

## YOUTH RESTIVENESS, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND POLITICAL STABILITY IN ADAMAWA STATE: A POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the intricate relationship between youth restiveness, unemployment, and political stability in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Against the backdrop of Nigeria's persistently high youth unemployment, the research employs both descriptive and regression analysis to explore how structural factors influence political stability. Guided by the Political Economy Theory, the study investigates the roles of labour market dynamics, economic conditions, governance structures, social service availability, and investment confidence in shaping youth unemployment and its implications for political order. Primary data were obtained from 343 respondents through a random sampling survey and analysed to establish causal linkages. The findings indicate that social service availability, government intervention, and investment confidence have significant positive effects on political stability, primarily by creating employment opportunities for youths. Labour market dynamics showed a weaker but positive relationship, while economic factors were negative and statistically insignificant, suggesting that weak economic structures and inflationary pressures continue to hinder employment creation. The results underscore that youth unemployment in Adamawa State is not solely an economic issue but a political economy challenge that fuels restiveness and threatens institutional legitimacy. The study concludes that strengthening social services, enhancing youth empowerment programs, improving the investment climate, diversifying the economy, and promoting inclusive governance are critical for reducing unemployment and ensuring sustainable political stability in Adamawa State and beyond.*

**Keywords:** Adamawa State, political stability, political economy, regression analysis, youth restiveness, youth unemployment

### Introduction

Nigeria, a richly endowed and populous nation in West Africa, continues to face the persistent challenge of youth unemployment and its profound implications for political stability. Unemployment among young people remains one of the country's most pressing socio-economic issues, leading to widespread frustration, hopelessness, and dependence on already strained family and social systems. As the youth population continues to expand, the unemployment crisis has intensified. Akande (2014) estimated that about 11.1 million youths were unemployed in 2012. Similarly, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that by the first quarter of 2016, 15.2

million out of 38.2 million youths in the labour force were either unemployed or underemployed, representing a 42.24% unemployment rate. Between 2014 and 2017, youth unemployment averaged 21.73%, peaking at 33.10% in the third quarter of 2017. Taiwo (2017) further noted that 7.9 million youths aged 15–34 years were unemployed in the fourth quarter, translating to an alarming 61.6% national youth unemployment rate. Although the problem is nationwide, it is particularly severe in Northern Nigeria, including Adamawa State.

Empirical evidence has shown a strong causal relationship between youth unemployment and political instability in Nigeria. Rising joblessness has been linked to increased social unrest, violence, and criminality among youths. Studies such as Ugal, Nwagbara, and Uyang (2011) and Emeh (2012) revealed that unemployed youths are often drawn into antisocial and violent activities, including kidnapping, political thuggery, militancy, drug trafficking, and human trafficking. The inability of key economic sectors like agriculture and manufacturing to absorb the expanding labour force further exacerbates this situation (Okafor, 2011). This structural weakness perpetuates unemployment, which, in turn, fuels youth restiveness a condition marked by frustration, aggression, and a willingness to engage in disruptive acts.

The pathway from unemployment to restiveness and ultimately to political instability can thus be summarized as follows: unemployment → frustration and deprivation → youth restiveness → erosion of political stability. Nwokike (2022) observed that sustained unemployment generates a sense of exclusion and inequality, pushing many young people toward violent or criminal alternatives. Abdullahi and Saka (2023) also emphasized that prolonged joblessness weakens faith in democratic institutions and government legitimacy, fostering resentment toward political authorities. Consistent with Hussain's (2014, as cited in Milasaite & Micic, 2020) argument, political instability often emerges from civil discontent or intense competition among political actors, conditions that are amplified by high youth unemployment.

Therefore, youth unemployment acts as both a trigger and driver of political instability by intensifying socio-economic inequality, eroding social cohesion, and fostering anti-government sentiments. Understanding this chain of causation is therefore essential for formulating effective policy interventions that promote inclusive growth, reduce restiveness, and strengthen political stability, particularly in volatile regions such as Adamawa State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Youth unemployment has emerged as one of the most critical challenges undermining political stability in Nigeria. Despite the country's abundant human and material resources, the persistent rise in youth unemployment has fostered frustration, restiveness, and increasing involvement of young people in violent and criminal activities such as kidnapping, political thuggery, drug trafficking, and insurgency (Okafor, 2011; Nwokike, 2022). In Adamawa State, where the problem is particularly acute, high unemployment rates have deepened social exclusion, eroded trust in government institutions, and exacerbated political instability. Reports by the National Bureau of

Statistics indicate that youth unemployment in Nigeria has reached alarming levels, with rates peaking at 33.1% in 2017 and disproportionately affecting the northern region, including Adamawa (Taiwo, 2017). This persistent socio-economic challenge not only undermines governance and development efforts but also threatens the fragile peace and security of the state. Hence, understanding the political economy of youth unemployment and its implications for restiveness and stability in Adamawa State is essential for designing effective policy interventions.

### **Research Questions**

- i. To what extent does political stability influence youth unemployment in Adamawa State?
- ii. What are the major drivers of youth unemployment in Adamawa State, and how do they affect political stability?

### **Research Objectives**

- i. To examine the extent to which political stability impacts youth unemployment in Adamawa State.
- ii. To identify the major causes of youth unemployment and analyse their implications for political stability in Adamawa State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** Political stability has no significant impact on the level of youth unemployment in Adamawa State.

**Ho2:** The major causes of youth unemployment do not significantly influence political stability in Adamawa State.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual Clarifications**

#### **Youth Unemployment**

The concept of youth unemployment has been defined and interpreted in various ways depending on disciplinary orientation, institutional perspective, and national contexts. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines youth unemployment as the share of the labour force aged 15–24 that is without work but available for and actively seeking employment (ILO, 2015). While this definition provides a standardized benchmark for international comparisons, it has been criticized for being overly restrictive, as it excludes discouraged job seekers who have given up looking for work due to structural barriers. This creates a gap in capturing the true scale of unemployment in developing countries like Nigeria, where many young people fall into the category of discouraged workers.

Similarly, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria defines unemployed youths as individuals within the age bracket of 15–34 who are without work but are available and actively seeking employment (NBS, 2016). This broader age categorization aligns more closely with Nigeria's demographic and labour realities. However, the gap in this definition is that it does not adequately differentiate between unemployment and underemployment, particularly in contexts where many youths are engaged in precarious or low-paying jobs that do not match their

qualifications. As a result, the definition may understate the severity of youth labour market exclusion.

From an academic perspective, Okafor (2011) conceptualizes youth unemployment as the situation where young people who are able and willing to work cannot find gainful employment commensurate with their skills and education. This definition highlights the problem of job–skill mismatch and emphasizes the qualitative dimension of unemployment. The gap, however, lies in its limited operationalization, as it does not specify measurable indicators that can distinguish between temporary job search and chronic, long-term unemployment.

Another view by Emeh (2012) describes youth unemployment as a socio-economic condition characterized by widespread joblessness among young people, resulting in poverty, dependency, and social vices. This definition goes beyond the economic lens and incorporates social consequences, thereby capturing the broader societal costs of unemployment. The limitation, however, is that it is descriptive and normative, offering little guidance for empirical measurement or for policy design that requires clear operational definitions.

In addition, Ugal, Nwagbara, and Uyang (2011) define youth unemployment as the inability of the labour market to absorb the growing number of job seekers, particularly those leaving educational institutions. This structural approach emphasizes the demand–supply imbalance in the economy. The gap here is that it overlooks the role of individual factors such as lack of employable skills, entrepreneurship, or cultural attitudes toward certain jobs, which may also contribute to youth unemployment.

Taken together, these definitions reflect diverse dimensions—statistical, structural, and socio-economic—of youth unemployment. Yet, a consistent gap remains in capturing the informal and underemployment dimensions, especially in developing economies like Nigeria where informal work dominates. Moreover, most definitions do not adequately account for regional variations, meaning the peculiar experiences of states such as Adamawa are often obscured in national or international classifications. Addressing these definitional gaps is crucial for developing a nuanced understanding of youth unemployment and its linkages to restiveness and political stability.

### **Youth Restiveness**

The concept of youth restiveness has attracted attention in Nigerian and African scholarship, given its increasing prominence in political, economic, and social discourse. According to Ojo (2014), youth restiveness refers to sustained protest, agitation, or violent expression of grievances by young people, often as a result of socio-economic deprivation, political exclusion, or perceived injustice. While this definition highlights the role of structural inequality in shaping youth behaviours, it does not sufficiently differentiate between peaceful expressions of discontent and violent actions, thereby creating a conceptual gap in distinguishing legitimate activism from disruptive restiveness.

Osumah (2013) defines youth restiveness as a form of social disorder manifested in violence, hostage-taking, destruction of property, and militancy, particularly when young people seek attention from the state or political elites. This definition emphasizes the violent and destructive aspects of restiveness, yet its limitation lies in reducing the concept only to negative or criminal expressions, ignoring non-violent strategies such as civil protests, boycotts, and peaceful demonstrations that are equally part of youth agitation.

From another perspective, Elegbeleye (2005) conceptualizes youth restiveness as any sustained protest or disruptive behaviour by youths aimed at pressing home perceived demands from authority. This definition is broader and captures the idea of sustained discontent. However, it leaves a gap in operational clarity, as it does not specify the conditions under which such protests become restiveness rather than normal civic participation.

In a more recent framing, Abdulkarim and Adeboye (2019) argue that youth restiveness is an outcome of unaddressed unemployment, poor governance, and lack of opportunities, which push youths into thuggery, cultism, armed robbery, and other anti-social behaviours. The strength of this definition is that it links causes directly to manifestations of restiveness. However, the gap lies in its deterministic tone, as it overlooks the agency of young people who may channel their frustrations into constructive or non-violent resistance rather than necessarily engaging in criminal activities.

Collectively, these definitions suggest that youth restiveness is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, encompassing both violent and non-violent forms of youth agitation driven by socio-economic and political discontent. Yet, there are persistent gaps: most definitions either overemphasize violence while neglecting peaceful forms of resistance, or they lack clarity in differentiating between legitimate youth participation in governance and destructive agitation. Furthermore, few definitions provide a localized perspective, particularly in conflict-prone regions such as Northern Nigeria and Adamawa State, where youth restiveness is shaped not only by unemployment but also by insecurity, insurgency, and ethno-religious tensions. This study addresses these gaps by adopting a broader conceptualization that situates youth restiveness within the political economy of unemployment and governance in Adamawa State.

### **Political Stability**

Political stability is a widely used but often ambiguously defined concept in political science and development studies. According to Huntington (1968), political stability refers to the absence of violence, disorder, and revolutionary change within a polity. His definition emphasizes the endurance of political institutions against upheaval. However, the gap lies in its narrow framing, which equates stability merely with the absence of conflict, overlooking dimensions such as governance quality, legitimacy, and institutional effectiveness that are essential for sustainable stability.

In a similar vein, Alesina et al. (1996) define political stability as the probability that a government will not be terminated by unconstitutional or violent means within a given period. This econometric perspective allows for cross-country measurement and comparability. The limitation, however, is that it reduces political stability to regime survival, thereby neglecting other important factors such as corruption, policy inconsistency, and social inclusion, which equally determine stability in developing countries like Nigeria.

Hussain (2014) conceptualizes political stability as the extent to which governments are able to provide security, manage conflicts, and ensure policy continuity without disruption. This definition recognizes governance performance as an important aspect of stability. Yet, its limitation lies in the lack of empirical indicators that can capture varying degrees of instability, such as low-level protests, rising youth restiveness, or declining trust in democratic institutions.

A broader approach is offered by Milasait and Micic (2020), who argue that political stability is not only the absence of violent conflicts but also the presence of conditions that foster peace, institutional resilience, and public trust in government. This definition integrates both negative (absence of conflict) and positive (presence of legitimacy and cohesion) dimensions of stability. However, the gap here is that it tends to generalize stability conditions without sufficiently accounting for country-specific or subnational contexts, such as Nigeria's regional disparities where instability may be localized in states like Adamawa while the central government remains intact.

### **Political Economy**

The political economy perspective provides a framework for understanding how political and economic factors interact to influence social outcomes. According to Marx (1859/1970), political economy refers to the ways in which the economic base (production and resources) shapes the political superstructure (institutions, governance, and ideology). This classical Marxist view highlights the role of class struggles and resource distribution in shaping political order. However, the limitation of this approach is its deterministic nature, as it overlooks the agency of non-economic factors such as culture, identity, and social movements that also influence political stability.

In a broader sense, North (1990) defines political economy as the study of how institutions—both political and economic—evolve and structure human interactions. His institutionalist perspective emphasizes the role of rules, incentives, and enforcement mechanisms in shaping governance outcomes. While insightful, this definition faces the gap of assuming that institutional reforms automatically generate stability, which does not fully account for persistent instability in weak states like Nigeria, where formal institutions exist but informal practices undermine them.

Leftwich (2000) advances the concept by arguing that political economy is concerned with the ways in which power and resources are distributed and contested in different societies, and how these dynamics affect development outcomes. This perspective integrates both political and

economic factors, recognizing that governance failures, corruption, and exclusion can exacerbate unemployment and restiveness. However, the limitation is that it tends to adopt a macro-level analysis, often neglecting subnational contexts such as state-level disparities in Nigeria, where regions like Adamawa may face unique challenges distinct from national trends.

More recently, Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) argue that political economy should be understood through the distinction between inclusive and extractive institutions. Inclusive institutions foster participation and long-term growth, while extractive ones concentrate power and resources in the hands of a few, perpetuating instability. Although this framework provides a useful lens, it does not sufficiently capture the immediate link between socio-economic problems (e.g., youth unemployment) and political instability, which are crucial in fragile democracies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Political Economy Theory, rooted in the works of Karl Marx (1859/1970), provides a framework for understanding how economic structures and resource distribution shape political and social outcomes. Marx emphasized the role of the economic base in determining the political superstructure, arguing that unemployment, inequality, and class struggles create instability within societies. Later scholars such as North (1990) and Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) expanded the theory to focus on institutions, governance, and the interaction between politics and economics in shaping development. This evolution of thought highlights the interconnectedness of economic performance, political legitimacy, and social stability.

One of the major strengths of the Political Economy Theory is its integrative perspective, as it links unemployment, poverty, and inequality with governance and political outcomes. This makes it especially relevant for analyzing issues such as youth restiveness in Adamawa State, where poor economic opportunities are directly tied to weak institutions and governance challenges. The theory also provides policy relevance, as it helps in identifying structural reforms needed to address unemployment and enhance stability. However, a notable weakness of the theory is its tendency toward economic determinism, often placing excessive emphasis on economic structures while underestimating the role of cultural, psychological, and identity-based factors in shaping political instability. Additionally, its macro-level orientation sometimes overlooks localized variations within states or regions.

Applied to this study, Political Economy Theory provides a robust framework for examining the nexus between youth unemployment, restiveness, and political stability in Adamawa State. It explains how structural unemployment, poor institutional capacity, and inequitable resource distribution generate frustration among youths, leading to restiveness, crime, and political violence. Furthermore, it clarifies how governance failures in addressing unemployment weaken trust in institutions and undermine political stability. Thus, the theory offers a holistic understanding of the socio-economic and political drivers of instability in Adamawa State, making it the most suitable framework for this research.

## Methodology

### 3.1 Data, Sampling Technique and Sample Size

This study employed a survey research design using structured questionnaires and interviews to collect primary data from residents of Adamawa State. A cross-sectional survey was conducted within a defined period to capture current conditions (Owens, 2002). A random sampling technique was used to ensure all individuals had an equal chance of selection, thereby reducing bias, improving representativeness, and enhancing the validity and generalizability of the findings to the wider population. The sample size of 384 respondents was determined using Cochran's sampling formula, which provides a reliable estimate for large populations:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{(n_0 - 1)}{N}}$$

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where P= proportion of attribute presented in population, Q =1-P, e = Margin of error, N= population size,  $n_0$ = Cochran's sample size recommendation, n= new adjusted sample size, Z value = 1.96 (for 95% confidence level).

Hence,

$$\frac{1.96^2(0.25)}{0.0025} = 384.160$$

$$\frac{384}{1 + \frac{(384 - 1)}{318,300}} = 383.5$$

### 3.2 Model Specification

Apart from descriptive analysis, the study employed regression analysis to determine the nature of correlation between the variables of interest.

$$PS = B_1 LMD + B_2 EF + B_3 GI + B_4 SSA + B_5 IC + U_i$$

Where: PS = Political Stability, LMD = Labor Market Dynamics, ES = Economic Situations, GI = Government Intervention, SS = Social Services Availability, IC = Investment Confidence and  $U_i$  = Error Term.

**Labour Market Dynamics (LMD):** Labour market policies such as wage regulations, employment protection, and labour laws directly influence youth unemployment. Supportive policies ease entry into the workforce, while rigid ones increase unemployment. A flexible labour market, where displaced workers can quickly find jobs, reflects a strong economic and political system (Clark & Summers, 1979).

**Economic Factors (EF):** Resource-dependent economies are highly vulnerable to shocks, often leading to slow growth, recession, and rising youth unemployment. Conversely, diversified and

stable economies foster development, job creation, and political stability. Political instability further discourages investment, reducing employment opportunities and weakening growth (Milasaite & Micic, 2020).

**Government Intervention (GI):** Effective governance and transparent policies can mitigate youth unemployment and enhance political stability. However, corruption, nepotism, and favouritism undermine institutional credibility, reducing opportunities for youth and fuelling restiveness (Sengupta, 2004).

**Social Services Availability (SSA):** Limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure diminishes youth productivity and fuels instability. Investment in social services, however, reduces unemployment, improves welfare, and strengthens political stability (Ilkcaracan et al., 2021).

**Investment Confidence (IC):** Political stability fosters investor confidence, encouraging both domestic and foreign investments that generate jobs for youths. In contrast, instability creates uncertainty, discourages investment, and limits employment opportunities (Chletsos & Sintos, 2024).

#### 4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The results are analysed in line with the study objectives, focusing on the relationship between youth unemployment, restiveness, and political stability in Adamawa State.

**Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------|-----------|------------|
| 18–30 | 147       | 42.9       |
| 31–40 | 118       | 34.4       |
| 41–50 | 51        | 14.9       |
| 51+   | 27        | 7.9        |
| Total | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most respondents are youths, with 42.9% aged 18–30 and 34.4% aged 31–40. This confirms that unemployment in Adamawa State disproportionately affects young people, who are more prone to restiveness when job opportunities are scarce.

**Table 2: Employment Status**

| Employment | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Employed   | 116       | 33.8       |
| Unemployed | 227       | 66.2       |
| Total      | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Over two-thirds (66.2%) of respondents are unemployed, a figure that reflects the intensity of joblessness in Adamawa. High youth unemployment is strongly linked to frustration, crime, and political instability in the State.

**Table 3: Cross-Tabulation of Age and Employment**

| Age   | Employed    | Unemployed  | Total       |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 18–30 | 58 (16.9%)  | 89 (25.9%)  | 147 (42.9%) |
| 31–40 | 34 (9.9%)   | 84 (24.5%)  | 118 (34.4%) |
| 41–50 | 18 (5.2%)   | 33 (9.6%)   | 51 (14.9%)  |
| 51+   | 6 (1.8%)    | 21 (6.1%)   | 27 (7.9%)   |
| Total | 116 (33.8%) | 227 (66.2%) | 343 (100%)  |

Source: Author’s Computation, 2025

Unemployment is highest among respondents aged 18–30, many of whom are recent graduates still searching for work. This shows how the labour market’s inability to absorb young people fuels discontent and increases vulnerability to restiveness.

**Table 4: Correlation Matrix (PS vs. Determinants)**

| Variable | PS    |
|----------|-------|
| LMD      | 0.170 |
| SSA      | 0.530 |
| GI       | 0.350 |
| EF       | 0.144 |
| IC       | 0.533 |

Source: Author’s Computation, 2025

Political stability (PS) is positively correlated with Labour Market Dynamics (LMD), Social Service Availability (SSA), Government Intervention (GI), and Investment Confidence (IC). Economic factors (EF) show only a weak correlation. This suggests that governance, services, and investment play stronger roles in reducing unemployment and restiveness in Adamawa State.

**Table 5: Labour Market Dynamics (Job Opportunities)**

| Response           | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes (Difficulties) | 230       | 67.0       |
| No                 | 112       | 32.7       |
| No Response        | 1         | 0.3        |
| Total              | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

About 67% reported difficulty in finding jobs, reflecting weak labour absorption in Adamawa State, which contributes to youth frustration and instability.

**Table 6: Economic Factors (Investment Capital)**

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes      | 260       | 75.8       |
| No       | 81        | 23.6       |

|             |     |     |
|-------------|-----|-----|
| No Response | 2   | 0.6 |
| Total       | 343 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most respondents (75.8%) believe access to capital promotes youth employment. However, economic instability (inflation, poor exchange rates) constrains such access, limiting opportunities.

**Table 7: Government Intervention (Training Programs)**

| Response    | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes         | 204       | 59.5       |
| No          | 138       | 40.2       |
| No Response | 1         | 0.3        |
| Total       | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

About 59.5% benefitted from government training/skill programs, indicating positive but insufficient interventions in reducing unemployment and restiveness.

**Table 8: Social Service Availability**

| Response           | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Highly Unsatisfied | 39        | 11.4       |
| Unsatisfied        | 113       | 32.9       |
| Neutral            | 94        | 27.4       |
| Satisfied          | 62        | 18.1       |
| Highly Satisfied   | 34        | 9.9        |
| No Response        | 1         | 0.3        |
| Total              | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most respondents (44.3%) are dissatisfied with career counseling and job placement services. Poor services hinder youth employment and fuel instability.

**Table 9: Investment Confidence**

| Response              | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Highly Unconfident    | 74        | 21.6       |
| Neutral               | 93        | 27.1       |
| Confident             | 103       | 30.0       |
| Highly Confident      | 47        | 13.7       |
| Very Highly Confident | 24        | 7.0        |
| No Response           | 2         | 0.6        |
| Total                 | 343       | 100        |

Source: Field Survey, 2025

About 30% expressed confidence in the business environment, while 27.1% were neutral. Weak confidence discourages investment and limits youth job creation.

### Regression Results

**Table 10:  $H_{01}$ :** Political stability has no significant impact on the level of youth unemployment in Adamawa State.

| Variable                          | B      | Std. Error | Beta   | t-Statistic | Sig. value) | (p- Decision    |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|--------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Constant                          | -0.001 | 0.314      | –      | -0.003      | 0.998       | Not Significant |
| Labour Market Dynamics (LMD)      | 0.249  | 0.112      | 0.096  | 2.214       | 0.028       | Significant     |
| Social Service Availability (SSA) | 0.317  | 0.053      | 0.301  | 5.930       | 0.000       | Significant     |
| Government Intervention (GI)      | 0.355  | 0.116      | 0.143  | 3.063       | 0.002       | Significant     |
| Economic Factors (EF)             | -0.004 | 0.124      | -0.001 | -0.031      | 0.975       | Not Significant |
| Investment Confidence (IC)        | 0.354  | 0.054      | 0.331  | 6.532       | 0.000       | Significant     |

**Source: Computed Result, 2025**

**Decision Rule:** Reject  $H_{01}$  if  $p < 0.05$ .

**Decision:** Since most variables (LMD, SSA, GI, IC) are significant at  $p < 0.05$ ,  $H_{01}$  is rejected.

The results reveal that political stability significantly impacts youth unemployment in Adamawa State. Variables such as social service availability, government intervention, and investment confidence have strong positive effects ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that when the political environment is stable, these factors function more effectively to create job opportunities and reduce unemployment. Conversely, economic factors showed an insignificant effect, suggesting that macroeconomic instability still constrains job creation. Overall, the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) confirms that political stability plays a crucial role in lowering youth unemployment and mitigating restiveness in Adamawa State.

**Table 11: H<sub>02</sub>:** The major causes of youth unemployment do not significantly influence political stability in Adamawa State.

| Determinant                       | Statistical Evidence           | Relationship with Political Stability | Sig. (p-value) | Decision               |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Labour Market Dynamics (LMD)      | $r = 0.170$ ; $\beta = 0.096$  | Positive                              | 0.028          | Reject H <sub>02</sub> |
| Social Service Availability (SSA) | $r = 0.530$ ; $\beta = 0.301$  | Strong Positive                       | 0.000          | Reject H <sub>02</sub> |
| Government Intervention (GI)      | $r = 0.350$ ; $\beta = 0.143$  | Positive                              | 0.002          | Reject H <sub>02</sub> |
| Economic Factors (EF)             | $r = 0.144$ ; $\beta = -0.001$ | Negative                              | 0.975          | Accept H <sub>02</sub> |
| Investment Confidence (IC)        | $r = 0.533$ ; $\beta = 0.331$  | Strong Positive                       | 0.000          | Reject H <sub>02</sub> |

**Source:** Computed Result, 2025

**Decision Rule:** Reject H<sub>02</sub> if  $p < 0.05$ .

**Decision:** Since most determinants (LMD, SSA, GI, IC) are significant, H<sub>02</sub> is rejected.

The results indicate that the major causes of youth unemployment such as poor labour market dynamics, inadequate social services, weak government intervention, and low investment confidence have a significant influence on political stability in Adamawa State. Most of these factors showed positive and statistically significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ), meaning that improvements in job opportunities, social service delivery, and government empowerment programs enhance stability by reducing youth restiveness. However, economic factors like inflation and limited access to capital were insignificant ( $p = 0.975$ ), suggesting that while they contribute to unemployment, their direct effect on political stability is minimal. Overall, the hypothesis test leads to the rejection of H<sub>02</sub>, confirming that the key causes of youth unemployment significantly shape the level of political stability in Adamawa State.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a strong interconnection between youth unemployment, restiveness, and political stability in Adamawa State. Unemployment remains highest among young people aged 18–30, many of whom are recent graduates unable to secure employment. This supports the views of Okafor (2011) and Nwokike (2022) that exclusion from productive work pushes youths toward frustration and anti-social behaviour such as political thuggery, drug abuse, and violent protests—which ultimately threatens political stability.

Consistent with Hypothesis One, the results show that political stability significantly affects youth unemployment in Adamawa State. With 66.2% of respondents unemployed, the weak but positive link between labour market dynamics and political stability implies that rigid job markets and limited opportunities sustain unemployment, thereby fuelling restiveness. This aligns with Clark and Summers' (1979) position that efficient labour markets underpin economic and political health, a condition largely absent in Adamawa due to limited job accessibility.

In relation to Hypothesis Two, the study found that the major causes of youth unemployment such as poor social services, weak governance, and low investor confidence significantly influence political stability. Economic factors showed a negative but insignificant effect, indicating that inflation and capital constraints weaken employment creation without directly affecting stability. However, effective government interventions through training and empowerment programs, as well as improved social services, were shown to enhance stability by creating employment and reducing frustration among youths. These findings mirror Sengupta's (2004) and Ilkcaracan et al.'s (2021) arguments that governance quality and social investment play critical roles in sustaining peace and development.

However, investment confidence also displayed a strong positive relationship with political stability, confirming Chletsos and Sintos' (2024) assertion that stable governance environments encourage investment and job creation, while instability deters growth and deepens unemployment.

Theoretically, the results support the Political Economy Theory (Marx, 1859/1970; North, 1990; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012), which links governance structures and economic systems to political outcomes. In Adamawa State, weak institutions and high unemployment undermine government legitimacy and public trust, intensifying restiveness. Conversely, effective governance, robust social services, and stronger investor confidence reduce unemployment and reinforce political stability.

Therefore, the findings confirm both hypotheses, demonstrating that youth unemployment and its underlying causes have a significant and multidimensional impact on political stability in Adamawa State. Addressing these challenges requires integrated policies that strengthen institutions, expand job opportunities, and foster economic resilience to ensure long-term peace and development.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the relationship between youth unemployment, restiveness, and political stability in Adamawa State through the lens of Political Economy Theory. The findings reveal that unemployment remains disproportionately high among young people, particularly those aged 18–30, who form the bulk of the labour force. Structural challenges such as weak labour market absorption, limited access to capital, and unfavourable economic conditions continue to fuel joblessness, frustration, and restiveness.

The regression results showed that social service availability, government intervention, and investment confidence have a strong and significant impact on political stability by creating opportunities for youth employment. Labour market dynamics, though positively related to stability, remain constrained by policy rigidity and poor implementation. Economic factors, particularly inflation and exchange rate volatility, were found to negatively affect stability,

reinforcing the argument that weak economic structures undermine both employment creation and political order.

In conclusion, the study affirms that youth unemployment is not merely an economic issue but a political economy challenge that threatens peace, stability, and governance in Adamawa State. Tackling it requires a holistic approach that strengthens institutions, enhances social service provision, improves investment confidence, and fosters inclusive economic growth.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

#### Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis of youth unemployment, restiveness, and political stability in Adamawa State, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. The Adamawa State Government should expand vocational and entrepreneurship training centers tailored to local economic needs such as agriculture, renewable energy, and ICT.
- ii. Collaboration between the government, private sector, and educational institutions should be strengthened to align skills training with labour market demands
- iii. To restore public confidence and ensure fairness, the State should institutionalize transparent selection processes for beneficiaries of empowerment and training programs.
- iv. The State should focus on improving infrastructure especially electricity, roads, and security to attract both domestic and foreign investors.

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