



Socioeconomic Drivers and Economic Consequences of Cultism in Rural Niger Delta Communities: Evidence from Ogbia, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

¹Atabiri, O. G., ²Ene, W. R. & ³Edaba, M. I. E

¹ Federal University, Otuoke, Nigeria, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

² University of Africa, Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension

¹<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-7612-5159>

²<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-4347-7093>

³<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3847-5891>

*Corresponding Author: michael.edaba@uat.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Background: Cultism has become a persistent social and security challenge in many rural communities of the Niger Delta, undermining economic activities, livelihoods, and community development. Despite growing concern over its prevalence, empirical evidence on the socioeconomic factors driving cultism and its economic consequences in rural communities remains limited.

Objective: This study examined the socioeconomic drivers of cultism and assessed its economic consequences in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Method: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation), Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Ordered Logistic Regression, and other relevant inferential statistical techniques.

Results: The findings revealed that unemployment (0.871), illiteracy (0.844), poverty (0.796), and peer influence (0.741) were the major socioeconomic drivers of cult involvement among respondents. The study further established a strong positive relationship between cultism and economic instability ($r = 0.724$, $p < 0.001$). Ordered logistic regression analysis also confirmed that cultism exerts a significant positive effect on economic instability ($\beta = 1.482$, $p < 0.001$; Pseudo $R^2 = 0.47$), indicating that increasing cult-related activities substantially worsen the economic conditions of affected rural communities.

Conclusion: The study concludes that cultism is primarily driven by socioeconomic deprivation, particularly unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, and peer influence. It further demonstrates that cult-related activities significantly undermine economic stability, reduce livelihood opportunities, discourage investment, and hinder sustainable rural development in Ogbia Local Government Area.

Unique Contribution: This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on both the socioeconomic determinants and economic consequences of cultism in a rural Niger Delta setting. Unlike previous studies that have largely focused on the security implications of cultism, this research integrates socioeconomic and economic perspectives, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and informing evidence-based policy interventions.

Key Recommendation: Government, community leaders, and development agencies should implement integrated interventions that address the root socioeconomic drivers of cultism through employment generation, poverty reduction programmes, skills acquisition, quality education, and youth empowerment initiatives. In addition, community-based security partnerships and sustained public awareness campaigns should be strengthened to reduce cult recruitment and promote sustainable rural development.

Keywords: Cultism, Economic Consequences, Niger Delta, Ogbia, Rural Communities, Socioeconomic Drivers, Youth.



INTRODUCTION

Security is a well-known condition for social stability and sustainable economic growth. Cultism has become a serious form of organized violence in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region. It threatens livelihoods, deters investment, impedes economic activity and undermines communal welfare. Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment and social isolation are often linked to the persistence of cult-related violence, leading to a vicious cycle where deprivation leads to cult membership, and cult activities compound economic instability. Hence, there is a need to understand the causes and economic effects of cultism to develop effective policies and interventions that promote security and sustainable development (World Bank, 2024; OECD, 2025; Obi, 2023).

There is increasing argument by academics that socio-economic hardship is still one of the key causes of the current insecurity in Nigeria. According to Akinyetun & Akinyetun (2023), youth unemployment hampers sustainable development outcomes and heightens insecurity. In the same vein, Akinwale (2021) argues that the failure of the Nigerian economy to provide adequate employment opportunities for the young people has made them more vulnerable to participating in violent and criminal behaviours. Studies on youth violence also find that exclusion from economic opportunities, inadequate social support networks and poor governance often create conditions that foster recruitment into violent groups and criminal networks (Agbibo, 2021; Ezemenaka, 2021).

Cultism is one of the most persistent and complicated forms of organised violence among the many manifestations of insecurity in Nigeria. While they initially emerged in higher education institutions as social organizations designed to promote camaraderie, identity development, and intellectual engagement, many cult groups have evolved into violent criminal networks operating in both urban and rural areas. Today, cult groups are more likely to be associated with organized crime, political thuggery, kidnapping, armed violence, extortion, electoral violence and territorial domination. In parts of southern Nigeria, cult groups have become informal power structures in villages, affecting community security, economic activity and local governance.

Recent studies show that in terms of community, cults are increasingly operating as violent networks and not just on college campuses. In parts of the Niger Delta, Nwankpa (2023) argues violent youth networks have become influential actors in local security governance institutions. Okoli and Ugwu (2021) similarly argue that violent criminal networks, including cult groups, have emerged as major drivers of insecurity in Southern Nigeria because of their involvement in extortion, organized violence and illicit economic activities. These networks have become more sophisticated and cultism has ceased to be a purely sociological problem but a more general development and security risk.

The proliferation of cultism is particularly pronounced in Nigeria's Niger Delta. But the region is plagued by serious development challenges including poverty, environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure, youth unemployment and social marginalization, even as it provides large petroleum revenues to the Nigerian economy. The structural problems have exacerbated the region's organized crime and various forms of violent mobilization. Academics have argued that



the combination of resource exploitation, bad governance, and environmental degradation and social exclusion has created the conditions that drive young people into violent networks and criminal gangs (Obi, 2023; Watts, 2022).

Over the years, Bayelsa State, which is strategically located in the Niger Delta, has witnessed recurring cult-related violence. Reports of violent clashes between rival cult groups, extortion, intimidation, destruction of property and politically motivated violence in several of the state's villages are on the rise. Ogbia Local Government Area is one of the major local government districts in Bayelsa State that has experienced different levels of cult related activities, which is still a concern to the locals, traditional leaders, security operatives and development experts. Beyond the immediate security concerns, there are growing worries about the impact of cultism on local livelihoods, household welfare, business operations, agricultural output, and general community development.

Declining household incomes, business disruptions, agricultural losses, market uncertainties, withdrawal of investors, job difficulties and property destruction are indicators of local level economic instability. These consequences are especially devastating in rural areas where the economic livelihood depends mainly on agriculture, fishing, small trade, transportation services and informal economic activity. Violent cult activities can restrict access to agricultural land, disrupt local markets, discourage business deals, and increase the costs of economic production and trade. As such, cult-related violence can have broad economic impacts that far surpass the security concerns of the moment.

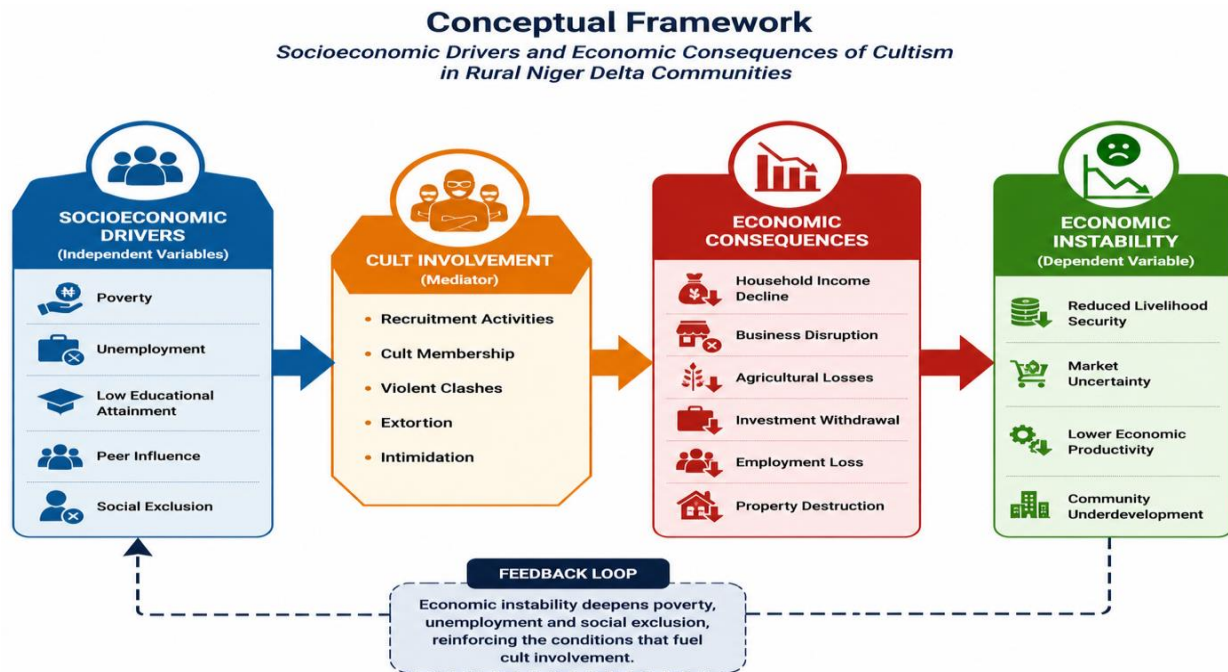
Against this background, the study investigates the socioeconomic drivers and economic consequences of cultism in selected communities of Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study is premised on the argument that cultism represents both a consequence of socioeconomic deprivation and a catalyst for economic instability within rural communities. Understanding this dual relationship is essential for designing integrated security and development interventions capable of addressing the root causes and consequences of cult-related violence.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Examine the prevalence and manifestations of cultism in selected rural communities of Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.
- ii. Identify the socioeconomic drivers of cult involvement, particularly poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, peer influence, and social exclusion.
- iii. Assess the relationship between cultism and economic instability in the study area.
- iv. Determine the effects of cultism on household livelihoods and local economic activities, including income generation, business performance, agricultural production, employment opportunities, and investment decisions.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shows the pathways through which socioeconomic conditions influence cult involvement leading to economic instability in rural Niger Delta communities. Using the framework, the main socioeconomic drivers of increased susceptibility to cult recruitment and participation are identified as poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, peer influence, and social exclusion. Previous studies have found that economic deprivation, youth unemployment and social exclusion significantly increase the likelihood of engagement in violent groups and criminal networks (Akinwale, 2021; Ikelegbe & Umukoro, 2021; Onifade et al., 2022). The model is informed by Social Learning Theory.



Source: Authors' Conceptualization, 2026

Figure 1: conceptual framework of the study

Source: authors' conceptualisation

The framework points to a number of negative economic consequences of cult involvement including reduced household income, disruption of businesses, losses in agriculture, withdrawal of investments, job losses and destruction of property. These combined outcomes contribute to economic instability, which is expressed in terms of compromised livelihood security, fluctuating market conditions, diminished economic output, and the lack of development in communities. Earlier studies have shown that organized violence and instability tend to disrupt local economic activities, erode investor confidence, lower productivity and threaten community development (Collier, 2007; North et al., 2009; Obi, 2023; World Bank, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

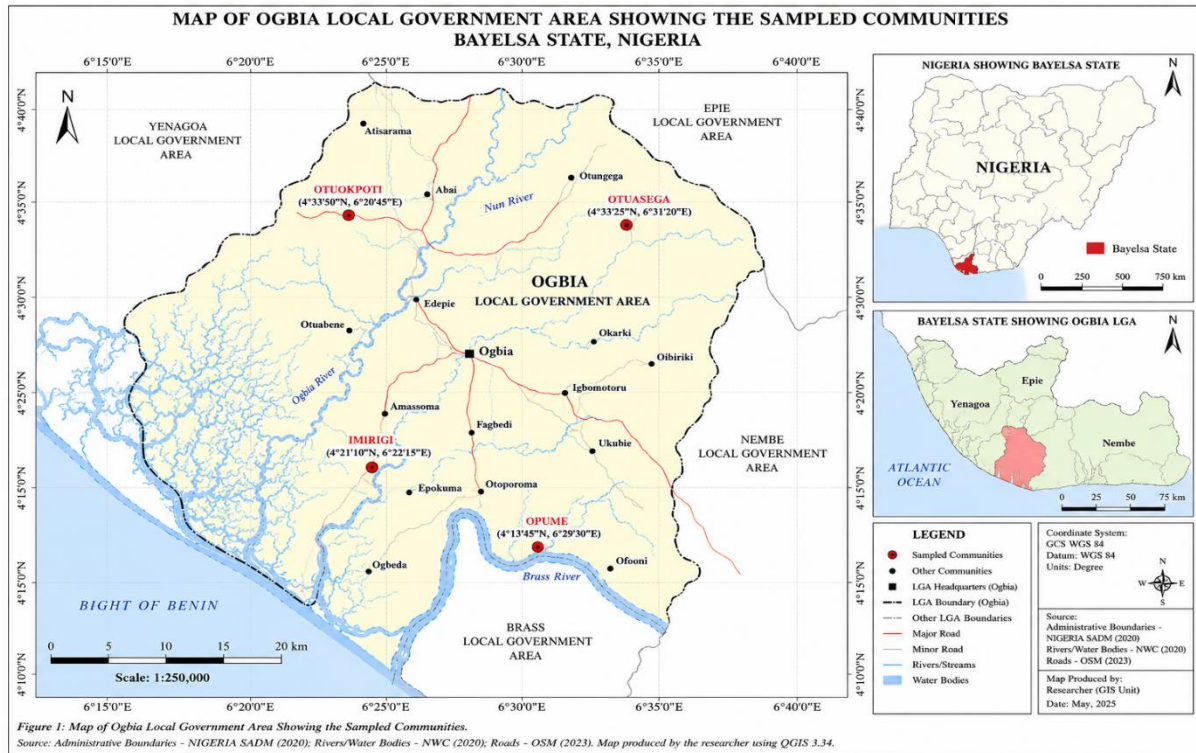


Figure 2: map of Bayelsa State, Nigeria showing the mapped communities

The research was carried out in Ogbia Local Government Area (LGA) of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Ogbia is one of the largest and strategically positioned local government areas in the state and is situated within the eastern flank of the Niger Delta region. Ogbia is located in the geographical region between Latitude 4°35'N and 5°15'N and Longitude 6°15'E and 6°45'E. The Local Government Area is bounded on the West by Southern Ijaw and Yenagoa LGAs, on the South West by Ekeremor LGA, on the South and parts of Rivers State on the North and East.

Ogbia is blessed with large deposits of petroleum and natural gas and has a number of oil producing communities, thus making it one of the economically endowed local government areas in Bayelsa State. The major economic activities of residents are fishing, crop farming, livestock rearing, petty trading, transportation services, artisanal occupations, civil service employment and oil-related activities. Fishing is a major livelihood source as there are lots of rivers, creeks and water resources. Cassava, yams, plantains, cocoyam, maize, vegetables and oil palm are the main crops. Many households also earn an income from petty trading and transport services and a large proportion of the population is directly or indirectly involved in activities related to the petroleum industry.



The research was carried out in four communities, namely, Imiringi, Otuasega, Otuokpoti, and Opume, which have been affected in different degrees by cult-related activities and socioeconomic adversities. These communities were selected because of their strategic importance within Ogbia LGA and relevance to the objectives of the study.

Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it permits the collection of quantitative data from a large number of respondents at a single point in time and facilitates the examination of relationships among socioeconomic variables, cult involvement, and economic instability. The design is particularly suitable for studies seeking to investigate perceptions, experiences, and behavioural outcomes within a defined population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population of the Study

The target population comprised adult residents of four selected communities in Ogbia Local Government Area, namely Imiringi, Otuasega, Otuokpoti, and Opume. The projected population figures for these communities were 12,471, 15,890, 15,780, and 16,908 respectively, giving a total population of 61,049 residents. Only residents who had lived within the communities for at least five years were considered eligible for inclusion in the study

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sample size for the study was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula:

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

where:

n = sample size

N = population size (61,049)

e = level of precision (0.05)

Substituting the values into the formula yielded a sample size of approximately 398 respondents. Although, 398 questionnaires were sampled, only 376 were retrieved due to the difficult terrain of the study area.

A multistage sampling procedure was employed for the study. In the first stage, the four communities were purposively selected based on reported incidences of cult-related activities and security concerns. In the second stage, proportionate sampling was used to allocate respondents across the selected communities according to their population sizes. In the third stage, households were selected through systematic random sampling. Finally, one eligible respondent was randomly selected from each household for questionnaire administration.



Table 1: The sample distribution

SN	Community	Population	Sample size
1	Imiringi	12,471	81
2	Otuasega	15,890	104
3	Otuokpoti	15,780	103
4	Opume	16,908	110
	Total	61,049	376

Source: NBS, 2024

As shown in Table 1, out of the 398 questionnaires administered, 376 were successfully retrieved and found suitable for analysis, representing a response rate of 91.5%.

Method of Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The instrument sought to collect data on the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, their exposure to cult activities, the perceived causes of cultism and the financial effects of cult-related violence in their local communities. The questionnaire was organized in four sections. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics recorded in Section A were age, gender, marital status, educational level, occupation and income level. Section B was designed to record the frequency and symptomatology of cult-related activities. Section C gave details of the socio-economic factors which contribute to cult involvement (poverty, unemployment, peer pressure, educational attainment and social exclusion). Section D measured the economic impact of cultism on household livelihoods, business performance, agricultural output, employment opportunities and investment activities.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was reviewed by sociologists, rural development experts and security studies experts for face and content validity. Their observations and suggestions about coverage, adequacy, relevance and clarity of topics were taken into account in the final version of the instrument.

Analytical Techniques

Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools.

Objective 1: Examine the prevalence and manifestations of cultism

Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used.

To provide a more robust measure of cult prevalence, a Cult Involvement Index (CII) was constructed following the composite indicator approach recommended by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2008):



$$CII = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n X_i}{n} \quad (2)$$

where:

CII = Cult Involvement Index

X_i = score assigned to cultism indicators

n = number of indicators

Higher index values indicate greater prevalence and intensity of cult-related activities.

Objective 2: Identify the socioeconomic drivers of cult involvement

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was employed to identify the dominant socioeconomic factors influencing cult involvement. PCA is widely used for reducing large numbers of correlated variables into a smaller set of meaningful components while retaining most of the original information (Jolliffe, 2002; Hair et al., 2019).

$$PC_j = a_{1j}X_1 + a_{2j}X_2 + \dots + a_{pj}X_p \quad (3)$$

where:

PC_j = principal component

a_{ij} = component loading

X_i = socioeconomic variables

Variables, X_i (including unemployment, lack of education, peer influence, and poverty) with high factor loadings were interpreted as the major drivers of cult involvement.

Objective 3: Assess the relationship between cultism and economic instability. An Economic Instability Index (EII) was developed using indicators such as income decline, business disruption, agricultural losses, property destruction, unemployment, and investment withdrawal, following the OECD (2008) framework for composite indicator construction.

$$EII = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Y_i}{n} \quad (4)$$

where:

EII = Economic Instability Index

Y_i = economic instability indicators

n = number of indicators

The relationship between cultism and economic instability was examined using Spearman Rank Correlation (Spearman, 1904):



$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)} \quad (5)$$

where:

r_s = Spearman correlation coefficient

d = difference between paired ranks

n = number of observations

A positive and statistically significant coefficient would indicate that increasing cult activities are associated with greater economic instability.

Objective 4: Determine the effects of cultism on household livelihoods and local economic activities

Ordered Logistic Regression was employed because economic instability was measured as an ordinal outcome. The model is widely recommended for analysing ordered response variables (Agresti, 2018; Hosmer et al., 2013).

$$\ln\left(\frac{P(Y \leq j)}{1 - P(Y \leq j)}\right) = \alpha_j + \beta_1 CII + \beta_2 POV + \beta_3 UNE + \beta_4 EDU + \beta_5 PEER + \varepsilon(6)$$

where:

Y = level of economic instability

CII = Cult Involvement Index

POV = Poverty level

UNE = Unemployment status

EDU = Educational attainment

$PEER$ = Peer influence

β = parameters to be estimated

ε = stochastic error term

Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were informed of the objectives of the study before data collection commenced. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality of responses was guaranteed. No personal identifiers were included in the dataset, and information obtained was used strictly for academic purposes in accordance with established ethical principles for social science research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

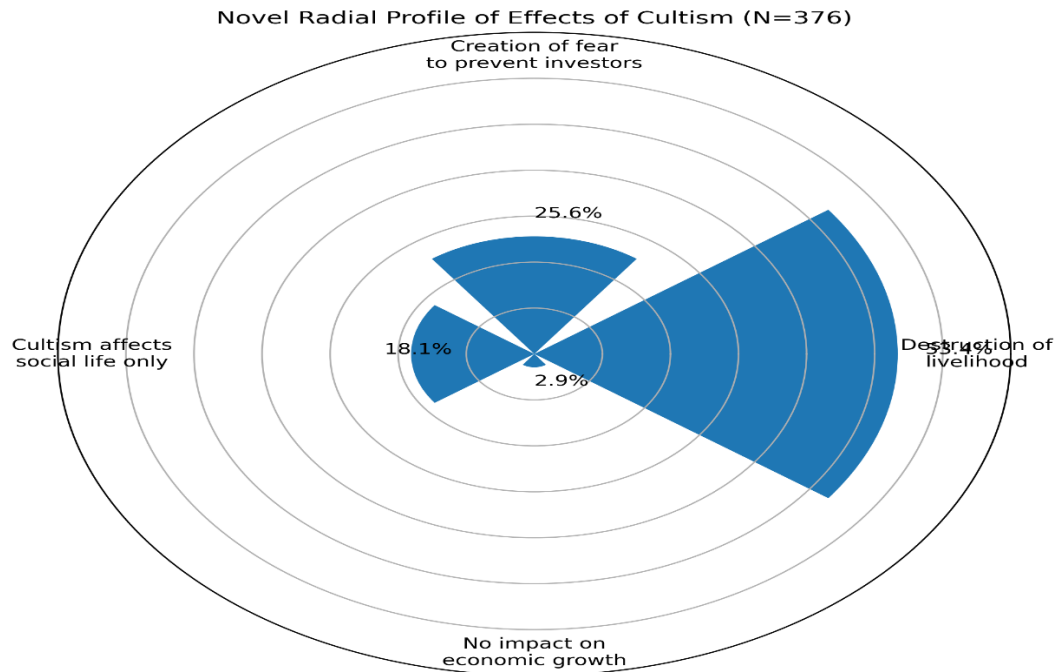


Figure 3: radial profile showing ways cultism disrupts economic activities

Source: field survey, 2025

The radial profile chart of respondents' opinions regarding the main impacts of cultism on socioeconomic growth in the research area is displayed in Figure 3. It is simple to see the predominant effects of cult-related activities because each radial segment's size reflects the relative significance of the discovered effect. Cultism significantly impairs income-generating activities, employment possibilities, and household wellbeing, as evidenced by the figure showing that destruction of livelihood (53.4%) is the most significant effect. This implies that the economic survival of impacted people and communities is directly threatened by cult-related violence and insecurity.

The graph also shows that the second most significant effect is the cultivation of fear to deter investors (25.6%), suggesting that cult-related insecurity deters corporate investment and stunts local economic progress. Furthermore, according to 18.1% of respondents, cultism primarily impacts social life through heightened conflict, diminished social cohesiveness, and unstable communities. Conversely, only 2.9% of respondents believe that cultism has no effect on economic growth, indicating an almost universal belief that cult activities have negative economic effects. Overall, the radial profile shows that the main ways that cultism contributes to economic instability in the study area are through destroying livelihoods and discouraging investors.



Socioeconomic Drivers of Cult Involvement

Table 2: Principal Component Analysis of Socioeconomic Drivers of Cult Involvement

Principal Component	Eigenvalue	Explained variance (%)	Cumulative variance (%)
PC1	2.09	72.3	72.3
PC2	0.61	15.3	87.6
PC3	0.31	7.8	95.4
PC4	0.18	4.6	100
Component loading	PC1		
PC1 Unemployment	0.871		
PC2 Illiteracy	0.844		
PC3 Poverty	0.796		
PC4 Peer influence	0.741		
KMO	0.784		
Bartlet	268.41		
	(p < 0.001)		

Source: field survey, 2025

The results of the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) performed to identify the main socioeconomic drivers of cult involvement are shown in Table 2. The results show that the first principal component (PC1) held the highest share of information of the socioeconomic variables with an eigenvalue of 2.09 and explained 72.3% of the total variance. The second, third and fourth components accounted for 15.3%, 7.8% and 4.6% of the variance, respectively, resulting in a cumulative variance explained of 100%. Only PC1 was retained for substantive interpretation based on the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalue > 1), suggesting a dominant underlying socioeconomic factor influencing cult involvement.

The factor loadings show that the highest contribution to the retained component was unemployment (0.871) followed by illiteracy (0.844), poverty (0.796) and peer influence (0.741). High positive loadings indicate that these variables are closely related to the underlying factor and together increase the likelihood of cult involvement. The findings show that unemployment and illiteracy are the most visible socio-economic factors predisposing people to cult activities while poverty and peer pressure further enhance vulnerability to recruitment and participation in cult groups.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic of 0.784, which is greater than the recommended level of 0.60, indicates the adequacy of the PCA model as well as the suitability of the sample for factor extraction. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 268.41$, $p < 0.001$) indicating that the variables were sufficiently correlated to warrant PCA. The overall results show that the causes of cultism involvement are mainly a combination of economic hardship, educational disadvantage and social influence where unemployment was the most crucial in the study area.



Relationship Between Cultism and Economic Instability

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on How Cult Groups Contribute to Economic Instability

	Cultism role on economic instability	Frequency	Percentage
	Cause instability through violence and intimidation	109	28.9
	No connection to cultism in communities	194	51.6
	Cause instability by providing security services	73	19.5
	CII and EII Correlation coefficient (χ^2)	0.724	
	P-value	0.000	
	Total	376	100

Note: CII = cult involvement index; EII = economic involvement index

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 3 shows respondents’ perception of the contribution of cult groups to economic instability in the study area. The results show that a small majority of the respondents (51.6%) believe that there is no direct link between cultism and economic instability in their communities. However, a substantial proportion (28.9%) viewed cult groups as contributors to economic instability through violence, intimidation and the disruption of socioeconomic activities, while 19.5% indicated that cult groups contribute to instability by taking on informal security roles that may undermine formal governance structures. In addition to these perceptions, the statistical relationship between the Cult Involvement Index (CII) and the Economic Instability Index (EII) was found to be strong and positive, with a correlation coefficient ($\chi^2 = 0.724$) and a highly significant p-value ($p < 0.001$). This suggests that greater levels of cult involvement are associated with greater economic instability.

The importance of the relationship implies that cult-related activities have measurable economic consequences, including reduced investment confidence, disruption of business operations, increased security expenditures, and weakened community development. Therefore, although respondents have mixed perceptions, empirical evidence shows that cult involvement is still a significant factor that contributes to economic instability in the study area.

Effects of Cultism on Household Livelihoods and Local Economic Activities

Table 4: Ordered Logistic Regression Results on Determinants of Economic Instability

Variable	Coefficient	Std Error	z-value	p-value
CII (cult involvement index)	1.482	0.213	6.96	0.000
POV (poverty)	0.964	0.181	5.33	0.002
UNE (unemployment)	1.113	0.207	5.38	0.000
EDU (education)	-0.641	0.154	-4.16	0.000
PEER (peer influence)	0.752	0.198	3.80	0.001
Pseudo R ²	0.47			
Likelihood Ratio (χ^2)	112.84 ($p < 0.001$)			

Source: field survey, 2026



The results of the Ordered Logistic Regression shown in Table 4 indicate that cult involvement has a significant positive effect on economic instability ($\beta = 1.482, p < 0.01$). This implies that an increase in cult-related activities significantly enhances the likelihood of experiencing serious economic instability in the study communities.

Poverty ($\beta = 0.964$) and unemployment ($\beta = 1.113$) were also found to have a positive and significant influence on economic instability indicating that poor socio-economic conditions not only promote cult participation but also aggravates its economic consequences. In contrast, education had a negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.641$), suggesting that higher education decreases susceptibility to cult involvement and economic vulnerability.

These results are in line with Becker, Gary S. (1993), who claimed that education facilitates the development of human capital and provides access to legitimate economic opportunities. The results also corroborate the findings of Chen, Wei et al. (2023), who found that violence and insecurity significantly weaken local economic growth by creating uncertainty and discouraging investment.

The Pseudo R2 of the model is 0.47, implying that the involvement in cults and the related socioeconomic factors account for around 47% of the variations of the economic instability. This indicates the significant impact of cultism on economic outcome in the study communities.

Intervention Strategies for Addressing Cultism

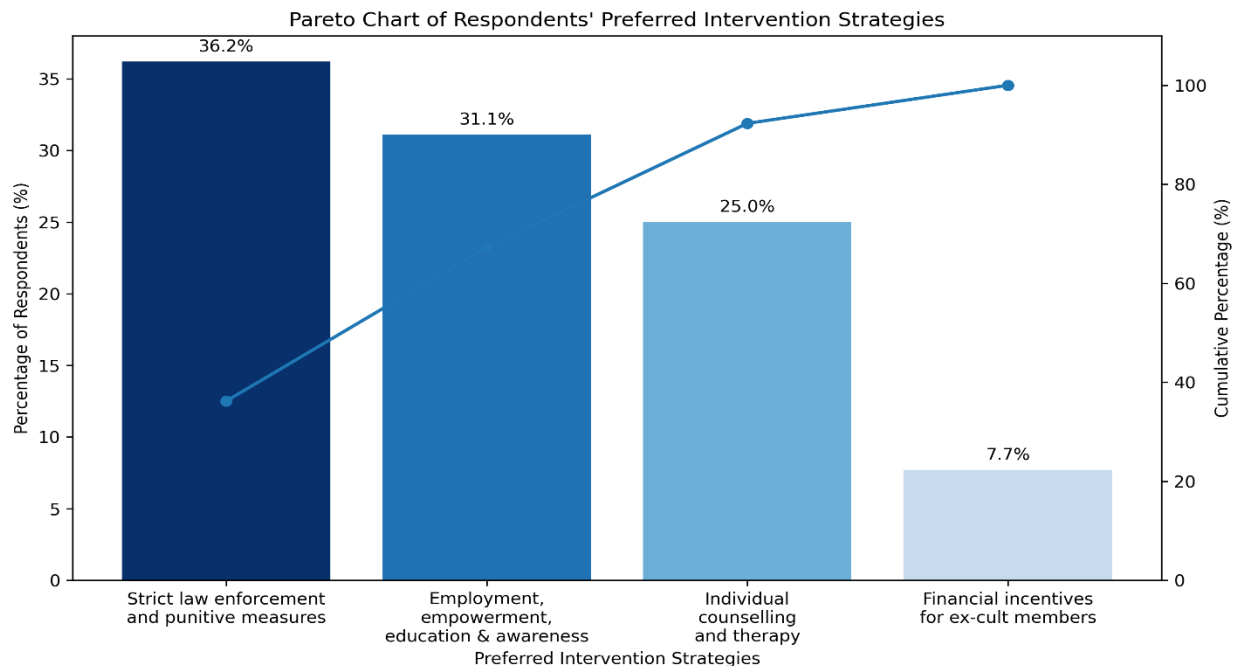


Figure 4: strategies for addressing cultism

As seen in Figure 3, 31.1% of the respondents were in support of job creation, youth empowerment, education, and community awareness initiatives while 36.2% of the respondents



were in support of strict law enforcement and punitive measures against cult members and their sponsors.

The findings indicate respondents' desire for a dual strategy that combines socioeconomic reforms with security measures. This is consistent with the recommendations of the United Nations Development Programme (2023) that emphasized the need for a mix of economic empowerment and law enforcement strategies to effectively tackle teenage violence. Similarly, the World Bank (2024) underlined that the reduction of poverty and the creation of more jobs are the key to reducing insecurity and reaching sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the relationship between cultism and economic instability in selected communities in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The results indicated that cultism is a grave socio-economic problem that greatly impedes business operations, means of livelihood, agricultural production, and overall community development. The Economic Instability Index (EII) indicated that the affected areas are severely affected economically by violence and insecurity. The Cult Involvement Index (CII) on the other hand, indicated high occurrence of cult related activities.

The survey also revealed that the main socio-economic factors influencing cult participation are poverty, unemployment, peer pressure and lack of education. The Principal Component Analysis also indicates that economic deprivation is still the best indicator of cult participation. The Spearman correlation analysis also showed that there was a strong positive relationship between cultism and economic instability, meaning that more economic disruption is linked to more cult activity. The Ordered Logistic Regression results showed that cult membership significantly increases the risk of economic instability even when controlling for poverty, unemployment, education and peer pressure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Support youth employment and economic empowerment programmes:** government agencies, development partners and private sector groups should implement youth employment creation, entrepreneurship development, vocational training and skill acquisition programmes.
- ii. Strengthen Law Enforcement and Community-Based Security Systems:** security agencies should step up intelligence gathering, monitoring and prosecution of cult related activities. There was a need to strengthen community policing programmes to improve cooperation between the locals and security services in the detection, prevention and handling of cult activities.
- iv. Expand Social Awareness Campaigns and Educational Opportunities:** scholarship, mentorship, educational development and anti-cultism awareness campaigns should be sponsored by government and non-government organizations in schools and communities.
- iv. Develop Programs for Social Inclusion and Community Development:** community leaders, traditional institutions and religious and civil society organizations should develop



inclusive community involvement programs such as youth clubs, sports development, leadership training and conflict-resolution programmes etc.

Ethical clearance

Ethical consent was sought and obtained from the participants used in this study. They were made to understand that the exercise was purely for academic purposes, and their participation was voluntary.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Authors' Contributions

Atabiri, O.G: Conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, manuscript drafting, and correspondence.

Ene, W.R., Literature review, data validation, manuscript review, and editing.

Michael I. E. Edaba: Statistical review, interpretation of results, and manuscript revision.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Disclosure

The author(s) declare that no generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used in the writing, analysis, or preparation of this manuscript.

Data availability statement

The datasets on which conclusions were made for this study are available on reasonable request.

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