

## **Roles of Youth Organizations in the Participation in Vigilante in Rivers State**

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D.O.I: 10.56201/ijaes.v9.no2.2023.pg29.36

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the role of youth's participation in vigilante in Rivers State. The study make used of one objective, research questions and hypothesis. The descriptive survey design deals with the systematic collection of facts from a target audience or population. This design rightly adopted by the researcher as it did help to determine the roles of youth organisations in community development in Rivers State, Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean and inferential statistics of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the stated hypothesis. Objective 1 was achieved using weighted mean scores. The Hypotheses were tested using ANOVA. The weight (w) of a response was based on 5-Point Likert Rating Scale, respectively with a cut off decision meaning of 3.0. The study concluded that youth organization helps in community policing that reduce social vices such as snatching of phones, cultism and breaking and entering of people house to steal. Therefore, the study recommended that Government should encourage community police that will employ youths to reduce crime in Rivers State. Government and NGO should create job opportunities for youths in the state to reduce social vices in the state*

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**Key Words:** Youth, Organizations, Participation, Vigilante

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### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Vigilante is the concern of every human society, irrespective of its level of civilization. It is a pivotal condition for national development. Recognizing this crucial role of vigilante to human social development, Radda (2008) argued that the fundamental obligation of any state is to ensure the vigilante of lives and properties of the citizens. Drawing from the contract theorists, Radda (2008) boldly states that failure to fulfill this role makes the state an illegitimate one; thus citizens have no obligation to obey the state's commands. Reflection from the Nigeria's civil war (1967-1970) to date, the country has witnessed stagnation of development due to security

challenges posed by that conflict; thereby confirming the indispensability of vigilante in any social developmental intervention.

The concept of participation makes a man a subject rather than an object of development (Udensi, 2013). It also guides the people to appreciate that success can be achieved when they participate willingly in their own affairs. According to Nkwede (2014), active participation of youths as agents of community development like vigilante, helps in the reduction of crime in Rivers State. Hence, youth participation in vigilante will reduce social vices like snatching of phones, breaking into people house to steal and cultism. The role of youths participation in vigilante in Rivers State cannot be over-emphasized. This is because youths have been deeply involved in self-help projects in various local governments in Rivers state. Their areas of interventions cover anti-corruption, counter-terrorism, community policing and drug-free clubs among others. These youths' self-help projects are classified into two by Odoh & Eme (2014): government aided projects (GAP) and non-government aided projects (NGAP). Government aid projects are those executed with the assistance of the government in either finance or material resources while non-government aid projects are those executed solely with collective effort of community members. Nigerian youths are found to be involved in anti-terrorism. The Boko Haram insurgency was successfully contained through the decisive role of the youth vigilante groups (Yan Kato da Gora). As witnessed in Nigeria also, youths are positive agents of change in their communities in time of conflict and disaster. As noted by Alexander (2008), everyone benefits when young people are actively engaged in the decisions that directly affect their lives! Youth, families, adults, organizations, policymakers, and communities as a whole benefit when young people have a voice that is listened to, respected, and utilized. Alexander (2008) adds that engaging youth in decision making is essential to their overall development. This is true for all youth, even youth with behavioural issues. Gender variation, political inclination, religious affiliation ethnic background and socio-economic status of the youths are also immaterial in the participation of youths in promoting vigilante and social development. In view of this background, the study is designed to investigate the roles of youth organizations in participation in vigilante Rivers State.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The Study was conducted in Rivers State of Nigeria. Rivers State was created by Decree No. 19 of May 31, 1967, and is one of Nigeria's 36 states. Its capital city is Port Harcourt. According to 2006 National Population Census, the State has a population of 6,185,400 people out of which women accounted for 2,474,735; youths are 2.8 million, The number of men in Rivers State is 2,673,026 (www.rivers StateMinistryofyouthDevelopment.gov.ng ).

The State is bound on the South by Atlantic Ocean, on the north by Anambra State, Imo and Abia States, on the east by Akwa Ibom State and the west by Bayelsa and Delta States (Ibemere and Ezeano, 2014). Rivers State which is in the Niger Delta has topography of flat plains with a network of Rivers and tributaries. The State is made up of seventeen (17) ethnic groups namely: Ogba/Egbema, Ndoni, Opobo, Igbani, Ogoni, Eleme, Okirika, Kalabari, Abua, Odual, Ekpeye, Engenni, Etche, Ikwerre, Degema, Andoni. Rivers State is situated on the Southern part of Nigeria.

Rivers State lies between latitude five North (5°N') and mid-way between longitude five South (5°S') of the Greenwich Meridian (Howard, 2007). The State is divided into three Senatorial Districts, namely Rivers East, Rivers West and Rivers South-East Senatorial Districts. The three districts make up the twenty-three (23) Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Rivers State. Rivers East senatorial district comprises Emohua, Etche, Ikwerre, Obio/Akpor, Ogu-Bolo, Okrika, Omuma and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas. Rivers West Senatorial District comprises Abua-Odual, Ahoada East, Ahoada West, Akuku-Toru, Asari-Toru, Bonny, Degema and Ogbema-Egbema Ndoni Local Government Areas. While Rivers South-East Senatorial District is made up of Khana, Gokana, Tai, Eleme, Andoni, Opobo/Nkoro and Oyigbo Local Government Areas.

The thick mangrove forest, raffia palms and light rainforest are the major types of vegetation. The predominant occupation of the people of Rives State is farming. The people have a rich cultural heritage of different beliefs, traditional songs, dances an masquerades; the dominant ethnic groups are the Ogonis, Ikwere, Ijaws and Etches; although Pidgin English is also used because of the multi-lingual nature of the State. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people.

The State has over 2,805 primary schools and 243 secondary schools. The secondary schools are concentrated mainly in Local Government Area Headquarters. The Tertiary institutions include University of Port Harcourt, Choba, Port Harcourt, established by the Federal Government in 1975, Rivers State University of Science and Technology now Rivers State University Founded in 1980 by the State Government in the Year 1980, Rivers State College of Health Science and Management Technology, Oro-Owo, Rumueme, Port Harcourt, established by the State Government, the Federal Polytechnic at Omoku (Federal Technical College Omoku) and the State owned Ken Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic at Bori, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education at Rumuolumeni, with Campuses at Nkpolu-Oroworukwo and Ndele and School of Nursing and Midwifery at Rumueme, Port Harcourt. There is also the Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic at Rumuola, Port Harcourt Rivers State. (Tukool.Com -2018). The descriptive survey design deals with the systematic collection of facts from a target audience or population. This design rightly adopted by the researcher as it did help to determine the roles of youth organizations in participation in vigilante Rivers State, Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean and inferential statistics of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the stated hypothesis. Objective 1 was achieved using weighted mean scores. The Hypotheses were tested using ANOVA. The weight (w) of a response was based on 5-Point Likert Rating Scale, respectively with a cut off decision meaning of 3.0.

Roles	Rivers East (n=199)				Rivers West (n=21)				Rivers South East (n=27)				Pooled (n=247)		
	Sum	Mean	SD	Remark	Sum	Mean	SD	Remark	Sum	Mean	SD	Remark	Sum	Mean	Remark
Donations of uniforms to vigilante arm	443	2.23	1.426	D	48	2.29	1.102	D	62	2.30	.869	D	553	2.24	D
Whistles to vigilante arm	811	4.08	.932	A	97	4.62	8.657	A	69	2.56	1.086	D	977	3.95	A
In service training sponsorships	815	4.10	.946	A	60	2.86	1.315	D	68	2.52	1.397	D	943	3.82	A
Informants association sponsorship	759	3.81	1.101	A	58	2.76	1.221	D	68	2.52	1.397	D	885	3.58	A
Vigilantes services	586	2.94	1.580	D	57	2.71	1.347	D	80	2.96	1.829	D	723	2.93	D
Provision of tear gas to vigilante arm	798	4.01	1.030	A	50	2.38	.973	D	55	2.04	1.255	D	903	3.65	A
Provision of cutlass / spear to vigilante arm	759	3.81	1.020	A	55	2.62	.921	D	59	2.19	1.075	D	873	3.53	A
Patrol van to vigilante arm	780	3.92	.843	A	50	2.38	1.117	D	66	2.44	1.476	D	896	3.63	A
Guns to vigilante arm	591	2.97	1.302	D	40	1.90	.944	D	66	2.44	1.311	D	697	2.82	D
Peace talk/parley	804	4.04	1.310	A	38	1.81	.981	D	72	2.67	1.468	D	914	3.70	A
Motor cycle to vigilante men	813	4.09	1.329	A	41	1.95	1.203	D	82	3.04	1.698	A	936	3.79	A
Bicycle to vigilante arm	830	4.17	1.000	A	45	2.14	1.062	D	67	2.48	1.341	D	942	3.81	A
Sunshade /torchlight to vigilante arm	857	4.31	.954	A	62	2.95	1.596	D	91	3.37	1.471	A	1010	4.09	A
CCTV to vigilante arm	528	2.65	1.249	D	45	2.14	.964	D	80	2.96	1.480	D	653	2.64	D
Batten to vigilante arm	583	2.93	1.519	D	48	2.29	1.007	D	57	2.11	1.219	D	688	2.78	D
Boot to vigilante arm	889	4.47	1.038	A	55	2.62	1.203	D	71	2.63	1.471	D	1015	4.11	A
Radio/ walky-talky to vigilante arm	799	4.02	1.139	A	58	2.76	1.179	D	71	2.63	1.471	D	928	3.76	A
Supporting with fund	808	4.06	1.076	A	70	3.33	1.155	A	87	3.22	1.577	A	965	3.91	A
Provision of food items	864	4.34	1.056	A	71	3.38	1.117	A	107	3.96	1.344	A	1042	4.22	A
Donating shoe stockings	765	3.84	1.015	A	68	3.24	1.300	A	80	2.96	1.765	D	913	3.69	A
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.73</b>				<b>2.65</b>				<b>2.70</b>				<b>3.53</b>	

## 4.0 Results

**Table 4.1: Roles of Youth Organisations in Vigilante Development in Rivers State**

**Source: Field Survey, 2019**

**Decision Means  $\geq 3.0$  = Agreed;  $< 3.0$  = Disagreed**

The mean value of vigilante roles of youth organisations in community development in Rivers State using a decision rule of mean  $\geq 3.0$  are as shown in Table 4.1. The Table reveals that the respondents in Rivers East Senatorial Zone agreed to the following vigilante roles of youth organisations in community development as follows: Boot to vigilante arm (M = 4.47), Sunshade/torchlight to vigilante arm (M = 4.31) etc; respondents in Rivers West Senatorial Zone agreed to the following: Whistles to vigilante arm (M=4.62), Provision of food items (M = 3.38)

etc; while respondents in Rivers South East Senatorial Zone agreed to the following: Motor cycle to vigilante arm ( $M = 3.04$ ), Bicycle to vigilante arm ( $M = 4.17$ ), etc.

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant variation in vigilante roles performed by youth organisations among the three Senatorial Districts in Rivers State.

**Table 4.2: Analysis Of Variance Result for Vigilante Roles Performed Among Youth Organisations in the Three Senatorial Districts**

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	P-value
Between Groups	43.305	2	21.653	37.534	0.000
Within Groups	140.761	244	.577		
Total	184.066	246			

Where: ss = sum of squares; df = degree of freedom; ms = mean squares; F=F calculated  
Source: Researcher's computation with SPSS 25.0, detailed in Appendix

The results of the Analysis Of Variance Result for Vigilante Roles Performed Among Youth Organisations in the Three Senatorial Districts is shown in **Table 4.2**. The F calculated (37.534) and p-value (0.000). Since the probability of value (0.000) is less than the standard P-value of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis which says that there is no significant variation in vigilante roles performed by youth organisations among the three Senatorial Districts in Rivers State is rejected while the alternative hypothesis which says that there is significant variation in vigilante roles performed by youth organisations among the three Senatorial Districts in Rivers State is accepted.

**Table 4.3: Least Significant Different Comparison of Senatorial Districts**

Senatorial Districts	Mean	Sig.
Rivers East Senatorial District Vs Rivers West Senatorial District	1.08205*	.000
Rivers East Senatorial District Vs Rivers South East Senatorial District	1.03920*	.000
Rivers West Senatorial District Vs Rivers South East Senatorial District	-.04286	.846

**Source: Researcher's Computation with SPSS 25.0.**

Least significant difference was used to determine the variation in vigilante roles between the three Senatorial Districts. Table 4.3 showed that Rivers East had significant difference with Rivers West and Rivers South East with p-value < 0.05.

#### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

The mean value of Vigilante Roles of Youth Organisations in Community Development in Rivers State using a decision rule of mean  $\geq 3.0$  as shown in Table 4.3. The Table reveals that the respondents in Rivers East Senatorial Zone agreed to the following Vigilante Roles of Youth Organisations in Community Development as follows: Whistles to vigilante arm (M=4.08), In service training sponsorships (M=4.10), Informants association sponsorship (M=3.81), Provision of tear gas to vigilante arm (M=4.01), Provision of cutlass / spear to vigilante arm (M=3.81), Patrol van to vigilante arm (M=3.92), Peace talk/parley (M=4.04), Motor cycle to vigilante arm (M=4.09), Bicycle to vigilante arm (M=4.17), Sunshade /torchlight to vigilante arm (M=4.31), Boot to vigilante arm (M=4.47), Radio/ walky-talky to vigilante arm (M=4.02), Supporting with fund (M=4.06), Provision of food items (M=4.34) and Donating shoe stockings (M=3.84); respondents in Rivers West Senatorial Zone agreed to the following: Whistles to vigilante arm (M=4.62), Supporting with fund (M=3.33), Provision of food items (M=3.38) and Donating shoe stockings (M=3.24); while respondents in Rivers South East Senatorial Zone agreed to the following: Motor cycle to vigilante arm (M=3.04), Bicycle to vigilante arm (M=4.17), Sunshade /torchlight to vigilante arm (M=3.37), Supporting with fund (M=3.22) and Provision of food items (M=3.96).

#### 5.0 Conclusion

The purpose of the study is to examine the role of youth's organization in the participation in guiding Rivers State. Participation of youths is crucial in ensuring vigilante and fighting many social, economic and political problems bedevilling state. The vigilante challenges of Rivers State include corruption, poverty, unemployment, youth radicalization, ethno-religious conflict, terrorism and insurgency. The study came up with some important insights into some of these crucial roles by the youths in Rivers State. In conclusion, youths have many media to contribute to vigilante. They can serve as community policing that will help reduce social vice like snatching of phones and protection of women against rape and others.

#### Recommendations

1. Government should encourage community police that will employ youths to reduce crime in Rivers State
2. Government and NGO should create job opportunities for youths in the state to reduce social vices in the state
3. Finally, proper training on vigilante tips should be given to Rivers youths from time to time to make them acquit with vigilante happenings in the state.

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