

**JUVENILE GANG MEMBERSHIP AND VIOLENCE: AN EMERGING PERSPECTIVE IN  
SOME SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

**DESTINY E. AGWANWO (Ph.D)**  
Department of Sociology,  
Faculty of Social Sciences,  
University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.  
[agwanwodestiny@mail.com](mailto:agwanwodestiny@mail.com)

&

**CHIOMA JOSEPH-OBI (Ph.D)**  
Department of Sociology,  
Faculty of Social Sciences,  
University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.  
[chiomaobi@rocketmail.com](mailto:chiomaobi@rocketmail.com)

**Abstract**

*Juvenile gang violence has become a serious phenomenon the world over. Recent researches on gang violence focused on youth gang violence. This study, therefore, examines juvenile gang violence as an emerging form of violence in many rural areas of Rivers State. Insight into this emerging reality was gained through unstructured interview, personal observation and review of related works on gang violence. The survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study covered five purposively selected communities that have witnessed increasing rate of cult-related violence in the Rivers State. A sample of 100 respondents were purposively selected and interviewed. The study revealed that, although youth gang violence such as cult and armed robbery have been on the increase, juvenile gangs violence further exacerbates the violent situation in the study area through inter and intra gang rivalries/wars and other violent social vices. Resulting from these phenomena, lives have been lost, property destroyed, buildings set ablaze; and many people have been displaced in many places in Rivers State, including Ibaa, Rumuodogo, Omudioga, Omademe, Omarelu, Ahoada, Ogoni, Omoku and Abua, among others. The study further revealed that the breakdown of family values/ties, peer group influence and poverty, among others factors, are at the root of this social problem. The study recommended that proper parental control as well as parents' watchful eyes on their children would help reduce the incidence of gang membership and its consequences on society.*

**Keywords: juvenile, juvenile gangs, gang membership, violence, and family,**

**Introduction**

Gang involvement, gang proliferation and gang violence have become common features of 21st century. Nigeria is currently engulfed in myriads of social-economic and political challenges that pose very serious threats to her quest for peace, security and development. This may be connected with the many years of obvious poor and corrupt leadership at all levels of our governance/national life. This situation has, consequently, led to serious political problems, manifesting in mass youth and graduate unemployment, poverty, lack of social infrastructure at all levels. Also, the inability of the Nigerian state to meet her obligations with the masses has equally created disillusionment, and the spirit of violence amongst youth. Currently, there is an unprecedented widespread cases of violence in Nigeria, particularly in Rivers State, where youth and juvenile gang violence is almost a daily occurrence. Since the return of the nation to civil

rule, after many decades of military rule, Rivers State, for many reasons, has become a theatre of violence perpetrated by gang members (Yomi, 2006; Horsefal, 2014; Igiebor, 2015).

The sub-culture of gang and gang violence has become widespread because of the increasing number of juveniles and youth who now involve in crime. Gang violence is usually perpetrated against members of the same gang as means of effecting punishment with a deterrent effect or against members of another gang as a retaliatory action or even as a show of superiority within their domain. Resulting from the breakdown of family values, family stability, and the failure of the state to meet or discharge their constitutional mandate of providing security and welfare for citizens, many families have become breeding grounds for delinquents, who find easy expression in joining gangs.

In many rural areas in Rivers State, there has been an increasing manifestation of violence by juvenile gang members. This condition is exacerbated by the proliferation of many gang groups, which subscribe to violent sub-culture as a means of expressing a feeling of superiority or inferiority over a given turf. Many of these juveniles are either in secondary school or have dropped-out of school, and come from poor family backgrounds and are thus recruited by the youth gangs. The recurring nature of juvenile gang violence in the forms of juvenile cult gang, juvenile kidnapping gang, juvenile armed robbery gang and juvenile rape gangs, has resulted in the loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement/forced migration, and untold hardship on the people, leading to psychological and emotional trauma. Such rural areas as Abua-Odual, Ahoada, Ikwerre and Ogoni in Rivers State are the worst hit by this social malaise of juvenile gang violence.

Earlier studies on violence had focused mainly on urban violence due to neighbourhood formation and social disorganization (Yomi, 2006), cult violence (Wosu, 2010; Agwanwo and Ajoku (2018), and on such area as youth gang violence (Esbensen and Weerman, 2005). However, current data in juvenile gang membership are limited and inconsistent in the delineation of individual, family, peer, school and community characteristics specific to gang members. Such youth that are prone to youth gang violence have been characterized as having poor academic performance; also they have been described as having an early onset of substance use, having an affiliation with aggressive peers in early adolescence and inconsistently residing in disadvantaged communities. Almost all these characteristics are identified with some youths in Rivers State where there is now an emerging form of violence- juvenile gang violence that poses a serious threat to peace, security and development. This study, therefore, examines the phenomenon of juvenile gang violence within the context of the failure of family and community system, and the inability of the Nigerian government to bring quick solutions to the problems of gang violence in some selected communities in Rivers State.

### **Conceptual clarification**

The term 'gang' is fraught with some definitional issues. These issues arise as a result of the divergent views as they concern the nature of the evolution and proliferation of gangs in developed and developing countries. According to Esbensen and Weerman (2005), one reason for this definitional problem is that the wordings and terms used for gangs have diverse meanings and emotional loading in different languages. Also, what constitutes a stereotype of highly organized gang in one place may not approximate what it is in another place. In spite of this nuances, however, some scholars have offered some workable definitions of gang.

Esbensen and Weerman (2005:8) see gangs as any "durable, street-oriented group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity". This definition translates to the fact that a gang is a group of people known for engaging in criminal or illegal activities. Also, Klein and Maxson (1989) define a gang (youth or juvenile) as any denotable group who (a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in their neighbourhood, (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group with a name, and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of illegal incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighbourhood residents and/ or enforcement agencies. This definition captures the basic features of a gang as a distinct social category. However, juvenile gang, which is the subject of our discourse, is seen as a group of people between 14-17 years (Siegel, Welsh and Senna, 2003; Pyorooz and Sweeten, 2014), with some

form of organizational structure, who are involved in unlawful activities such as cultism, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, killing and destruction of property as part of their group identity in most rural areas of Rivers State.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper adopted Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) theory of differential opportunity and gang subculture. This theory was an offshoot of the synthesis of Sutherland's differential association theory and Merton's strain theory. The differential opportunity and gang subculture theory posit that crime/deviance or gang phenomenon exists because of the various forms of delinquent subcultures in society. Cloward and Ohlin following the Mertonian tradition averred that the existence of criminal subcultures or gangs among the low class in society is due to the lack of access to the valued cultural goals through the approved cultural means by the lower class people. Therefore, the difference in the goals, and means of actualizing the goals breeds disillusionment and anger, which culminate in deviation from the acceptable means of getting the goals. As aptly noted by Shoemaker (2004), the limited blocked economic aspiration leads to frustration and poor self-esteem and these negative conditions move people to form gangs that vary in type. In a similar vein, Miller, Schreck and Tewksbury (2008) observed that the ratio of conventional and criminal values to which juveniles are consistently exposed account for the variations in the nature of the gangs.

Cloward and Ohlin (1960) identified three forms of gang membership/subculture which correspond to the nature of neighbourhood formation within a social context. These types of gangs are first criminal gangs, which are organized mainly to commit income yielding crimes, such as armed robbery, extortion, theft among others. The criminal gangs have the adult criminals as their mentors or role model (Akers and Sellers, 2009; Shelden, Tracy and Brown, 2004). The second are the conflict gangs which engage in conflict as a means of ventilating their frustration. The conflict gangs involve in inter-intra-gang/cult wars, which are aimed determining the camp that has more 'power' within an environment. In the case of Rivers State, these conflicts between various gangs have left much to be desired as a lot of people have been killed or maimed, property destroyed, involuntary population displacement, and severe economic hardship in some of the rural areas occasioned. The third type is the retreatist gang which according to Cloward and Ohlin, are engaged in illicit drug abuse as a disposition against the goal and the means. In Rivers State however, this is not the case. Rather, the gangs are emboldened by illicit drug to commit crime. These gangs or cult groups operating in this low income area are seriously engaged in drug abuse, which in turn, makes them perpetrate violent acts.

These forms of gangs according to Cloward and Ohlin exist in low socio-economic neighbourhoods with its own distinct structure woven around licit and illicit endeavours in an area. In a similar vein, any one of the gangs may engage in one or more of these anti-social behaviours (Miller, Schreck and Tewksbury 2008). This theory is relevant to this study in three-folds. First, this theory is based on deviant subculture or gang/cult subculture which is the main focus of this study. Second, this theory posits that gang/cult subcultures writ large in low socio-economic areas. This work is focused on low income areas of Rivers State- rural areas that are experiencing high rate of cult violence. Thirdly, the theory states that where these (criminal, conflict and retreatist) gang operate, that there will be the likelihood of violence. Obviously, the reports from the print and electronic media attest to the willful and unrestrained killings, maiming and the destruction of property on a weekly basis in some of these rural communities in Rivers State by the youth and juvenile cult gangs.

### **Methods**

The study utilized the descriptive survey method of data collection. Interviews were conducted with some of these juvenile gangs, community leaders, and other members of the communities who fled their communities into nearby communities due to the violence in their communities. The researcher purposively selected the respondents and the communities based on his knowledge of the areas and severity of the gang violence. One hundred (100) respondents were interviewed from five purposively selected communities (Ibaa, Rumuodogo, Omudioga, Omademe and Omarelu). Those interviewed include the juvenile gang members, community leaders, and some of those who fled their communities into nearby peaceful communities for safety.

Unstructured interviews were conducted with the respondents so as to get the much needed information from them. The local language and pidgin English were used for conducting the interviews, which made the respondents to express themselves freely. The interview lasted between 10-20 minutes because of the volatile nature of the area. Information elicited from the respondents was complemented with various local and national dailies report on the prevailing gang violence in the area; researches on gang violence and personal observation. Personal observation was utilized to ascertain the extent of destruction in the communities visited. Three research assistants were engaged by the researchers from each selected area to assist us to locate those interviewed.

In addition, the researchers adopted the socio-metry method of qualitative research introduced by Timasheff (1967) to reach the sample population (juvenile gangs, community leaders and some of those who fled their communities in the heat of the violence). The socio-metry approach is based on the fact that society is made up of cleavages of selective affinity and repulsion. Therefore, on the basis of selective affinity, if one gets someone within a group, you can use him/her to reach other members of the group through referrals. The fieldwork was carried out between August 2017 and February, 2018.

### **Findings**

This research work was conducted in five rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria. These communities were chosen based on the level of gang wars that led to the wanton destruction of lives and property in the communities. The communities are mostly agrarian in nature. The respondents in our interview sessions instructed that their names should not be mentioned based on the volatile nature of these communities where various gangs held sway and intimidated almost everyone in the community. The findings from the interview will be presented in three segments – forms of juvenile gang membership, factors that facilitate gang membership and the effects of gang violence in the communities studied.

### **Forms of Juvenile Gang Membership**

Popular understanding of gang membership and gang violence in literature, have focused on youth gangs. This is because in many parts of the world where gang exists, they mainly composed of youth (Esbensen and Weerman, 2005; Sheldon, Tracy and Brown, 2004; Pyrooz and Sweeten, 2015). However, recent observations in some rural communities in Rivers State show that there exists a new form of gang phenomenon-juvenile gang membership which engages in juvenile delinquent acts that are illegal and violent. Our interview with some of the gang members revealed that the juvenile gangs had various categories in all the communities we studied. These include the cult gang, armed robbery gangs and kidnapping gangs. They further revealed that the above classification is patterned around the youth gang structure. One of our respondents from Ibaa gave the following testimony “I belong to the robbery gang. Our boss uses us to make money that he uses to drink and smoke ‘wewe’. When we succeed in the act, he also gives us part of what got for our upkeep”. Also, one of the juvenile gangs we interviewed from Omudioga community when asked the gang he belongs to said, “I am a member of the cult gang in this community. I joined the ice-lander and we are the leading cult group. When we show, others go displace. So, others gangs dey fear us”.

In Omademe community, a juvenile interviewed told us that he is of ‘De-well’ cult. “I joined them because they are too much. They no de carry last for jungle. Them they win others. When we want to kill, we kill and even behead, particularly other gangs that want to try our power. When the fight starts, the entire community will be on the run”. Also, in Rumuodogo, one of our respondents revealed to us that he is a member of ‘De-gbam’ cult. He said that other “cults exist in our community but I am comfortable where I belongs because we are in majority”. This situation was reported in all the communities we visited. The findings above corroborated the assertion of Dikewoha, (2016), Agwanwo and Ajoku, (2017) that most of the killings going on in most rural areas of Rivers State are perpetrated by juvenile gangs.

### **Facilitating Factors in Gang Membership**

The outcome of the interview with the juveniles and community leaders revealed a number of factors that have predisposed most of the juveniles to joining gangs. One of the recurring factors admitted by the different groups during the interview was their consensus on the breakdown of the family social values and family ties. This breakdown, as many reaffirmed, is located in the general despondency in the larger society. Most of the community leaders located this situation within the context of many family abandoning their parenting responsibility in search of money to the point that parents no longer put their watchful eyes on the their children. This meant that there was the absence of family ties/cohesion. Some of the juveniles that were asked if their parents had time to monitor their daily activities said their parents rarely did. This, according to the gang members, made them susceptible to gang membership.

Another factor identified during the study as a causal factor was the phenomenon of peer influence and negative role model. Most of the gang members interviewed said that they were influenced to join gangs by their friends who are members. Experts have shown that young people because they act as surrogate family, and also share a sense of belonging, power, control, and prestige join gangs. The ideal of gang members acting as substitute family is supported by the interview with some community leaders. The interview carried out with community leaders carried out have shown that gang member see fellow gang members as family and they took care of each other. It is also discovered that many of the gang member interviewed had tatoos to show allegiance to their gangs and to show pride in belonging to such groups Also, some of the community leaders pointed out that the majority of the juveniles who joined gangs were exposed to it at secondary school. Most of the community leaders said this was possible because in most public schools, teachers do not effectively monitor the activities of the students under them.

Also, the respondents identified peer group influence and negative role model as one of the predisposing factors in juvenile gang membership. Responses from the gang members clearly shows that apart from the breakdown of the family values and ties, juveniles join gangs because of peer group pressure. Most of the gang members interviewed said that they were influenced to join gangs by their friends who are members. Also, some of the community leaders pointed out that the majority of the juveniles who joined gangs were exposed to it at secondary school because in many public schools, teachers do not effectively monitor the students under them. They further revealed that these juveniles, who joined gangs, were highly exposed to the influence of their class mates, friends and relations who are gang members. In fact, scholars have looked at the influence of peers on gang membership in a variety of ways which included their exposure to delinquent peers, and attachment to delinquent peers and commitment to them. Thus, the association with delinquent peers is one of the main factors spawning gang membership (Esbensen and Weerman, 2005).

The findings further revealed that aside from the issue of peer group influence, youth with low self-esteem also constitutes another predisposing factor in the membership of juvenile gangs. In the course of our interview with the gang members, very few admitted that lack of self-esteem made them join gangs, while the majority of them (juvenile gangs) agreed to the fact that they suffered from lack of self-esteem, and thus inadvertently predisposed them to gang membership. Similarly, some factors associated with poor mental health also predispose them to join gang; and some the juveniles who involve in gang report of high level of depression and suicidal thought, and membership in gang exacerbates these underlying problems creating higher levels of stress, depression and a higher prevalence of suicidal thoughts and actions (Watkin and Melde, 2016).

In a related endeavor, Alleye and Wood (2010) examining the psychological processes predisposing individuals to join gang say lack of environmental pro-social supports (i.e home, school, and community), risk factors such as low self-esteem, impulsivity, post traumatic stress disorder symptoms, mood disorder, attention deficient hyperactivity disorder, disruptive behaviour disorder and substance use disorders also affect gang membership. The majority of the leaders from the various communities studied, revealed that lack of self-esteem, result from the lack of social ties between these gang members and their families. This finding is corroborated by that of Yablonsky, (1962 as cited in Esbensen and Weerman, 2005), Moffitt (2003), Esbensen and Weerman (2005), that gang members, unlike non-gang members, are more socially

inept, have lower self-esteem and have sociopathic features. This psychological state further drives them into gang membership.

Poverty was also found to be responsible for gang membership in the study areas. Most of the gang members interviewed revealed that they joined gangs to engage in crime in order to earn a living. They said their families are poor, and depended on subsistence agriculture or petty businesses. Most of these families find it difficult to adequately take care of their children due lack of funds. This poverty is evident in the number of the gang members that lack basic education and better life chances.

### **Effects of Juvenile Gang Violence**

Violence, regardless of the form it takes, leaves so much to be desired because it takes heavy toll on individuals and society at large. The following are the effects of juvenile gang violence in the rural communities studied. The revelations are based on responses from the interviews and personal observations of the researchers.

**Loss of Lives:** The perpetration of juvenile gang violence has resulted in the loss of lives of many people in the state. Some are killed through gun shots or butchered with knives. Recently many have been killed and beheaded depending on magnitude of the violence. Those mostly affected are the key players in the violence (gang members) as a group or as rivals. Sometimes too, where members of a gang rival go to look for a rival gang member and they are not able to find the prime target, they can kill the family members of their prime target in his place/absence. Thus, close relatives of gang members are not spared when there is inter-or-intra gang violence in most rural areas of Rivers State.

**Loss/Destruction of Property:** Aside from the loss of lives, juvenile gang violence also manifest in the loss or destruction of property. The property of gang members and that of their family members can be destroyed in the course of gang attacks. Some rural areas such as Ibaa, Ahoada, Abua, Ogoni, Rumuodogo, Omademe, and in many other part of the state witnessed partial or total destruction of houses/buildings of rival gang members. This has equally resulted in rendering the victims and family members homeless in many of these communities.

**Forced migration and internal displacement:** Gang violence in these rural areas have also spawned involuntary movement of people and groups to safer neighbouring communities. Due to gang violence, these rural communities in Rivers State have become ghost town, where only the aged are left behind. The effect of gang war/rivalries in these communities have made community members to migrate into neighbouring communities that have relative peace or relocated to the urban centres. This situation has greatly affected their economic, social and psychological wellbeing.

**Food Insecurity:** A lot of studies have shown that there is a relationship between violence and food insecurity in Nigeria, Ajodo-Adebanjoko, Okwudili, Okoli, Olaku and Iortyer (2015); Agwanwo and Oladejo (2017). The perpetration of violence scares people away from engaging in their legitimate businesses. In the Rivers State, most of these gangs have their operational base in the bushes around. And because of this, many farmers do not feel safe to go to the surrounding bushes to carry out their farming activities. In a situation where farmer are scared of going to farm for fear of being killed or raped, in the case of women, this portends great danger for food security for rural communities with far-reaching implication for the urban population. The situation has caused food scarcity and is evident in the high and increasing prices of garri (from 1500 to 3500 naira) in the recent time, particularly, in Rivers State where thesespate violence are widespread.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Gang violence, in the forms of cult armed robbery and kidnapping, has become a serious issue of concern to the citizens, government and policy makers due to the effects of their activities in the urban and rural areas of Rivers State. Like the youth gang, juvenile gang membership with a sub-culture of violence is a real but neglected part of human existence in some rural areas of Rivers State. These gangs steal, rape, kidnap, maim and kill rival cult members and their relatives almost on a regular basis in conjunction with youth gangs. The existence of gangs with their cult related activities, which used to be an urban phenomenon, has caught up with many rural communities especially in the agrarian centres in Rivers State. These gang related violence

has led to the loss of lives, the destruction of property, untold hardship, forced migration, internal displacement, and food insecurity, among other forms of discomfort in Abua communities, Ibaa, Ahoada communities, Ogoni communities, Rumuodogo, Omudioga and Omademe.

The emergence of gangs, as an unacceptable social force, is linked to socio-political failures that have created a huge gap between the rich and the poor; spatial inequality between the urban and rural areas; social exclusion; marginalization; and lack of social infrastructures and opportunities have facilitated the spread of youth and juvenile gangs into the rural areas of the state. These conditions, coupled with the proliferation of small arms and light weapons have turned the state, particularly, the rural areas into battle grounds for gangs with a huge toll on human lives and property. To reverse this ugly trend would require a concerted effort from the state government, political parties, community members and leaders, families, faith-based organizations and non-government organizations.

The state government amnesty programme that was intended to curb cult activities has not reduced the level of criminal violence perpetrated by gangs in the state particularly in the rural areas. Therefore, the state government would have to fashion a novel method of engaging these gangs. Apart from getting them to surrender their sophisticated arms, the government should engage them in behavioural modification programme through their relevant agencies and also ensure their empowerment before reintegrating them back to the society. Their empowerment is necessary because poverty is a contributory factor in their involvement in gang membership.

The bifurcation of the state along political party line has spawned the emergence and proliferation of various violent gangs in the state along party lines for election purposes. Some of these gangs enjoy good patronage from some top politicians in the state. They buy arms for them, which makes it possible for them to kill and destroy. The leading political parties and politicians in the state should learn to modify their political ambitions so that they could eschew politics by violent means. This would drastically reduce the level of violence in the state.

Good governance is very vital in the mitigation of the socio-economic and political factors that bring about this social malady in the state. More needs to be done urgently in the area of human capital development especially in the rural areas where there are the poorest of the poor. Social inequality as one of the conditions prevailing in these areas has contributed to the inability of families that cannot adequately take care of their children to make them follow acceptable family and social norms. Thus, many of these children deviate from standard family and social norms to join gangs to seek economic liberation.

## REFERENCES

- Agwanwo, D. E. and Oladejo, A. (2017). Fulani herdsmen and farmers violent conflicts: implication for food security in Nigeria. Paper accepted for publication in *Journal for Conflict and Gender Studies*, University of Port Harcourt.
- Agwanwo, D. E. and Ajoku, B. (2018). Cult-violence, migration and rural development in some selected communities in Rivers State. Forth Coming.
- Ajodo-Adebanjoko, A; Okwudili, W.; Okoli, C., Olaku, D. and Iortyer, P. (2015). Resource conflict, communal violence and agricultural productivity in Nasarawa State. *Studies in Politics and Society*, 3(1): 243-258.
- Akers, R. L. and Sellers, C.S. (2009). *Criminological theories: introduction, evaluation and application*. 5<sup>TH</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anikpo, M. (2006). *Foundation of social science research: A methodological guide to students*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Barnes, J. and Cheng, H. (2006). Do parental neighbourhood perceptions contribute to child behaviour problems? A study of disadvantaged children. *International Interdisciplinary Journal for Research, Policy and Care*. 1(1): 2-14.
- Carrington, P. J. (2009). Co-offending and the development of delinquent career. *Criminology*, 47 (4); 1295-1330.
- Esbensen, F. and Weerman, F. M. (2005). Youth gang and troublesome youth groups in the United States and the Netherlands: A cross-national comparison. *European Journal of Criminology*. 2 (1); 5-37.
- Horsfall, A. K. (2013). *The Security Challenge of the city*. In Alagoa, E.J. and Nwanodi, J. (ed) Port Harcourt at 100 Past, Present and the Future. Port Harcourt: Onyoma Research Publication.
- Igiebor, N. (2015 September 14). Rivers of war. TELL P4.
- Ikpi, A. (1996). *Democratic governance and development in 21<sup>st</sup> century West Africa*. In Ikpi and Olayemi (eds) *Governance and development in West Africa: perspective for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Arlington: Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development.
- Intravia, J., Wolff, K., Gibbs, B. and Piquero, A. (2017). Violent attitudes and antisocial behaviour: Examining the code of the street's generalizability among college sample. *Deviant Behaviour*. 38 (9): 957-974.
- Jutersonke, O.; Muggah, R. and Rodgers, D. (2009). Gangs, urban violence, and security intervention in Central America. *Security Dialogue* 40(4-5): 373-397.
- Lopez, D. A. and Brummett, P.O. (2003). Gang membership and acculturation. *Crime and Delinquency*. 49(4): 627-642.
- Miller, J. M., Schreck, C. J. and Tewksbury R. (2008). *Criminological theory. A brief introduction*. Boston: Pearson.
- Sheldon, R., Tracy, S. K., and Brown W. B. (2004). *Youth gangs in American society*. Australia: Thomson and Wadsworth.
- Timasheff, N. (1967) *Sociological theory: its nature and growth*. New York: Random House.
- Wosu, E. and Anele, K, A. (2010). Rural–urban migration of young persons from selected conflict ridden communities in Rivers State: A Sociological Approach. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*. 4(6): 209-214.
- Yomi, O. (2006). Youth urban violence in Nigeria. A case study of urban gangs from Port Harcourt. *Institute of International Studies*, University of California, Berkeley.
- Pyrooz D .C. and Sweeten G. (2014).Gang membership between ages 5 and 17 years in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. xxx 1-6.