

# **(878) Factors Motivating Violent Behaviours Among Youths In Delta Region Of Southern Nigeria**

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## **PROBLEM**

The Niger Delta region of Southern Nigeria has been a hot spot for violence, perpetuated by mainly youths who advance several reasons for their actions. These violent behaviours often leave scores dead or injured not to mention the destruction to government and society's infrastructures. Several crude oil pipelines and petroleum chemical installations have been damaged during these episodes of violence. However, studies that would illuminate the public health impacts of this violence were lacking at the time this pilot was launched.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To study the reasons why the youths in Delta region of Nigeria opt for violent confrontations against government and multinational petrochemical companies operating in their region.

## **METHOD**

A cross-sectional pilot survey of youths; 2 600 randomly selected youths from 13 out of 25 local government areas of the three senatorial zones of Delta State of Nigeria participated. Between November 2002 and February 2003, these youths were given self-administered questionnaires with specific questions about their employment status, educational background, age, sex and perceived situations such as feelings of being cheated by authorities and reasons for military intervention in their area. A descriptive analysis of the 2 000 returned questionnaires was made and subsequently ANOVA was utilised for statistical analysis.

## **RESULTS**

91% felt cheated in the resource distribution; 63% felt the revenue sharing formula of the federal government is unfair; 91,95% were unemployed and 67,87% felt they were deprived of education. 960 (48%) respondents felt the quest for the control of crude oil was the reason for resorting to violence; 640 (32%) agreed it was partly the reason; 360 (16%) said it was not the reason while 60 (3%) were not sure. 1 380 (69%) preferred the crude oil to be in the total control of their region; 400 (20%) said it should not be in total control while 220 (11%) either were not sure or felt a part of it should be controlled by the region. 1 580 (79%) rejected military intervention while the rest were either partial or not sure. 860 females (43%) and 1 140 male (57%) participated.

## **CONCLUSION**

This brief survey provides the basic data on the factors that motivate the violent behaviours of youths towards crude exploitation, poor development and low capacity-building and empowerment of future Nigerian leaders. Several factors were advanced as reasons for the chronic youth violence and the persistent glamour for regional control of natural resources such crude oil in the Delta region of Nigeria. Other countries with similar situations have applied both political and economic interventions that provided equity and reassurances. These data when well translated could initiate strategies and actions targeted at those concerns with a view to reducing morbidity and mortality from youth violence in this region