



## Youth Unemployment and Increasing Crime Rate: A Study of Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.4.923.49002>

### ABSTRACT

The recent rise in crime rate such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cult activities, ritual killing, prostitution, cheating, fraud, and so on, within the Calabar Metropolis, despite the presence of security agencies all over the town to combat these activities, is worrisome. A town once identified as the safest and most peaceful in the country, with the slogan "Come and Leave and Be at Rest", is now a den for criminals and social predators. This has caused a great uproar and increasing insecurity in the State. The causes of these crimes may not be farfetched, as different studies have linked increasing youth unemployment to the rising crime rate in other climes. Moreover, there is a serious contention that increasing youth unemployment is responsible for this chaotic situation, especially as higher institutions continue to graduate thousands of young people into the labour market, with little or no job to absorb them, thus making them a nuisance to the society in which they belong. This study investigated the relationship between youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis, in order to ascertain whether there is a strong correlation between them, as other researches have claimed. To achieve this, data were gathered through the use of the questionnaire from 220 respondent randomly selected from the two Local Government Areas that make up Calabar Metropolis, namely, Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Areas. The Chi-square was used as an analytical tool to test the hypotheses. Data collected were analysed at 0.05 level of significance. The test of hypotheses result show that there is a significant relationship between youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis. It was recommended that combating these hoodlums would only deepen the situation, but that, government, in collaboration with non-governmental organisations, should beef up efforts towards job creation, youth empowerment and the building of enabling and accessible skill acquisitions for the youths, while beefing up security to ensure the realization of these objectives. (Word count: 325 words)

**Key Words:** Youths, Unemployment, Crime, Nigeria, Calabar

### 1.0 Background to the study

Unemployment is a term used to define people who are willing to work but are not able to find work. In the view of Adebayo (2013), unemployment describes the condition of people who are without work. Youth unemployment can, therefore, be seen as the inability of able and active youths, with the energy, capacity and desire to work, but have no work, due to the absence of job opportunities. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate in the country rose from 13.9 percent in the 3rd quarter to 14.2 percent in the 4th quarter of 2016, respectively, representing 27.12 million in 3rd quarter, compared to 28.58 million persons in the 4th quarter (The Guardian, 2017.) Most recently the Bureau has observed that youth unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 53.40 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 from 40.80 percent in the second quarter of 2020 (Trading Economics, 2023.)

Unemployment is when people actively seek jobs but are unable to get these jobs, in order to make ends meet. Unemployment is one key indicator of the state of the economy (Hayes, 2023.) It is a situation where the economically active population is ready to work but have no work to do. It also includes those who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left their jobs. Aside poor governance, bad leadership, insecurity and poverty, unemployment and crime are contemporary social problems threatening human social coexistence in many nations of the world, including Calabar, Cross River State, and Nigeria in general. Granted that they are not new in the society, their rising trend is alarming. This trend has grown, over the years, as the labour market continues to grow with an increasing proportion of youth unemployment. This poor situation has often led many into committing crimes. Recently, the increasing wave of crime, such as armed robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, and what have you, within the Calabar Metropolis, may well have been as a result of youth unemployment in the area. Most worrisome is the increasing insecurity posed by this trend, which tends to distort the peace of the inhabitants of the metropolis. There is no doubt that arms and other weapons are in wrong hands in the State. Whereas the northern part of the country is besieged by the Boko Haram group, Calabar Metropolis and, indeed, Cross River State, is ravaged by miscreants such as armed robbers, kidnappers,

money dupes, vandals, oil bunkers, and so on, in spite of the efforts of government and security agencies to combat these crimes. The situation is even made worse by the political administrators who, despite their enticing and voluminous campaign promises, jettison such promises on assumption of office after elections.

Many studies have associated the rise in crimes, such as armed robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, cultism, and what have you, to youth unemployment in the society. Entorf and Sieger (2014) have cited the works of Gould et al. (2002), Edmark (2005), Lin (2008), Lastauskas and Tatsi (2013), and others, as dealing with the relationship between unemployment and crime. Researchers like Chiricos (1987); Jelilov and Ndanitsa (2015) have established positive relationships between unemployment and crime in the society.

Crime, according to the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2009), quoted in Adebayo (2013), is defined as offence which goes beyond the personal rule of law, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority. In other words, crime is a violation of codified laws, which attracts negative sanctions by law enforcement agents. Guzeeva (2010), added that crime constitutes a violation of individual human rights either by the government or by private citizens. Human rights in this context include the fundamental prerequisites for well-beings, including food, shelter, clothing, medical services, challenging work and recreational experiences, as well as security from predatory individuals or repressive and imperialistic social elites. Experience shows that, when individuals are deprived of these basic fundamental life prerequisites, resorting to crime as a means of survival becomes imminent. The prevailing increase of crime in the society, especially in Calabar, is not an exception as it is a major problem resulting from unemployment in Africa. In the work of Ajufo (2013) unemployment is a major problem giving rise to other criminal tendencies in the youth, and threatening socio-economic peace and stability of the continent. He further stated that young Nigerians are increasingly affected by unemployment, which has boosted militancy, violent crime, kidnappings, restlessness, and socially irresponsible behaviour.

Unemployment as a global issue is one of the fundamental challenges facing Nigeria now. Although 1980's witnessed a high rate of unemployment in Nigeria's checkered history, no other time than now has the unemployment situation gone out of control, despite frantic efforts by government to curtail it, than now. The creation of National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), just to mention but a few, were programmes desperately targeted at combating the menace of unemployment in the 1980's and some three decades following. Even though the government of Muhammadu Buhari has also rolled out some programmes to combat unemployment, such as the Presidential Youth Empowerment Scheme (PYES), Social Welfare Services Scheme (SOWESS), National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS), and the like, it has been observed by Kazeem (2020) that Nigeria's unemployment rate has more than tripled in the last five years and would only get worse and create more poverty. It is in this regard that Kuhe (2016, p. 2) noted that, "Poverty means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities from the scheme of things. It also means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water and sanitation." Unemployment is, therefore, a paramount social problem which needs to be urgently addressed. The problem of unemployment can be attributed to a number of factors among which include corruption, poor educational system, poor management practice, neglect of the agricultural sector, lack of purposeful leadership, poor governance, constant infrastructural decay, stringent terms and conditions placed on most jobs, undesirable and unfavourable government reforms, over population, the challenge of globalization and lack of industrialization. These have led many young men and women into stealing, prostitution, kidnapping, armed robbery, vandalization of government property, car snatching, illegal bunkering of fuel, importation of arms, and the promotion of other antisocial behaviours.

The recent economic recession in the nation, followed by the increasing unemployment rate and quest for materialism have deepened the state of insecurity in Calabar, Cross River State, in particular, and Nigeria in general. Given this scenario, young men and women, especially the unemployed, out of frustration, hunger, anger and poverty are easily drawn into engaging in crimes and other social vices, in order to make ends meet. Sometime in the past, the First Bank in Calabar South Local Government, at Mayne Avenue, was robbed, and the policeman on guard was gunned down (where the lead researcher once worked). Also, Cherry Investment Limited, a fuel filling station, still at Mayne Avenue, was also robbed. The Sun (2021) also reported that "Three suspects Micah Edet, Bassey Udoh and Emmanuel Bassey, were arrested by members of the NSCDC attached to OP Akpakwu on February 8, 2021, for robbing one Mr. Akan of the sum of N25,000." The same news source also reported that a certain Peter Obri, 25 years of age, was nabbed by the army on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, at a rubber plantation in Ibiae, and handed over to the police, while he was trying to steal palm fruits from the plantation, with a locally made pistol. No doubt, the possession of arms and ammunition by the youth increases the proliferation of more arms and ammunition for subsequent use against the populace. It is in this regard that Attah, Adalikwu and Ngele (2018), noted that, due to the increased importation of sophisticated weapons used to engage opposing parties, there is heightened risk to lives and property in conflict-affected areas.

The situation of criminality was unbearable in Calabar Municipality in July, 2016, when several areas within the vicinity were robbed at night, and even in broad daylight. For instance, New Dawn Stores was robbed along Marian Road and the proprietor's daughter kidnapped. Southern Fried Chicken was also robbed, including the marble shop at Marian Road precisely on July 9, 2019. Native Delicacies Restaurant was also robbed. The University of Calabar community was not left out, as occupants of the staff quarters were also thrown into fear, following the kidnapping of Professor Ekwuezie's son and the robbing of his residence. October 4, 2016 witnessed another upheaval, following the robbery incident at Edim Otop axis of the State. Till now, several cases are reported daily of different kinds of criminal activities within the State, ranging from car snatching to robbing people with axes, and even ritual kidnapping of people using tricycle popularly known as Keke Napep.

Equally of concern is the kind of sophisticated weapons such as AK47 and machine guns used by the robbers, when compared to the type of weapons used by the security agencies. The rising state of insecurity in this part of the State has negatively affected normal social lives (businesses, families, working environments, recreational activities, church worship, and so on.) People no longer sleep with their two eyes closed, nor are they guaranteed of safety during the day. Despite the presence of security agencies all over the Metropolis, crimes seem to be increasing. Year in and out, the tertiary

institutions churn out thousands of graduates, without some corresponding job opportunities to absorb them. The situation is worsened by the refusal of those who have worked up to the age of retirement to retire. And, even political officers continue to recycle themselves within the realm of power, from the councillors to members of the Houses of Assembly and the Senate. The unemployed youths remain redundant, while their future is compromised by the adults who continue to perpetuate themselves in power, thereby making themselves a nuisance in the society. The only option left for young people is to take to crime as the means of survival. Hence this hard way becomes the only way to survival. The unemployed youths in Nigeria are often times subjected to low self-esteem, deprivation, frustration and acute want. This undesirable condition often leads the young people to deviant behaviours, like crimes in the society.

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## 2.0 Objectives of the study

From the foregoing discussion, therefore, it becomes apparent that many factors generated by unemployment may be the cause of the rising rate of crime in Calabar Metropolis. The present study, as its general objective, therefore, wished to test youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis, but, as its specific objective, tested unemployment factors such as hunger, idleness, frustration and deprivation of wants, to see whether they strongly correlated with rising crime rate in the metropolis.

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## 3.0 Research questions

The research questions begging for research answers are posed below.

- (i) Does hunger significantly correlate with rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (ii) Does idleness significantly correlate with rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (iii) Is there a significant correlation between frustration and rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (iv) Is there a significant correlation between deprivation of wants and rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?

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## 4.0 Statement of hypotheses (H<sup>0</sup>)

The hypotheses are stated in the null form below.

- (i) Hunger does not significantly correlate with rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (ii) Idleness does not significantly correlate with rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (iii) There is no significant correlation between frustration and rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?
- (iv) There is no significant correlation between deprivation of wants and rising crime rate in Calabar Metropolis?

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## 5.0 Limitations of the study

The study only gathered data from respondents of the two local governments of Calabar Municipality and Calabar South that are in Calabar Metropolis; it did not consider other local governments in the State. The study also limited itself to the 2006 population census figure, as at 2016, which was the latest census figure officially given by the commission in Nigeria; it did not apply the so-called population growth rate, which the researchers are not too confident with. The study was also limited by financial resources to reach out to more than 400 respondents, such that when less than 400 pieces of questionnaires were returned by respondents, they did not bother to administer more pieces of questionnaire, to make up the number. The belated publication of this article in 2023 is also due to the fact that the researchers were limited by pecuniary constraints, if not it would long have been published before now.

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## 6.0 Theoretical framework

This study adopted as its theoretical foothold the theory of Anomie or Strain, propounded by Emile Durkheim, and further expounded by the American criminologist, called Robert K. Merton. To Durkheim, the specialized division of labour and the rapid expansion of industrialized society contain threat to social solidarity. He uses the term "Anomie" to describe the condition of deregulation occurring in the society. Durkheim defines the term "Anomie" as meaning a state where norms are confused or absent. Wickert (2022) explained that, according to Durkheim, Anomie is a sign of societal breakdown. Social differentiations (such as rich versus poor, urban versus rural, religious versus secularized, and so on) are becoming more pronounced as a result of a profound social transformation rooted in industrialization and the adoption of the structural concept of division of labour. Social cohesion is weakened when established rules of structure and order are abandoned. As a result, common social norms are no longer followed, the social order dissipates, and Anomie sets in. To Durkheim, there is a breakdown in the general procedural rules of a society; the rules of how people ought to behave. This state of normlessness, according to Haralambos and Holborn (2007), often leads to deviant behaviours.

Merton further expounded the theory of Anomie in what he calls the Strain Theory. Modern industrialised society, notes Merton, sets equal goals for its citizens without providing equal means for the attainment of these goals. The success goals, which Merton calls the American dream, of a good education, a good job, a good wife or husband, a beautiful house and a beautiful car are all that the American society desires for all, but not every American has equal means to the attainment of these goals. As a result, a state of Anomie is created as those who are unable to meet up with the institutionalised means devise deviant means toward the attainment of these success goals set for all. Moreover, too much emphasis is placed on the success goals but no emphasis is placed on the provision of equal means for the achievement of these success goals. So that Merton (1938, pp. 675 – 676.) observed that “fraud, corruption, vice, crime, in short, the entire catalogue of proscribed behaviour, become increasingly common when the emphasis on culturally-induced success-goal becomes divorced from a coordinated institutional emphasis.” Apart from the conformists who have the institutionalised means to achieve the culturally defined ends, Merton delineated four deviant modes of adaptation, which are discussed below.

- i.) Innovation – This is a mode of adaption where the deviants, called innovators, believe in the institutionalised means but devise fraudulent means towards their attainment, because they cannot achieve success through the right means. Examples of Innovators are kidnapers, armed robbers, pen robbers, to mention but a few, who acquire wealth by the wrong means to achieve the success goals. They turn to illegitimate methods when the legitimate methods are unreachable.
- ii.) Ritualism – This is a class of deviants who believe in the institutionalised means but do not believe in the institutionalised goals. The Ritualists, believe that, yes, the right means to success must be used, but they do not believe in the success goal set by society. They have been limited by unjust social structures. Although they earn a legitimate living, they do not accept the success goal set by society. Examples are labourers, cleaners and those who do menial jobs, who are deprived of educational opportunities.
- iii.) Retreatism – This anomic class believes neither in the institutionalised means, nor the institutionalised goals. The Retreatists reject all of society’s set goals and means of achieving them. Examples of Retreatists are alcoholics, drug addicts, psychotics, vagrants, and all those who tend not to find meaning in living and are disinterested in social norms and values.
- iv.) Rebellion – This group of deviants rejects society’s institutionalised goals and means and strives to replace them with their own goals and means. They propose a new social order, with different set goals and methods instead of the current accepted goals and methods. They believe that the current social order is unjust and benefits a few rather than many and so wish to replace it by a new and more inclusive social order. Examples of the Rebels are the Boko Haram terrorists, the Niger Delta militants, the Egbesu Boys, the Isakaba, and so on.

The relevance of the Anomie and Strain Theory rests in the fact that it explains why people take to crime because of social change and expectation of a new social order, which many of its members may not be able to cope, and so they are forced into crime and deviance because the favourable conditions for conformity are lacking. It is relevant to this study as it explains that the strain of unemployment which deprives young people of the means to the achievement of the success goals push them towards crime and deviance as illegitimate means of achieving success.

The weaknesses of Merton’s Structural Strain Theory are that, one, he conceives success in terms of economic worth or in terms of material worth or riches, whereas Christian believers may see success or riches in terms of spiritual value or worth stowed away in heaven; two, he failed to understand that, even if all were provided with “equal means”, not everyone would utilise such means to success; and, lastly, Merton failed to consider that all faced with the same type of strain would not react in the same way to such a strain, as some may remain within the boundaries of legitimacy while others may take to crime and deviance.

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## 7.0 Methodology of the study

This study only covers Calabar Metropolis, which embraces two (Calabar Municipality and Calabar South) of the 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Cross River State. The indigenes of this area of study are the Quas and the Efiks, although civilisation, growth of urban centres and social change have brought many far and near to live in the area. The majority of the early settlers in the region were blacksmiths, farmers, fishermen and hunters. In modern times, however, artisans, civil and public workers, sole proprietors and traders have dominated the local economy. The Metropolis lies approximately between latitude 50°05’ N and longitude 80°50’ E and covers an area of about 331,551 square kilometres. Its climate is tropical monsoonal, with a long, wet season lasting 8 to 9 months and a brief dry season lasting the final 3 to 4 months (Nku-Ekpang, et al., 2017.)

The two local government areas within Calabar Metropolis (Calabar Municipality and Calabar South) were used for the study. The survey design was employed for the study in order to determine “Youth Unemployment and Increasing Crime Rate: A Study of Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria”. Through their responses to the survey instrument that was given to them, the respondents’ pertinent information was gathered. Close-ended questions were used in the survey instrument to elicit relevant information for investigation. The questions contained in the questionnaire were created in a logical order, starting with straightforward subjects to more complicated ones. The importance and relevance of the study were explained in an introductory letter, containing the request to participate in the research process.

The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting respondents, from the population involved. The essence was to give everybody a chance of being selected for the study, and to ensure a fairly representative sample. The sample consisted of males and females within the age of 15 and 30 years, who have lived in the metropolis for a period not less than five years, based on the assumption that young persons within this age range are in their later years in the secondary school, have finished their secondary education, are in the university, have finished their university education, are learning other trades, or are unmarried and trying to find their bearing in life. To further buttress the assumption, the Nigerian Government and many private Nigerian employers refuse to give fresher jobs to people above the age of 30 years, believing that they are no longer young people, even though the Federal

Government defines youth as those between the ages of 18 and 35, as contained in the National Youth Policy of 2009 (Uzoma, Bello & Falade, 2016.) The researchers assume that youth starts a little earlier than 18 years, so they have chosen 15 to 30 years, as the assumption is based on the belief that people within this age range stand a better chance of answering the questions, due to the chances that a large number of them may be unemployed.

The Taro Yamane formula was applied to the population of Calabar Metropolis, which, according to the 2006 Census stood at 183,681 (for Calabar Municipality), and 191,515 (for Calabar South), bringing the total population of the Metropolis to 375,196 (City Population, 2022.) The formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

The symbols in the formula are stated as follows: n = the sample size; N = the population size;

e = the acceptable sample error.

Therefore, N = 375,196; e = 0.05.

Hence,

Sample size =  $n = 375,196 / 1 + 375,196 (0.05)^2$ , which is approximately 400 respondents.

Two hundred (200) pieces of questionnaire were administered to respondents in each local government area, with the help of two research assistants. Out of the four hundred pieces of questionnaire distributed, a total of two hundred and twenty (220) were returned; one hundred and thirteen (113) from Calabar Municipality, with five badly filled, and one hundred and nineteen (119) from Calabar South, with seven badly filled, leaving us with one hundred and eight (108) and one hundred and twelve (112) pieces of questionnaire for analysis, respectively. Qualitative data were also sourced from the respondents through oral interview.

The questionnaire was designed in two sections: A and B. Section A dealt with information on respondent's biodata, including their local governments of residence and occupation, while section B sought information on the relationship between unemployment and crime, using some unemployment indices. The questionnaire was design on a five-point Likert scale and scored as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 5 points, Agree (A) 4 points, Undecided (U) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. The higher the points, the stronger the relationship between unemployment and increasing crime rate.

A mean rating was also used. Rating below 3.5 meant the respondents did not agree, whereas rating from 3.5 and above meant the respondents agreed. A table of Chi-square was computed from Table 1 to test the hypotheses earlier stated to guide the study. This is tested using 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule is to accept the null hypotheses, if the calculated value is less than critical ( $X^2$ ), otherwise the null is rejected, while the alternate hypotheses is accepted. The study also made use of secondary data gathered from textbooks and journals, to complement the primary sources of data analysed using simple statistical tools such as tables and simple percentages.

Out of four hundred (400) questionnaires administered, two hundred and twenty (220) only were received by researcher, one hundred and sixty-eight (168) were not returned, while 12 were badly filled by respondents. Hence the analysis of the study is based on the two hundred and twenty (220) pieces of questionnaire that were properly filled and returned by the respondents.

## 8.0 Data presentation and analysis

Data collected from the field of study in 2016 are presented and analysed below, using analytical tools already mentioned above.

Table 1: Factors of unemployment that may lead to crime

S/N	Factors of unemployment	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
1.	Hunger	80	55	30	25	30	220
2.	Idleness	90	60	20	30	20	220
3.	Frustration	60	70	35	25	30	220
4.	Deprivation of wants	60	65	40	35	20	220
	Total	290	250	125	115	100	880

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The respondents were asked to rate the factors of unemployment that could possibly lead to increasing crime in the metropolis. their responses are contained in the table below.

Table 2: Computation for mean rating

S/N	Factors	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
1.	400	220	90	50	50	790	220	3.6	Agree
2.	450	240	60	60	20	830	220	3.8	Agree
3.	300	280	105	50	20	765	220	3.5	Agree
4.	300	260	120	70	20	770	220	3.5	Agree

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The rating of youth unemployment factors responsible for increasing crime in Calabar Metropolis are computed below for mean rating. This is to make decision about respondents' view.

Table 2 above shows that Two hundred and twenty (220) respondents agreed that the unemployment factors stated in Table 1 above are responsible for increasing crime in the metropolis. This is as a result of the fact that the mean scores of respondents are higher than the cut-off point of 3.5. This shows that hunger, idleness, frustration and deprivation of basic wants lead people into indulging in increasing crimes in the metropolis.

## 9.0 Test of Hypotheses

The general objective of this work was to test whether there is a strong relationship between youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis. The specific objective was to test and see whether hunger, idleness, frustration and deprivation of basic wants strongly correlated with increasing crime rate in the metropolis, and the stated null hypotheses were rejected and the alternate hypotheses upheld using the mean rating, meaning that there is a strong correlation between youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State of Nigeria. However, to confirm this result, the factors of unemployment that may be responsible for increasing crimes in the metropolis have also been subjected to Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) test, as a statistical tool of analysis. This is seen in Table 3 that follows.

Table 3: Computation for Chi-square

O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> / E
80	72.5	7.5	56.25	0.78
55	62.5	-7.5	56.25	0.9
30	31.3	-1.3	1.69	0.054
25	28.8	-3.8	14.44	0.50
30	25	5	25	1
90	72.5	17.5	306.25	4.22
60	62.5	-20.5	6.25	1
20	31.5	-11.5	132.25	4.20
30	28.8	1.2	1.44	0.05
20	25	-5	25	1
60	72.5	-12.5	156.25	2.16
70	62.5	7.5	56.25	0.9
35	31.3	3.7	13.69	0.44
25	28.8	-3.8	14.44	0.50
30	25	5	25	1
60	72.5	-12.5	156.25	2.16
65	62.5	2.5	6.25	1
40	31.3	8.7	75.69	2.42
35	28.8	6.2	38.44	1.33
20	25	-5	25	1
	41.41			

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The Chi-square formula for degree of freedom = (R-1) (C-1); where: R = Rows and C = Columns.

Thus: Df = (4-1) (5-1) = 4 x 3 = 12.

Based on the degree of freedom, the critical Chi-Square value at 5 per cent level of significance is 21.03 while calculated  $X^2$  is 41.41.

Decision rule

If the calculated  $X^2$  is less than critical value, accepts the null and rejects the alternate hypothesis and vice versa. Given the above computation,  $X^2$  calculated is greater than the  $X^2$  critical value. We therefore reject the null and accept the alternate hypothesis; meaning that there is a significant

relationship between youth unemployment and increasing crime rate in Calabar Metropolis. Hence, this Chi-square litmus test buttresses the earlier result obtained by the mean rating result.

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## 10.0 Discussion of Findings

From the foregoing findings, it is observed that the reality of increasing rate of crime in Calabar Metropolis, is as a result of youth unemployment due to frustration, hunger, idleness and deprivation of basic wants of life, among others. It is indeed an error by the government of the day to neglect the youth in the employment process, as they would turn to crime and use their latent energies to prey on the wider population. If they are more engaged in productive activities, they would indeed contribute to the security and development of the nation, as Oputah (2015) observed that youth are the cornerstone of any society, as the rate of a nation's development and security are determined by their energies, resourcefulness, character and orientation.

Youth unemployment is a major problem giving rise to other criminal tendencies in the youths and threatening the socio-economic peace and stability of our nation. Adejumo and Tayo-Olajubulu (2009) also argued strongly that unemployment is the major cause of social vices, like armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, political thuggery, kidnapping and many more. And that what holds true for Nigeria and most other nations of the world is the fact that crime is often a means of survival.

Large numbers of youths who are unemployed are capable of undermining the democratic practice, as they constitute a serious threat when engaged by the political class for clandestine and criminal activities. This is not far from the present situation in Nigeria and Calabar. Every year as noted by Okafor (2011), thousands of graduates are produced but majority of them have no jobs. Therefore, Nigeria streets are littered with youth, commercial motorcyclists, retailers, menial job men hawkers and so on, who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some professional enterprises. The result of this unemployment for many who cannot endure the hard times has been to involve in crime as a means of survival. Unemployment and crime are inseparable twins, as one cannot exist without the other. The social implications of unemployment are first felt at the individual and household levels, before extending to the entire socio-economic space. The unemployed individuals, usually not able to earn money to meet their financial responsibilities and necessities of life, experience frustration, hunger, idleness, depression, loss of confidence, and so on, and these eventually push them further into crime. The view of Edward (2011) and Ajaegbu (2012) also support this fact. They noted that the problem of violent crimes in Nigeria has been exacerbated by high rate of unemployment and economic recession which has pushed many jobless youths, some of whom are graduates, into various deadly crimes. To further expand on this, Ideyi (2005) observed that unemployment problem which now seems beyond remedy has produced an army of idle hands, some of whom have decided to punish the society that failed to provide them with the means of livelihood and dignity, by robbing the wider society members of their property at gun point. Wherever unemployment exists, crime abounds in such an area. The security agencies are almost overpowered by the situation, owing to the increasing number of crime cases reported daily on news headlines and newspapers. It is appropriate that the government at all levels rise to the challenge of unemployment to reduce crime in the society. The situation is even made worse by the present hardship posed by the economy, which has contributed significantly to increasing the number of unemployment youth, owing to the layoff of the already employed by their employers, as they are not able to meet their obligations of remuneration. This situation, however, calls for urgent redress.

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## 11.0 Conclusion

Until the problem of unemployment is tackled, it is practically impossible for crime to be curtailed in the society. Despite the amount of war against crime, the effort will be in futility if the unemployment situation is not addressed, as the unemployed youths are readily available for criminal and other anti-social activities, which undermine the peace, stability and social order in the society. There is need for government to rise up to the challenge of unemployment and demonstrate commitment towards responsible governance, by creating job opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths.

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## 12.0 Recommendations

Youth unemployment and crime are the major social problems affecting the Nigerian nation in general, and Calabar in particular. The following recommendations are hereby made, to assist in curbing the menace.

Firstly, the issue of corruption must be tackled headlong in every facet of government, as this has eaten deep into the entire fabric of the nation. Funds that could have been utilized for creative ventures that will generate employment opportunities for the labour market are diverted to personal use by individuals, saddled with the responsibility of such public money for national development. Government must increase its commitment towards eliminating corruption, be it official or non-official corruption.

Secondly, there is need to improve the development of infrastructural facilities, especially at the rural areas. This will also help to check undue migration of youth manpower from rural to urban centres.

Thirdly, government at all levels should create enabling environments that would drive the development of industries and encourage private entrepreneurs to invest in the economy. This will further create room for job opportunities and the engagement of some unemployed youths.

Fourthly, there is need to restructure the educational system. Syllabi should be redesigned to meet the needs of the present society youths, so that when they come out of school at secondary and tertiary levels, they would be able to set up businesses on their own as sole proprietors and employers of labour. Skill acquisitions centres should be developed from secondary to tertiary institution levels to equip students with the necessary skills needed to operate

on their own after graduation, rather than make them depend on government to create job for their survival. Self-employed ventures should be encouraged through adequate sponsorship and loans, with terms of reference.

Fifthly, the government also needs to intensify effort towards diversifying the economy, with much attention on the agricultural sector, through the provision of soft loans for farmers and small and medium scale entrepreneurs.

Sixthly, employment opportunities should be created by government and non-governmental agencies. This can be achieved through proper and adequate investment on capital and industrial projects at both the rural and urban centres. Establishment of these industries will create more opportunities for employment of the teaming unemployed youths.

Seventhly, efforts should be redirected towards the screening of ghost workers at the Federal, State and Local Government levels, in order to create room for the unemployed youths. Recent screening exercises in some Federal, State and Local government parastatals revealed that several ghost workers existed in these parastatals. If these checks are conducted regularly, it would help to fish out those ghost workers and create employment opportunities for the youths.

Eighthly, employment by contract should be discouraged. Young people who have not worked all their lives have been known to be given contract jobs, which terminated as soon as they were employed. This should be discouraged, as these laid off contract youths can be more dangerous than those who have never been employed at all.

Lastly, security agencies should handle offending youths as if they were handling eggs, knowing that they have been pushed into crime and deviance by the unbearable situations, which, ordinarily, they would have avoided. The criminal justice system should rather think of rehabilitating these offending youths, rather than treat them roughly, with disdain and calling them names. This would rather harden them up and prepare their entire adulthood on the path of criminality. As W.I Thomas and Thomas said that, that when men conceive situations as real, they are real in their consequences; meaning that, if security agencies begin to rough handle unemployed youths and treat them as hardened criminals, they will believe they are so and start acting as hardened criminals (Thomas & Thomas, 1928; Burgess, 1952.)

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