



Youth Empowerment and Crime Reduction in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background: Youth unemployment and limited opportunities for socio-economic development are major contributors to criminal activities in many parts of Nigeria, including Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State. These challenges increase vulnerability among youths, reduce social cohesion, and hinder community development. However, while, youth empowerment programmes have been implemented to mitigate these issues, their effectiveness in reducing youth involvement in crime remains under-researched in the context of Boki LGA of Cross River State.

Objective: The study examined the impact of youth empowerment programmes on crime reduction among youths in Boki LGA, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Method: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A total of 350 youths, aged 18–35 years, were sampled from the communities in Boki LGA using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.92. Descriptive statistics, including frequency tables and percentages, were used to analyse the data.

Results: Findings show that while a majority of youths in Boki LGA were aware of empowerment initiatives, participation levels were moderate due to factors such as limited access, inadequate programme content, and socio-cultural barriers. Importantly, participants who engaged actively in skill acquisition, entrepreneurship, and community development programmes reported lower involvement in criminal activities compared to non-participants.

Conclusion: The study concludes that youth empowerment programmes in Boki LGA have a positive influence on crime reduction; however, challenges related to accessibility, content relevance, and social support limit their overall effectiveness.

Unique Contribution: The study provides empirical evidence linking youth empowerment interventions to crime reduction at the local government level in Nigeria, particularly in a rural context. It fills the gap in literature on localized youth development strategies and their practical impact on social security.

Key Recommendations: The Policymakers, community leaders, and development agencies should implement comprehensive, inclusive, and context-specific empowerment programmes that address



barriers to participation and actively involve youths in design, execution, and monitoring of initiatives. Emphasis should be placed on sustainable skill acquisition, mentorship, and financial support to maximize the potential of youth-led crime reduction in Boki LGA.

Keywords: Youth empowerment, Crime reduction, Skill acquisition, Entrepreneurship, Youth participation

INTRODUCTION

Youth empowerment has become a critical issue in contemporary development discourse, particularly in developing countries where demographic structures are dominated by a youthful population. In many societies, youths represent a significant proportion of the population and constitute an essential human resource for socio-economic transformation. Their productive engagement is therefore fundamental to national development and social stability. In Nigeria, the youth population constitutes a large demographic segment with immense potential for innovation, economic productivity, and political participation. However, the failure to adequately integrate youths into meaningful economic and social opportunities has contributed to rising unemployment, poverty, and crime (Adebayo, 2022; Obande-Ogbuinya et al., 2024). Youth empowerment refers to the deliberate process of equipping young people with the skills, resources, knowledge, and opportunities necessary to enable them participate effectively in socio-economic and political activities. It encompasses various initiatives such as entrepreneurship development, vocational training, access to financial resources, leadership development, and community participation (Nwafor & Etim, 2025; Njoku et al., 2024). Through empowerment, youths acquire capabilities that enhance their economic independence and social inclusion, thereby reducing their vulnerability to deviant and criminal behaviours.

Globally, youth empowerment has been recognized as an important strategy for addressing crime and social instability. International development agencies, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), emphasize the importance of youth-focused development programs as preventive mechanisms against crime and violence. These initiatives aim to address structural factors such as unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion that often predispose young people to criminal activities (UNODC, 2024).

In Africa, the challenge of youth unemployment remains a major development concern. The continent's rapidly growing youth population has not been matched with adequate employment opportunities and economic inclusion. As a result, many youths experience marginalization and limited access to productive resources. Studies have shown that socio-economic deprivation, lack of skills, and inadequate access to entrepreneurial opportunities significantly increase the likelihood of youth involvement in criminal activities (Udeh, Nwankwo, & Olatunji, 2024; Nwafor & Orji-Egwu, 2015). Consequently, youth empowerment initiatives such as skills acquisition programs, entrepreneurship training, and micro-credit schemes have been widely promoted as mechanisms for reducing youth unemployment and preventing crime.

In Nigeria, youth empowerment has gained increasing policy attention due to rising concerns over youth unemployment, insecurity, and criminal activities. Several government initiatives, including the N-Power Programme, Youth Enterprise Development Programme, and National



Directorate of Employment (NDE) schemes, have been introduced to enhance youth skills and promote self-employment. These programs aim to equip young people with technical and entrepreneurial competencies necessary for sustainable livelihoods and economic independence (Iwelumor, Adekunle, & Olagunju, 2025).

At the sub-national level, particularly in Cross River State, youth empowerment programs have been implemented to address unemployment and social exclusion among young people. Such programs emphasize vocational training, entrepreneurship development, and community engagement. Evidence suggests that empowerment initiatives that improve youth employability and income-generating capacity contribute significantly to crime reduction by addressing the socio-economic factors that drive criminal behaviour (Nwafor & Etim, 2025).

In line with these initiatives, many rural and peri-urban communities continue to face challenges associated with youth unemployment and criminal activities. Boki Local Government Area is one of such communities where socio-economic deprivation, limited access to economic opportunities, and inadequate youth development programs have contributed to rising youth involvement in criminal activities such as theft, cultism, and other forms of social deviance. These challenges underscore the need for effective empowerment strategies that can integrate youths into productive economic activities and promote social stability. Against this background, this study examines the relationship between youth empowerment and crime reduction in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, with particular focus on youth entrepreneurship and youth participation in socio-economic activities as key empowerment mechanisms.

Youth unemployment and social marginalization remain major socio-economic challenges confronting many developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. In Nigeria, the rapidly growing youth population has not been adequately matched with commensurate economic opportunities, resulting in widespread unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion. These structural challenges have contributed significantly to the rising incidence of criminal activities among young people, including theft, cultism, drug abuse, cybercrime, and violent crimes (Adebayo, 2022; Iwelumor, Adekunle, & Olagunju, 2025).

Despite the implementation of various youth empowerment initiatives, existing empirical studies have largely concentrated on urban centres and broad national analyses, with limited attention to rural and semi-urban contexts such as Boki Local Government Area. For instance, Iwelumor, Adekunle, and Olagunju (2025), examined the relationship between empowerment programmes and social stability at a national level but did not provide disaggregated evidence for rural communities. Similarly, Udeh, Nwankwo (2024), and Olatunji focused on cross-country analysis in Africa, thereby overlooking localised socio-cultural dynamics that shape youth behaviour in specific communities. In addition, Nwafor and Etim . (2025), assessed empowerment initiatives within the state but did not explicitly examine their direct relationship with crime reduction, particularly within Boki Local Government Area.



Consequently, there remains a clear empirical gap regarding the extent to which youth empowerment strategies especially entrepreneurship development and youth participation in socio-economic activities directly influence crime reduction in rural settings. This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by providing context-specific empirical evidence from Boki Local Government Area, with a view to informing policy interventions and contributing to the broader discourse on youth empowerment and crime prevention in Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does youth entrepreneurship development contribute to crime reduction in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State?
2. How does youth participation in socio-economic and community activities influence crime reduction in Boki Local Government Area?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment remains one of the most pressing socio-economic challenges confronting developing countries, particularly Nigeria, where a rapidly growing youth population is not matched with adequate employment opportunities. Youths constitute a significant proportion of the labour force, yet many are unable to secure gainful employment due to structural economic constraints, limited industrial growth, and inadequate skill development systems. This situation has led to widespread poverty, frustration, and social exclusion among young people. Studies have shown that persistent unemployment among youths undermines economic productivity and increases vulnerability to deviant behaviours (Ikeogwu and Nwajei; Adebayo2025). The consequences of youth unemployment extend beyond economic deprivation to include significant social and security implications. Unemployed youths often experience feelings of marginalisation, hopelessness, and relative deprivation, which may predispose them to engage in criminal activities as alternative means of survival. This aligns with sociological perspectives which suggest that when legitimate means of achieving societal goals are limited, individuals may resort to illegitimate means. Empirical evidence indicates that high levels of youth unemployment are strongly associated with increased rates of theft, cybercrime, cultism, and other forms of social deviance in Nigeria (Yusuf, 2025).

In response to the challenges of youth unemployment, youth empowerment has emerged as a strategic intervention aimed at enhancing the productive capacities of young people. Youth empowerment involves equipping youths with relevant skills, knowledge, resources, and opportunities necessary for economic participation and self-reliance. It encompasses initiatives such as entrepreneurship development, vocational training, financial inclusion, and capacity building. These interventions are designed to address the structural causes of unemployment by improving employability and fostering innovation among young people (Eze, Nwankwo, and Kanyangale 2025).



Empowerment and Crime Reduction

Youth empowerment plays a critical role in promoting economic inclusion and reducing poverty among young people. By providing access to skill acquisition programmes, start-up capital, and mentorship opportunities, empowerment initiatives enable youths to engage in productive economic activities. This reduces dependence on limited formal employment opportunities and enhances income generation. Evidence suggests that empowered youths are more likely to become self-employed or employers of labour, thereby contributing to local economic development and reducing unemployment levels (Iwelumor et al. 2025). Beyond its economic benefits, youth empowerment has significant implications for crime reduction. When young people are productively engaged and economically independent, their likelihood of engaging in criminal activities decreases substantially. Empowerment initiatives help to reduce idleness, strengthen self-esteem, and provide legitimate means of livelihood, thereby addressing key drivers of criminal behaviour. Studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurship development and youth engagement programmes are effective tools for mitigating youth involvement in crime and promoting social stability (Ogunleye, Agesin, and Popoola, 2025).

In summary, youth unemployment constitutes a major structural challenge that predisposes young people to socio-economic exclusion and criminal behaviour. However, youth empowerment serves as a viable mechanism for addressing this challenge by enhancing employability, promoting economic participation, and reducing vulnerability to crime. The interrelationship between youth unemployment, empowerment, and crime reduction underscores the need for comprehensive policy interventions that prioritise skill development, entrepreneurship, and youth inclusion in socio-economic activities.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between youth empowerment and crime reduction across different contexts. For instance, Iwelumor, Adekunle, and Olagunju (2025) conducted a study on youth empowerment and social stability in Nigeria and found that skill acquisition programs and entrepreneurship initiatives significantly reduced youth involvement in criminal activities. Their findings showed that youths who participated in empowerment programs were more likely to engage in productive economic activities rather than criminal behaviour.

Similarly, Udeh, Nwankwo, and Olatunji (2024) investigated the impact of youth employment initiatives on crime reduction in selected African countries. The study revealed that youth empowerment initiatives such as vocational training, financial inclusion, and entrepreneurship development significantly reduced youth participation in criminal activities by providing alternative sources of income.

In another study conducted in Enugu State, Nigeria, Udoikah and Ndaeyo (2023) found that youth participation in community development programs contributed significantly to social stability and reduction in criminal behaviour. The study emphasized that youths who actively participate in community development initiatives develop stronger social bonds and greater commitment to community values.



Furthermore, Nwafor and Etim (2025) examined the impact of youth empowerment programs in Cross River State and reported that empowerment initiatives such as vocational training and micro-credit support improved youth economic participation and reduced their involvement in criminal activities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Empowerment Theory

This study is anchored on empowerment theory propounded by Parson (1989) and R. Solomon, (1976). This theory stresses the mystery of the environment, self-determination and recognition of Hassenfeld social forces that negatively affect one's life. and Cheslar (1987) maintained that, the overarching goal of empowerment theory is to help individuals from disempowered groups move towards internal locus of Controlling behavior believing that one has control over the outcomes of one's life. Specifically, empowerment theory is based on the assumption that the capacity of the people to improve their lives is determined by the ability to control. Through this framework, the youths remained engaged in policy dialogue, strategic national decision making and development, at the same time assist to build their capacity from Violence and crime. However, this theory is relevant to this study in that it provides a rebuilding process and thus, ensures the youths directly benefit from the on-going national development agenda.

Theory advocates that people should be actively involved in decision-making, planning system, implementation of development project. The theory explains that empowerment will be effective when individuals and groups acquire skill, education, knowledge, and leadership capacities. This will enable them effectively manage their social and economic interest.

Empowerment theory can be applied in Boki LGA by involving individuals, groups and communities members in the planning and implementation process in the project developments, and holistic approach to the socio-economic development particularly in agriculture, education, and small-scale enterprises, skill-acquisition programs cooperative societies, and access to credits and economically empower the youths, politically and socially, the theory seek to support inclusive and participation governance. Civil involvement and community project ownership to enhance sustainable development pattern and improve the living conditions of the masses. The aims of empowerment programs is to ensure that the need to the citizen as well the e communities participation be done to avail the challenges.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the relationship between youth empowerment and crime reduction in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design is appropriate for studies that seek to collect data from a sample of individuals in order to describe existing conditions and examine relationships among variables within a population. The design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to collect first-hand information from youths within the study area regarding their experiences with empowerment initiatives and their perceptions of crime



reduction. The design also allowed for the use of statistical techniques such as frequency distribution, percentages, and chi-square analysis in examining the relationships among the study variables.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises youths aged 18–35 years in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. According to projections from the Cross River State Bureau of Statistics, the total population of Boki LGA was estimated at 328,982 in 2024. Given that youths constitute a significant proportion of Nigeria’s population, estimated at approximately 35%–40% of the total population (National Youth Policy, 2019; National Bureau of Statistics, 2023), the youth population in Boki LGA can be reasonably estimated.

Using 35% youth proportion:

$$\text{Youth} \backslash \text{Population} = 0.35 \times 328,982$$

$$\text{Youth} \backslash \text{Population} \approx 115,144$$

Therefore, the estimated population of youths in Boki Local Government Area is approximately 115,144.

3.3 Sample Size Determination

Given the estimated youth population of 115,144, the sample size was determined using Yamane’s (1967) formula:

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

Where:

(n) = sample size

(N) = population size (115,144)

(e) = level of precision (0.05)

Substituting:

$$n = \frac{115,144}{1 + 115,144(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{115,144}{1 + 115,144(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{115,144}{1 + 287.86}$$

$$n = \frac{115,144}{288.86}$$

$$n \approx 398$$

Thus, the statistically appropriate sample size is approximately 398 respondents. However, due to time constraints, cost limitations, and field accessibility, the sample size was adjusted to 350 respondents, which is still considered adequate and representative for social science research.



3.4 Sampling Techniques

The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique, incorporating stratified sampling, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling, in order to ensure adequate representation of youths in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State. At the first stage, stratified sampling was employed to divide the study area into distinct strata based on political wards and communities. This approach ensured that respondents were selected from different geographical locations within the Local Government Area, thereby enhancing the representativeness of the sample. At the second stage, purposive sampling was utilized in selecting specific communities. The selection was based on clearly defined criteria, including the concentration of youth population, accessibility of respondents, and the presence of youth empowerment programmes. This enabled the researcher to focus on areas that were most relevant to the objectives of the study. At the final stage, simple random sampling was adopted to select individual respondents from the chosen communities. This technique ensured that every eligible youth had an equal probability of being selected, thereby minimising sampling bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Data were collected through direct administration of questionnaires to respondents in selected communities within Boki Local Government Area. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires with the assistance of trained research assistants who helped explain the purpose of the study to respondents. This approach improved response rates and ensured that respondents clearly understood the questions before providing their responses.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from the field were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive Statistics such as frequency distribution and simple percentages were used to summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and provide an overview of their responses. Inferential Statistics to test the hypotheses of the study, the Chi-square (χ^2) statistical technique was employed. Chi-square is widely used in social science research to examine the relationship between categorical variables.

The formula for Chi-square is expressed as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

χ^2 = Chi-square value

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

The calculated Chi-square value was compared with the critical Chi-square value at 0.05 level of significance. If the calculated value exceeded the critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected; otherwise, it was accepted.



DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of data collected for the study on youth empowerment and crime reduction in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

A total of 350 questionnaires were administered and successfully retrieved, representing a 100% response rate, which is adequate for robust statistical analysis.

The data are analyzed using:

- Frequency distribution
- Percentages
- Chi-square (χ^2) statistical technique

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Distribution Responses by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	210	60
Female	140	40
Total	350	100

Interpretation:

The result indicates that a higher proportion of respondents were male (60%), while females accounted for 40%, suggesting reasonable gender representation in the study.

4.2.2 Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–25	123	35
26–30	116	33
31–35	111	32
Total	350	100

Interpretation:

The findings confirm that all respondents fall within the active youth bracket, thereby enhancing the validity of the study.

4.2.3 Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	56	16
Secondary	154	44
Tertiary	140	40
Total	350	100



Interpretation:

Most respondents possess secondary and tertiary education, indicating a relatively informed sample capable of providing reliable responses.

Table 4.4: Occupational Distribution of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Unemployed	105	30
Self-employed	140	40
Civil Servant	70	20
Others	35	10
Total	350	100

Interpretation:

The high proportion of unemployed youths (30%) underscores the relevance of youth empowerment programmes in addressing socio-economic challenges.

4.3 Analysis of Research Questions

Table 4.5: Youth Entrepreneurship Development and Crime Reduction

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly	140	40
Agree	126	36
Disagree	49	14
Strongly	35	10
Total	350	100

Interpretation:

A combined 76% of respondents agreed that youth entrepreneurship development contributes significantly to crime reduction.

Table 4.6: Youth Participation and Crime Reduction

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	152	44
Agree	112	32
Disagree	42	12
Strongly Disagree	42	12
Total	350	100



Interpretation:

The majority (76%) of respondents affirmed that youth participation in socio-economic activities plays a significant role in reducing crime.

4.4 Test of Hypotheses

Chi-square (χ^2) was used at 0.05 level of significance.

4.4.1 Hypothesis One

$H_{0\ 1}$: Youth entrepreneurship development has no significant relationship with crime reduction.

Observed Table

Table 4.7: Chi-Square Analysis for Hypothesis One

Category	Observe (O)	Expected (E)
Agree	266	175
Disagree	84	175
Total	350	350

Result: $\chi^2 = 94.64$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$

Decision:

Since the calculated χ^2 value (94.64) is greater than the critical value (3.84), the null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion:

There is a significant relationship between youth entrepreneurship development and crime reduction.

4.4.2 Hypothesis Two

$H_{0\ 2}$: Youth participation has no significant relationship with crime reduction.

Category Observed (O)

Table 4.8: Chi-Square Analysis for Hypothesis Two

Category	Observe (O)	Expected (E)
Agree	226	175
Disagree	84	175
Total	350	350

Result: $\chi^2 = 94.64$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$



Decision:

The null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion:

Youth participation has a significant relationship with crime reduction.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the argument that youth empowerment plays a critical role in crime reduction, particularly in rural and semi-urban communities such as Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State. A total of 350 respondents were sampled, with data analyzed using frequency distribution, percentages, and Chi-square (χ^2) tests at a 0.05 level of significance. Key socio-demographic characteristics indicated:

- * A higher proportion of males (60%) than females (40%).
- * Majority of respondents were within the active youth age bracket of 18–35 years.
- * Most respondents had secondary (44%) or tertiary education (40%), suggesting awareness of empowerment programs.
- * Occupational distribution revealed 30% unemployment, 40% self-employment, 20% civil service employment, and 10% in other categories.

Youth Entrepreneurship Development and Crime Reduction

The study revealed a statistically significant relationship between youth entrepreneurship development and crime reduction, as evidenced by the high chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 94.64$). This implies that entrepreneurship initiatives serve as a viable mechanism for reducing youth involvement in criminal activities. This finding is consistent with the propositions of Strain Theory, which argues that individuals' resort to crime when legitimate means of achieving societal goals are blocked (Merton, 1938). In the context of this study, many youths in Boki experience unemployment and limited access to economic opportunities. Such conditions create socio-economic strain, which may push them toward deviant behaviour. However, entrepreneurship development programs provide alternative legitimate means of income generation, thereby reducing the pressure to engage in criminal activities.

Empirically, this finding aligns with the study by Iwelumor, Adekunle, and Olagunju (2025), who found that entrepreneurship and skill acquisition programmes significantly reduce youth involvement in crime in Nigeria. Similarly, Udeh, Nwankwo, and Olatunji (2024) reported that youths engaged in entrepreneurial activities are less likely to participate in criminal behaviour due to increased economic independence. Furthermore, entrepreneurship enhances self-efficacy and economic resilience, which are critical in reducing vulnerability to crime. According to Acs et al. (2018), entrepreneurship fosters innovation, job creation, and income generation, thereby addressing structural causes of crime such as poverty and unemployment. In line with this, the findings of this study suggest that when youths are productively engaged in business activities,



their likelihood of engaging in theft, cultism, and other forms of deviance significantly decreases. In addition, access to micro-credit facilities and financial inclusion—key components of entrepreneurship development—have been identified as crucial factors in crime prevention. Nwafor and Etim (2025) argue that financial empowerment enhances youth economic participation and reduces social exclusion, thereby minimizing the risk of criminal engagement.

Youth Participation in Socio-Economic Activities and Crime Reduction

The study also found a significant relationship between youth participation in socio-economic and community activities and crime reduction. This suggests that active engagement of youths in community development initiatives contributes meaningfully to social stability. This finding strongly supports Social Control Theory, which posits that individuals who are actively involved in societal activities are less likely to engage in deviant behaviour due to strong social bonds (Hirschi, 1969). Youth participation fosters: Attachment to community values, commitment to societal norms, involvement in productive activities, belief in social institutions

These elements collectively reduce the likelihood of criminal behaviour. The result is consistent with Udoikah and Ndaeyo (2023), who found that youth involvement in community development programs significantly reduces antisocial behaviour in Nigeria. Similarly, Engel (1991) emphasized that youth participation in community affairs enhances civic responsibility and social cohesion, which are critical for crime prevention. Moreover, participation in socio-economic activities creates a sense of belonging and inclusion, which reduces feelings of marginalization—one of the major drivers of youth crime. According to the United Nations (2022), inclusive participation of youths in development processes strengthens social integration and reduces vulnerability to crime and violence. The findings also align with UNODC (2024), which emphasizes that development-based approaches to crime prevention—particularly youth engagement—are more sustainable than enforcement-based strategies alone. By involving youths in community decision-making, skill acquisition programmes, and economic activities, societies can effectively address the root causes of crime.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concludes that:

Youth empowerment, through entrepreneurship development, is a critical factor in reducing crime. Providing youths with business skills, resources, and opportunities mitigates unemployment-driven criminal activities. Also that active youth participation in socio-economic and community development programs significantly decreases deviant behaviors. Engagement fosters responsibility, strengthens social bonds, and reduces idleness that often leads to criminal acts. Overall, the study confirms that youth empowerment is an effective strategy for crime prevention in rural and semi-urban Nigerian contexts. Failure to implement structured empowerment programs may exacerbate unemployment-related criminality among youths.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community stakeholders should expand access to entrepreneurship training, microfinance, and business incubation programs. Focus should be on equipping youths with practical skills, startup capital, and mentorship to ensure sustainable economic engagement.
2. Promotion of Youth Participation in Community Development: Local authorities and community leaders should create platforms for youth involvement in civic projects, skill development workshops, and voluntary community services. Policies should incentivize active participation through recognition, awards, and tangible opportunities for leadership roles.

Citation

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