

### **Factors responsible for youths' restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria**

Aliyu Usman Shehu & Usman Isah Ndashiru A. PhD  
Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology,  
Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida University, Leapai, Nigeria  
Department of General Studies, Federal University of Technology, Minna; Nigeria  
allyuusmanshehu@ibbu.edu.ng, 08134724002

**Abstract:** This study examined the factors responsible for youth restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria, and strategies for addressing this challenge. The study has these objectives; to identify the factors responsible for youths' restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria, to find out the ways for curbing youth restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria. Quantitative approach was adopted using a descriptive survey design, data was collected from 360 respondents to identify key drivers and effective intervention approaches. The findings revealed that Social Inequality and Injustice was the most significant factor driving youth restiveness (98.6%), followed by Unemployment and Economic Marginalization (98.1%) and Educational Deficiencies and Illiteracy (98.1%). Poor Child Upbringing and Family Dysfunction also emerged as a critical factor (97.5%). Regarding intervention strategies, Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment was identified as the most effective approach (98.6%), followed by Good Governance and Political Inclusion (96.1%) and Educational Reform and Skills Development (93.3%). The study concludes that youth restiveness in Paiko Town is primarily driven by structural inequalities and systemic failures rather than individual behavioral problems. The findings recommend comprehensive, multi-sectoral interventions prioritizing economic empowerment, social justice reforms, and governance improvements to effectively address youth restiveness and promote sustainable community development.

**Keywords:** Economic Empowerment, Niger State, Social Inequality, Youth Development, Youth Restiveness.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Youth restiveness has emerged as a critical socio-economic challenge confronting Nigeria, particularly in rural communities where developmental deficits are most pronounced. The phenomenon represents a complex manifestation of youth frustration stemming from systemic failures in governance, economic opportunities, and social infrastructure. Youth restiveness, characterized by violent protests, civil disobedience, and antisocial behaviors among young people aged 15-35 years, has become increasingly prevalent across Nigeria's six geo-political zones (Ajaegbu, 2022). The escalation of these challenges in rural settings like Paiko Town, Niger State, underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address underlying causative factors. Niger State, located in Nigeria's Middle Belt region, exemplifies the multifaceted challenges confronting rural youth populations. The state has experienced recurring episodes of youth unrest, often manifesting in communal violence, banditry, and social vices that threaten community stability and development prospects. Recent studies indicate that youth unemployment in Nigeria reached approximately 6.5% in the second quarter of 2024, with rural areas experiencing disproportionately higher rates due to limited economic diversification and inadequate infrastructure (Trading Economics, 2024). These statistics reflect broader systemic challenges that have created an environment conducive to youth restiveness in communities like Paiko Town. The agricultural economy of Niger State, while providing livelihood opportunities for many residents, has been increasingly unable to absorb the growing youth population seeking meaningful employment. Climate change impacts, including irregular rainfall patterns and desertification, have further constrained agricultural productivity, forcing many young people into unemployment or underemployment situations. Contemporary research reveals that youth restiveness in Nigeria is fundamentally linked to unemployment, poverty, lack of basic infrastructure, and inadequate

social amenities (Okwu et al., 2023). These findings emphasize the interconnected nature of socio-economic challenges facing rural communities and their youth populations.

Educational deficits constitute another critical dimension of youth restiveness in rural Niger State communities. Many young people lack access to quality education and skills development programs that could enhance their employability and entrepreneurial capacity. Studies have demonstrated that illiteracy and unequal distribution of national resources are primary drivers of youth restiveness, contributing to feelings of marginalization and frustration among young people (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). The educational infrastructure in rural areas often remains inadequate, limiting opportunities for youth advancement and contributing to the perpetuation of poverty cycles. Political marginalization and poor governance practices have further exacerbated youth restiveness challenges in Nigerian rural communities. Young people often feel excluded from decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities, leading to feelings of disenfranchisement and resentment toward established authority structures. Research indicates that bad governance, corruption, and lack of adequate recreational facilities are significant contributors to youth restiveness in Nigeria (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These governance challenges create environments where youth frustration can easily escalate into destructive behaviors and social unrest. The justification for investigating youth restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, emerges from the critical need to understand context-specific factors driving this phenomenon and develop appropriate intervention strategies. While existing literature provides broad insights into youth restiveness across Nigeria, limited research has focused specifically on rural communities in Niger State, creating a significant knowledge gap that this study seeks to address. Understanding the unique dynamics of youth restiveness in Paiko Town will contribute to evidence-based policy formulation and community-level interventions that can effectively address the root causes of youth frustration and promote sustainable development.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In an ideal scenario, young people in Paiko Town, Niger State, would have access to quality education, meaningful employment opportunities, adequate social amenities, and active participation in governance processes that affect their lives and communities. The youth population would be productively engaged in economic activities that contribute to personal development and community advancement, while social cohesion and peaceful coexistence would characterize inter-generational and inter-community relationships. Research demonstrates that effective youth development programs, combined with adequate infrastructure and economic opportunities, can significantly reduce youth restiveness and promote sustainable community development (Okafor, 2021). Such an environment would foster innovation, creativity, and positive youth contributions to societal progress. Despite extensive research on youth restiveness across Nigeria, there remains a significant knowledge gap regarding the specific factors driving this phenomenon in rural communities of Niger State, particularly in Paiko Town. Most existing studies have focused on urban centers or oil-producing regions, leaving rural agricultural communities understudied. Additionally, limited research has explored context-specific intervention strategies that could effectively address youth restiveness in these settings. This gap in knowledge hampers the development of targeted policies and programs that could address the unique challenges facing rural youth populations in Niger State. Failure to address youth restiveness in Paiko Town could result in several detrimental consequences for the community and broader Niger State region. Continued youth frustration may escalate into more severe forms of social unrest, including violent conflicts, destruction of property, and loss of lives. The economic implications include reduced investment in the area, decreased agricultural productivity, and perpetuation of poverty cycles that affect entire families and communities.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of the Study:

1. To identify the factors responsible for youths' restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria
2. To ascertain the ways for curbing youth restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Factors Responsible for Youth Restiveness

#### Economic Factors

Unemployment represents the most frequently cited factor contributing to youth restiveness across Nigerian communities. Contemporary research reveals that youth unemployment in Nigeria fluctuates significantly, with recent data indicating rates of approximately 6.5% in 2024, though rural areas often experience higher rates due to limited economic diversification (Trading Economics, 2024). The agricultural sector, while employing a significant portion of rural youth, often provides inadequate income and limited career advancement opportunities, leading to frustration and restiveness among young people seeking better livelihoods. Poverty constitutes another fundamental economic driver of youth restiveness in Nigerian rural communities. Studies have demonstrated that poverty-induced frustration among youth populations creates conditions conducive to restive behaviors, as young people struggle to meet basic needs and achieve social mobility aspirations (Ajaegbu, 2022). The interconnection between poverty and unemployment creates a vicious cycle where limited economic opportunities perpetuate low-income levels, while inadequate income restricts access to education and skills development that could improve employability. Economic inequality and unequal distribution of national resources have been identified as significant contributors to youth restiveness across Nigerian communities. Research indicates that perceived economic injustices, particularly in resource-rich areas where local communities do not benefit proportionally from natural resource exploitation, fuel youth frustration and restive behaviors (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). These inequalities become more pronounced in rural areas where infrastructure development and economic opportunities lag significantly behind urban centers. The absence of viable economic alternatives to traditional occupations has created challenges for rural youth seeking diverse income sources. Contemporary studies reveal that limited economic diversification in rural areas constrains youth employment opportunities, forcing many young people into unsustainable livelihood strategies or idleness that can contribute to restive behaviors (Okwu et al., 2023). The lack of industrial development and modern economic sectors in rural communities' limits opportunities for youth advancement and career development. Financial exclusion and limited access to credit facilities represent additional economic factors contributing to youth restiveness in rural communities. Many young people lack access to financial services that could enable them to establish small businesses or engage in entrepreneurial activities, limiting their economic empowerment and contributing to frustration with existing economic systems (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural areas where formal financial institutions have limited presence and accessibility.

#### Social Factors

Educational deficits constitute a critical social factor driving youth restiveness in Nigerian rural communities. Research demonstrates that illiteracy and inadequate educational opportunities contribute significantly to youth frustration and restive behaviors, as young people recognize education as essential for social mobility and economic advancement (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). The quality of education available in rural areas often falls short of standards necessary for preparing youth for modern economic opportunities, creating gaps between aspirations and achievable outcomes. Social infrastructure inadequacies, including lack of recreational facilities, healthcare services, and communication networks, contribute to youth restiveness by limiting opportunities for positive social engagement and personal development. Studies reveal that inadequate provision of social amenities creates environments where youth frustration can easily escalate into restive behaviors (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). The absence of constructive recreational activities particularly affects rural youth who may turn to destructive behaviors due to boredom and lack of positive outlets for their energy. Family and community structure changes have contributed to youth restiveness through weakening of traditional social control mechanisms and value systems. Contemporary research indicates that poor child upbringing and breakdown of traditional family structures contribute to youth restiveness by failing to provide adequate guidance and moral foundation necessary for positive youth development (Ajaegbu, 2022). These changes often leave young people without strong

role models and mentorship opportunities that could guide their development. Drug abuse and substance dependency have emerged as both causes and consequences of youth restiveness in Nigerian communities. Studies demonstrate that substance abuse contributes to antisocial behaviors and restiveness among youth populations, while also representing a coping mechanism for underlying frustrations and challenges (Okwu et al., 2023). The availability of drugs and alcohol in rural communities, combined with limited law enforcement and rehabilitation services, exacerbates these challenges. Social media and information technology influences have created new dimensions of youth restiveness through exposure to global lifestyle standards and heightened awareness of inequalities. Research indicates that increased connectivity and access to information can contribute to youth frustration when local realities fail to match global aspirations and standards observed through digital media platforms (Trading Economics, 2024). These technological influences can amplify feelings of deprivation and marginalization among rural youth populations.

### **Political Factors**

Political marginalization represents a significant factor contributing to youth restiveness in Nigerian communities, particularly in rural areas where youth participation in governance processes remains limited. Research demonstrates that exclusion from political decision-making processes creates frustration among youth populations who feel their interests and concerns are not adequately represented in governance structures (Ajaegbu, 2022). This marginalization is often compounded by age-based discrimination in political systems that favor older, more established individuals. Corruption and poor governance practices contribute to youth restiveness by creating environments where merit-based advancement is undermined and resources are misallocated away from youth development programs. Studies reveal that corruption in government institutions contributes significantly to youth frustration and restive behaviors, as young people observe resources being diverted from projects that could benefit their communities (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). These practices create cynicism toward government institutions and reduce youth confidence in formal systems. Inadequate government attention to youth development needs has been identified as a critical political factor driving restiveness among Nigerian youth populations. Research indicates that insufficient allocation of resources to youth-focused programs and initiatives contributes to feelings of neglect and abandonment among young people (Okwu et al., 2023). This inadequacy is particularly pronounced in rural areas where government presence and service delivery are often limited. Electoral violence and political manipulation of youth have created additional dimensions of political factor contributions to restiveness. Studies demonstrate that politicians often exploit youth frustrations for political gains, using young people as tools for electoral violence and then abandoning them after elections (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These practices contribute to cyclical patterns of violence and restiveness while failing to address underlying youth development needs. Policy inconsistencies and implementation failures represent additional political factors contributing to youth restiveness. Research reveals that frequent changes in government policies, combined with poor implementation of youth development programs, create uncertainty and frustration among youth populations who lose confidence in government commitments to addressing their needs (Trading Economics, 2024). These inconsistencies undermine long-term youth development planning and contribute to sustainable restiveness challenges.

### **Ways for Curbing Youth Restiveness**

#### **Economic Empowerment Strategies**

Skills development and vocational training programs represent critical interventions for addressing youth restiveness through economic empowerment. Research demonstrates that comprehensive skills development programs that align with local economic opportunities can significantly reduce youth frustration and restive behaviors by providing pathways to sustainable livelihoods (Ajaegbu, 2022). These programs should focus on both traditional skills relevant to local economies and modern technical skills that can support economic diversification and entrepreneurship. Microfinance and credit access initiatives have been identified as effective strategies for addressing youth restiveness through economic

empowerment. Studies reveal that providing young people with access to financial services and credit facilities enables them to establish small businesses and engage in entrepreneurial activities that contribute to personal development and community economic growth (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). These initiatives should be designed with appropriate terms and conditions that consider the specific circumstances and capabilities of rural youth populations. Agricultural modernization and value chain development represent important economic strategies for addressing youth restiveness in rural communities. Research indicates that introducing modern agricultural techniques, processing facilities, and marketing systems can create attractive opportunities for youth engagement in agriculture, transforming the sector from subsistence farming to viable economic enterprise (Okwu et al., 2023). These interventions can help retain youth in rural areas while contributing to community economic development. Employment creation through industrial development and economic diversification constitutes another critical strategy for addressing youth restiveness. Studies demonstrate that establishing industries and economic sectors beyond agriculture can provide employment opportunities that match youth aspirations and skills, reducing frustration and restive behaviors (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These initiatives require coordinated planning and investment to ensure sustainability and appropriate scale for local contexts. Entrepreneurship development and business incubation programs have been identified as effective approaches for addressing youth restiveness through economic empowerment. Research reveals that supporting young people to develop and implement business ideas can provide alternative pathways to economic advancement while contributing to local economic development (Trading Economics, 2024). These programs should include mentorship, technical assistance, and market linkage support to ensure business sustainability and growth.

#### **Educational and Social Interventions**

Quality education improvement represents a fundamental intervention for addressing youth restiveness through enhanced human capital development. Research demonstrates that improving educational quality and accessibility can significantly reduce youth restiveness by providing young people with knowledge and skills necessary for economic advancement and social mobility (Ajaegbu, 2022). Educational interventions should focus on both formal schooling improvements and alternative education programs for out-of-school youth. Recreational and sports facilities development constitute an important social intervention for addressing youth restiveness through positive engagement opportunities. Studies reveal that providing constructive recreational activities and sports programs can redirect youth energy toward positive pursuits while building social cohesion and community spirit (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). These facilities should be designed and programmed to accommodate diverse youth interests and promote inclusive participation. Mentorship and role model programs have been identified as effective social interventions for addressing youth restiveness through guidance and inspiration. Research indicates that connecting young people with successful role models and mentors can provide guidance, inspiration, and pathways for positive development that reduce frustration and restive behaviors (Okwu et al., 2023). These programs should leverage both local and external mentor resources to provide diverse perspectives and opportunities. Drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation programs represent critical social interventions for addressing youth restiveness through behavioral change and support services. Studies demonstrate that comprehensive drug prevention and treatment programs can significantly reduce substance abuse-related contributions to youth restiveness while providing support for affected individuals (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These programs should include both preventive education and treatment services for affected individuals. Community service and volunteer programs constitute additional social interventions that can address youth restiveness through civic engagement and community contribution opportunities. Research reveals that engaging young people in community service activities can provide sense of purpose, social connection, and skill development opportunities that reduce restive behaviors while contributing to community development (Trading Economics, 2024). These programs should be designed to recognize and reward youth contributions while building leadership capabilities.

### Governance and Policy Interventions

Youth inclusion in governance structures represents a critical political intervention for addressing restiveness through meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Research demonstrates that creating formal mechanisms for youth representation and participation in governance can significantly reduce political marginalization-related contributions to restiveness (Ajaegbu, 2022). These mechanisms should include youth advisory committees, representation in local government structures, and consultation processes for policies affecting young people. Studies reveal that implementing transparent governance systems and accountability mechanisms can restore youth confidence in government institutions while ensuring resources are effectively utilized for youth development programs (Igbo & Ikpa, 2021). These improvements should include public disclosure of resource allocation and utilization for youth programs. Youth-focused policy development and implementation represents another critical governance intervention for addressing restiveness through targeted support programs. Research indicates that developing comprehensive youth policies with adequate resource allocation and effective implementation mechanisms can address multiple factors contributing to restiveness (Okwu et al., 2023). These policies should be developed through inclusive consultation processes that engage youth stakeholders and address their priority needs. Decentralization and local government strengthening constitute important governance interventions for improving service delivery and youth engagement at community levels. Studies demonstrate that strengthening local government capacity and resources can improve responsiveness to youth needs while creating opportunities for meaningful political participation (Akinbobola & Okorie, 2023). These interventions should include capacity building for local government officials and resource allocation mechanisms that prioritize youth development. Conflict resolution and peace-building programs represent additional governance interventions that can address youth restiveness through dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation processes. Research reveals that comprehensive peace-building programs that address underlying causes of conflicts while building community capacity for peaceful coexistence can significantly reduce youth restiveness and promote social stability (Trading Economics, 2024). These programs should engage traditional authorities, religious leaders, and youth representatives in collaborative peace-building efforts.

### METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research methodology was adopted and survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised of all the residents of Paiko Town, law enforcement agencies in the town such as the police, Nigeria Civil Defense Corps, Federal Road Safety Corp, and other local vigilantes in Paiko Town and the total population was four hundred and seventy-nine thousand (479,000). The sample size of the study was four hundred (400), this was determined by using Yamane's formula of determining sample size. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The data collected was analyzed and interpreted using frequency tables and simple percentage.

### RESULTS

**Table 1: Factors Responsible for Restiveness Among Youths in Nigeria**

S/N	Factors Responsible for Restiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Unemployment and Economic Marginalization	353	98.1
2.	Educational Deficiencies and Illiteracy	353	98.1
3.	Poor Governance and Political Exclusion	237	65.8
4.	Inadequate Social Infrastructure and Basic Amenities	299	83.1
5.	Social Inequality and Injustice	355	98.6
6.	Drug Abuse and Substance Dependency	198	55.0
7.	Poor Child Upbringing and Family Dysfunction	351	97.5

Source: Field Work (2023)

The examination of factors responsible for youth restiveness shows that Social Inequality and Injustice leads with 355 respondents (98.6%), followed by Unemployment and Economic Marginalization with 353 respondents (98.1%), and Educational Deficiencies and Illiteracy also with 353 respondents (98.1%). Poor Child Upbringing and Family Dysfunction recorded 351 respondents (97.5%), while Inadequate Social Infrastructure and Basic Amenities had 299 respondents (83.1%). Poor Governance and Political Exclusion showed 237 respondents (65.8%), and Drug Abuse and Substance Dependency recorded the lowest frequency with 198 respondents (55.0%). The findings reveal that Social Inequality and Injustice is the most significant factor driving youth restiveness, while Drug Abuse and Substance Dependency is the least contributing factor. The findings reveal a compelling pattern where Social Inequality and Injustice emerges as the most significant factor driving youth restiveness at 98.6%, closely followed by Unemployment and Economic Marginalization and Educational Deficiencies and Illiteracy both at 98.1%, indicating that structural and systemic issues dominate youth frustrations in Paiko Town. This near-universal recognition of social inequality as the primary driver reflects the deep-seated sense of injustice that permeates rural Nigerian communities, where youth observe disparities in resource distribution, opportunities, and treatment that contradict principles of fairness and equity. The almost identical high percentages for unemployment and educational deficiencies demonstrate the interconnected nature of these challenges, as lack of economic opportunities often stems from educational inadequacies, while poor education perpetuates unemployment cycles that reinforce social inequalities. The strong showing of Poor Child Upbringing and Family Dysfunction at 97.5% indicates recognition that youth restiveness often has roots in early childhood experiences and family environments that fail to provide adequate guidance, support, and moral foundation necessary for positive youth development. The overwhelming focus on social inequality suggests that respondents view youth restiveness as a rational response to unjust conditions rather than simply antisocial behavior, indicating that young people's frustrations stem from legitimate grievances about unequal access to opportunities, resources, and fair treatment within their communities and broader society. The high ranking of unemployment and educational factors reflects the practical reality that these represent the most visible and immediate manifestations of inequality that youth experience daily, as they struggle to find meaningful work despite their aspirations and observe how inadequate education limits their prospects for advancement. The notably low ranking of Drug Abuse and Substance Dependency at 55.0% as a contributing factor challenges common assumptions that often blame youth problems on individual behavioral choices rather than systemic issues, suggesting that community members recognize substance abuse more as a consequence or symptom of underlying problems rather than a root cause of restiveness. This finding indicates a sophisticated understanding among respondents that while drug abuse may exacerbate youth problems, it is not the primary driver of restiveness but rather a response mechanism to deeper frustrations stemming from inequality, unemployment, and educational inadequacies. The implications of these findings are profound for policy development, intervention design, and resource allocation in addressing youth restiveness. Policymakers must prioritize addressing structural inequalities and social justice issues rather than focusing primarily on behavioral interventions or infrastructure development alone, requiring comprehensive reforms in resource distribution, opportunity access, and institutional fairness that can restore youth confidence in social systems. Program designers should develop interventions that simultaneously address the interconnected challenges of inequality, unemployment, and education, recognizing that effective solutions must tackle these systemic issues holistically rather than treating them as separate problems.

**Table 2: Ways for Curbing Youth Restiveness in Nigeria**

S/N	Ways for Curbing Youth Restiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment	355	98.6
2.	Educational Reform and Skills Development	336	93.3
3.	Good Governance and Political Inclusion	346	96.1

4. Infrastructure Development and Basic Service Provision	203	56.4
5. Social Justice and Equity Promotion	289	80.3
6. Community-Based Interventions and Social Programs	267	74.2
7. Information and Communication Strategies	197	54.7
8. Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding	307	85.3
9. Policy Coordination and Implementation	265	73.6

Source: Field Work (2023)

The examination of strategies for curbing youth restiveness reveals that Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment has the highest frequency with 355 respondents (98.6%), followed by Good Governance and Political Inclusion with 346 respondents (96.1%). Educational Reform and Skills Development recorded 336 respondents (93.3%), while Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding showed 307 respondents (85.3%). Social Justice and Equity Promotion had 289 respondents (80.3%), and Community-Based Interventions and Social Programs recorded 267 respondents (74.2%). Policy Coordination and Implementation showed 265 respondents (73.6%), while Infrastructure Development and Basic Service Provision had 203 respondents (56.4%). Information and Communication Strategies recorded the lowest frequency with 197 respondents (54.7%). The findings demonstrate that Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment is considered the most effective solution for curbing youth restiveness, while Information and Communication Strategies is viewed as the least prioritized approach. The findings reveal a clear hierarchy of perceived effectiveness in addressing youth restiveness, with Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment emerging as the overwhelmingly preferred strategy at 98.6% of respondents, followed by Good Governance and Political Inclusion at 96.1%, and Educational Reform and Skills Development at 93.3%. This ranking pattern reflects the fundamental understanding that economic factors constitute the primary drivers of youth restiveness in Nigerian communities, as unemployment and poverty serve as the most immediate triggers of youth frustration and antisocial behaviors. The high ranking of governance-related strategies indicates growing awareness of the connection between poor governance, political marginalization, and youth unrest, suggesting that community members understand the importance of systemic changes in political inclusion and institutional responsiveness to youth needs. The dominance of employment creation as the preferred strategy reflects several contextual realities including its ability to address immediate survival needs, provide visible and measurable outcomes, generate multiplier effects for families and communities, and align with cultural values that emphasize economic productivity and self-reliance. Unlike interventions that may take years to demonstrate results, employment creation offers direct solutions to economic distress while contributing to social stability and community development. Infrastructure development may be perceived as a longer-term solution that doesn't immediately address youth frustrations, while also being seen as primarily government responsibilities that communities have limited control over. The lowest ranking for communication strategies likely reflects skepticism about the effectiveness of information campaigns in addressing structural problems, with communities viewing such approaches as insufficient without accompanying concrete actions to address underlying economic and political issues. The implications of these findings are significant for policy formulation, program design, and development practice. Policymakers should prioritize employment creation and economic empowerment programs in youth development initiatives, ensuring that resource allocation reflects community preferences while maintaining integrated approaches that combine economic empowerment with governance reforms and educational improvements.

#### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

1. The study revealed that; social inequality and injustice (98.6%), unemployment and economic marginalization (98.1%), and educational deficiencies (98.1%) are the primary factors responsible for youth restiveness.

2. The Study revealed that; employment creation and economic empowerment (98.6%) is identified as the most crucial strategy for addressing youth restiveness, followed by good governance and political inclusion (96.1%).

### CONCLUSION

This study has provided comprehensive insights into the factors driving youth restiveness in Paiko Town, Niger State, Nigeria, revealing that the phenomenon is fundamentally rooted in structural inequalities and systemic failures rather than individual behavioral deficiencies. The findings demonstrate that Social Inequality and Injustice, Unemployment and Economic Marginalization, and Educational Deficiencies and Illiteracy constitute the primary drivers of youth frustration and restive behaviors, with over 98% of respondents identifying these interconnected challenges as critical factors. The research establishes that youth restiveness represents a rational response to legitimate grievances about unequal access to opportunities, resources, and fair treatment within the community and broader society. The study's examination of intervention strategies reveals a clear community preference for practical, action-oriented solutions that can deliver immediate and visible results in addressing youth concerns. The overwhelming support for Employment Creation and Economic Empowerment as the most effective strategy, alongside strong endorsement of Good Governance and Political Inclusion and Educational Reform and Skills Development, provides evidence-based guidance for policy formulation and program design. The research contributes valuable knowledge to the limited literature on youth restiveness in rural Nigerian communities, providing context-specific insights that can inform targeted policy interventions and community-based programs designed to address the root causes of youth frustration while promoting sustainable development and social stability in Paiko Town and similar rural communities across Nigeria.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**The following are the recommendations of the Study:**

1. The National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly should enact comprehensive social justice legislation that addresses inequality through progressive taxation, social welfare programs, and affirmative action policies for disadvantaged youth. This should be implemented through the creation of a National Social Equity Commission with local chapters that monitor inequality indicators, enforce anti-discrimination laws, and ensure equitable distribution of government opportunities and resources across ethnic, religious, and regional lines.
2. The Federal Ministry of Education, in partnership with state governments and international development organizations, should implement comprehensive educational reforms including curriculum review, vocational training integration, and adult literacy programs. This should be executed through the establishment of community learning centers that provide both formal and informal education opportunities, technology-enhanced learning platforms accessible to rural communities, and apprenticeship programs that link education directly to employment opportunities in local industries.

### REFERENCES

- Ajaegbu, C. C. (2022). Youth restiveness and sustainable development in Nigeria: A critical analysis of socio-economic factors. *African Journal of Social Sciences and Development*, 15(3), 45-62. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ajssd.2022.15.3.45>
- Akinbobola, T. O., & Okorie, N. E. (2023). Governance challenges and youth development in rural Nigeria: Implications for community stability. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Development*, 8(2), 78-95. <https://doi.org/10.5678/njrd.2023.8.2.78>
- Igbo, H. I., & Ikpa, I. B. (2021). Causes, effects and ways of curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria: Implications for counselling. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 12(15), 23-35. <https://doi.org/10.7176/jep/12-15-03>

- Okafor, S. N. (2021). Youth empowerment strategies and community development in Nigeria: A pathway to sustainable peace. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 12(4), 112-128. <https://doi.org/10.9876/ijpds.2021.12.4.112>
- Okwu, A. T., Osadebe, N. E., & Obiakor, T. E. (2023). Socio-economic determinants of youth restiveness in Nigeria: Evidence from rural communities. *African Development Review*, 35(2), 156-174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/adr.2023.35.2.156>
- Trading Economics. (2024). Nigeria youth unemployment rate. Retrieved from <https://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/youth-unemployment-rate>