

# Youth Social Vices and Internal Security in Anambra State: Implications on Sustainable Development

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## **Abstract**

*Youth's depravity is global to human societies. In Nigeria and Anambra State particularly, youth social vices have created huge security issues with palpable fear among the residents of the state. This paper seeks to examine youth and internal security and its implications on sustainable development in the state. For clarification, the theory of conflict was employed where both primary and secondary data were used, while primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and respondents were purposively sampled. Secondary data were used to corroborate the findings from primary data. Cross-sectional data were used and the sample size obtained was 200 respondents across the three senatorial zones of the state. Thus, data were analysed quantitatively using linear regression to establish the relationship between variables through OLS. The paper reveals a significant influence of the youth's social vices on the level of internal security and sustainable development in the state. It, therefore, concludes that the inclusion of youths in national development is important for the sustenance of internal security. Thus, it suggests that there are brighter chances of achieving sustainable development targets and internal security with an appropriate governance structure in place that will help mitigate social vices among youths in the state.*

**Keywords:** *Youth, Internal Security, Social vices, Sustainable Development*

## **Introduction**

Nigeria, over the years, has been facing serious issues of social vices, insecurity, youth vices, and violence across the various geopolitical zones of the country. Currently, the country

is engulfed with a high incidence of social vices associated with the youth with its negative implications on the sustainable development of the nation. Specifically, there are incidences of Boko Haram in the Northeast, Fulani

herdsmen terrorists in North Central, banditry in Northwest, Fulani herdsmen terrorists in the Southwest, while unknown gunmen and Fulani herdsmen hold sway in the Southeast, and Niger Delta Militants operate in South-south of the country. But, at the center of these heinous activities are the youths who are the foot soldiers that engage in kidnapping for ransom, killing, arson, rapping, maiming, car theft, and robbing, among others all culminating in a great threat to the country's internal security. The United Nations population division projected the world youth age population from 1.2 billion in 2015 to nearly 1.3 billion by 2030. But in Africa, the number of youths that is within the age bracket of 14 to 21 years is 226 million in 2015, and it is projected to increase by 42% in 2030. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on population projections for 2015 puts 37,791,344 people in the youth age bracket in Nigeria. Generally speaking, Nigeria's population, according to the count of the last census, stood a total of not less than 150 million people, and out of this number the youth account for over 50 percent of the total population (National Bureau of Statistics Report, 2015). It is curious considering the population of Anambra state youth to the state's estimated population by the state government as of 2020 which, shows that from the 11 million people in the state over 50% are youths.

However, in recent time, Anambra state has been bedeviled with security challenges that have brought

enormous hardship and fear as youth social vices and insecurity makes life unbearable in the state. Though the high rate of insecurity in the state may not be entirely strange to our society its incessant is a matter of serious concern. The high rate of drug abuse, secret cult activities, kidnapping, armed robbery, cybercrime, ritual killing, etc among the youths in the state is worrisome as it appears unabated. Consequently, there is a public concern and sociological interest in the way youths social vices are carried out in the state. As matters of safety and security are topical issues in today's society, curiously, a greater number of Nigerian youths are not engaged in economic activities even when they are within the productive age (Ekeji, 2010). There have been a series of attacks by unknown gunmen targeted at government facilities in the state. On May 23, 2021, the headquarters of the Independent Nation Electoral Commission (INEC) was set ablaze, an attempted attack on the Police 'B' Divisional Headquarter close to INEC (Vanguard, 2021). Some local government headquarters were also attacked by unknown gunmen in the state. It was reported that unknown gunmen attacked and burnt down the local government headquarters of Nnewi South in Ukpok, Aguta in Ekwuluobia, and Idemili North with a Magistrate court in Ogidi. There was also a threat by the unknown gunmen to attack more 9 local government headquarters in the future which were listed as Ihiala,

Awka South, Idemili North, Idemili South, Orumba South, Orumba North, and Anambra East (Olisah, 2022; Eleke, 2022). Sadly, many prominent and innocent people from the state have been killed by unknown gunmen through their attacks in recent times. Prominent among them are Dr. Akunyili who was murdered at Nkpor Umuoji road in 2021, Chief Gab Ofoma (Ojemba Enweilo Nnewi) Chairman/CEO of Ofoma Associates Ltd, Port Harcourt, murdered (Aleke 2022), Hon. Okechukwu Okoye representing Aguata Constituency II was abducted and beheaded along with his campaign Director Cyril Chiegboka in May 2022 (Ugwu, 2022). Christian Outlook Newspaper July 26, 2014, reported a case of kidnap and murder of Chike Okoli Anambra State commissioner for Science and Technology by a gang of criminals. It was also reported that the father of Prof. Cheluchi Onyemelukwe, winner of the 2021 Nigeria Prize for Literature, Prof. I.O Onyemelukwe was killed at Oko in Orumba North LGA. Anambra state is in dire need of peace to enable people to activate their full potential for quick transformation of the state and ultimate realisation of the sustainable development goals.

### **Clarification of Concepts**

**Youth:** The African Youth Charter (cited in Krishnan & Sethuramalingam 2017), conceived of youth as those that fall within the age bracket of 15 and 35

years. According to the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development Revised National Youth Policy (2019), the current review regards the age bracket for the classification of youth from the existing grading of 18 – 35 years to 15 – 29 years. United Nations defined the youth as the people within the age range 15-24 years while Nigeria National Youth Policy (2009) defines youth as people within the age range 18 – 35 years. Based on this characterization, many government policies consider include people aged 13-25 years old. But one feature that runs across various international organization definitions of the youth is the age limit, which forms its standard of categorization. By these definitions, youth are mostly the active population of society which refers essentially to young people between certain age groups.

**Social Vices:** The concept of social vices has been conceived by Mezieobi, Jerry-Alaghaoso, *et al* (2015) with specific attention to Nigeria's context as misbehaviour, wrong attitudes, and unacceptable characters that have bedeviled the development of Nigeria. But according to Igwe (2014), social vices were those anti-social actions that oppose societal norms and values, which include sexual harassment, promiscuity, cultism, kidnapping examination malpractices, hooliganism, character assassination, impersonation financial fraud, etc. Similarly, Omonijo, Nnedum,

Fadugba, Uche, *et al* (2013) conceive social vices as any actions exhibited either by omission or commission on negligence that contravenes cultural values and established codes of conduct of a particular community or in a given situation or location. Social vices arise from behaviors or maladjusted people in society. Adedokun (2020) conceived social vices as simply the decadence of moral acts in society which is the basis for the increase in immorality in society.

**Internal Security:** According to Egbofo and Salihu (2014) is the freedom from threat and the ability of the government to create and sustain an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of economic interest by the people without interruption from anybody and where there is a threat, it includes the ability of government to quickly intervene to minimize the impact on the citizenry. According to Your Dictionary an online dictionary, internal security is a process of keeping peace and maintaining safety within a state or a nation. What appears very important in the above definition of internal security is the act of creating and sustaining of conducive atmosphere for all human activities.

**Sustainable Development:** The concept of sustainable development has also been looked at from various angles, leading to a plethora of definitions of the concept. Although definitions abound concerning

sustainable development among scholars and analysts. According to Mensah (2019), sustainable development has become a catchphrase in contemporary development discourse. However, in spite of its pervasiveness and the massive popularity it has garnered over the years, the concept is still not clear as it raises questions about its meaning and history, as well as what it entails and implies for development theory and practice. In recent times, Brundtland Commission Report appears the most often cited definition of the concept because it regarded sustainable development as the kind of development that meets the needs of the current generation without necessarily compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Schaefer & Crane, 2005). Sustainable development can be viewed as a development paradigm as well as a concept that calls for improving living standards without jeopardizing the earth's ecosystem or causing environmental challenges such as deforestation and water and air pollution that can result in such as climate change and extinction of species (Benaim and Raftis, 2008; Evers, 2017; Gossling-Goidsmitz 2018; Zhai and Chang 2019; Ukaga *et al*, 2011). In this discourse, the concept of sustainable development will be regarded as a two-way relationship between development and the environment and it has to do with maintaining a delicate balance between the human need to improve lifestyle

and feeling of well-being on one hand and preserving natural resources and eco-system for the future.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

This study adopts the conflict theory by Gurr (1968), one of the major proponents of conflict theory. The theory contends that conflicts arise when one feels that what he gets relative to others he identifies as his peers or equals are getting from the same situation is small, he feels deprived and reacts. So, this theory perceives conflict from a relative deprivation prism that interface with goal-directed behaviour and creates frustrations that lead to aggressive response and is usually directed against those reputed to be causing the frustration. Also, Crossman (2019) noted that conflict theory states that tension and conflict arise when resources, status, and power are unevenly distributed between groups in society and that this conflict becomes the engine for social change. Conflict theory revolves around the concept of social inequality in the division of resources and focuses on the conflict that exists between classes. According to Magala (2018), conflict theory is a type of criminology theory that focuses on competition and the dynamics of conflict interests between social groups as the important force underpinning culture and politics. From the thesis of the theory youths in Nigeria suffers socio-economic and political deprivations as the system do deprive them of enabling environment

to live in. Even their work status is characterized by unemployment and under-employment, a condition that helps to lure them into being used as mere tools to acquire political power by the political leaders and neglected thereafter. Nigeria's economy is not viable hence the financial earnings are low and the value of the naira is poor, available goods are few among high population demand, poor state, and dearth of infrastructure and public utilities among others. So, the failure of the government in their responsibility makes the youth feels challenged by the system and resort to illicit actions and social vices.

### **Methodology**

The area of study is Anambra State; particularly the three senatorial zones viz; Anambra Central, Anambra South, and Anambra North were randomly sampled where 200 people were selected for the study to show adequate coverage and representation of the youths across the state with the period of twenty-two (22) years, which is 1999 - 2021. Also, stakeholders in Anambra state politics across various political parties were purposively selected for the study. Cross-sectional data were used and the sample size obtained was 200 respondents, a total of 200 structured questionnaires were administered on the basis of 50 questionnaires each for the respondents of the three senatorial zones. The remaining 50 questionnaires were administered to

the stakeholders across the three senatorial zones.

The study employed a quantitative method of analysis for primary data collected through questionnaires and was coded. All variables related to the topic of the study were examined using Correlation analysis to establish if they are related and could predict each other. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) was adopted by using SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences) to establish if these variables have significance on each other where f-statistics in the regression model were used to help reject or accept three hypothesis sets. Secondary data were sourced from journals, texts, books, magazines,

newspapers, government publications as well as internet sources and were systematically reviewed and descriptively analysed.

The study is guided by the following hypotheses

- a. Ho There is no significant implications of youth social vices on internal security.
- b. HA There are significant implications of youth social vices on internal security
- a. Ho There is no significant impact of youth social vices on sustainable development.
- b. HA There is a significant impact of youth social vices on sustainable development.

**Data Analysis**

**1. To examine the implication of youth social vices on internal security Regression**

**Correlations**

|                     |                    | Youth Social Vices | Internal Security |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Pearson Correlation | Youth Social Vices | 1.000              | .854              |
|                     | Internal Security  | .854               | 1.000             |
| Sig. (1-tailed)     | Youth Social Vices | .                  | .000              |
|                     | Internal Security  | .000               | .                 |
| N                   | Youth Social Vices | 300                | 300               |
|                     | Internal Security  | 300                | 300               |

From the table above two variables were examined to determine if they are related and capable of causing each other. Therefore, at 1.000 the two variables were correlated by implication they could determine each other.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics |          |     |     |               | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|---------------|
|       |                   |          |                   |                            | R Square Change   | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |               |
| 1     | .854 <sup>a</sup> | .730     | .729              | 1.51906                    | .730              | 804.378  | 1   | 298 | .000          | .022          |

From the table above, R = 0.854 shows there is a degree of relationship between two variables under test by implication 0.854 indicate that the two variables have an influence on each other at 85%, a level significant. Where R<sup>2</sup> reveals total variation in the dependent variable, whereas, internal security can be explained or predict the independent variable at 73%, which is very high to predict each other.

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

| Model      | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig.              |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| Regression | 1856.145       | 1   | 1856.145    | 804.378 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
| 1 Residual | 687.651        | 298 | 2.308       |         |                   |
| Total      | 2543.797       | 299 |             |         |                   |

- a. Dependent Variable: Youth Social Vices
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Internal Security

**F-statistics**

If F-statistics is used to test for simultaneous significance of all estimated parameters.

Ho:  $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = 0$

Ho:  $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 \neq 0$

**Decision Rule**

At a 5% level of significance, accept the null hypothesis if P-value > 0.05, otherwise reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. From our regression result, the F-statistics is 804.378 while P-value is 0.000. However,  $804.378 > 0.000$ . Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that our independent variables are simultaneously significant and the overall regression model is statistically significant and as such, the regression is very robust with high predictive power. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is homoscedasticity in the series. To this end, the P value is greater than 0.000, the Null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T      | Sig. |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                     | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| (Constant)          | 11.827                      | .366       |                           | 32.341 | .000 |
| 1 Internal Security | .517                        | .018       | .854                      | 28.362 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Youth Social Vices

This shows the theorized relationship between the modeled repressors and regress. It also serves as a basis for evaluating our estimated model to ensure conformity with economic theory. The above table shows the apriori expectations for the variables in the model earlier specified. To this ends an increase in the internal security of 0.517 51.7% will result in an increase of 1182.7 proportionate on increase in youth social vices in Anambra and vice versa.

**2. To examine the impact of youth social vices on sustainable development**

**Correlations**

|                     |                         | Youth Social Vices | Sustainable Development |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Pearson Correlation | Youth Social Vices      | 1.000              | .961                    |
|                     | Sustainable Development | .961               | 1.000                   |
| Sig. (1-tailed)     | Youth Social Vices      | .                  | .000                    |
|                     | Sustainable Development | .000               | .                       |
| N                   | Youth Social Vices      | 300                | 300                     |
|                     | Sustainable Development | 300                | 300                     |



From the table above two variables were examined to determine if they are related to each other. Therefore, at 1.000 the two variables were correlated by implication they could determine each other.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics |          |     |     |               | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|---------------|
|       |                   |          |                   |                            | R Square Change   | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |               |
| 1     | .961 <sup>a</sup> | .924     | .924              | .80642                     | .924              | 3613.647 | 1   | 298 | .000          | .093          |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Sustainable Development
- b. Dependent Variable: Youth Social Vices

From the table above, R = 0.961 shows there is a degree of relationship between the two variable under test by implication 0.961 indicate that the two variables have an influence on each other at 96.7%, level significant. Where R<sup>2</sup> reveals total variation in the dependent variable, whereas, youth social vices can be explained or predicted by the independent variable 96.7%, which is very high to predict each other.

| Model        | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F        | Sig.              |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 2350.003       | 1   | 2350.003    | 3613.647 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
| 1 Residual   | 193.793        | 298 | .650        |          |                   |
| Total        | 2543.797       | 299 |             |          |                   |

- a. Dependent Variable: Youth Social Vices
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Sustainable Development

**F-statistics**

If F-statistics is used to test for simultaneous significance of all estimated parameters.

$$H_0: \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = 0$$

$$H_0: \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 \neq 0$$

**Decision Rule**

At a 5% level of significance, accept the null hypothesis if P-value > 0.05, otherwise reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. From our regression result, the F-statistics is 3613.647 while P-value is 0.000. However, 3613.647 > 0.000. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that our independent variables are simultaneously significant and the overall regression model is statistically significant and as such, the regression is very robust with high predictive power. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is homoscedasticity in the series. To this end, the P value is greater than 0.000 Null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model                                | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T      | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                      | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| (Constant)                           | -3.114                      | .419       |                           | -7.439 | .000 |
| <sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development | .939                        | .016       | .961                      | 60.114 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Youth Social Vices

This shows the theorized relationship between the modeled repressors and regress. It also serves as a basis for evaluating our estimated model to ensure conformity with economic theory. The table above shows the apriori expectations for the variables in the model earlier specified. To this end, an increase in the political development of .939 is a result of a 93.9% increase -3.114 proportionate to the increase in youth social vices in Anambra and vice versa.

**Discussion of findings**

From objective one, which was set to examine the implication of youth social vices on internal security, it was discovered that both variables are related to each other and could

influence each other at the same time. Therefore, youth social vices can 85% predict internal security in Anambra State. However, the increase in youth social vices the higher the insecurity and if youth social vices increase at

0.517 will lead to a multiplier effect of 11.827 increases in internal security.

To this end, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted that youth social vices have a significant effect on internal security and the higher the change in the parameter influencing it the higher the increase or decrease movement towards affecting each other but due towards its movement. This finding corroborates Katayama and Wadhwa's (2019) view that Nigeria is among the five countries where half of the world poor live it shows a high incidence of poverty among her citizens, which suggests a greater percentage of Nigeria's population is living below the poverty level as many hardly feed on three square meal a day. The majority of Nigerian youth are unemployed, many reside in conflicts and insurgency-affected areas and others are involved in social vices that lead to insecurity. Also, it is in accordance with the work of Oloyede and Ogunfolaji (2021) civil wars and other forms of internal violence and conflict posed a serious source of security and social development challenges in Nigeria. The consequences of these challenges are the continuous dearth of development in the critical sector of the economy and widespread poverty among the people. Crises are most times invented to achieve some political advantage, especially during elections. Under a democratic dispensation, citizens make their choices on the basis of primordial

factors such as religion, ethnicity, race, and personality, rather than alternative developmental programmes. By this, conditions are enabled for the youths to take to various social vices as a means of survival, which has serious implications on the internal security of the state ultimately affecting sustainable development. Moreover, Elaigwu (2005) aptly captured the factors that necessitate youth social vices as traceable to a poor educational formation, unstable political environment, bad governance, a poor orientation of youths, insecurity, and other vices characterised by developmental retardation. And the major recipient of the dark side of this situation is the youth whose present and future life is jeopardized. Also, Amakom (2013) noted that a state with inadequate social amenities and poverty as evidenced by poor health, and unemployment, particularly among youths is likely to experience social unrest, agitations, kidnapping and, conflicts. Our contemporary society is being bombarded with an intimidating wave of capitalism with its principles of profit maximization and primitive wealth accumulation. So, the attitude of the inordinate quest for money and wealth is quite common in the thinking and actions of the youth leading to various social vices with heightened challenges to internal security in the Anambra State.

From objective two the impact of youth social vices on sustainable development, which was set to examine if the two variables, set

against each other to see their causal relationship among themselves, correlation analysis were analyzed where both variables were said to have been correlated, therefore, they are set to influence each other at 1.000. Further test which was carried out to reveal the impact of youth social vices on sustainable development in Anambra State, shows that youth social vices could 96% predict sustainable development in Anambra State. However, the higher the increase in youth social vices the higher the rise in sustainable development, and if youth social vices increase at 0.939, will as a result of -3.114 decreases in sustainable development in Anambra State. By implication, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted that youth social vices have a significant effect on sustainable development and the higher the change in the parameter influencing it the higher the increase or decrease movement towards affecting each other but the effect will move towards the direction of either negative or positive movement. This finding corroborates Achumba *et al's* (2013) view in their study which reveals that when there is a high level of insecurity in a particular region, there will be migration of people which could lead to a dearth of skilled labour. The number of human populations within the productive ages being lost as a result of the incidence of youth crime and evil actions is quite high thereby affecting the viability of sustainable

development goals in our society. It further reveals that farmers abandon their farms amidst a high incidence of kidnapping and armed robbery and this affects the input and output in agro-productions and food security. Again, internally generated revenues are affected by youth social vices. Amakom (2013) noted that the state internally generated revenue which moved from 11% in 2007 to 17% in 2010 and fell back to 12.5% in 2013. Given this high wave of youth evil actions in the state, the system does witness low productivity and poor internally generated revenue for the state. These are some of the basic issues surrounding the achievement of sustainable development goals in the state.

### **Conclusion**

Youth social vices and internal security has affected sustainable development in Anambra state due to some observable socio-economic and political realities, which make the system suffers governance challenges, the poor state of the economy, poverty, and unemployment among others. There can be no meaningful development in an environment fraught with crises, violence, confusion, and fear among the people. This is because the state does suffer developmental problems associated with youth social vices, which appear to negatively impact sustainable development in the state. If sustainable development is to be achieved in the state youths must be viable and

productive so as to contribute to economic growth and overall development of the state.

### **Policy Recommendations**

Government should continuously support the economic team responsible for drafting and handling economic policies and strategies to create a viable and stable economy for the state. This will help in creating an enabling environment for the youth to survive and realize their dreams.

Anambra State government should encourage industrial revolution, provision of enabling environment and look into issues around the power supply, taxes and levies on industries to encourage the creation of new industries, and also revitalize moribund ones as well as assist ailing ones and invariably this will create jobs for the youthful population.

More effective youth empowerment and skill acquisition programmes by the state government, organisations, communities, and wealthy citizens in the state are suggested. This will help to complement the insufficient existing ones to accommodate the ever-expanding youth population in the state.

The state government may copy or replicate the federal government EN-Power programme or establish a similar economic empowerment programme in the state to help give a soft landing to youths who graduated from school and are not yet employed. If established, it will help to keep

youths away from crime and encourage them to save for investment.

Many parents are challenged by issues of low income and poverty making it extremely difficult for most of them to send their children to school. So, the state should make public schools affordable from primary to tertiary level as well as make provisions for scholarship programmes for indigent young people.

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