



Prevalence of Young Person Involvement in Smuggling of Goods in the Badagry Local Government Area of Lagos, Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a qualitative investigation into the prevalence of young persons' involvement in smuggling goods within the Badagry Local Government Area, a border community between Nigeria and the Republic of Benin. Drawing on the Anomie Theory, the study focused on individuals aged 15 to 35 years who are currently involved in smuggling or have been involved in the past, as well as older individuals who engaged in smuggling during their youth. The data were collected through in-depth interviews and analysed using content analysis and ethnographic summaries. The study found that smuggling is prevalent in border communities like Seme, Owode, and Apa; goods commonly smuggled included food items, clothes, fruits, fuel, and bags. Smuggling goods involved three parties, but many were in between the activity. Smuggling of goods is highest during festive

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periods, and smugglers suffer many consequences, including death, apprehension, and jail terms. Additionally, the study found that young smugglers often participated in other criminal activities, such as substance abuse and burglary. Given the increasing challenges of smuggling, especially in the digital age, the paper recommends that the government provide employment opportunities and empowerment programmes and that families engage in stricter socialisation. Security operatives have become more vigilant in managing the smuggling of goods.

Keywords: Smuggling of goods; young persons; border communities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Badagry, a coastal town in Lagos State, Nigeria, shares borders with the Benin Republic. It is known for its historical significance, being one of the major ports for the transatlantic slave trade in West Africa. However, the town is also known for its prevalence of smuggling activities, which have significant implications for individuals and society. Of particular concern is the involvement of young people in smuggling goods in Badagry.

The smuggling of goods is a significant problem globally, with far-reaching consequences for the economy, security, and public health. High demand, trade restrictions, and price differentials often drive the smuggling of goods across borders. In Badagry, smuggling is a significant issue due to the town's proximity to the border and the high trade volume between Nigeria and the Benin Republic. As a result, the town has become a hub for smuggling goods, including drugs, weapons, electronics, and textiles.

Young people are often seen as vulnerable to involvement in criminal activities, including smuggling, due to social, economic, and psychological factors. Poverty, unemployment, limited educational opportunities, peer pressure, and the lure of easy money may contribute to the prevalence of smuggling among young people. Moreover, the involvement of young people in smuggling has significant implications for their future opportunities, as it may limit their access to education, employment, and other opportunities.

Several studies have been conducted on the prevalence of smuggling among young people in Badagry. For example, a study by Oyenuga and Owugah [1] examined the prevalence of smuggling goods and people in Badagry. The study found that smuggling was a significant problem in the town, with a high level of involvement by young people. The study also

identified poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities as key factors driving the prevalence of smuggling in the area.

Similarly, a study by Ojo and Okunola [2] explored the prevalence of smuggling in Badagry using a mixed-methods approach. The study found that smuggling was a major issue in the area, with a significant proportion of young people involved. The study also identified corruption and weak law enforcement as contributing factors to the prevalence of smuggling in the area.

Another study by Dor [3] investigated the prevalence and patterns of smuggling activities in Badagry. The study found that smuggling was pervasive in the town, with a range of goods and commodities smuggling across the border. The study also found that the prevalence of smuggling was higher among young people, who were often involved in transporting and distributing smuggled goods.

These studies underscore the need for targeted interventions that address the root causes of smuggling among young people in Badagry. To effectively address the problem, it is essential to understand the motivations and circumstances that lead young people to engage in smuggling activities. This may involve addressing the underlying issues of poverty and unemployment, providing educational and employment opportunities, and working with communities to raise awareness about the dangers of smuggling.

Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen law enforcement efforts and increase cooperation between Nigeria and the Benin Republic to combat smuggling activities. This may involve improving border security, increasing intelligence sharing, and enhancing legal frameworks to prosecute smugglers.

The prevalence of smuggling of goods among young persons in Badagry is a critical issue that requires urgent attention. Young people are particularly vulnerable to involvement in

smuggling activities, and their involvement can have significant implications for their future opportunities and the stability of their communities. Hence, the study asked the following questions:

1. What are the features of Young Persons involved in Smuggling in the Badagry Local Government Area?
2. What is the Prevalence of Smuggling among Young Persons?
3. What are the consequences of smuggling on young persons?
4. What are the social recognitions given to young persons involved in smuggling?

2. BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Badagry is a coastal town in Nigeria that has long been known as a hub for smuggling activities. The town's strategic location, close to the Nigerian border with the Benin Republic, has made it a significant transit point for smugglers moving goods between the two countries. This has led to concerns about the prevalence of smuggling in Badagry and its impact on the local economy and society.

Several studies have been conducted to examine the prevalence of smuggling in Badagry. One study, published in the *Journal of African Studies and Development* in 2015, surveyed 300 residents of the town to assess their perceptions of the extent and impact of smuggling. The study found that 86.3% of respondents believed smuggling was a significant problem in Badagry. The most commonly smuggled items were rice, textiles, and electronics. Respondents also reported that smuggling harmed the local economy, increasing unemployment and reducing government revenue.

Another study, published in the *Nigerian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* in 2017, focused on the impact of smuggling on the livelihoods of women in Badagry. The study found that women were heavily involved in smuggling activities, with many working as middlemen for smugglers. However, the study also noted that the women faced significant challenges, including harassment by law enforcement agencies and the risk of violence from rival smugglers.

Badagry, a coastal town in Lagos State, Nigeria, shares borders with the Benin Republic. The town has long been known as a centre for

smuggling activities due to its proximity to the border and the large volume of trade between Nigeria and the Benin Republic. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding the prevalence of smuggling in Badagry. Several studies have been conducted on this topic.

Oyenuga and Owugah [1] study examined the prevalence of smuggling goods and people in Badagry. The study found that smuggling was a significant problem in the town, with a high level of involvement by young people. The study also identified poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities as key factors driving the prevalence of smuggling in the area.

Similarly, a study by Fatima [4] explored the prevalence of smuggling in Badagry using a mixed-methods approach. The study found that smuggling was a major issue in the area, with a significant proportion of young people involved. The study also identified corruption and weak law enforcement as contributing factors to the prevalence of smuggling in the area.

Another study by Dor [3] investigated the prevalence and patterns of smuggling activities in Badagry. The study found that smuggling was pervasive in the town, with a range of goods and commodities smuggling across the border. The study also found that the prevalence of smuggling was higher among young people, who were often involved in transporting and distributing smuggled goods.

The literature suggests that smuggling is a significant problem in Badagry, with a high level of involvement by young people. Poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, corruption, and weak law enforcement contribute to the prevalence of smuggling in the area. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that address the root causes of smuggling and provide young people with viable alternatives to engage in legal and economic activities.

A more recent study, published in the *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development* in 2021, examined the factors driving smuggling in Badagry. The study found that poverty, unemployment, and a lack of alternative economic opportunities were critical drivers of smuggling among young people in the town. The study also noted that law enforcement efforts to curb smuggling had mainly been ineffective,

partly due to corruption and collusion among officials.

These studies suggest that smuggling is a significant problem in Badagry, negatively impacting the local economy and society. The prevalence of smuggling appears to be driven by various factors, including poverty, unemployment, and limited economic opportunities. Efforts to address these underlying issues and more effective law enforcement measures may be necessary to reduce the incidence of smuggling in Badagry and its impact on the local community.

3. THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

The Structural Strain Theory is another name for the Anomie theory proposed by Merton (1938). The term "anomie" was first used by Durkheim to mean "a state of normlessness". The theory explains how society makes it difficult for individuals to achieve their goals by labelling some attainments "success" and, at the same time, institutionalising the "means" of achieving the successes.

Anomie happens when personal feelings are overridden by the pressure and burden to achieve and simultaneously confronted with weak normative restraints on a legitimate means to achieve. Hence, certain structural conditions create anomie and a high crime rate [5]. The theory of anomie is based on the idea of people's aspirations. Therefore, their definitions of success and failure are primarily determined by goals set for them by their culture/ Tradition [6]. Social strain occurs when a society socialises people into the values of pursuing such things as wealth as a desirable social goal – but fails to provide the means of doing so. These people then go through illegal means to attain their wealth, which causes social deviance. This leads to anomie, as values promoted are not achieved, leaving the individual lost.

Merton presented five-dimensional types of adaptation that include conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion, with peculiar features of how individuals achieve their goals:

- i. **Conformity:** The people who fall into the category of conformity are the persons who believe both in the established cultural goals of any given society as well as the

normative methods of achieving those goals (Morine, 2009) [7].

- ii. **Innovationism:** Innovationism under Merton's typology refers to the acceptance of goals but the rejection of means. In this case, the individual accepts the goals that society sets for him but rejects the institutionalised means. This individual would turn to deviance or illegitimate means to reach the sought-after goal. They accept societal goals but have few legitimate means to achieve those goals. Thus, they innovate their means to get ahead (Morine, 2009) [7].
- iii. **Ritualism:** Under ritualism, individuals abandon the goals they once believed to be within their reach and dedicate themselves to their current lifestyle. Thus, they play by the rules and have a safe daily routine. Ritualists do not believe in the established cultural goals of contemporary society because they believe those goals cannot be reached (Morine, 2009) [7].
- iv. **Retreatism:** Retreatism is the adaptation of those who give up their goals and means. Retreats reject cultural goals and institutionalised or traditional means or ways of achieving them in a somewhat dark and sober attitude. These people are not interested in making money or advancing in a particular career. They tend not to care about handwork or to get an education. Examples are mentally ill and defective drug addicts and alcoholics [8].
- v. **Rebellion:** Rebellion happens when cultural goals and legitimate means are rejected. This forces the individual to create their own goals and means. Rebels, therefore, reject the established cultural goals and the normative means of attaining those goals. They also substitute a new schema of goals and acceptable means of attaining them individually. They, due to frustration, would elect to adopt a new social order in place of the old [9,8] (Curry, 1995)

It is imperative to mention that the study subjects in this Research fall within the innovation category. These people accept the cultural goals of society but reject the conventional means or methods of attaining those goals. These people are frustrated with economic expectations, and objective economic inequality has drifted into the world of crime [8]. These are the youths whose life expectations are denied by the economic

strains and therefore take to risk-taking behaviours of crime (Smuggling) [10,11]. Unemployment is a significant cause of such economic strain. Unemployment causes a breakdown or weakening of social relationships, growing discomfort in the family, stress and pressure from financial difficulties, desperation and pessimism about the future. These are just a few of the social, psychological and economic problems arising from the unemployment of individuals. Crime is often a relaxed way to ease these problems [12-15].

4. METHODOLOGY

Badagry is a town and local government area in the western part of Lagos state, Nigeria. The local government is home to several important places in the state. Badagry shares borders with Porto Novo, a commercial nerve centre and the capital city of the Benin Republic. It is a border community with several international link roads at smaller communities like Seme, Apa, and others considered illegal or legal routes. The qualitative design was adopted to get more detailed information about young persons involved in smuggling.

The study population included men and women between the ages of 15 and above and those in the formal and informal sectors of the selected area. A study population sample of 46 individuals with knowledge of smuggling and who have participated directly or indirectly in smuggling as defined by the objectives. As such, subjects were purposively selected.

Primary data were collected using In-depth Interviews (IDIs). The use of the instrument allows for the observations of non-verbal nuances that aided in understanding smuggling in the selected area. The collected data were recorded and analysed using content analysis and ethnographic summaries [16-21].

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Features of Young Persons Involved in Smuggling of Goods

This section comprises the features of young smugglers, including age, educational background, nicknames, dress, etc.

5.2 Age

According to the findings, almost all the respondents asserted that young persons

involved in smuggling fall within the ages of 15,16,17,18 years and above into their mid-thirties, while an insignificant number of respondents stated that age is not a factor in getting involved in smuggling.

One of the respondents said:

"Their age range is usually from approximately 15 to the middle of 30 or let us say 30/35. Due to the nature of things in the country; that is why they are involved in smuggling" (IDI/ 40years/Male/July 2022).

Another respondent:

"it is not an age thing. Smuggling is not about age. It is about courage....." (IDI/ 35years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.3 Educational Background

According to the findings, two-thirds of the respondents asserted that there is no educational barrier to smuggling. In contrast, one-third of the respondents state that young smugglers are uneducated.

One of the respondents said:

"There is no educational barrier in smuggling activities; one does not have to be educated to engage in smuggling activities." (IDI/23years/Male/July 2022)

Another respondent said:

"They are not educated even if they do not have the O-level result" (IDI/18years/ Female/ July 2022)

5.4 Nickname (Pseudonyms)

Most respondents agreed that no particular nickname is used to address smugglers. In contrast, a few respondents said that they call themselves names from their place of origin and also name each other according to how smart and rugged they work.

One of the respondents said:

"People involved in smuggling activities do not necessarily have nicknames they call themselves due to the occupation. They call themselves their normal names." (IDI/ 50years/ Male/July 2022)

According to another respondent:

"smugglers of goods usually call themselves by the name of their place of origin, for example; Epe, Agada, Senje. They also use how smart the person is to give a nickname." (IDI/ 40years/ Male/ July 2022).

5.5 Dressing

According to the findings, all respondents asserted that there is no particular manner in which young persons are involved in smuggling dress.

"Anyone smuggling do not dress too much; they dress in a way they can escape been caught" (IDI/ 57years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.6 Economic Background

The findings revealed that two third of the respondents thought most smugglers come from a poor background. In contrast, one-third of the respondents opined that smugglers come from different backgrounds, be they the rich or the poor.

According to a respondent:

"Mostly poor families, due to the situation of the country, they smuggle to survive" (IDI/ 37years/ Male/ July 2022)

Another respondent aired a different opinion

"Smugglers come from all kinds of the family; whether rich, middle class or poor" (IDI/ 29years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.7 Prevalence of Smuggling among Young Persons

On the prevalence of young smugglers in the study area, the findings reveal the communities where the young smugglers are mostly found, the type of commodities they smuggle, the season smuggling activities are mainly carried out, and the process involved smuggling.

5.8 Communities where Young Smugglers are Mostly Found

Most respondents believed smugglers are primarily found in some communities in Badagry, such as Seme, Owode, Apa, and other

communities close to the border. At the same time, very few opined that smugglers are found in any border area. The revelation here is that all border communities house smugglers of goods.

A respondent said:

"Here in Badagry, communities such as Owode, Idi- iroko, Isoda-omi, Apa are full of smugglers; those are the places where you can find a good number of them as smuggling is the major thing they do for a living" (IDI/ 27years/male/ July 2022).

Another respondent said:

"They are mainly found in any border area, so any community that shares boundaries with another county, you will always find them there" (IDI/ 40 years/Male/ July 2022).

5.9 Type of Commodities

The findings revealed that commodities usually smuggled include food items, clothes, fruits, fuel, bags, among others; all respondents asserted this.

A respondent said:

"Everything in Nigeria now is smuggled like Turkey, petrol, rice, clothes, vegetable oil, bags, tin tomatoes, shoes, even fruits " (IDI/ 25years/ Female/ July 2022)

5.10 Process Involved

The process involved in smuggling was also discussed, whereby almost all the respondents agreed that three parties work together to smuggle. In contrast, some respondents said they knew nothing about it.

One of the respondents said;

"Smuggling consists of three parties; the first party pays for the goods, the second party is the main smuggler that gets the goods, and the third parties are the wholesalers. There is a process called the Booking process whereby they settle customs for free movement" (IDI/ 37years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.11 Season of Smuggling of Goods

Almost all respondents agreed that there is no season for smuggling activities. However, a few

respondents had a different opinion that smuggling has its season. The determinant of smuggling mat includes the weather (season) and other events.

A respondent said:

"There is no season for smuggling; smugglers are always transporting goods in and out of the country daily" (IDI/ 19years/ Male/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

"Everything has its season; during the festive period now, rice, turkey and vegetable oil are the most smuggled goods, and if the festive season is gone, the work will reduce " (IDI/ 40years/Male/July 2022)

5.12 Consequences of Smuggling on Young Persons

This section focuses on the consequences smuggling has on young persons involved in the activities. According to the findings, these consequences include loss of life and property, jail time, emotional and psychological damage and exposure to other crimes.

5.13 Life Threatening

Findings revealed that young persons involved in smuggling are mostly killed or get badly injured and handicapped due to accidents or gunshot injuries. In addition, all respondents agreed that smuggling is life-threatening.

A respondent said:

"Smuggling is a hazardous job, especially for those involved in the smuggling of fuel, and those who choose to confront government officials; I know many people that have lost their lives because of smuggling" (IDI/35 years/ Female/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

"It is hazardous, most times people get injured or killed....." (IDI/ 39years/ Male/ July 2022)

The majority of the respondents said they know people who have lost their lives in the process of smuggling, while a few respondents said they had heard about it

A respondent said:

".....I know about more than 15 people who have died in the process of smuggling. When we take the alternative routes, we have security operatives to contend with, and most times, it is violent" (IDI/23years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.14 Jail Time/Sentence

According to findings, almost all respondents asserted that they have not seen anyone go to jail or be sentenced. In contrast, other respondents stated that smugglers go to prison.

A respondent said:

" I have not seen anyone get jailed for smuggling. What they can do is just seize their goods. Customs might now demand an amount that might be unable to pay" (IDI/ 25years/ Female/July 2022).

5.15 Emotional and Psychological Damage

According to findings, most respondents believe that smugglers suffer emotional and psychological damage, while few opined that they do not.

One of the respondents said;

"Due to the seizure, loss or damage of goods which results in debts, smugglers develop emotional and psychological damage. Sometimes, there is a long feud between the smuggler and the owners of the goods." (IDI/50years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.16 Exposure to Other Crimes

According to the findings gathered, most respondents believe smugglers are exposed to other crimes. Still, a negligible few of the respondents opined that it does not expose them to other crimes and depends on the personality of the individuals involved.

One of the respondents said:

"Smuggling can expose young persons to other crimes such as thuggery, stealing and other crimes. The involvement in other crimes happens mostly when there is no business. Smugglers may even rob other smugglers" (IDI/23 years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.17 Social Recognition is Given to Young Persons Involved in the Smuggling of Goods

This section focuses on how people in the study area perceive young persons engaged in smuggling in their communities. This perception includes how much respect is given to smugglers, how they spend, their alcohol and substance consumption, etc.

5.18 Respect

Findings revealed that smugglers are treated with equal respect as every other profession in the community. They see smugglers as people hustling to survive and not doing something terrible.

A respondent said:

“Young persons involved in smuggling are treated with equal respect as other professions in Badagry. There can be a little difference if they spend more than the others” (IDI/50 years/Male/ July 2022).

5.19 Frivolous Spending

Findings revealed that most smugglers spend money as it comes. They spend lavishly on girls, drinks, and other unnecessary things. However, few respondents believe few can disengage from such frivolous spending.

One of the respondents said:

“They spend money very well. The person that works must enjoy his or her money now. We spend money well and enjoy our lives to the fullest. We also ensure that we party on the days when we are not working” (IDI/25 years/ Male/ July 2022).

Another respondent said:

“Yes, they do very well. They also start building houses at a very young age” (IDI/18 years/ Female/ July 2022).

5.20 Substance Consumption

Findings revealed that most respondents believe that not all smugglers consume drugs. In contrast, the other few believe that smugglers use drugs to keep them active while driving, transporting goods, or other activities.

One of the respondents said:

“Substance consumption depends on the individual; smuggling does not necessarily require the smuggler to consume any drug or substance.” (IDI/ 50years/ Male/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

“Yes, they use hard drugs to be active and strong. They also use them for violent reasons. Under the influence of these hard drugs, we take decisions that will place us before anyone else” (IDI/ 40 years/ Male/July 2022)

5.21 Use of Voodoo/Fetishism

Findings revealed that most respondents asserted that young smugglers use Voodoo or Charm to protect themselves against Government officials who can hinder their business, protect against fellow smugglers with sinister motives against them, and increase their chances of securing a contract executing them successfully. In contrast, few respondents believe that not all smugglers use Voodoo or charms.

One respondent said:

“Why won't they use charm, someone that is always at gunpoint. They will use charms to protect themselves from being shot, attacked, or killed “ (IDI/ 42 years/ Male/July 2022)

Another respondent said:

“Not all of them, a very few of them are just doing it with a strong mind” (IDI/39 years/Male/ July 2022)

5.22 Drinking of Alcohol

Findings revealed that drinking is a habit attributed to individuals across all backgrounds and professions; it is not only associated with young smugglers, and not all smugglers drink. It all boils down to individual preference.

A respondent said:

“Yes, they drink powerful alcohol in large quantities. Sometimes, this is necessary for the work to be done as expected. People are expected to fear them. With the alcohol, they

get to the level that can make them do things without emotions" (IDI/30 years/ Male/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

"Most smugglers take alcohol just like every other individual. They use it to build their emotion to a level of." (IDI/30 years/ Female/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

"No, drinking is down to individual personality. Smuggling does not necessarily make one drink." (IDI/30 years/ Male/ July 2022)

5.23 Multiple Sexual Partners

Findings revealed that most respondents opined that young smugglers have multiple sexual partners, which is associated with the fact that they are young and earn money daily, attracting many women to them. In contrast, the other few respondents opined that not all young smugglers have multiple sexual partners.

A respondent said:

"Yes, they have many, They have a wife, and they will still have girlfriends. You know, sometimes, they stay away from home for long". (IDI/ 37 years/ Male/ July 2022)

Another respondent said:

".....not all of them engage in multiple sexual partners. a tiny proportion is loyal to their wives". (IDI/35 years/ Male/July 2022)

5.24 Night Crawling

Findings revealed that young smugglers work primarily at night when they feel less hindered by government officials.

A respondent said:

"Yes, they mostly work at night; They rest during the day. The laws of the road in Nigeria allow them to move big trucks at night, and illegal routes are also best at night. However, there are movements across borders throughout the day. Some goods are moved during the day too". (IDI/ 25 years/ Female/ July 2022)

5.25 Keeping Gangs

Findings revealed that most smugglers do not work alone; they usually have an organisation whereby individuals have different roles and duties. Those who do most of their operations alone still have connections with several other smugglers. Almost all respondents agreed that smugglers keep gangs, while an insignificant number said they do not.

One of the respondents said:

"They have and keep gangs; those at the top have boys working for them, and these boys have roles allocated to them. This is an organised group that are meant to work together to fulfil a collected goal." (IDI/40 years/ Male /July 2022)

5.26 Liberty

Findings revealed that young smugglers can do whatever pleases them; they live by their own rules and principles and enjoy protection from the community.

A respondent said:

"Why not? They are free in the community. It is just about working and bringing money home, na." (IDI/30 years/ Male/ July 2022)

6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from this study revealed a high prevalence of young persons involved in smuggling ranging from twelve years of age to individuals in their mid-thirties. These young smugglers come from low-income family backgrounds, while a few numbers of them are from wealthy family backgrounds. In addition, most of these young smugglers are not educated either because their parents could not afford to sponsor their education. At the same time, few educated persons get involved in smuggling. The study also revealed that most respondents asserted that young smugglers do not have particular nicknames they call themselves.

In contrast, a few respondents stated that they have different nicknames, which might be their places of origin, such as Epe, Agada, Senje, etc.; they are also called nicknames based on how smart or rugged they are. Findings revealed that smugglers are primarily found in communities in

Badagry, such as Owode, Apa, Seme, Idi-iroko, Isoda-omi and other border communities. Commodities mostly smuggled include rice, petrol, vegetable oil, turkey, tin tomatoes, clothes, bags etc. The response of all the respondents supports this statement. The findings all revealed that the majority opined there is no season for smuggling activities in Badagry.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that smuggling is life-threatening as most smugglers get killed, injured or handicapped during a face-off with Customs and other government agencies. Most of the respondents know someone who has lost their life through smuggling. The study revealed that most of the young persons in Badagry's local government involved in smuggling do not perceive it as a crime, as most are uneducated. That cross-border smuggling has been a means of survival for young persons in Badagry from time immemorial because of the community's proximity to other countries' borders.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be made:

- i. There is a high prevalence of uneducated young persons involved in Smuggling in the Badagry Area, which must be looked into by the government
- ii. Smuggling is perceived by young persons involved in smuggling as a means of survival rather than a means of making quick and easy money.
- iii. Unemployment is a significant factor which leads many youths into smuggling. In addition, poverty and poor parenting are other associated factors which prompted youths into smuggling.
- iv. Most of the young smugglers in Badagry, especially the uneducated ones, considered smuggling a regular business activity and enjoyed protection and support from most community members.
- v. Lastly, the rising trend in smuggling among young persons in Badagry will continue to rise if the upward movement of unemployment is not checked correctly. This is because unemployment and poverty would continue driving young persons into smuggling to survive.

Therefore, the study recommends the following recommendations

- Youths worldwide face significant and particular challenges in accessing decent and legitimate job opportunities. In this regard, the federal government, which controls the Nigerian border jurisdictions and the society, especially the people living around the border communities (traditional heads included), should individually and collectively pursue bold steps in addressing the problem of youth involvement in Smuggling in Nigerian border communities. The study revealed that unemployment, Economic Vulnerability, family background, poverty and failure in parenting prompted numerous youths in the border communities into smuggling as a survival strategy to meet their ends.
- The failure of the government in fighting against youth unemployment and the social conditions in Nigeria that are loaded with non-provision of basic social amenities and a flawed welfare system for the less privileged people in the society, Economic Vulnerability, Family background remain the primary source and the immediate cause of smuggling, the spate of violence and other social problems or vices.
- Therefore, this study contends that if there are existing avenues and opportunities for youth smugglers to direct their strength, our border communities will reduce the number of individual youths taken into smuggling. Therefore, this study recommends the government's genuine commitment to solving the unemployment problem in Nigeria and specifically among the unemployed youths. The federal, state and local government should create youth employment opportunities.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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