ayotunde, 1997)
- Vocational/technical skills training (Okeke, 1995)
- Adult literacy programmes (Anyanwu, 2002)

d. Extent of Youth Participation

- Youth participation in skill acquisition programmes was found to be high, with many actively involved in various training centres across the LGA (Oduaran, 1994).

e. Relationship Between Skill Acquisition and Restiveness Reduction

- Participation in skill acquisition significantly increased productivity, employability, and positive engagement among youths, thereby reducing restiveness and involvement in social vices (Ayotunde, 1997; Okeke, 1995).

### **Interpretation**

The findings align with existing literature which emphasizes skill acquisition as a critical intervention for tackling youth unemployment and restiveness (Garmezzy, 1993). Youths who gain marketable skills become economically engaged, reducing incentives for crime and disruptive behaviour.

## **4. Conclusion**

The study concludes that skill acquisition programmes play a pivotal role in curbing youth restiveness in Ovia North East Local Government Area. When youths acquire relevant vocational and entrepreneurial skills, their productivity, employability, and engagement in meaningful socio-economic activities significantly increase (Ayotunde, 1997; Nsidibe et al., 2017). Therefore, sustained investment in skill acquisition is essential for promoting peace, stability, and community development.

## **5. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

### **a. Government Policy Support**

The government should strengthen national and local policies on vocational and technical education, ensuring mass sensitization and youth engagement (Ofem & Ajayi, 2008).

### **b. Expansion of Training Opportunities**

Access to skill acquisition centres should be expanded, especially in rural areas, to reduce youth idleness and encourage community development (Oduaran, 1994).

### **c. Curriculum Innovation**

Skill acquisition programmes should integrate modern technologies and employ market-driven curricula that appeal to youths (Ayotunde, 1997).

### **d. Financial Support for Trainees**

Provision of stipends, soft loans, and start-up grants should be prioritized to empower graduates of skill acquisition programmes (Okeke, 1995).

e. Post-Training Support Services

Agencies such as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDAN) should provide mentorship, business development support, and follow-up monitoring to ensure sustainability (Ayotunde, 1997).

## **6. Suggestions for Further Research**

Future studies may explore:

- a. How acquired skills contribute to community transformation (Nyerere, 1976)
- b. The role of vocational and technical education in addressing youth unemployment nationally (Oduaran, 1994)
- c. The effectiveness of skill acquisition programmes in different geopolitical zones of Nigeria (Nsidibe et al., 2017)

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