

# **The Effects of Violent Crime on Socio-Economic Development in Gboko Metropolis**

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## **Abstract**

The study examined the effects of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis. The study adopted a survey research design, and structured questionnaire as instruments of data collection. The population for the study was three hundred and sixty-four (364) respondents as a sample size of the study involved youths, parents and vigilante members. Data collected were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings of the study revealed that poverty, unemployment and the nature of politics in Nigeria are determinants of violent crime. Violent crime was seen to have a negative consequence on the youth themselves, family and society at large. These have affected the stability of the country and caused underdevelopment. Recommendations were made to control violent crime with emphasis placed on the role of the family and all security agents who must work together complementarily for a positive result in curbing violent crime in the society.

**Keywords: Effects, Violent Crime, Socio-Economic, Development**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Crime according to Henslin (2008) is the violation of rules that has been written into law. Igbo (2006) defined crime as an intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law (statutorily and case law), committed without defense or justification and sanctioned by the state as a felony or misdemeanor. Crime is a social problem; this is because it is undesirable to the society and also the inherent nature of crime has posed a threat to society as a whole, and to the individuals who live in that society. A study conducted by Dambazau (2007) shows the types of crime include, property related crime such as car theft, burglary, fraud, bribery and corruption, food and drug adulteration, gambling, smuggling, human trafficking, drug trafficking, money laundering, internet scam and advanced free fraud (419). Also, Igbo (2009) maintained that crimes such as murder, rape, and armed robbery are violent crime and are more common than other crimes especially, in Nigeria. As observed by the Action on Armed Violence (2015), Nigeria is one of the countries most severely affected by violence crimes. It is ranked 148 of 162 countries worldwide in the Global Peace Index (Vision of Humanity, 2013). However, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (2010) argues that the violent crime category is composed of four specific offenses: murder, and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. Therefore, the rising cases of violent crime in Nigeria have attracted the attention of this study.

A 2009 global survey of crime in cities conducted by Munice (2009) showed considerable data on the dynamics of crime. The study further reported that in Europe, the crime rate had increased by 2.6% compared to the previous year's increase of 1.7%, while South-East Asia, Latin America and North America were reported to have crime rate increase of 0.7% and 1.8%. The relatively high rate of the crime in Latin America has attributed to the drug economy in places like Mexico and Columbia (Rual, 2010). In Africa, crime has continued to increase largely as result of unemployment and poverty. Between 2007 and 2009, the crime rate went up from 3.2% to 5.7% (Ende, 2016). Such increases have link to the rate at which cities proliferate or the increased level of urbanization (Igbo, 2009). In Nigeria, there has been a 6% decrease in the actual of crime from 511% recorded in 2012 to the current 25% (Center for Law Enforcement Education of Nigeria – CLEEN Foundation, 2015), and increase of 34.52% of crime in Nigeria from 2016-2020 (World Bank, 2019). In Benue state crime statistics suggest that armed robbery offenses rose from 27 in 1999 to 71 in 2005, murder rose from 26 to 47, and grievous body harm rose from 890 within the same period. Kidnapping which as hitherto unknown became rampant in 2009 till date (Yecheo, 2010). In Gboko metropolis murder which is violent crime has been increased,

according to Duru (2012) the increased has raised from 3% to 5% this is because of the cult- related activities perpetrated by the students of Fidel polytechnic, Gboko.

In Nigeria, the increasing rate of the violent crime has become a major concern, especially the use of improvised explosive devices by criminal elements for instance murder which is a clear example of violent crime was 1, 629 in 1994. This number has increased to 2, 120 in 2001 and climbed to a record high of 2,136 in 2003 (Center for Law Enforcement Education of Nigeria, 2007). Such incredible increase of over 75 percent between 1994 and 2003 is pathetic. Armed robbery a violent crime was 2, 044 in 1994. In 2002, it rose to 3,889 amounting to over a 52 percent increase in less than a decade. In 2007, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) recorded 34, 738 incidences of crime against persons and this figure escalated in 2008 to 35, 105 occurrences (NPF, 2008). A cursory look at some of the level (disaggregated) data in Nigeria is equally tragic, for instance in 2002, 52 cases of armed robbery were reported in Abia State, but in 2004, it rose to 176. In Edo State, 171 cases of armed robbery were reported to the police in 2002; the number gradually increased to 144 in 2005 and 165 in 2006. In 2008, the Abia State Police Command recorded a total of 940 criminal cases and arrested 1,275 suspects. Accordingly, Ukoji and Okolie-Osemene, (2017) observed that a total number of violent crimes in states by number of incidents and fatalities are: armed robbery 4,268, cultism 2,363, kidnapping 457, rape 147, domestic violence 605, and assassination 675.

The rising increase in violent crime has affected both developed and developing countries. According to Bakery (2012), the offenders of violent crime can impact negatively on the economic in a variety of ways, from encouraging emigration and brain drain to discouraging foreign direct investment. In many parts of developing world, violent crime related to gang activity has raised to crisis levels, negatively impacting people, property and business activity. According to United Nations and World Bank (2007), violent crime cost Guatemala an estimated \$2.4 billion or 7. 52% of GDP, the Mexican government estimated the costs violence crime in 2007 \$9.6 billion, primarily from lost investment, local business, and jobs. United Nation and World Bank also projected that in 2007 Jamaica and Haiti could have increased their GDP by 5.4% merely by bringing down their crime level to that of Costa Rica. In Nigeria, according to Arinze (2010), more than \$102 million was spent to combat violent crime in Nigeria and an estimated 185048 cases of armed robbery were reported nationwide, properties valued over \$23,407,806.50 were reported lost.

One of the major causes of violent crime is poverty. According to MacRae (2010), many countries in which scarceness has low percentage such as India and China have experienced low violent crime. This reality is that aside from the industrialized or developed countries violent crime is limited to those areas of the world where the political and judicial system has broken down such as Russia and most of sub-Saharan Africa. MacRae (2010) further opined that the root cause of violent crime which overwhelms all of the others is fatherlessness. The relationship between fatherlessness and crime is so strong that controlling for family configuration erases the relationship between low income and crime. As Defoe Whitehead (1997) noted in her famous article "Dan Quayle was Right" that 80% rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes (US Department of Justice, Special Report, 1988) and 85% of all youths sitting in prisons grew up in a fatherless home (Texas Department of Correction, 1992). The findings of Fajnzylber, Lederman, and Loayza (2002) also show that increases in income inequality raise crime rates, crime tends to be counter-cyclical, and criminal inertia is significant.

These violent crimes trends have an adverse impact on the economy. It increases the cost of doing business for the private sector and providing public services. Resources that would otherwise been invested in increasing output, fund education, health, and other welfare programmes are diverted to violent crime control and prevention. There is also the social-cost dimension. Yecho (2010) opined that the impact of violent crime on the society is also related to physical cost dimension to incidences of crimes. A successful robbery entails the direct loss of property or the life of an individual. Most crimes lead to loss of productivity through the incapacitation of the victims. It could also lead to the death of the victim. The Human Rights Watch (2014) reported that 3,600 people had been killed over the last three years. Similarly, a violent crime like assassination leads to the elimination of individual who is usually of immense contribution to their family and indeed society in general (Yecho, 2010). In Gboko metropolis, many cases of murder, arm robbery among others were recorded or reported especially between 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2018 as observed by the study. It is therefore from the backdrop that a research on the effect violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis is initiated.

## **II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Crime has been an endemic phenomenon in almost every human society. The problem of lawbreaking is a universal one in both developed and developing countries of the world including Nigeria. This menace has seriously affected the residents of Gboko metropolis. Despite several measures employed by the government to control crime, especially those which are violent persist. And the prevalence of this raising violent crime wave has been attributed to a lot of factors. Adebayo (2013) observed that it is outrageous that in many developing

countries particularly Africa and Nigeria in focus, there are no stringent measures by any government to rid the society of the criminal tendencies and manifestations, as people in the leadership positions are also guilty of corruption and crime. The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) (2007) posted that high levels of inequality, poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and marginalization are reasons why violent crimes are still perpetuated in the society. Also, the reliance on a criminal justice system that is mired in many issues, including inefficiency and corruption is confirmed by Yebo (2010) as an attribute of incidences of violent crime. Other research studies conducted on violent crimes include those of Sipes (2011) who worked on top 10 factors contributing to violent crime-updated and Bier (2013) who worked on “by the numbers: is the UK really 5 times more violent than the US?”, among other empirical evidences.

The effects of these violent crimes are severe especially as there is total unrest and restiveness in areas where these crimes are perpetrated. Sometimes, life and property worth millions of Naira are lost at the instance of these violent crimes. It is therefore in recognition of this fact that a study on the effect of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis is informed.

### **III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The general question of this study is to what extent the effect of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis. Specifically, the following research questions served as guide for the study.

1. What are the types of violent crime that prevail in Gboko metropolis?
2. What are the causes of violent crime in Gboko metropolis?
3. What are the effects of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis?
4. What are the measures that can help curb the effect of violent crime in Gboko metropolis?

### **IV. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of the study cannot be over-emphasized. Theoretically, it will expand on the existing literature on violent crime in Gboko, Benue State and Nigeria generally. Practically, the study is timely and topical, with the current wave of crime among youths in many communities of the federation; the findings of this study would assist law makers, security agencies/ crime managers to find lasting solutions to these perennial problems. Elucidating the causes of this crime, significant changes be made to strengthen the cordial relationship in the society among individuals that are critical to secure security in Nigeria which is the foundation for peace and harmony.

Finally, this research exercise constitutes a source of inspiration to other researchers and students who may wish to undertake similar studies on violent crime.

### **V. METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a survey research design. This design was chosen because the researcher intends to survey the opinions of youths, parents and vigilante members on the actual strategies that can be employed for curbing violent crime in Gboko metropolis. The population of the study was youths, parents, and vigilante groups in Gboko metropolis. Gboko metropolis has a population of 487,700 as projected by the National Population Census (2017). The sampling techniques for this study were purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Four (4) areas or zones in Gboko metropolis namely, Gboko-West, Gboko-North, Gboko-South, and Gboko-East were selected purposively because they are urban in nature and more prone to violence crime because of the characteristics of the targeted population of the study. In using simple random sampling which was used to select the youths, parents, and vigilante members. The study identified five (5) streets in each area or zone and wrote the name of the streets and squeezed them; they select three (3) out of five (5), the number of streets were identified at the end of the day from the streets the research work was carried out. Four hundred (400) youths, parents and vigilante groups were selected out of the 487,700 population sample size for the study. This is to ensure a true representation of the entire population of the study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), we can determine size from a heterogeneous population using Taro-Yamane's. Data for the study were collected through questionnaire and in-depth interview. The youths and parents were administered questionnaire because most of them were not willing to give detail information through interview method especially the youths shy away from face-to-face interview questions and Vigilante members were interviewed. This is because vigilante members were more at ease to be interviewed and gave an in-depth explanation on the issue of violent crime. Out of 400 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 364 were returned and found usable showing a response rate of 91%. The data collected were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **VI. RESULTS**

This segment of the study focuses on the analysis of data about the four research questions that were asked at the early stage of this investigation.

**Table 1: Responses of Respondents on the Types of Violent Crime in GbokoMetropolis.**

<b>Types of violent crime</b>	<b>Frequency (F)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Murder	115	31.6
Assault	79	21.7
Armed robbery	119	32.7
Rape	31	8.5
Kidnapping	20	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100</b>

From the findings, 31.6% (115) respondents viewed murder as a type of violent crime, according to them; ritual murder is common in the country. In many instances the corpses of people especially commercial motorcyclist declared missing by the police.

Assault is another type of violent crimes as identified by 21.7% (79) respondents assault of the public by coercing or forcing them against their will which includes cuts, black eyes and matchet wounds, partial loss of hearing and vision and at times resulted in damaged joints.

The armed robbery was also identified as a type of violent crime by 32.70% (119) represents. During this, they use different types of weapons varying from knife, gun, axes, broken bottles, and other sharp objects. These sometimes lead to death of victim and physical deformity.

Rape is another type of violent crimes as viewed by 8.5% (31) respondents youths indulge in rape act like violent rape, stranger rape, date rape and acquaintance rape: this act causes inconveniences to the public. The Kidnapping was also identified as a type of violent crimes as pointed by respondents 5.5% (20). The result presented above indicates that murder and armed robbery are the major types of violent crime committed in Gboko metropolis. This results was collaborated by a respondent (A male vigilante member from Abagu unit command, Gboko West) thus:

The common violent crime engaged among our youth today is murder, a syndicate of young boys who specialized in killing commercial motorcyclists in the process of stealing their bikes confessed that they robbed either in the day or night by burning commercial motorcycles and directing the cyclists to dark or lonely end of the town after enticing them with good pay. "As soon as he stops, one of us will put a cable around his neck and tighten the nose. While he is gasping for breath we will drag him until he is dead. Then we will take his motorcycle away".

**Table 2: Responses of Respondents on the Causes of Violent Crime in Gboko Metropolis**

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Unemployment	10	2.7
Politics	61	16.8
Poverty	53	14.6
Frustration	18	5
Decay in family values	62	17
Illiteracy/ignorance	50	13.7
Drug abuse	11	3
Love for money	26	7.1
Peer influence	20	5.5
Greed	15	4.1
Impatience	24	6.6
Bad governance	14	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above the respondents trace the roots of violent crimes to unemployment, 2.7% representing (10) respondents said that unemployment is responsible for violent crime. The phenomenon of youth unemployment is devastating to both the individual and society as a whole both psychological and economical. In recent times, there had been notable adverse social, economic and political consequences in Nigeria, as a result of youth unemployment and under-employment, particularly exemplified by increasing militancy, violent crime, kidnapping, restiveness, and political instability. The scariest undertone of Nigeria's socio-economic underachievement, by far, is the steady rise in youth crime, nurtured in a climate of increasing national income and the simultaneous failure of employment generation and poverty alleviated programmes. The unemployment problems which now seems beyond remedy has produced an array of idle hands, and some of them have decided to push the society that fails to provide them with means of livelihood and dignity by

robbing its members of their property at gunpoint. The result of the study offered empirical support for the existence of a positive and statistically significant association between the two intertwined variables of youth unemployment and criminality. The findings bore semblance to the study of Ololo and Meisamari (2012) and was also in harmony with the result of prior research of Ezie (2012) which indicated that the accelerated levels of crime such as armed robbery, street crimes, prostitution and all facets of violence could be attributed to the incidence of youth unemployment. To a very large extent the findings reflected the views of Nwogu (2012) that the unemployment condition of the youths resulted into various crimes when they could not get jobs.

Majority of respondents saw decay in family values as a major cause of violent crime, according to their views, 17.0% (62) state that violent crime arises in Nigeria because of the changes in African values. People of Gboko metropolis of Benue state and Nigeria generally are highly respected because of the money they have, the houses they own and their flashy cars, not for their food characteristics. When children loses their parents through death, divorce, desertion or prolonged separation, the deprivation that results could degenerate into delinquency or criminality. Studies have shown that abnormal or defective family relationship exists much more in families where there are delinquent children than among families of comparable children who do not exhibit delinquent character (Monahan, 1962). Anti-socialization processes in the family account for delinquent and criminal behavior. Delinquent and criminal tendencies are learnt at an early age and sharpened by 'the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction.

Political thuggery is another cause of violent crime as described by 16.8% (61). According to the respondents, the struggle to acquire governmental powers seen as "a do or die affair". This finding agrees with that of Yecho (2010), when he avails that, one of the main sources of the increase in violent crimes is the rise of prebendal politics and the promotion of political thuggery as a profession.

Poverty was identified among the causes of violent crimes in their view, 14.6% (53) respondents described crime occurring in the society when people feel they have exhausted the beneficial means to reach their goals. Poverty basically defined as lack of what a human person needs to live a usual and genuine life. It is a disease because it distorts person's worth and destroys his dignity and pushes him or her to live a miserable life. In material poverty a victim whether a person or a country lacks basic needs of life like food, shelter clothing, access to health and education. In spiritual poverty, a victim absence love for others, does not have regard for others interest, is always concerned with his concern and prepared to ride roughshod over others to achieve his or its selfishness.

Illiteracy/ignorance is another cause for a violent crime as identified by the respondents. 13.7% (50) of the respondents opined that ignorance is the bane development in Nigeria. Knowledge is the virtue, and thorough it other ventures such as love, honesty, integrity, respect for others, respect for life, hard work are revealed and their importance as well as appreciated. Ignorance- in human society, ignorance is a primary problem, and every other unruly is secondary. This finding is in agreement with Criminological studies that have attempted to link education and delinquency/criminality.

Drug abuse is another cause of violent crime as identified by 3.0% (11) respondents. In their opinion, violent crime like results related injuries and rape is caused as a result of drug abuse among the youth in the study area. Nigerians are a drug-using society. Nigerians use alcohol or drugs regularly to entertain ourselves, or to ease a headache. The public safety in the excessive use of these drugs is that it can influence their users to commit crime and delinquency. As addict users become emotionally depressed and nervous (Tepperman, 2006), they continue to search for means to obtain the drugs to calm themselves down. In such a situation, they are likely to do anything, including stealing, assault, and burglary or commit robbery.

The love for money is also another cause of violent crime. 7.1% (26) respondents agreed that the violent crime behavior is highly influenced by money. Many people preferred to be rich in other to command respect from society through criminal means. In general, criminals commit crimes for all kinds of reasons or motives.

Peer influence is another cause of violent crime .1% (15) in their opinions stated that the imitations of other peers, learning behaviors that are not proper in the society are learned from peer groups and associations. They learned techniques of committing the actions, how to stay in the acts and possible ways of escape if caught. Result related injuries and rape for example, are learned in relation with other peer influence.

Greed is also a cause of violent crime as described by 4.1% (15). According to the respondents, this causes violent crime in the situation whereby that excessive, uncontrolled, burning passion to have more of anything than one need.

Impatience has also been identified as a cause of violent crime as indicated on the table above. 6.6% (24) respondents described impatience as the selfish desire to acquire wealth or materials in the midst of others. Impatience is a subtle but fertile soil for the violent crime. Frustration is another cause for violent crime as identified by the respondents. 5.0% (18) opined that the frustration and desperation that daily torments the youths creates a fertile ground for crime to thrive. The finding of Ajufu, (2013) pointed out that frustration torments the unemployed makes a fertile ground for criminality to thrive.

Bad governance is another cause of violent crime. 3.8% (14) respondents pointed out that this is occasioned by the planlessness of successive governments in Nigeria, owing to corruption and selfishness on the part of those in government. It is a fact that government does not create the enabling environment for the youths to find themselves in the society rather than venturing into criminal act. According to a member of the vigilant group (Obagaji unit, Gboko South) interviewed on the causes of violent crime stated that:

Here in Obagaji, the cases of law-breaking we have investigated have shown that; poverty, unemployment, and frustration are the major causes of violent crime. Recently, a young man arrested and interrogated was found to be a habitual criminal and a thug to a politician here in Gboko.

Another respondent argued:

The reasons why most youths get involved in violent crime is that they do not listen to parents' advice. And some parents do not advice their children against wrong doings. As such these youths automatically become vulnerable to criminality in our area (A female parent from Abagu, Gboko West).

**Table 3: Responses of Respondents on the Effect of Violent Crime on Socio-Economic Development in Gboko Metropolis**

Socio-Economic Effects	Frequency f	Parentages (%)
Bad image	24	6.6
Loss of lives	54	14.8
Destruction of properties	71	19.4
Unwanted pregnancy	18	4.9
Lost resources	33	9.1
Social withdrawal	30	8.2
Psychological trauma	62	17.0
Insecurity	40	11.0
Underdevelopment	29	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100</b>

From the findings of the respondents, 6.6 % (24) identified a bad image as one of the socio-economic effect of violent crime in Gboko metropolis. In their view, the activities of violent crime bring about the bad image on the society. Fear to live in areas especially areas rampant of violent crime become a disturbing issue to the people in such areas. The findings revealed that the negative image is not confined within the Nigeria boundaries alone but also abroad. Nigerians are known for various crimes in overseas countries. Violent crimes such as kidnapping and assassinations have damaged Nigeria's international image. Foreigners are afraid to do business with Nigerians, and the state of insecurity occasioned by militancy in the Niger Delta Region have scared foreign investors from investing their money in the Nigerian political and economic system.

Loss of lives was also identified as the socio-economic effect of violent crime in Gboko metropolis as stated by 14.8% (54) respondents. Robbery and kidnapping could result to death or permanent disability of the victim. Similarly, assassination leads to the elimination of individuals who are usually of immense contribution to their society. Yecho (2010) attested to this in his study that, robbery and kidnap could result to death or permanent disability of the victim. The findings has also coincided with the views of the Trent (2014) where an incident involves robbery, victims usually lose their valuables after the attack like the 2014 incident in Ogun state where a businesswoman lost N1,803,000 cash, gold worth of N200,000 and wrist watch worth N5,000 and blackberry phone at a total of N2,187,500 to armed robbers. Similarly, assassination leads to the elimination of individuals who are usually of immense contribution to their family and indeed society in general.

Another socio-economic effect of violent crime on the people which in turn affects Gboko metropolis as posited by 19.4% (71) respondents is the destruction of property. A successful robbery entails the direct loss of belonging of an individual; such property is transferred from the ungrateful owner to another person. Crime has consequences for individuals, groups, corporate bodies and the society. This result is in line with Igbo's study (1999) that the physical effects of crime on people include bodily injuries inflicted and sustained, especially from gun-shot, sharp instruments, and other forms of victimization.

The effects of violent crime on the family, 4.9% (18) respondents identified unwanted pregnancy. In their view, violent crime like rape leads to an unwanted pregnancy of such a victim in the family. Parents and guidance also suffer a degree of humiliation or shame.

Another effect of violent crime as identified by 9.1% (33) respondents is missing of resources. It is usually the victims and sometimes the government that suffer the consequences of criminal activities. Funds that would fund education, health, and other welfare programs are averted to violent crime control and prevention. This finding is in tone with that of Ariweriokuma (2008), that consequence of crime such as money laundering, economic fraud, financial embezzlement, etc. is serious economic and financial loss to the nation. Individuals,

groups, families, corporate bodies, governments, spend money on preventive measures (such as the installation of electronic devices, burglary-proof doors and window protectors and personalized gates, watchdogs and private security guards). This expenditure could have been used for essential needs to better lives of Nigerians.

Social withdrawal is another effect of violent crime as noted by 8.2% (30). In a society where violent crime is at the increase, people no longer go out to interact. Everybody becomes suspicious of one another. This result is confirmed by Ekpenyong (1999), that social life and social relationships of people are affected. The fear of crime has kept some people away from social affairs. In some neighborhoods, particularly in the cities, social life activities have been paralyzed due to urban/gang violence which poses a threat to life and property causing fear in the people.

Psychological trauma was also identified as an effect of violent crimes as viewed by 17.0% (62) respondents. The result related injuries which include bruises, cuts, black eyes, broken bones, partial loss of hearing, and vision, permanent disfigurement, shocks from burns, knives and machet wounds occurs as a result of violent crime. The finding is also attested to by Igbo (1999), the victims and non-victims, especially neighbors, relatives and friends including passers-by have emotional or psychological effects from a 'crime-event' they witness. Many of such persons develop psychological neurosis and pay for medical and psychiatric treatment.

A significant number of 11.0% (40) identified insecurity as the major effect of violent crime in Gboko metropolis. In their view, violent crime activities brings about insecurity, residents live in fear and panic. Movement is been restricted for the fear of criminal victimization.

Furthermore, 8.0% (29) respondents stated that violent crime hinders societal/community development, a society characterized with the violent crime cannot move forward because efforts of the government towards the progress will also be thwarted by such criminal activities. In a society where everyone is suspicious of one another where movement is restricted for fear of criminal victimization, there can be no meaningful development and progress.

On the effect of violent crime, vigilante member who was interviewed have this to say: The effects of violent crime on socio-economic development here in Gboko is related to loss of lives, damage to properties, loss of resources, and unwanted pregnancy. Similarly, assassination leads to the elimination of individuals who have a contribution to their families and indeed society in general. The recent case at Labet Pharmacy at Bristow roundabout is a good example (A vigilante member at Adekaa Unit Gboko North).

## **VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study was to examine the effect of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis. The respondents' understanding of the concept of violent crime was quite encouraging especially from parents and vigilante members. They see violent crime as an offense that is punishable under the law. Through the response of youths, the violent crime involves rape, assault, kidnapping among others. The result of this finding is that it is clear that, both parents and the youths were fully aware of the presence of violent crime activities in Gboko town, with this, curtailing violent crime in the town will be easier. This findings corroborated with the findings of Scott and Marshall (2005) that the violent crime is an offense which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory laws of the society to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are affected and which requires the intervention of a public authority (the state or local body)''.

One of objective of the research was to find out the causes of violent crime in Gboko metropolis. In response to the causes of violent crime, it was discovered that most violent crime are product of politics and poverty. The return to political democracy marked a fierce struggle by members with arms, and the training of thugs were embarked upon between 1999 till date, with sole aim of winning elections at all costs. Most of these arms were not returned after successive elections. Relatedly, most of the thugs who took possession of these arms were not settled as promised by their political godfathers. The view of Yecho (2010) has coincided with respondents' opinion that one of the major sources of the increase in violent crimes is the rise of prebendal politics and the promotion of political thuggery as a profession. Nigeria is virtually an unproductive capitalist system. Her major source of wealth is through crude oil which controls the nation's wealth. The struggle to acquire political power is seen as "a do or die affairs" which has resulted to members carrying arms and ammunitions.

Another objective of the study was to assess the effects of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis. The study discovered that the effects of violent crime are enormous ranging from societal bad image. The implication of this is that, many places are painted black especially in Gboko. In Benue State or elsewhere in Nigeria, Gboko boys are known for their hardened behavior or attitudes, just like Nigerians are known before the world by their criminal behaviour and corruption. Another grievous effect of violent crime as discovered from the study is the psychological trauma and destruction of property. Victims of violent crime sometimes suffered psychological trauma like partial loss of hearing and vision, permanent

disfigurement, scares from burns, knives and matchet wound. Also, a successful robbery entails the direct loss of property of an individual. The above claims are in agreement with scholarly work of Yebo (2010) that the effect of violent crime on the society is related to psychical cost dimensions to incidence of crimes. He further found on his study that robbery and kidnap could result to death or permanent disability of the victim. Most crimes also lead to the loss of productivity through the incapacitation of the victims.

The last objective of the study was to find possible solutions to the problem of violent crime on socio-economic development in Gboko metropolis. The respondents' opinion on solution to violent crime cuts across every aspect of the society, starting from job creation. The findings revealed that government should create more job opportunities for the youths. The implication of this is that, in Nigeria, the unemployment rate is worrisome. It has consistently increased in the years. Government must therefore ensure the survival of industries which can provide more jobs for the unemployed youths.

### **VIII. CONCLUSION**

From the findings of the study, the majority of the respondents attested that violent crime has destructive effects on the youth themselves, family and society at large. This they said affects stability of the society and causes underdevelopment. Evidently, its effects on the youths are untimely death, life imprisonment and bad name to the family. From the discussion of findings, summary and conclusions be that, many factors instigated the increase of violent crime, its effects on society stability and suggested ways to reduce the situation should be seen as valid statements and as such, they should be considered in other to accomplish the major aims and purpose of the study.

### **IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

- i. First and foremost, there should be joint efforts by all organized security agencies like Vigilante group, the Police, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corp, the Army, the Navy, the Air force to mention but a few to regularly organize workshops to sensitize the youths on the effects, and negativity of violent crime in the society.
- ii. The issue of social inequality and stratification should be addressed to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor.
- iii. The government should engage the teeming youths by establishing farm settlements and employ youths who will contribute their quota to national development.
- iv. Increase sensitization on the need to be educated. Vocational and technical vigorously pursued. This will go a long way to reducing youth unemployment. However, at the completion of the vocational training, government should provide soft loans to the trained youths as take off capital.
- v. There is need to strengthen the family institution as well as develop a welfare programme for the children from broken homes as this will prevent them from been recruited into criminal gangs.

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