# SOCIO - ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION AND YOUTH RESTIVENESS, IMPACT ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study investigates socio-economic marginalization and youths' restiveness impact on community development. The study employed content analysis with indepth literature review as methodology. Socioeconomic marginalization is the exclusion of the youth in the social and economic activities of the community and also denying them from benefiting from socio - economic opportunities of the land. The concept of youth restiveness is the unwelcome attitude and behaviour, demonstrating violence and grievances to press home their demands, needs and aspiration. All of these impact community development which represent real change in the life of a community in terms of the people, infrastructure, the environment. Empirical literatures have investigated the nexus among socio-economic marginalization, youths' restiveness and their impact on community development and found strong correlations among the variables. Thus, socio-economic marginalization brings about youths' restiveness which in turn crops up negative impact on community development. This is validated with this studies. To reverse this trend, socio-economic inclusion should be encouraged which will in turn eliminate restiveness of youth and bring about sustainable community development. Thus, this study concludes that, involvement of youth in social and economic activities of the community, opening opportunities for them will curb restiveness and crop up sustainable community development. Therefore, the study recommends that, there should be youth involvement in terms of participation and benefits association with the socio-economic activities of the community. This will systematically eliminate restiveness and drive community development.*
**KEYWORDS:** socio-economic, marginalization, youth restiveness, community development, Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

The peace, progress and development a society experience is a function of the interplay of various agents working in synergy to drive inclusive development that will have positive impacts on all sections of the community. The management or leadership of the community should employ this systemic approach in managing people and all other resources making up the proper functioning of the society. The isolation of a critical sub-sector of a system may lead to a dysfunctional society or community. From policy conceptualization, policy making and policy execution, all critical

stakeholders should be involved and their inputs factored into policy decision making and implementation (Torugsa & Arundel, 2015; Zokaei et al, 2010; WHO, 2009). Hence, the involvement of a critical stakeholders in decision making in any system; government, institutions, organisations, community and family etc help in making informed decisions for the progress of the system. The isolation or marginalization of any important element and lack of inclusiveness may lead to impacts or restiveness and crop-up a dysfunctional society or community (OECD, 2017; Akpokighe & Ejovi, 2020). Hence, socio-economic marginalization can successfully predict youth and lead to negative influence on community development.

Socio-economic marginalization is the process where a certain individual or group of people are denied access to opportunities in terms of social and economic benefits, such as education, employment, politics and governance, affordable housing and up-keep such that, there is dislocation in the value or worth of the individuals or groups in society (Steemit, 2018; Rejo, 2013). Thus, the human being is the most important asset in society, all other assets or resources are subservient to the human factor. Marginalizing the most important asset in any society or community will affect the proper functioning of such community. A marginalized section of any society may adopt through wide range processes including restiveness (Ozxoher-Suleiman, 2006). Hence, the leadership of any society should ensure that the leadership style executed should affect all section of society positively, devoid of any form of discrimination or marginalization. A situation where people do not have the same chances as others in society to contribute and benefit from the society or community. The people do not have the chance to get a good job or couldn't attend a trade school to equip them with the skills to enter a certain profession or industry. This situation may crop up restiveness as it is associated with most developing nations including, Nigeria.

Youths' restiveness is the extreme form of deviant attitude and behaviour prevalent among youth, which is socially unacceptable in any community or society. Youth restiveness is the integration of actions, attitudes and behaviour demonstrated by youth which are socially unacceptable by the leadership of the society or community (Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). Hence, the behaviours emanating from the youths' restiveness are generally unacceptable and unwholesome in the community (Yusuf, 2014). Thus, youths' restiveness is a worrisome situation and the subject has escalated, permeating virtually all communities in Nigeria chiefly due to socio-economic marginalization on the youth in the areas of education/scholarships, politics and governance, employment, medical/health care, housing, security just to mention but few, which have affected the wellbeing and general conditions of the Nigerian youth. Socio-economic marginalization of the average Nigerian youth lead to youths' restiveness in our communities which in turn have negative impact on our communities' development (Yusuf, 2014).

Community development is a process where members of community are supported by government, individuals and agencies to identify and take collaborative actions on issues affecting members which are relevant and important to them. Community development creates opportunities which

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empowers community members and create stronger and more connected communities (Schutte, 2016). Thus, Community development stem from the deliberate attempt by community members to work together in order to guide the future of their communities and the design of a corresponding set of methods for assisting members of the community in such as process to enhance their wellbeing and aspirations. Again, community development also involves the progressive change in a community in terms of economic, social and political progress enjoyed by the communities and its members and this process is guided by valued and principles based on fundamental human right, social justice and ecological justice which have the basis of community development practice (Goel, 2014).

The study is meant to investigate socio-economic marginalization and youths' restiveness impact on community development in the context of Nigerian communities. How socio-economic marginalization lead to youths' restiveness and in turn crop up impact on community development of Nigeria's communities.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The concept of socio-economic Marginalization
Socio-economic marginalization is a reality that happens virtually in every society; nation, state, region, communities, families, as well, occurs in every period of man's history. The construct of socio-economic marginalization is the social and economic exclusion of individual and groups in their involvement in contributing to the society and also making such social and economic gains inherent in the society or community (Schatz & Schiffer, 2008). Thus, when an individual or group of people are excluded from making social and economic contributions to their communities and at the same time stopped from achieving social and economic benefits, the individual or group's general wellbeing is affected and create negative perception and disposition for the leadership and community. People who are marginalized are not actively involved in the economy of the community or nation and in a way isolated from active participation in the affairs of the community socially, economically and politically.

According to Schatz & Schiffer (2008), socio-economic marginalization could be defined as a process by which people or group is denied accessing relevant positions and authorities in terms of economic, social, political and religious benefits in the community or society. Usually a marginal group has numerical strength in terms of number compared to the minority group that is in possession of the economic and political power in society. Socio-economic marginalization explains the position of individual member of the community, groups or population in contrast with main stream members of society. To be marginalized is to be distanced from contributing to the society and isolated from social, economic and political benefits inherent in the society or community. People who are marginalized in the society or community have poor access to social and economic benefits such as education, employment, health care/medical services, housing opportunities, politics and governance, social services and the likes. This situation makes

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marginalized citizens to be distanced from political power and economic resources which ordinarily drives self-determination. Hence, their participation and self-determination in the community or society is usually low (Whitehead & Dahigren, 2006).

According to Birchall (2019), socio-economic marginalization is the economic, social and political exclusion of people or individuals in society such that the individual or groups are unable to participate fully in the economy of the society. Usually people who are socially and economically excluded are women, girls, physically challenged individuals, ethnic/religious minority, children and youth, migrants and internally displaced individuals, people with terminal sicknesses such as HIV as well as cancer patients just to mention but a few (Birchall, 2019).

Thus, this foregoing is most prevalent in Nigeria where the vast majority of the citizens are marginalized especially, youths related marginalization. Marginalization affects the individual and the group especially the type of marginalization founded in economic, social and political dimensions where the Nigerian youths are discriminated upon, leading the vast majority of the youths to a state of hopelessness (Igbafe, 2021).

Marginalization of any nature is bad and should not be encouraged in any society; nations, state, community and family. The leadership of a society should ensure that equal treatment is given to all citizens irrespective of age, class, ethnicity, background, sexual orientation, location, career, educational status and other benefits. People should be given level playing field in all sectors of community's life in terms of participation in the social, economic and political processes and attendant benefits available to citizenry. The leadership that manages the affairs of the people and the resources should ensure that no form of discrimination or marginalization is melted on any section of our society. This foregoing is in tandem with constitutional provisions of most society both developed and developing nations but, in actual practice especially developing communities in Nigeria, the constitution is a mere cosmetic provision in actual practice. Observably, there is systemic social, economic and political exclusion of the Nigerian youth. Society does not reinforce the social contract of common good but the hegemony of socio-economic and political powers exercised by the few elites at the corridor of power, leaving the Nigerian youth to their fate (Birchall, 2019; Yusuf, 2014; Reje, 2013). Hence, this situation crops up various kinds of adaptation on the part of the Nigerian youth in their various communities including restiveness.

**The Concept of Youths' Restiveness**
The construct of youths' restiveness is the confrontation behaviour demonstrated against the community and the leadership in authority by the youth in order to press home their grievances, so as to reverse the current challenges melted on them by deliberate leadership in actions, leadership deficit and maladministration in society; nation, state and community (Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). Hence, it is the extreme form of deviant attitude and behaviour among youth which is morally and socially not acceptable in any community. Youths' restiveness involves the integration conflict of behavioural actions exhibited by youths which are socially not acceptable and not good

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for any society. Youths' restiveness in most communities in Nigeria is a service challenge confronting community members, community leaders including the government. It is a topical issue that permeated the social, economic and political spheres of the Nigerian society (Akpokighe & Ejovo, 2020).

According to Akpokighe & Ejovo (2020, youths' restiveness could be defined as the state of unrest, tension and violent behaviour exhibited by youth in order to make people in authority to yield to their demand. It is the unwelcome act or behaviour that is not acceptable by society. Most times, youth restiveness may lead to violent actions that may lead to destruction of lives and property as seen in most Nigerian communities. Thus, even if the act melted on the youth may be bad, their approach to resolving issues through violent confrontation may visiate the cause they are pursuing (Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). Hence, it is expedient for youth in communities to welcome objective means of pursuing their grievances and flee from restiveness irrespective of the degree of challenges they are facing. Youths restiveness should not be the best prescription for their marginalization in society, there are more civil options that the youth in communities can employ to press home their grievances against the community's leadership (Steamit, 2018; Zakaria, 2006).

Furthermore, youth's restiveness generally is a challenge to the community's leadership and the government. This is because the approach employed by youth to achieve their goals and aspirations through restiveness and confrontation/agitations have negative consequences for societal progress and development in terms of growth and development of the communities and the nation. Importantly, sometimes, youths' restiveness in some instances claims lives and property and lead to economic drawbacks. A notable example is the end SARS in Nigeria youths' unrest that claimed the lives of some young Nigerians at the Lagos-Lekki toll-gate. It was believed to have been caused by the inhuman treatment act of SARS on Nigerian youth. The youths' restiveness that erupted as a result of SARS mismanagement of crimes among youths, claimed the lives of Nigerian youth and property particularly in Lagos (Lagos state judicial Panal of Enquiry, 2020). Thus, in contrast a more civic approach should have been resorted to which should have ordinarily avoided the killings associated with the Lekki incident investigation.

Importantly, the concept of youths' restiveness comes with several challenges. Restiveness of the youths negatively affect all aspects of the community's life's; youths' personal career advancement and development, the security of the community, economic activities etc. which during the restive period and thereafter, usually affect the economic growth and development of the community (Reje, 2013; Pettinger, 2017). Thus, for a community to reverse these negative consequences, she must first identify the root causes of youths' restiveness in our communities and provide preventive measures so that society will be a better place for all (Yusuf, 2013). Hence, some of the causes of youths' restiveness in our communities are economic, social and political marginalization which include, exclusion from political participation and governance, unemployment, lack of access to medical/health care, education/scholarship just to mention but few. These dimensions of marginalization usually lead to crime/criminality, unsecured

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environment, poor economic growth and development since economy is below full employment, rebellious communal behaviour and increased underemployment (Akpokighe & Ejovi, 2020).

More so, in most developing nations including Nigeria, the most salient causes of youths' restiveness in our communities is also linked with poor government policies, lack of youths advancement and job opportunities, poor and worst standards of living, poor educational systems associated with strikes, lack of basic social amenities etc (Igidon & Ahiazua, 2005; Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). Thus, these negative situations associated with youths' restiveness in Nigeria's communities can be eliminated through inclusiveness which should involve youths in policy decisions, job opportunities and sustainable employment, improvement in standard of living/minimum wage, improved standard of education, enhancing basic infrastructure in communities, development of community living (Ifidon & Ahiazua, 2005; Zakaria, 2006). Thus, youths' restiveness in communities can completely be eliminated if the foregoing measures are taken with equal opportunities to all citizen irrespective of background, ethnicity, religion, region, location and educational status.

**The Concept of Community Development**
The construct of community development is the real change experienced by members of the community and its members. This contrast with community growth that deals with numerical increases. A community can experience growth without development. Development is the progressive real change experienced by all sections of the society (Schutte, 2016). Thus, community development can compass a situation where community members are supported by institution and agencies to identify and take collaborative actions on subjects which are relevant to them. Community development provides empowerment to members of the community and creates enduring, stronger and more connected communities. In most instances, community development can be measured through community's capacity building, people and group development and empowerment and the achievement of social, economic, cultural and environmental objectives and goals.

According to Schutte (2016), community development could be defined as indigenous development which involves community participation to enhance peace and progress of the community and its people. The dimensions of community development are full community participation, bottom-up development strategy, solving felt needs of community, community program, program execution, interpretation of local knowledge, culture, norms and values of the community, interaction with the social environment, time line execution of community projects (Schutte, 2016; Bopape, 1993). However, community development should also encompass the respect and care for the community people, and nature, improvement of the quality of lives and wellbeing of human, conservation of the earth's vitality and diversity. Minimization of the loss of non-renewable resources, environmental care and protection, changing citizens' attributes, behaviours and practices, community care for its environment, frameworks for integrating

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community development and creating networks and allowance with peer communities, the local government, state and the nation (Schutte, 2016; Kok & Gelderblom, 1994).

Community development is seen as the involvement and participation of members of the community. Community participation is highly laudable and fundamental to the achievement of sustainable community development. The participation of the citizenry in developing programs and activities that seek to drive sustainable and progressive change and development for the community is highly laudable and very essential. Effective people participation in the development programme of a community should be fully encouraged by the leadership of the community if sustainable development is to be achieved by the community and its leadership (Bopape, 1993). Hence, the implication is that, regardless of the nature of the program of activity all relevant resources should be integrated; the people, funds, materials, methods and information should be optimally, effectively and efficiently utilized and operationalized to achieve sustainable community development. Again, community development is also largely driven by literacy level of the people, economic status, government presence and knowledge of the projects, networking among institutions and agencies (Naku et al, 2021).

According to Naku et al (2021), sustainable community development can occur through the exploration of socio-economic and political advantages. For sustainable community development, no section of the society should be excluded socially, economically and politically. Communities remain to develop sustainably through inclusiveness and leveraging the collective strength and resources of all sections of the society. Hence, the collection of people that live in a functional relationship with one another within a specified geographical area with the awareness of their unique identify and distinctiveness and working as group can successfully achieve sustainable community development (Schutte, 2016; Naku et al, 2021).

Pertinent to note that the through notion of community development has been hijacked by the few elites in most developing countries content including Nigeria. In most communities, the leadership does not allow the participation of the community in the development value chain process. Most people especially the youth are excluded from contributing to the development of their communities. Again, they are also excluded from social, economic and political benefits associated with the community. This alienates a critical section of the community's population segment of the society (Schutte, 2020).

Thus, community and its development should be inclusive. The leadership of a community should run a system approach to community development, collaboratively engaging all critical stakeholders and resources, devoid of marginalization or exclusion. This will drive sustainable community development in Nigeria.

**Socio-economic Marginalization and Youths' Restiveness impact on Community Development**

Socio-economic marginalization instituted by the leadership of a society or community created youths' restiveness which has negative impact on community development. Socio-economic marginalization usually leads to poor community development, as development strategy does not involve inputs from all sections of the society. Again, this leave some section of the society aggrieved, which may lead to tension, agitations and restiveness and this will ultimately impact negatively on community development. This foregoing is validated with studies. Birchall (2019), investigated the impact of social exclusion and its impact on the Nigerian society. The study employed qualitative research design and the findings of the study is that, social exclusion negatively impact the development of the Nigerian society. This finding is in agreement with the empirical works of several scholars.

Socio-economic marginalization in communities drives youths' restiveness and has implication for sustainable national development. This position is highly supported with the empirical study of Akpokighe & Ejovi (2020). The scholars investigated the implication of youths' restiveness in sustainable development in Nigeria. The study employed qualitative research design with participant observation and interviews methods. Restiveness negatively impact sustainable development in the contest of Nigeria. It is important to note that, youth which are excluded socially and economically in society will lead to restiveness which will in-turn crop up negative consequences for community and national development.

Furthermore, mal-administration and poverty in the land can lead to crisis. This treatise is highly validated with studies. Amorawo (2000), studies the nexus between maladministration and poverty in the context of the Nigerian state. The study employed qualitative research method and the findings is that, maladministration of the Nigerian state leads to poverty which crops up crisis in the land. Thus, bad administration will give room for corruption which will create mass poverty and crisis. To reverse this, designing a good government and good governance will eliminate poverty in the land, vacate crisis and lead to economic development for all. The study above is in agreement with the norms of Anasi (2010), who discovered that, one of the ways in curbing youths restiveness and bringing about even community development is through socio-economic inclusion of youth in all community programmes and projects.

More so, conflict and youth restiveness can be contaminated through socio-economic inclusion of youth in community programmes. Crisis should be best managed through inclusiveness and integrating youth into community participation and involvement. Thus, Crossman (2019), investigated the responses and intervention for conflict in communities with content analysis, discovered that, crisis in communities can only be put into control through the convocation of an inclusive community development program. The competences and resources inherent in youth should be fully harnessed by community leadership. Such inclusion will create sustainable community development. This position is corroborated with the works of Echezona (2007), who

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discovered the role of library and information in curbing youth restiveness in communities in Nigeria. The scholar evaluated the importance of libraries and information for the management of conflict in the society. It was revealed that libraries and information in books of readings available to youth is a laudable intervention for youths' restiveness in the society.

The establishment of recreational facilities in schools and community will help curb youths' restiveness and bring about community development. This foregoing is highly supported with the supply of Elegbeleye (2005), who studied the nexus between recreational facilities and youths' restiveness in the context of Nigeria. The study employed a qualitative research design and discovered that, recreational facilitates significantly reduces youth's restiveness in communities in Nigeria, which help to positively enhance socio-economic development of communities in Nigeria. Thus, the establishment of recreational facilities to engage youths for their leisure and play help eliminate youths' restiveness and help in positively impacting community development in Nigeria. Socio-economic marginalization, political exclusion creates youths' restiveness in Nigerian communities and have negative implication for community development. This position is made valid with the study of Oromareghake, Arisi & Igho (2013), the scholars studied the relationship between youths' restiveness and insecurity in the context of Niger Delta in Nigeria. The study made use of qualitative research design and the findings of the study are that youth restiveness positively and significantly correlates with insecurity in Nigeria's Niger Delta. It was further revealed that, what inform youth restiveness in the Niger Delta is the economic exclusion of the youth of the resources from the land. Importantly, socio-economic inclusion of youth, will curb restiveness and drive sustainable development of communities in Nigeria. Again, this finding is supported with the empirical works of Ozohu-Suleiman (2016), the scholar discovered that political exclusion of the youth leads to restiveness which negatively impact community development. It was concluded that, youths' involvement in politics and governance will help eliminate youths' restiveness and successfully drive sustainable community development. From the expositions above, socio-economic marginalization and youths' restiveness negatively impact community development in Nigeria.

The Social and economic exclusion of youths in society brings about restiveness which crops up negative impact in community development. Hence, a society or community which excluded youths in social, economic and the political process has given room for youths' restiveness which will again crop up negative growth and development of the community, this is because, restiveness will result into crisis and all form of anti-social behaviours in the communities. Therefore, socio-economic inclusion of youth will eliminate youths' restiveness and drive sustainable community development. Thus, socio-economic marginalization predicts, youths' restiveness, youths' restiveness predicts negative impact on community development. Again, socio-economic inclusion, reduces youths' restiveness which in turn enhance community development. S

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study investigated socio-economic marginalization and youths' restiveness impact on community development. From the review of related literature, the study reveals that, socio-economic inclusion of youth by leaders in community will eliminate youths' restiveness and bring about sustainable community development in Nigeria's community. Therefore, the leadership in our communities should run an inclusive system without excluding the youths from participating or benefiting socially, economically and politically.

Finally, it is recommended that; The leadership of communities in Nigeria should run an inclusive administration without marginalizing any section of the society. This will bring about even and sustainable community development.

The leadership of community in Nigeria should include the youth socially, economically and politically. Allowing the youth to participate in the process and also benefit from opportunities will eliminate youths' restiveness and create robust community development. The restiveness of youths in the community can be mitigated through provision of education scholarships, employment opportunity to indigenes of host communities, provision of health, medical care and other social services.

The leadership should incorporate the youths into the political and governance space. Allowing the youths to take part in the politics/governance of the community through appointment like community liaison with government, and other institutions/agents. This will give sense of belonging to the youths and eliminate potential restiveness and drive community development.

To reduce socio-economic marginalization, youth restiveness and negative impact on community development, youths should be actively involved in the social, economic and political process of the community, there should be broader collaboration between the community leadership and the youths. This, the leadership can do by establishing community's youth organ or association also have representative at the community development level. This will ensure inclusiveness and enhance sustainable community development.

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