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# Sociodemographic Background Predisposing youths into Gang Violence in Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The historical and constitutional responsibility of youths in any country cannot be underrated because youth remain one of the vital weapons for accelerating and harmonizing societal orderliness. Evidence gathered from extant publication shows that youth formed the larger percentage of people apprehended for violence activities in most correctional facilities in the world. In Nigeria, extant publications were reviewed while Anomie and rational choice theories were adopted for the study. Mixed methods were adopted for collections of data from the inmates in the Lagos correctional facility approved for the study. 400 hundred copied of structured questionnaires in the three approved corrections in Lagos. But 347 of the questionnaires were retrieved for the quantitative analysis while 36 out of 40 interviews conducted were found useful using In-depth interview for the inmates while key informant interviews were used for collection of verbal data from the member of the Nigeria Police Force, Correctional Officers, market men/women and community elders in Lagos. The study concluded that gender positioning ( $t=0.47$ ), family background ( $t=0.83$ ) and marital status ( $t=0.14$ ) significantly predisposed youths into violent activities compared with employment ( $t=0.816$ ), age ( $t=0.123$ ) and level of education ( $t=0.482$ ). In addition, the qualitative data indicated that immaturity and poor parental background influence youth gang violence. The social interventionist should encourage the family, youths and community members to get involved in decision making, adequate youth development programme should be encouraged and youth should develop act of self-creativity and innovation toward promoting self-image in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Sociodemographic, Background, Predisposing, Gang, Violence

## Introduction

Globally the impact of youth in developmental activities cannot be underrated because youth all over the world are labelled as the catalyst for achieving positive manpower development if open to opportunities. But once they (youths) are denied the opportunity to showcase their hidden talent or potential skills they easily adapt subcultural activities that can easily negate the generally accepted societal norms and values leading to gang formation. Ajufu (2013) supported the claim and laments on the fact that young people in Africa have the capacity to significantly contribute to

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