

# **Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts (ZAJOLA)**

*Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

*Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts* (ZAJOLA) is a peer-reviewed journal, published bi-annually by the Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. The journal welcomes manuscript of original articles, from scholars around the globe, in the various areas of Liberal Arts. The articles may be product of descriptive or analytical research, field research notes, reviews of publications and printed materials, drawn from, but not limited to Languages and Linguistics; Law; Environmental Sciences, Education; Management Studies; Cultural and Literally Studies; Theatre Arts; Philosophy; Religion; History and Strategic Studies; Archaeology and Heritage Studies; Developmental Studies and Social Sciences.

All manuscripts submitted for publication should adopt APA 8<sup>th</sup> Edition Style of referencing. The manuscripts should be typed double-spaced with sufficient margins and should count between 4,000 and 6,000 words, including the abstract, references, and appendices. The Manuscripts should not be under consideration for publication in any other research outlet.

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT

This Edition of *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts* marks the end of the year 2023. In this Edition, there are twelve well written articles by distinguished scholars.

The Edition opens with Ibrahim Muhammad Abdullahi's article on the implications of the New Normal on 21<sup>st</sup> century African novel and the impact of ICT. In a related study, Saleh Ahmad Abdullahi explores a semiotic approach of Emoji characters as used in WhatsApp chat messages. Through Ahmed Yerima's *Pari* and Fosudo's *Another Episode of Trauma*, Oladolapo Ojediran and Olayinka Magbagbeola interrogate enraged voices and social realities in Nigeria.

In linguistics, Hassan Usman Gadaka carries out a morphological analysis of Polar tone in Gudi and Yaya dialects of Ngamo language while Abdulrahman Umar works on the semantic aspects of repudiation in Basa language.

Ezekwesiri Okebugwu Nwosu, Nwaoha Chimaroke Chizoba and Tobeckukwu Odunze are concerned about the attack on Igbo indigenous religion. To them, this act can be defined as imperialism while Azuka Felix God's presence and Emily Oghale God's presence are concerned with the issues and perspectives in teaching and learning in urban society with the integration of multimedia, developmental and career guidance.

In his article on archaeology, Ogunlade Simeon Oluwole assesses some potential heritage sites in Nigeria. Following this is the article of Eraye Chistopher Michael and Jimoh Buhari Edun. The two scholars examine the implications of forest crime on socio economic development in Boki local government area of Cross River State. Alawode Musa Ajibola, on his own, examines the ideological nexus between Zaria and Ife Art schools.

In French studies, Tajudeen Abodunrin Osunniran and Hannah Kojusola Kuponiyi bring out the linguistic characteristics and discursive functions of filler words in French and Yoruba films. In a related field, Aliyy Abolaji Abdulrazaq carries out a reflection of lexical gaps in some translation works by Yoruba translators.

It is important to note that the view and opinions presented in these articles are solely those of the authors. Happy reading.

**Prof. Abubakar Sule Sani**

Editor-in-chief

30<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

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## Forest Crime in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State: Causes and Implications on Socio-Economic Development

Eraye Christopher Michael & Jimoh Buhari Edun

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### Abstract

*The study explores the factors responsible for the upsurge in forest crime in Boki Local Government area, Cross River State. The hike in illegality in the forest sector and its consequences in recent times has been alarming. The study investigated the determinants of forest crime and how the crime impacted on the socioeconomic development of the host community. The study employed the survey research designed. The sample size was determined through Yamani Taro's sample size determination techniques. A sample of 396 was selected through simple random and purposive sampling methods. The questionnaire and in-depth interview were employed to collect data from respondents. The quantitative data was analysed with frequency tables and chi-square was employed to test hypothesis after data was process with the help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was analysed via manual content analysis and ethnographic summaries. Findings revealed that poverty, unemployment, political style of leadership, political appointment, and weak social norms were some of the determinants of forest crime in the study location. With the proliferation of forest crime, poverty, deprivation of resources for community advancement, and extinction of some species of plant and animals has become inevitable. This study recommends that the twin problem of unemployment and poverty need to be seriously addressed through adequate policy formulation and poverty alleviation.*

**Keywords:** Forest, forest crime, socio-economics, poverty, unemployment

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### Introduction

Forest, the home of man and animal has come under server attack in recent years. The attack is prominently from criminals who now considered the forest as the one of the sources where resource can be explored illegally. Forest crime has become a modern form of organized criminal activity with has detrimental consequence not only on the income of the host communities but government (Environmental Investigation Agency, 2019). The steady rise in global scarcity of some species of timber, animal and other resources is partly responsible for the upsurge in forest crime. Forest crime involve criminal activity in the forest sector. It is the exploration of high value endangered wood and animal species illegally for either personal or group gains (Onen, 2020). This act of illegalities has been in existence for decades. Forest crime started when men started the free use of forest resources for housing and nutrition to the time restriction in the use of forest and the resources therein became restricted (Abang, 2021, Akintoye,

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Bisong, Utang, & Andrew –Essien, 2013). The restriction on the use of forest and resources was because of the need to prevent the rate at which forest and the resources therein were illegally explored at alarming rate.

Globally, forest need to be preserved and conserved because of its capability to provide forewords, medicines, building materials, vegetables, herbs for medicines and food for man and animal (Fon, Akintoye, Olorundaro, Nkpena, Ukata & Harrison, 2014, Global Initiative Against Transnational, Organized Crime, 2021). The preservation and conservation of our forest has become difficult because of the activities of criminals. Evidently, individuals and organized criminal gangs tend to benefit more from the forest to the detriment of the larger community. At the global scene forest crime has become multi-billion dollars' crime. These illegalities have become multi-billion-dollar global criminal enterprises that have become so sophisticated and militarized (Onen, 2020). From the developing countries of Asia and Africa, the problem of forest crime is devastating. In India, Indonesia, Singapore, Angola, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, the incidences of forest crime are high. It was estimated that revenue from illegal forest activities in developing countries accounted for about 815 billion us dollar in a year (Smith, 2018).

The illicit utilization of forest resources through Central Asia, West Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa has serious socio-economic implications (Ikuomola, Okunola & Akindutire, 2016). In Nigeria, the inability to police the forest due to the limited resource and lack of political will, has a cumulative effect on individuals, and communities. The National Directorate of Employment (2010) cited in Ikuomola (2016) estimated that Nigeria forest resource covers about 10 million hectares and that it accounted for more than 10% of land area. This approximate to about 92.2 million hectares (Ikuomola et al, 2016). The rate of depletion of the forest on annual basis stood at 3.5% (Fon et al, 014). The depletion of the forest is partly explained from illegal logging, illegal mining, and burning, over the last decade (Food and Agricultural organization, 2011, Alamu & Agbaja, 2011). Studies (Environmental Investigation Agency, 2019, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2021, Aborisade, 2016) had advanced reasons for the upsurge in forest crime across the globe. Low level of economic development, cultural, psychological, legal and political perspectives may be responsible for the upsurge in forest crime. Irrespective of the motivation for forest crime, the consequences are disastrous. Forest crime affect carbon cycle and boast

greenhouse effect due to the depletion of carbon. The revenue loss is massive as well as the loss of some species of trees and animals.

The rate of forest crime in Cross River State is alarming. The large expanse of forest running across the state with poor institutional and regulatory framework has helped to escalate forest crime. The continuous involvement of people in illegalities in the forest sector of the state has called for concern. Attempt from Cross River State government to ensure the protection of our forest through the establishment of Green Sheriff, Vigilante and task force on forest sector has not yielded the expected result as forest crime are still a daily occurrence. Although criminality in the forest sector pose a severe growing threat to the world, it has continued due to weak enforcement by government and community across the globe. Study (Ikuemola et al, 2016) conducted on forest crime uncovered the prevalence of forest illegalities. The study clearly explored the nature of illegal logging of woods in South-west Forest belt of Nigeria. The study uncovered that the proliferation of forest crime is due to the role of the locals, government agencies and foreign collaboration. The study also ventures into identifying economic factors that promote illegal logging in the study site. Although the revelation from the above study was apt, however the study only explains illegal logging of wood but negated other forms of forest crime. Ikuemola *et al* (2016) work was grounded in qualitative method but did not venture into the use the quantitative method for exploration. Thus, a study of this nature is required to offer more explanation on forest crime in a holistic manner paying attention to socio-economic factor through a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods. Fon et al (2016) has elucidated on the prevalence of forest crime in Cross River State. The study uncovered the upsurge in forest crime in the study location. Similar study by Onen (2020) was apt in explaining the hike and prevalence of forest crime in South-eastern States of Nigeria. The above studies although grounded in empirical methodology, did not give attention to the socio-economic and political determinants of forest crime and their consequences on host communities. This study is therefore a deviation from the prevalence and upsurge in forest crime to socio-economic and political factors as variables that promote forest crime in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study was to explore the factors responsible for the upsurge in forest crime in Boki, Local Government Area. The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To identify the forest crimes committed in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State
- ii. To determine the socio-economic factors influencing forest crime in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State
- iii. To establish the political factors that influence forest crime in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State
- iv. To ascertain the implications of forest crime on socio-economic development in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State.

### **Theoretical Adequacy**

Merton's anomie theory argued that society can encourage deviance to a large degree. To him socially accepted goals put pressure on people to conform. People are forced to work within the system or become members of a deviant subculture to achieve the desired goal. Merton (1938) cited in Smith (2016) discussed deviance in terms of goals and means as part of his anomie theory. Merton argued that anomie is the state in which social goals and the legitimate means to achieve them do not correspond (Aborisade, 2016). He postulated that an individual's response to societal expectations and the means by which the individual pursued those goals were useful in understanding deviance. Specifically, he viewed collective action as motivated by stress, or frustration in a body of individuals that arises from a disconnection between the society's goals and the popularly used means to achieve those goals. These two dimensions determine the adaptation to society according to the cultural goals, which are the society's perceptions about the ideal life, and to the institutionalized means, which are the legitimate means through which an individual may aspire to the cultural goals. Merton continued on the say that when individuals are faced with a gap between their goals and their current status, anomie occurs. From the level of adaptation, the innovationist responds due to the situation generated by our culture's emphasis on wealth and the lack of opportunities to get rich, which causes people to be "innovators" by engaging in forest crime (Aborisade, 2015, Iwarime-jaja, 2015). Therefore, anomie theory postulated that when an individual is faced with a gap between their goals and the means to achieving such goal, it brings about frustration and as a result can cause any individual to engage or involve in forest crime. The central idea inherent in this theory is that people engage in forest crime due to their disadvantaged situation. Merton's theoretical position was vehemently criticized. Smith (2016) advanced some criticisms. Anomie theory lay more emphasis on lower class as they struggle with limited resources to obtain their goals. The theory fails to explain white collar crime, the perpetrator of whom have many

opportunities to achieve through legal and legitimate means. It also fails to explain delinquency based in gender inequality. Merton deals with individuals forms of responses instead of group activity which delinquency is inclusive. The theory falls to explain why two adolescents who find themselves in same disadvantage situation respond differently.

### **Methodology**

The study was carried out in Boki local government area of Cross River State. Boki is one of the eighteen Local Government Areas of Cross River State and the second largest in terms of landmass (344,952km<sup>2</sup>). The area is bounded to the North by Obudu and Obanliku Local Government Areas, to the south by Ikom, to the west by Ogoja and to the East by Cameroun Republic. The projected population of Boki Local Government Area for 2020 is 264,813. The population is unevenly distributed across the ten political wards such as Ekapask1, Agba2, Boje, Abo, Truan, Alankv, Abu- Borum, Njua, Kakwagom/Buyop, Wula and Bateriko. Boki is situated at the southern end of the eastern highlands, a chain of hills along the eastern Nigeria border with Cameroun. Elevation ranges 150m to 1000m above sea level. The most notable land marks are the Boje and Nsadop hills, Erruan Mountains and Mbe Mountains. Boki is well drained with many streams and rivers such as Afi, Okorn and Aren rivers. Minor streams exist across the entire area that constitutes the tributaries of the main rivers. The study area has a tropical climate typified with distinct wet and dry seasons. It has a mean annual temperature of 25oC and annual rainfall of between 2000m to 3500mm. The rainfall is of double maxima regime (July and September). The above climatic conditions and rich soils derived from cretaceous and tertiary shale and sand stone produced a luxuriant vegetation. The Local Government Area has the largest forest reserve in the state, with choice species of trees, animals and vegetables. The study employed the descriptive survey research design with a combination of quantitative and qualitative components. The study adopted the simple random sampling (Fish bowl) and purposive methods to select 396 respondents from six (Abo, Alankwu, Kakwagm/Bawop, Ogep/Osokom, Ekpashi and Kakwagom/Bawop) electoral wards. The adoption of simple random sampling techniques is to ensure that every member of the population was given equal chance to participate in that study. The adoption of the purposive is for the convenience of the researcher. The questionnaire and interview were utilized to generate data. The combination of both methods ensured robust data was generated. The quantitative data was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This enables the study univariate analysis involving frequency and simple percentages. Bivariate analysis involved Chi-square test to

established relationship between variables. The qualitative data was analysed through manual content analysis and ethnographic summaries.

### Results and discussion

#### Characteristics of respondents

The table above revealed that majority 313 (79.0) of the respondents are between ages 18 - 49, only 44 (11.1%) are between ages 50-59, while 60 years and above account for 9.8% of the respondents. The implication of this is that many of the respondents are still in their youthful age, capable of exploring the forest resources illegally in the study location. Majority 114 (52.8%, n=208) of the participants in the study are males. This is a true reflection of the population of Boki which weighs in favour of the males as exemplified by the last population census figure. This has implication for the study as more male than female are engaged in forest crime in the study location. On marital status, it was established that majority (50.0%, n=198) of respondents are single had no immediate family responsibility as they were still single. The educational qualification of respondents revealed that about 90 % of the respondents had formal education. The implication is that many of the participants are educated and can give adequate information on forest crime.

**Table 5.1.1: Distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>		
10 -19	71	17.9
20 -29	63	15.9
30 -39	119	30.1
40- 49	60	15.2
50 -59	44	11.1
60 and above	39	9.8
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	209	52.8
Female	187	47.2
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	198	50.0
Married	178	44.9
Divorce	9	2.3
Widowed	11	2.8
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Tertiary	201	50.8
Secondary	106	26.7

Primary	48	12.1
No of formal education	41	10.4
<b>Occupation of respondents</b>	96	23.7
Traders	88	22.3
Civil Servant	184	46.5
Farmer	30	7.6
Others		
<b>Religion of respondents</b>	346	87.4
Christianity	34	8.6
Islam	16	4.0
Traditional Religion		

**Source: Fieldwork, 2021**

The occupation of respondents revealed that majority (46.5%, n=184) of the participants are farmers, (23.7%, n=96) are traders, (22.3%, n=88) are civil servants while other occupational background such as students and brick layers, wood loggers, vegetable collectors accounted for 7.6%. The religion affiliation of respondents shows that majority (346, 87.4%) of the respondents are Christians, (8.6%, n=34) were Muslims, while (4.0%, n=16) claimed they are affiliated to African traditional religion.

**Types of forest crime**

Table 5.2.1 display the forms of forest violation in the study location. Nine types of forest illegalities were identified by respondents.

**Table 4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by types of forest crime**

Forest Crime	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
	Freq (%)	Freq (%)	Freq (%)
Illegal logging of wood	42 (51.9%)	39 (48.1%)	81 (100%)
Illegal harvesting of vegetables.	21 (56.8%)	16 (43.2%)	37 (100%)
Extracting more timber than authorized	17 (48.6%)	18 (51.4%)	35 (100%)
Converting forest land to agriculture and cattle grazing	18 (56.3%)	14 (43.7%)	32 (100%)
Indiscriminate setting of forest on fire	31 (46.3%)	36 (53.7%)	67 (100%)
Smuggling/ transporting of timber	20 (58.8%)	14 (41.2%)	34 (100%)
Tax evasion	26 (54.2%)	22 (45.8%)	48 (100%)
Illegal hurting of games	19 (54.3%)	16 (45.7%)	35 (100%)
Poaching	15 (55.6%)	12 (44.4%)	27 (100%)
Total	209 (52.8%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)

**Source: Fieldwork, 2021.**

The table shows that illegal logging of wood is one of the commonest types of forest illegalities. Although both male and female respondents identified illegal logging as the frequently witnessed forest crime, more males (51.9%, n = 42) than females (48.1%, n =39) attest to this. The indiscriminate setting of forest on fire is common form of forest crime. Although more males participated in the study, more females (53.7%, n = 36), than males (46.3%, n =31) maintained that setting of forest on fire is common in the study of location. Similarly, more males (54.2%, n = 26) than female respondents believed that tax evasion is a form of forest crime in the study site. Beyond the extraction of more timber than authorized which more females (51.4%, N = 18) than male attested to, illegal harvesting of vegetables (56.8, n = 21), smuggling and transporting of timber (58.8%, n = 1920), illegal hunting for games (54.3%, n= 19), illegally converting forested land to agricultural and grazing of cattle (56.3%, n = 18), and poaching (55.6%, n = 15) were acknowledged as types of forest crime by majority of male participant in the study.

**Test of hypothesis one**

H<sub>01</sub>: Socio-economic factors and forest crime in Boki Local Government Area are not significantly related Table 5.3.1 showed the relationship between socio-economic factors and the involvement of residents in forest crime. The prevalence of forest crime in the study location is not unconnected with the high rate of poverty and unemployment. Although many of the respondents who acknowledged that forest crime was uncommon, also believed that poverty and unemployment was a trigger of forest crime. Ignorantly, the respondents who did not know forest crime was common, acknowledged that corruption promote forest crime. The result was significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). This is not surprising as corruption in the forest sector manifest in issuing of fake licences by corrupt officials to timber barons to illegally harvest timber without providing revenue to the host communities and government. Poor parental upbringing and learning process as reported by the respondents, has the capability of promoting forest crime. The respondents who acknowledged the prevalence of forest crime and maintained that poor parental upbringing and learning process are important  $P < 0.05$ . This is true as family socialization process has remained a catalyst for crime in developing countries.

The availability of forest resources and absence of security agents in preventing forest criminals has made forest crime prevalent. Although respondents who are aware of the commonality of forest crime, attributed its upsurge to the abundant forest resources and absence of security agents to secure our forest. The result was significant at  $P < 0.05$ . Duplication of existing laws promote forest crime. More than seventy percent of respondents, who believed forest crime is common, also assumed that absence of clear forest laws duplication of laws, affect the prevalence of forest crime. The results were all significant  $P < 0.05$ . This is true as there are multiple agencies engage in forest regulations.

**Table 4.3.1: x2 test of the relationship between socio-economic factors and forest crime.**

Socio –economic factors			Forest crime		Total	
x <sup>2</sup>	df	P-value	Common	Not common		
Poverty cause forest crime						
2	0.000	No	30 (68.2)	14(31.8)	44(100%)	24.45
		Don't know	57 (74.0)	20(25.9)	77(100%)	
		Yes	217 (78.9)	58(21.1)	275(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
Unemployment promote forest crime						
2	0.002	No	40(67.8)	19(32.2)	59(100%)	21.34
		Don t know	67(73.6)	24(26.4)	91(100%)	
		Yes	197(80.1)	49(19.9)	246(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
Corruption promote forest crime						
2	0.000	No	43(72.9)	16(27.1)	59(100%)	22.12
		Don't know	42(75.0)	14(25.0)	56(100%)	
		Yes	219(77.9)	62(22.1)	281(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
Poor parental upbringing						
2	0.202	No	42(67.8)	20(32.3)	62(100%)	18.21
		Don't know	21(44.7)	26(55.3)	47(100%)	
		Yes	241(84.0)	46(16.0)	287(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
Learning process						
2	0.000	No	43(78.2)	12(21.8)	55(100%)	19.15
		Don't know	72 (63.2)	42(36.8)	114(100%)	
		Yes	189 (83.3)	38 (16.7)	227(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8%)	92(23.0)	396(100%)	
Absence of security agents						
2	0.002	No	21(56.8)	16(43.2)	37(100%)	20.32
		Don't know	47(59.5)	32(40.5)	79(100%)	
		Yes	236(84.3)	44(15.7)	280(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8%)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	

Available of forest resource						
2	0.004	No	30(61.2)	19(38.8)	49(100%)	26.92
		Don't know	33(75.0)	11(25.0)	44(100%)	
		Yes	274(81.5)	62(18.5)	336(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8%)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
Absence of clear forest regulations						
2	0.001	No	37(74.0)	13(26.0)	50(100%)	17.33
		Don't know	146(77.7)	42(22.3)	188(100%)	
		Yes	121(76.6)	37(23.4)	158(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8%)	92(23.2)	396(100%)	
		Total	304(76.8%)	92(23.2%)	396(100%)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

A careful observation of the significant column shows that almost all the predictors are significant. On the basis of this, the null hypothesis is rejected. The quantitative data was buttressed by qualitative data. One of the respondents posited that:

What do you expect from people who are jobless. Many years after graduation without job. The only source of survival is to enter forest and cut trees indiscriminately for sale. See Nsadop forest is finished through the activities of these animals (Male, Nsadup village, Boki, Cross River State)

This respondent believed that unemployment is the cause of illegal logging. Another respondent posited that:

The reason we are finding it difficult to stop people stealing from our forest is because of corrupt government officials together with community leaders who are so corrupt. They collect money from timber barons and allow the cut trees we are already seeing the consequences on our and every day (Male, Botatong village, Boki, Cross River State).

This respondent believed corruption is the brain behind forest community

This is respondents stated that:

Forest is the place where criminals now use to get money my son. Some species of animals we used to see as children are no longer there. It is even worst with trees that are harvested illegally every day. Why is so, is because of corruption and forest laws that are not obeyed even by agents (Male Okwabang village, Boki, Cross River State).

This above respondent shares similar idea with the pervious. This interviewee stated that:

Our forest is no longer protected. The forest is so large that require so many forest guards from Government and community, these guards are not available (Female, Ashishie village, Boki, Cross River State).

### **Ho2: Political factor is significantly related to forest crime in Boki Local Government Area, Cross River State.**

The table established that all categories of respondents believed that weak political leadership is a contributory factor to forest crime in the study location. All categories of respondents had diverse opinion on the commonness of forest crime and government policy on forest sector. Similarly, more than 80% of all categories of respondents who believed in the commonness of forest crime also believed that repressive political system has a way of influencing forest criminality. The result was significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5.3.2: x2 test of the relationship between political and forest crime.**

Political factors			Forest Crime		
X <sup>2</sup>	df	P-value	Common	Not common	Total
Weak Political leadership					
<b>17.21</b>	No	<b>2</b>	44(62.9%)	26(37.1%)	70(100%)
	Don't know		64 (73.6%)	23(26.4%)	87(100%)
	Yes		196 (82.0%)	43(18.0%)	239(100%)
	<b>Total</b>		<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>
Political bureaucracy					
<b>20.43</b>	No	<b>2</b>	64(47.1%)	36(52.9%)	68(100%)
	Don t know		34(64.2%)	19(35.8%)	53(100%)
	Yes		154(81.9%)	34(18.9%)	188(100%)
	<b>Total</b>		<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>
Political involvement					
<b>18.67</b>	No	<b>2</b>	32(47.1%)	36(52.9%)	68(100%)
	Don't know		34(64.2%)	19(35.8%)	53(100%)
	Yes		238(86.5%)	45(15.8%)	275(100%)
	<b>Total</b>		<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>
Policy on forest resources					
<b>26.87</b>	No	<b>2</b>	21(46.7%)	24(53.3%)	45(100%)
		<b>0.000</b>			

	Don't know	41(64.1%)	22(35.9%)	64(100%)
	Yes	242(84.3%)	45(15.8%)	287(100%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>
Repressive political system				
	No	45(78.9%)	12(21.1%)	57(100%)
<b>27.41</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.001</b>		
	Don't know	72(62.1%)	44(37.9%)	116(100%)
	Yes	187(83.9%)	36(16.1%)	223(100%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>
Compensation of political faithful				
	No	21(78.9%)	7(25.0%)	28(100%)
<b>28.91</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.000</b>		
	Don't know	20(45.5%)	24(54.5%)	44(100%)
	Yes	263(81.2%)	61(18.8%)	324(100%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>304(76.8%)</b>	<b>92(23.2%)</b>	<b>396(100%)</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Respondents with the view that political bureaucracy promote forest crime also believed forest crime has become common ( $P < 0.05$ ). Finally, respondents with the perception that forest crime is common also believed that using the forest sectors to compensate political faithful also aid forest crime in the study site. The result was significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). The result shows that there exist a relationship between political factors and forest crime in the study location. This finding was buttressed by result from the interview. One of the interviews asserted that:

The political class ones that gave licenses to their associates to exploit our forest. Once license is given, they will used the opportunity exploit the resources beyond what the license permits (Male, Nkim Village, Boki, Cross River State)

Another respondent affirmed that:

The political atmosphere in the country has made many poor. The only source of survival is to exploit the forest illegally (**Male, kwagobang Boki, CRS**)

This interview posited that:

Politicians have given powers to their supporters to steal anything in the forest (**Female, Botatong, Boki, Cross River State**).

The respondents considered political factor as determinants of forest crime in the study location

#### **5.4 Effect on forest on socio-economic development**

Forest crime has serious implication on the development of our society the consequences of forest crime on social and economic development is presented in table 5.4.1. The upsurge in the violation of forest law has serious implications. Rather than the expected reduction in poverty in our society, forest illegalities beyond individual breeds community poverty. In comparative terms, more males (57.8% n = 116) than females affirmed that forest illegality breeds poverty in the host community. Beyond poverty, unemployment becomes more visible in communities with high violation of forest laws. More (55.5%, n= 122) of male participants than female believed forest crime, promote unemployment.

Similarly, conflict triggered by forest crime in host community are overtly seen even as more females (58.1%, n = 114) than males attested to this. The proliferation of forest crime result in the rapid extinction of certain species of plants and animals. Statistically speaking while both male and female participants agreed with the view, more (56.5% n = 152) males affirmed that the upsurge in forest crime leads to the extinction of some species of plants and animals. Deprivation of the sustainable source of livelihoods was considered as a consequent of forest crime in the study site. Evidently, more males (57.1%, n=168) than females attested to this opinion. The perception that forest crime deprive government of revenue for development was attested to by more male (52.7%, n = 157) than female participants in the study site as many of the males (52.7%, n = 157) believed that this act of forest criminality promotes human right abuse in communities where forest illegalities are prevalent.

**Table 5.2.1 Distribution of respondents on the effect of forest crime on socio-economic**

Socio-economic effect of forest crime	Gender		
	Male %	Female %	Total
<b>Breeds poverty</b>			
Yes	116 (51.8%)	108 (48.2%)	224 (100%)
No	93 (54.1%)	79 (45.9%)	172 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Promote Unemployment</b>			
Yes	122 (55.5%)	98 (44.5%)	220 (100%)
No	87 (49.4%)	89 (50.6%)	176 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	189 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Promote Conflict</b>			
Yes	114 (48.1%)	123 (51.1%)	237 (100%)
No	95 (59.7%)	64 (40.3%)	159 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Result in Species Extinction</b>			
Yes	152 (48.1%)	117 (51.9%)	269 (100%)
No	57 (44.9%)	70 (55.1%)	127 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Deprivation of Sustainable Livelihood</b>			
Yes	168 (57.1%)	126 (42.9%)	294 (100%)
No	41 (40.2%)	61 (59.8%)	102 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Deprive Government of Resources for Development</b>			
Yes	149 (52.7%)	134 (47.3%)	283 (100%)
No	60 (53.1%)	53 (46.9%)	113 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
<b>Promote Human Right Abuses</b>			

Yes	157 (52.7%)	141 (47.3%)	298 (100%)
No	52 (53.1%)	46 (46.9%)	98 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
Promote Corruption			
Yes	171 (55.7%)	136 (44.3%)	307 (100%)
No	38 (42.7%)	51 (57.3%)	89 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.2%)	396 (100%)
Laundering of Forest Resources			
Yes	144 (54.8%)	119 (45.2%)	263 (100%)
No	65 (48.9%)	68 (51.1%)	133 (100%)
Total	209 (52.7%)	187 (47.7%)	399 (100%)

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**Source: Fieldwork, 2021**

On the issue of corruption, while majority of the participants in the study agreed that forest crime encourages corruption, more (55.7%, n = 171) males than females affirmed this position. The perception that laundering of forest resources of forest resource was also greeted with more affirmation response from males (54.8%. N = 144) than females.

**Discussion of Findings**

Forest criminality has become common in Nigeria. The study established that illegal harvesting of trees and collection of mushrooms were common in the study site. This finding aligns with the earlier observation of Environmental Investigate Agency (2009) that acknowledged the prevalence of forest crime in Africa. In most developing countries, illegal harvesting of timber for sale is high. This finding also buttressed the assertion of Benjamin (2017) that forest crime which has become common has affected so many communities especially as the illegal logging of timber destroy the ecosystem. Beyond the prevalence of illegal harvesting of trees and mushrooms, hunting for games and poaching have become common. These findings negate the postulation of Smith (2016) that illegal hunting is not a problem in cross River state. Hunting for games even in the reserved forest has been on in Cross River State. This has serious implications on the gradual extinction of some species of animal within the forest belt of the state (Fon et al, 2014). The study further revealed that some of the animals are

slaughtered in the forest and parts harvested for sales. This finding aligned with the observation of EIA (2009) that poaching and slaughtering of animals and harvesting, of parts is prevalent in Africa. The harvesting of elephant parts and export from Africa to Asian countries has become a recurrent problem in the forestry sector of our society.

The upsurge in forest crime has close affiliation with some socio-economic conditions prevalent in the study location. The high rate of poverty and unemployment are said to be responsible for the increase in forest crime. This finding is in conformity with the revelation of Aborisade (2016) that poverty and unemployment are contributory factors to all forms of violent and non-violent crime in developing countries.

The upsurge in forest crime has a corresponding effect on loss of local income and unemployment. In resource limited countries, the hike in forest crime deprive communities of their source of livelihood. The implication is that future generation may not have access to some species of plant and animals. One of the glare consequences of forest crime is the deprivation of revenue meant for development. This finding corroborated the Stance of Green Corruption Team (2020) cited in Baker (2020) that forest crime requires the participation of corrupt officials and unscrupulous agencies that launder the resources. The agency further pointed out that corruption is the primary facilitator as well as consequences of forest crime. The International Police (2019) maintained that forest crime breeds and sustain bribery, extortion, nepotism, cronyism, abuse of office fraud and human right abuse in host communities.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The upsurge in forest crime has serious implications on not only the host communities, but government revenue. This study has established the prevalence of forest crime in the study site and that forest crime is promoted by socio-economic and political factors. Although the long-time effect of forest crime is huge, the criminals are never bothered because of the immediate benefits. In Boki, illegal timber logging, poaching, unregulated hunting for games, bush burning, collection of mushroom and vegetables are common. The implication of these illegalities is that in the near future, some of the choice species of trees, animals and vegetable may go into extinction. The cumulative effect of forest crime is the destruction of ecosystem, reduction in community and government revenue. It is imperative that the twin problem of unemployment and poverty need to be seriously addressed through adequate policy formulation and poverty alleviation.

There is need for the ministry of environment and forestry commission to embark on sensitization of the public on the need to abandon the belief that forest traditionally belong to the ancestors, thus the resources can be used illegally. Beyond the government communities should be constitute forest guards that will police the forest. These people should be men of proven integrity in the community. Government appointees found to be illegally exploiting forest resources for personal gains should be properly sanction by government as this will serve as deterrent to others.

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