

**‘DISCORD IN THE CITY OF HARMONY’: PROBING THE PHENOMENON OF  
YOUTH VIOLENCE IN ILORIN, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*The phenomenon of youth violence and its attendant consequences constitute the leading problems ravaging many urban cities of the world most especially the socio-economically developing Nations. In Nigeria, the phenomenon of youth violence is widely reported in every region of the country. Thus, this study examined factors contributing to youth violence in the harmonious city of Ilorin. Between methods approach was adopted. Questionnaire was employed to collect data among 1210 selected young people that are domiciled in violence prone localities. Descriptive data were analysed with the aid of frequency tables, while inferential data were analysed using chi-square and multinomial regression analysis. Using chi-square test of association, the findings of the study shows that there is a significant relationship between neighbourhood safety regarding violence and concentration of poor people in the neighbourhood ( $p < 0.05$ ) experience of violence and neighbourhood unplanned structure ( $P < 0.05$ ); Youth violence and lack of security patrol in the community ( $(P < 0.05)$ ). Further, the likelihood ration tests from the regression*

*model shows that drug abuse (.000), illiteracy (.000), poverty (.006) and insecurity (0.00) were significantly impacting youth violence in Ilorin metropolis. On the other hand, poor neighbourhood (.016) were not significantly impacting criminal activities in the neighbourhoods. The regression model also reports that Poverty, unemployment, drug abuse, illiteracy, poor neighbourhood and insecurity only contributes 26.3% (Nagelkerke =.263). The study concludes that there is a chemistry between certain socio-economic characteristics and youth violence in Ilorin metropolis. Therefore, the study recommends that relevant stakeholders in their respective communities should be incorporated into the community policing to ensure the menace of youth violence is properly addressed. Also, the study recommends that more funds geared towards social investment programs and infrastructural development should be budgeted to violence prone communities to arrest the phenomenon of youth violence.*

**Keywords:** Harmony; Urban Cities, Poverty, Drug Use, Community, Youth Violence

### **Introduction**

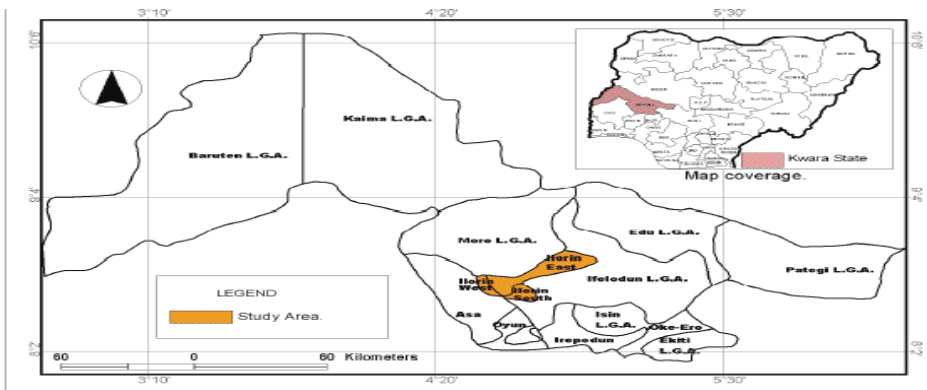
In African societies, young people constitute much of the population, and Nigeria is not an exception. Statistics have shown that Nigerian youths account for 60% of the country's total population with annual 2.6% growth rate (Ajaegbu, 2012; Awogbenle&Iwuamadi, 2010). When provided with enabling environment, young people, like those of Nigeria, are central and strategic to socio-economic and political transformations because they represent indispensable and ready-made tools in the making and unmaking of social and public order in any society (Ukeje, 2011; Nachana'a and Yusuf, 2015). Perhaps, owing to an age-long marginalisation, most young Nigerians have lost trust in their political leaders and as such are increasingly becoming angry and frustrated thereby taking on the roles of instigators and leaders of violent conflicts rather than mere followers. Studies have found in Nigeria that most violent activities are recorded in the urban centres. Indeed, the Nigerian urban centres, especially the socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods, are increasingly becoming theatres of violence manifested through gang and cult-related activities and this is increasingly becoming an issue of concern in Ilorin, the political and economic capital of Kwara State. The city of Ilorin is increasingly been occupied by poor young people who are either unemployed or under employed, drug dealers, property burglars, motorcycle snatchers, pocket pickers, armed robbers, political thugs and more of negative products such as violence. What has surfaced from these negative acts such as violence is that young people are usually the perpetrators and that, assaults involving young people contribute to injury, disability and death. Numerous studies have been conducted concerning the prevalence of violence in the city. However, what research has not adequately delved into is the intersection or interface between socio-economic, socio-political, neighbourhood physical characteristics and youth violence. Hence, the need for this study. Fundamentally, this study attempt to fill the gap in literature and improve on other numerous studies such as Isiaq, *et al.*, (2018) who reported that drug and alcoholism is a predisposing factor for youth violence in Ilorin. In this present study, attempt was made to identify other factors contributing to the alarming incidence of youth violence in Ilorin.

### **Ilorin: A city in Perspective**

The city of Ilorin is located on latitude 8 °30'N and longitude 4°35' E; 306km northeast of Lagos and 500km southwest of Abuja. Owing to its central location, the city of Ilorin serves as the major link between the Northern and Southern parts of the country. The city of Ilorin hosts the headquarters of the Emirate Council comprising five main Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the state, viz-a-viz, Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin South, Ilorin West, and Moro LGAs.

The city of Ilorin is popularly known as *Ilu Alfa* (the town of Islamic Scholars). Historically, the city of Ilorin is an assemblage of culturally diverse people who adopted Yoruba as a lingua-franca and Emirate as a political entity. The harmonious co-existence among the people of Ilorin can best be understood from the lifestyle of its inhabitant as Yoruba is the most popular language, the leadership system is a blend of Hausa-Fulani emirate system with Yoruba title-holding and a Hausa style of dressing (Danmole, 1980). Culturally, the major heritage of Ilorin includes *Ere-waka, Ijo-olomooba, Iyawosara, Bareke, Dadakuada music, and Durban Festival*. Religious wise, the city of Ilorin is predominantly a Muslim community with a certain degree of Christian faithful. The major occupation of traditional Ilorin includes farming, hunting, pottery and Craft work. This craft work includes carving cutlasses, hoes, arrows and other tools. The pottery work also includes making of big and small local cooking pots, local pigeon box and cooking utensils like dishes and pots for fetching water are made in commercial quantity in Ilorin. *Aso-oke* (hand-woven cloth) business is another lucrative industry that is thriving in Ilorin. This *Aso-Oke* is woven in different localities such as *Agbarere, Okelele, OkePakata, Isale Aluko*, and some other locations in Ilorin.

*Figure 1: The Map of Kwara State, Nigeria, Indicating Ilorin (Nigeria map insert)*



Source: Google Map

Modern Ilorin has undergone certain physical and structural expansion over the years (Omoyia, 2013). The city had a population of 856,900, making it the 11th largest city in Nigeria (the World Gazetteer 2015). Modern Ilorin houses several industries, notably Dangote Flour Mills, Unifoam Group, FoodPro Nigeria Limited, Tuyl Pharmaceutical Company, KAMWIL, Golden Confectionate Food Industries, Chellaram Motor-Cycle Assembly plants, International Tobacco Company, Olam Nigeria Limited, and Rajrab Pharmaceuticals. In modern Ilorin, there are several public and private tertiary institutions

such as University of Ilorin, Kwara State Polytechnics, Al-Hikamah University, Crown-Hill University, Kinsey college of education and Kwara state college of education. In terms of hospitality, modern Ilorin is home to certain numbers of four (4) and three (3) stars hotel such as Whitefield Hotel, G-pinnacle Hotel, Princess Luxury Hotel, Noktel Resort Hotel, Fancourt Hotel, Savannah Hotel, E-phoenix Hotel, Peace Hotel among numerous others. Transportation wise, modern Ilorin offers reliable road transport services to virtually all the States of the federation. There are three modes of transiting within the state such as the conventional taxis, *Okada* (Commercial motorcycle) and *Keke Napep*(Commercial tricycle).

Ilorin, the political and commercial headquarters of Kwara State, has lived on the assumption of being a peaceful traditional community devoid of criminality and youth violence. However, this assumption is under serious threat given the recent surge of youth violence in Ilorin. Between 2009 and 2019 not less than 248 people were reportedly killed with over 115 people injured and properties worth millions of Naira destroyed as a result of violence attributed to politics, secret cultism, land dispute and hooliganism (Abdullahi, Seedat-Khan and Saheed, 2016; Isiaq, Saheed, Abdulqadri and Olatunji, 2018). On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 2015 violence was recorded in *Idi-Ape, Gambari, Adifa* and *Agbarere* areas between the officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and some hoodlums. This singular incidence led to loss of at least three lives and properties worth millions destroyed in the affected areas ([www.Punchng.com](http://www.Punchng.com), 2015, [www.Ilorin.info](http://www.Ilorin.info), 2015). In 2017, not less than 7 persons died and 8 others injured in another incidence of violence in different parts of Ilorin such as *Ikororo, Baboko, Osere, Olunlande, Egbejila and Coca-Cola* road (Agency Report, 2017). While not less than 45 people were killed in cult-related violence between 2017 and 2019 (Dele, 2018; Statisense.com.ng, 2020).

Between May 2020 and March 2021 there are several reported cases of cult related violence where not less than 8 people were killed (Thenationonline.net, Businessday.ng) . In October 2020, many youths stormed warehouses where Covid-19 palliatives were stored and carted away loads of food items and several relief materials meant for victims of storm in the city. While these were ongoing in many parts of the city, many youths in their hundreds embarked on looting of public properties such as Shoprite Palm Mall and other business ventures in the area as well as disposing innocent citizens of their valuables. These negative acts and its attendant consequences does not reflect the harmonious nature of the city and its people.

*Figure 2: Pictorial Evidence of Some Incidence of Violence in Ilorin  
Source: Compiled from National Dailies*



Therefore, youth violence has exacerbated insecurity in the state, threatening peaceful ambience, Ilorin and Kwara at large is widely known for. Consequently, youth violence has occupied an important space in political discourse in Ilorin, especially among prominent political actors with obvious limited contributions from the academics. The central question therefore is: what socio-economic and socio-political factors could be responsible for the growing spate of youth violence in the harmonious city of Ilorin? What social factors are sustaining youth violence in Ilorin? It is against this background that this study empirically investigate the correlation between socio-economic, socio-political and neighbourhood variables and youth violence in Ilorin metropolis.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study employs household survey design to achieve the objectives of the study. In this survey, data were gathered from two main sources: primary and secondary data. The primary data were used to understand the predisposing and drivers of youth violence among the sampled respondents in the study areas. To collect primary data, the principal

instruments adopted was questionnaire. The respondents include 1210 residents of Ilorin who are 15 years and above. The questionnaire contained both open and close ended questions. In this study, closed and open-ended questionnaire has the quality of extracting some important information regarding the lifestyle that could predispose the city to violence.

To ascertain the rate, frequency, trends and pattern of youth violence in the harmonious city of Ilorin, the study relied on secondary sources of data such as online data bases, library materials, newspapers and police reports on youth violence in Ilorin. Finally, quantitative data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Product and Services Solution (SPSS). Inferential statistics were used to test for the relationship between socio-economic, socio-political and neighbourhood characteristics and youth violence in Ilorin. This requires the use of multinomial regression analysis to test for the factors contributing to youth violence in Ilorin metropolis.

**Presentation of Results**

The analysis and the presentation of this study was based on the correctly filled and returned questionnaire administered to respondents. In all 1228 questionnaires were returned, 1210 were however analysed.

**TABLE 1: Experience of Youth Violence**

<b>Is your neighbourhood safe from youth violence?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Not really, you must be careful	312	25.8
No	628	52.0
Yes	268	22.2
Total	1208	100.0
System	2	
<b>Is youth violence common in your neighbourhood?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
No	322	26.6
Yes	869	71.8
Don't Know	19	1.6
Total	1210	100.0
<b>In the past 90 days, did you notice violence in this neighbourhood?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
No	265	21.9
Yes	919	76.0
Don't Know	26	2.1
Total	1210	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021.

The table 1 above shows that, 268 respondents equivalent to 22% of the study population affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence, and only 312(25.8%) of the

respondents affirmed that their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence and someone have to be careful, while majority of the respondents 628 corresponding with 52% of the respondents affirmed that their neighbourhood is not safe from youth violence. Thus, this implies that majority of the respondents experienced or witnessed the occurrence of youth violence in their various neighbourhoods.

From the table above, confirming the occurrence of violence in various neighbourhoods of Ilorin, 869 respondents constituting the majority and corresponding to about 71.8% of the study population agreed or affirmed that incidence of youth violence is more common in their neighbourhood as compared to only 322 (26.6%) and 19 (1.6%) of the respondents that affirmed that said no and don't know respectively. Also confirming the incidence of youth violence in Ilorin metropolis, in the table, 919 respondents equivalent to about 76.0% of the study population said in the last 90 days they had experienced several incidents of youth violence in their neighbourhood, as against the 265(21.9%) and 26(9.1%) of the respondents that said no and don't know respectively.

**Table 2: Crosstabulation of variables**

		There is high concentration of poor youths who lack legitimate means of income in the Neighbourhood					Total
		Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Disagree	somewhat Disagree	Somewhat agreed	Strongly agreed	
Is your neighbourhood safe from youth violence?	Not really, you have to be careful	7 (2.2%)	32 (10.3%)	42 (13.5%)	130 (41.7%)	101 (32.4%)	312 (100.0%)
	No	6 (1.0%)	77 (12.3%)	82 (13.1%)	283 (45.1%)	180 (28.7%)	628 (100.0%)
	Yes	14 (5.2%)	55 (20.5%)	31 (11.6%)	109 (40.7%)	59 (22.0%)	268 (100.0%)
Total		27 (2.2%)	164 (13.6%)	155 (12.8%)	522 (43.2%)	340 (28.1%)	1208 (100.0%)

SPSS Output:  $X^2 = 35.314$ , Df= 8,  $P < 0.05$

The crosstabulation table above looks at the relationship between poverty/lack of legitimate means of income and neighbourhood safety regarding youth violence. The table shows that 45.1% of respondents who somewhat agreed that youth in their neighbourhoods were poor and lacked legitimate means of income reported that their neighbourhoods were not safe from youth violence. Also, this group represented about 28.7% of those who strongly agreed with this assertion. On the other hand, 20.5% of the respondents who strongly disagreed that youth in their neighbourhoods were poor and lacked legitimate means of income believed that their neighbourhoods were safe from youth violence while about 11.6% of them somewhat disagreed.

In order to test the significance of this observation, chi square test of association was employed. The result as shown in the chi square table above ( $X^2 = 35.314$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) shows that the observation is significant at 5% level. This implies that the observation in the cross tabulation is valid.

**Table 3: Crosstabulation of variables**

		This neighbourhood is a hideout for youth gangs as a result of its unplanned structure thus making it difficult for security to operate					Total
		Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Disagree	somewhat Disagree	Somewhat agreed	Strongly agreed	
Is youth violence common in your neighbourhood?	No	20 (6.2%)	58 (18.0%)	46 (14.3%)	87 (27.0%)	111 (34.5%)	322 (100.0%)
	Yes	53 (6.1%)	105 (12.1%)	106 (12.2%)	281 (32.3%)	324 (37.3%)	869 (100.0%)
	Don't Know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.3%)	17 (89.5%)	1 (5.3%)	19 (100.0%)
Total		73 (6.0%)	163 (13.5%)	153 (12.6%)	385 (31.8%)	436 (36.0%)	1210 (100.0%)

SPSS OUTPUT:  $X^2 = 39.386^a$ ,  $Df=8$ ,  $P<0.05$

The crosstabulation table above looks at the relationship between the nature of the respondent's environment and youth violence. The table shows that 324 respondents (37.3% of respondents who strongly agreed that their neighbourhoods were hideouts for youth gangs as a result of its unplanned structures reported that violence is more common in their neighbourhoods. Also, this group represented about 32.3% of those who agreed with this assertion. On the other hand, about 14.3% of the respondents who disagreed that their neighbourhoods were hideouts for youth gangs as a result of its unplanned structures believed that youth violence is not common in their neighbourhoods.

In order to test the significance of this observation in table 3, chi square test of association was employed. The result as shown in the chi square table above ( $X^2 = 39.386^a$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) shows that the observation is significant at 5% level. This implies that the observation in the cross tabulation is valid.



**Table 4: Crosstabulation of variables**

		There is no sign of security in this neighbourhood					Total
		Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Disagreed	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agreed	Strongly agreed	
Is there any sign of violence in your neighbourhood in the past 90 days	No	20 (7.5%)	34 (12.8%)	91 (34.3%)	60 (22.6%)	60 (22.6%)	265 (100.0%)
	Yes	81 (8.8%)	137 (14.9%)	233 (25.4%)	210 (22.9%)	258 (28.1%)	919 (100.0%)
	Don't Know	9 (34.6%)	1 (3.8%)	7 (26.9%)	6 (23.1%)	3 (11.5%)	26 (100.0%)
Total		110 (9.1%)	172 (14.2%)	331 (27.4%)	276 (22.8%)	321 (26.5%)	1210 (100.0%)

$X^2 = 32.656, df=8, p<0.001$

The cross-tabulation table above espouse the relationship between presence of security patrol and incidence of youth violence. The table shows that 28.1% of respondents who strongly agreed that there was no sign of security patrols in their neighbourhoods reported that they had experienced violence in their neighbourhoods. Also, this group represented about 22.9% of those who agreed with this assertion. On the other hand, about 25.4% of the respondents who disagreed with the fact that there was sign of security patrols in their neighbourhoods indicated that they had experienced incidence of violence in their neighbourhoods while about 12.8% of them strongly disagreed.

In order to test the statistical significance of this observation, chi square test of association was employed. The result as shown in the chi square table above ( $X^2 = 32.656, df=8, p<0.001$ ) shows that the observation is significant at 5% level. This implies that the observation in the cross tabulation is valid.

**Table 5: Model Fitting Information**

Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	2051.794			
Final	1737.586	314.209	44	.000

Here, the researcher formulated a null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between 'null model' and 'final model'. In other words, null model would not have any

independent variables in the model; final model would have all independent variables in the model. From the table, the significant value is .000. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. This means there is a significant difference between null model and final model. Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, poor neighbourhood and insecurity are impacting the violence in the socially disadvantaged neighbourhood in Ilorin. The final model is more significant than the null model.

**Table 6: Pseudo R-Square**

Cox and Snell	.229
Nagelkerke	.263
McFadden	.127

The researcher used Nagelkerke to measure the adequacy and completeness of the model. The Nagelkerke is .263 which represents 26.3%. This implies that the independent variables (Poverty, drug abuse, illiteracy, poor neighbourhood and lack of security patrol) only contributed 26.3% variation in the level of criminal activities in the neighbourhoods of Ilorin metropolis. There are still other determinants; but this study only focused on the aforementioned determinants.

**Table 7: Likelihood Ratio Tests**

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept	1737.586 <sup>a</sup>	.000	0	.
povertyouth	1759.061	21.475	8	.006
Druguse	1784.233	46.647	8	.000
Uneducated	1778.616	41.031	8	.000
Poor neighbourhood	1756.387	18.801	8	.016
Nosecurity	1769.242	31.656	8	.000
commonviolence_1	1874.836	137.251	4	.000

The likelihood ration tests show the independent variable(s) that is/are significant. From the table, drug abuse (.000), illiteracy (.000), poverty (.006) and lack of security (0.00) were significantly impacting criminal activities in Ilorin. On the other hand, poor neighbourhood (.016) were not significantly impacting criminal activities in the neighbourhoods.

**Table 8: Parameter Estimates**

MEDIAN(Violenceneighbourhood,2) <sup>a</sup>		B	Std. Error	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No	Intercept	1.267	.306	17.181	1	.000			
	[povertyouth=1]	-1.640	.583	7.910	1	.005	.194	.062	.608
	[povertyouth=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[druguse=2]	-1.149	.274	17.537	1	.000	.317	.185	.543
	[druguse=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[uneducated=3]	-.867	.248	12.195	1	.000	.420	.258	.684
	[uneducated=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[nonsecurity=2]	.237	.284	.695	1	.404	1.267	.726	2.211
	[nonsecurity=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
Not really, you have to be careful	Intercept	.090	.356	.063	1	.801			
	[povertyouth=2]	-.998	.310	10.356	1	.001	.369	.201	.677
	[povertyouth=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[druguse=1]	-1.396	.516	7.330	1	.007	.248	.090	.680
	[druguse=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[uneducated=3]	-1.220	.288	17.926	1	.000	.295	.168	.519
	[uneducated=4]	-1.055	.243	18.818	1	.000	.348	.216	.561
	[uneducated=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[poorneighbourhood=3]	-.792	.295	7.212	1	.007	.453	.254	.807
	[poorneighbourhood=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[nonsecurity=2]	.868	.325	7.128	1	.008	2.383	1.260	4.509
	[nonsecurity=5]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.

a. The reference category is: Yes.

b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

From the above table, the respondents who were neither agreed nor disagreed that poverty among the youths leads to criminal activities such as youth violence in the neighbourhoods when compared to the respondents who were strongly agreed were (0.194-1) -0.806 times (**Note: I minus 1 from its coefficient because its coefficient is less than 1 [0.194]**) less likely to report that their neighbourhoods is not safe from youth violence (**NO**) compared to those who agreed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**), while this observation is found to be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The respondents who were strongly disagreed that drug use among the youth leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods when compared to those who strongly agreed were (0.317-1) -0.683 times less likely to

report that their neighbourhood is not safe from youth violence (**NO**) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) and this is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

The respondents who were somewhat disagreed that illiteracy among the youth leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods when compared to those who strongly agreed were (0.420-1) -0.58 times less likely to report that their neighbourhood is not safe from youth violence (**NO**) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) and this is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Also, comparing the respondents who were somewhat disagreed that lack of security patrol leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods to those who strongly agreed. This category of respondents were 1.267 times more likely to report that their neighbourhood is not safe from youth violence (**NO**) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) though not statistically significant ( $P > 0.05$ ).

From the regression table above, holding all other variables constant, the respondents who were strongly disagreed that poverty among the youths leads to criminal activities such as violence in their neighbourhoods when compared to those who strongly agreed were (0.369-1)-0.631 less likely to report that their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence (**Not Really, you have to be careful**) compared to those who report that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**). This observation is found to be statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

The respondents who were neither agreed nor disagreed that drug use among the youth leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods when compared to those who strongly agreed were (0.248-1) -0.752 times less likely to report that (their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence (**NOT REALLY, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL**)) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) and this is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). From the table, the respondents who were somewhat disagreed that illiteracy among the youth leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods when compared to those who strongly agreed were (0.295-1) -0.705 times less likely to report that their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence (**NOT REALLY, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL**) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) and this is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Also, comparing the respondents who were somewhat disagreed that neighbourhood unplanned structure contributes to the incidence of youth violence in the neighbourhoods to those who strongly agreed. This category of respondents were (0.453-1) -0.547 times less likely to report that (their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence (**NOT REALLY, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL**)) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) and found to be statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

In the same vein, comparing the respondents who were strongly disagreed that lack of security patrol leads to criminal activities in the neighbourhoods to those who strongly agreed. This category of respondents were 2.383 times more likely to report that (their neighbourhood is not really safe from youth violence (**NOT SAFE, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL**)) compared to those who affirmed that their neighbourhood is safe from youth violence (**YES**) though not statistically significant ( $P > 0.05$ ).

### **Discussion of findings**

Fundamentally, youth violence in the city of Ilorin is an interplay of multiple individual, community, and societal risk factors that affect youth from early childhood to adulthood. These factors are capable of increasing or reducing the likelihood that youth will become involved in violence. This is owing to the fact that the incidence of youth violence is evident in the city against the popular assumption that the city of Ilorin is one of the most peaceful and harmonious cities in Nigeria. The level of violence been experienced in Ilorin in the recent past is assuming a pesky dimension.

Several studies have found that neighbourhood physical characteristics contribute greatly to the incidence of youth violence. Therefore, neighbourhoods that are characterized by high concentrations of poor people, crowded housing, criminal subculture, high rates of substance abuse and higher number of unemployed or under employed youths are criminogenic in nature ( Igbo 2007; Swenson et.al 2005). This study revealed that there is an inter-play between neighbourhood unplanned structure, lack of security patrol and incidence of youth violence (neighbourhood physical characteristics:  $X^2 = 39.386^a$ , Df=8,  $P < 0.05$ , lack of security patrol: 32.656, Df=8,  $P < 0.05$ ). The table 4 shows that 597 respondents (49.3%) of respondents who strongly agreed that their neighbourhoods were hideouts for youth gangs as a result of its unplanned structures reported that violence is more common in their neighbourhoods. This implies that a neighbourhood not well planned, economically poor and densely populated, and neglected in terms of availabilities of security and infrastructure will harbour youth gangs and thus promoting violence. This finding is in consonance with the assumption of social disorganization theory, that disorganised neighbourhood provide a fertile soil for all forms of crime including violence. It is also in tandem with broken window theory hypothesis that the lack of social control makes the neighbourhood attractive to other social disorder activities such as public drinking, and gambling which in turn is attractive to illegal commercial criminal enterprises such as drug dealing and elevates the level of serious violence in the neighbourhood.

Similarly, the study revealed that there is a nexus between neighbourhood safety regarding violence and drug use among the youth ( $X^2 = 53.727^a$ , Df=8,  $P < 0.05$ ). This supports world report on violence (2012) that drug and alcohol abuse is a risk factor for aggressive behaviour and violence among the youth. In Nigeria, the phenomenon of drug abuse is well documented as drug abuse daily increasing with youth abusing various types of drugs. This confirms the assertion of Bukoye, Adeoye, Usman & Oyinloye, (2012), that youth syndicate indulge in dangerous drugs, alcoholism and smoking which triggers their violent instinct, thus constituting threat to national security. Ultimately, the finding is in consonance with numerous studies such as Isiaqet *et al.*, (2018) that has found a relationship between access to hard drugs, alcoholism and youth involvement in violent activities. This study emphasised the fact that hard drug is widely available in Nigeria as 65.3% of the respondents affirmed that youth in their respective neighbourhoods have access to illicit drugs. Thus, many youths are becoming dependant on drugs and substances such as marijuana, Indian hemp, codeine and gin capable of altering their sense of reasoning. Also, the study established that there is a nexus between poverty/lack of legitimate means of income and neighbourhood safety regarding youth violence ( $X^2 = 35.314$ , Df=8,  $P < 0.05$ ). as shown in **table 2**, 862 (71.3%) of respondents confirm that youth in their neighbourhoods were poor and lacked legitimate means of income reported that their neighbourhoods were

not safe from youth violence. This finding is akin to the findings of most researchers. Hong and Farley (2008) Eamon (2001), who identified that what usually inspired violence among youths has to do with poverty, economic frustration, resulting especially from widespread unemployment among youths in the socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods of urban cities. Hence, the occurrence of youth violence differs across neighbourhoods. This point to the fact that the most recorded violence is from the socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Ilorin. Thus, youth violence in Ilorin may be attributed to the various indications of social and physical disorder, (uncompleted and dilapidated building which could be a hideout for criminals, litter of environment) that combined to breed criminals.

This further strengthen the opinion of Doreo (2013) who opined that unemployment rate in Nigeria is growing at the rate of 16% per year with the youth impacted the most and accounting for three times the general unemployment. Similarly, this finding agrees with Salami (2013), who argued that Nigeria's spiralling youth unemployment have significantly contributed to the dramatic rise in social unrest and crime such as Niger Delta militancy, Boko Haram and youth violence. Buttressing this finding, many of our respondents during the In-depth interview also affirmed that most youth that indulge in violence are unemployed.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this research, the following observations and conclusions were made. The various forms of nefarious and criminal activities committed by youths in Ilorin metropolis are owing to various socio-economic, socio-political and neighbourhood characteristics. Therefore, the study concludes that the chemistry between various factors were responsible for youth violence in Ilorin metropolis. Such interaction includes the relationship between youth unemployment, access to hard drug and alcohol, poverty, and neighbourhood unplanned structure on one hand, and lack of security patrol in the neighbourhoods on the other hand. It is therefore recommended that government must institutionalised certain policies capable of encouraging healthy behaviour among the youths thereby promoting sustainable peace in the city. Incorporating the community stakeholders in policing the affairs of most violence prone communities by institutionalising a peace committee comprising relevant stakeholders including the security agents, community health and social workers, whose responsibility is to ensure harmony is returned to the city of harmony-Ilorin.

Also, more funds must be budgeted for infrastructural development and social investment programmes in violent prone communities in Ilorin. Family preservation programmes should be funded in socially disadvantaged areas to reduce the harmful effects of youth violence on the residents. Family preservation programmes such as short-term, intensive, empowerment model programs, which will not focus on an individual but rather on the needs of the entire family.

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