

**THE IMPACT OF YOUTH ORGANIZATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT
OF USELU COMMUNITY**

BY

Blossom Oshione IDEWOR

SSC2004185

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA**

FEBRUARY 2025

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CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
AWARD OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK.**

FEBRUARY 2025

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that this research work was carried out by Blossom Oshione IDEWOR in the Department of Social Work, Faculty of social science, University of Benin. Benin City, in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the award of the Bachelor of Science in Social Work.

Dr. (Mrs.) Helen. E. Eweka
(Project Supervisor)

Barr. S. Yesufu, (PhD)
(Head of Department)

Date

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to God Almighty, whose grace, wisdom, and strength have guided me through every challenge and milestone. I also dedicate this to my family, whose unwavering support, love, and encouragement have been my foundation throughout this journey. Your belief in me has been my greatest motivation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of youth organizations on the development of Uselu community in Benin City, Edo State. The role of youth organizations in community development cannot be overstated, as they serve as a platform for young people to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of their communities. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study investigates the activities, challenges, and achievements of youth organizations in Uselu community, as well as their impact on the community's development. The findings of this study reveal that youth organizations in Uselu community have made significant contributions to the community's development, including the provision of education and healthcare services, infrastructure development, and empowerment of young people. However, the study also identifies challenges facing these organizations, including inadequate funding, lack of government support, and limited capacity. The study recommends that government and other stakeholders provide support to youth organizations in Uselu community to enhance their capacity and impact. The study contributes to the literature on youth organizations and community development, and provides insights for policymakers and practitioners working in this field.

Keywords: Youth Organizations, Community Development, Uselu Community, Benin City, Edo State.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

According to Mbagwu et al. (2016), from the earliest period of human history people have enjoyed and shared together the good tidings of nature because of the existence of communities and the social activities engaged by the people for the progress of their community, which is better called Community Development (CD). He further stated that community development marks the stage in the life of a community where by members come together to take collective actions in order to generate solutions to their identified problems. Community development in this context can be said to be a self-directional effort of the people by the people and for the people.

Youths in any society are known to be the leaders of tomorrow; hence, their role in sustainable national development cannot be over-emphasized, (Ayuba, et al., 2014), on the other hand youth participation in any economic activity is of paramount importance. Youth participation or engagement is about involving young people in development projects. These people make invaluable contributions in their communities and are empowered themselves when they participate (Sugut et al., 2018). The advancement of every community to a larger extent relies on the abilities, skills, competences and participatory levels of the youth. It is, therefore, very necessary to involve them in the developmental agenda since development centers around them (Issaka et al., 2022).

Sugut et al. (2018), also stated that in recent times, there has been a paradigm shift in the way the development projects are undertaken. Until recently the young people were not being actively involved in the development projects. Currently, a lot of attention to the youth can be witnessed in a number of sectors including but not limited to government, researchers and nongovernmental organizations. The focus on youth has been widely discussed with cross cutting issues affecting them and their community. In the present-day society, the youth still play a peripheral role in policy process. This disenfranchises them and places them in an awkward position of underdevelopment and dependency. If factored in development process, young people can be the nerve-center of development, innovation and change (Anan, 2015).

Olatunji, et al. (2021) noted that young people are increasingly participating in "alternative forms" of participation in the community, such as youth activism, volunteering within the community, activism, or digital activism are all examples of activism. Olatunji, et al. Further stated that youths can be a powerful instrument for community development programs if they participate actively and are encouraged to do so. This simply implies youth can be actively involved in community development programs (Youth Participation in Community Development, 2021). This however, makes youth participation in community development very vital and a very part of community development process.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to recent statistics in the world, the youth makes the largest population in history. Over 3 billion people – nearly half of the world's population –are under the age of 25. Almost 90% of all young people live in developing countries. These large numbers of young people are an

opportunity and investment, (Sugut, et al., 2018). When youths take part in development projects they get support to meet their own subsistence needs; averts and reduces susceptibilities to unstable economic, political and social environments; promotes ownership and sustainability of interventions; helps them gain entry into target communities and build up trust and social capital (Sugut et al, 2018).

The youth, represent a human capital resource that, if effectively engaged and deployed in the process of nation building, would drive a nation to a higher and enviable economic height in the community of nations. The youthful phase is the highest period of energy in the human life cycle for making a meaningful contribution to economic productivity, which, when directed and utilized correctly, defines the level of success obtained throughout the rest of the life cycle (Ibbih & Anthony, 2015). Several issues persist, including limited opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful development activities, inadequate resources to support youth-driven projects, and weak collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders. Additionally, challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and social instability hinder the ability of youth to fully contribute to their community's progress.

The Uselu community, like many other communities in developing countries, is home to a significant population of youth whose potential for driving sustainable development remains largely untapped. Despite the recognized global importance of youth participation in development initiatives, there is a lack of evidence-based understanding of how youth organizations contribute to the socio-economic growth and development of Uselu community. Youth organizations, when effectively utilized, can serve as critical tools for empowering young people to address

community challenges, foster innovation, and drive development. However, in Uselu community, the extent to which such organizations impact development remains unclear. This research aims to explore how youth organizations have influenced the development of Uselu community, identify the barriers faced, and highlight their potential roles in fostering sustainable community growth and development.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objectives of this study is to evaluate the impact youth organizations have in the development of Uselu community in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State. The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. assess the contributions of youth organizations to the socio-economic development of Uselu community.
2. examine the role of youth organizations in addressing unemployment, poverty, and social instability in Uselu community.
3. evaluate the effectiveness of collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders in fostering sustainable development in Uselu community.
4. identify the barriers and challenges faced by youth organizations in implementing development initiatives within Uselu community.
5. propose strategies for optimizing the impact of youth organizations on the sustainable development of Uselu community.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the contributions of youth organizations to the socio-economic development of Uselu community?
2. How do youth organizations address unemployment, poverty, and social instability in Uselu community?
3. How effective is the collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders in fostering sustainable development?
4. What barriers and challenges do youth organizations face in implementing development initiatives?
5. What strategies can be proposed to optimize the impact of youth organizations on the sustainable development of Uselu community?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study on the impact of youth organizations in the development of Uselu community is significant in several ways. First, it highlights the critical role that youth organizations play in driving social, economic, and cultural development within their local communities. Uselu, like many communities in developing countries, faces challenges such as unemployment, poverty, inadequate social infrastructure, and limited access to essential services. Youth organizations, being grassroots-driven and inherently close to the realities of their environment, have the potential to address these issues through innovative solutions and sustained action. This study is important in providing empirical evidence of how these organizations contribute to the development of Uselu and why they should be recognized as key players in community advancement.

One of the primary contributions of this study is its ability to bring to light the often-overlooked impact of youth organizations on community development. Youth organizations in Uselu community engage in various activities, such as skill development programs, community cleanups, health awareness campaigns, and educational initiatives. These activities not only provide immediate benefits to the community but also lay the foundation for long-term sustainable development. By documenting these contributions, this study will help to ensure that the efforts of youth organizations are acknowledged and celebrated, thereby encouraging more young people to participate in community-driven projects.

This research is also significant in addressing the challenges faced by youth organizations in Uselu community. While these organizations are vital to the community's growth, they often face obstacles such as inadequate funding, lack of government support, and limited access to training and resources. By identifying these challenges, the study can propose strategies to mitigate them, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of youth organizations in achieving their goals. For instance, the findings may recommend increased funding, partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations, and capacity-building programs tailored to the needs of youth groups. These recommendations could ultimately empower youth organizations to expand their reach and impact in Uselu and beyond.

Furthermore, this study challenges traditional models of working with youth, which often see young people as passive recipients of aid rather than active contributors to societal growth. By documenting the achievements of youth organizations, the research seeks to expand the understanding of what young people are capable of contributing to their communities. This shift

in perception can inspire other communities and stakeholders to adopt more inclusive and youth-centered approaches to development. It can also motivate policymakers to create enabling environments for youth engagement, such as policies that promote youth-led initiatives and provide platforms for young people to participate in decision-making processes.

The study is also significant in providing a unique perspective from the youth themselves, who are actively working in the area of community development. Their firsthand experiences, insights, and recommendations add to the growing body of research on youth engagement while offering localized solutions that are specific to the Uselu community. This localized perspective is essential for understanding the unique socio-economic and cultural context of Uselu, which may differ significantly from other communities.

On a broader scale, the research findings can serve as a resource for other communities seeking to replicate successful youth-driven initiatives. By documenting best practices, innovative strategies, and lessons learned from Uselu's youth organizations, the study can act as a blueprint for similar efforts in other parts of Nigeria and beyond. This transfer of knowledge has the potential to foster a culture of youth engagement and collaboration in community development on a national and even global scale.

In addition to its practical implications, the study contributes to academic literature by filling a gap in research on the role of youth organizations in community development, particularly in developing countries. While there is substantial research on community development and youth participation, studies focusing specifically on the impact of youth organizations in localized contexts like Uselu are limited. By addressing this gap, the study provides valuable insights for

scholars, development practitioners, and policymakers interested in understanding and leveraging the potential of youth in community development.

Finally, the study has the potential to inspire a new generation of youth leaders in Uselu community. By showcasing the positive impact of youth organizations, the research can encourage more young people to become involved in community development efforts. It can also strengthen the resolve of existing youth organizations, reaffirming their importance and motivating them to continue their work despite challenges. In this way, the study not only evaluates the current state of youth organizations but also contributes to building a stronger foundation for future youth engagement in community development.

1.6 Scope of the Study

In terms of scope, this study sought to understand the impact of youth organizations on the development of Uselu community; Egor LGA, Edo State. The area was chosen due to the large presence of youths and youth organizations in the community as a result of the presence of the University of Benin. At the time of this study Egor Local Government Area according to the National Population Commission of Nigeria and National Bureau of Statistics, has an estimated population of 502,700 people.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. **Impact:** Impact refers to the significant or measurable effect or influence of an action, activity, or event on individuals, groups, systems, or environments. It can be positive or negative and often reflects the outcomes or changes brought about by a particular intervention or initiative.

2. **Youth:** Youth refers to the transitional phase of life between childhood and adulthood, typically encompassing individuals aged 15 to 24, as defined by the United Nations. This group represents a critical demographic with the potential to contribute significantly to society through their energy, creativity, and innovation.
3. **Youth Organization:** A youth organization is a formal or informal group created to engage young people in activities aimed at personal development, skill acquisition, leadership training, or community service.
4. **Development:** Development is the process of improving the quality of life and well-being of individuals or societies, often characterized by economic growth, social progress, better living conditions, and access to education, healthcare, and other resources.
5. **Community:** A community refers to a group of people living in a specific geographical area or sharing common interests, values, or cultural heritage. Communities often function as social units where individuals interact, collaborate, and work collectively to achieve shared goals or address common challenges.
6. **Community Development:** Community development is the process through which members of a community come together to identify and address their common needs, challenges, and goals. It involves the active participation of community members in initiatives aimed at improving their socio-economic, cultural, and environmental conditions to achieve sustainable growth and collective well-being.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Youth Organization

According to Holtom, et al, (2016) youth organizations are those social organizations (associations, clubs or movements) that are set up to serve young people and where young people are in charge of the organizational structure” and “which are democratic, non-governmental and not for profit”. The distinctive feature of youth organizations is their anchoring philosophy of youth participation. It is within those contexts that young people’s voice is brought to bear on a range of issues in concern to them and then often articulated well beyond. Whatever else takes place in youth organizations (and it can be quite a list: education and learning, experience and opportunity, advice and guidance), they are associational spaces for young people to come together and learn and work together (Holtom et al. 2016).

The development of youth organizations and platforms and assistance from funders and sponsor organizations have resulted in expanding youth networks at the national, regional and global scale and the foundation of youth-led non-governmental organizations since the last decade. The

International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has estimated that youth worldwide are nearly two times more networked than the global population as a whole (Kieu & Singer, 2020).

Kieu and Singer, (2020) further stated that it is worth noting that along with influential youth groups, the emergence of young leaders like Greta Thunberg is attracting much popular attention worldwide to urgent global issues, and the recent accelerating expansion of youth-led organizations has allowed youth to be engaged in sustainability-linked programs. Youth-led organizations transform youth participation from spontaneous groups (e.g., eco clubs) to well-structured organizations. Youth-led organizations are fully led, managed and coordinated by young people, though in many cases they work under the patronage of different actors such as university educators, researchers, NGO leaders and funders.

Running a youth-led organization empowers youths to be creative in conceiving sustainability efforts, which can be regarded as a type of experiential learning. Indeed, “through participation, youth can learn civic concepts (such as decision-making structures) and skills (such as communicating and negotiating) that increase their ability to influence public affairs”. In addition, leaders of youth-led organizations typically transfer ownership to new leaders after a certain time (often before turning 30), so that youth participation can continue (Kieu & Singer, 2020).

Example of Youth Led Organizations include:

- Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales (AIESEC)
- Junior Chambers International (JCI)
- Nigeria Youth SDG

2.1.2 Community Development

According to Ramsey-Soroghaye (2021), Community development in Nigeria is as old humankind and there are vital proofs that at one point or the other people have craved for and engaged in one form of development or the other to enable them to function more easily and effectively in the society.

The practice of community development arises from diverse settings and sources across the globe. However, the origin of community development could be traced to reforms in the social movements in North America and Britain in the latter half of the 18th century where the principles of community development was formulated and applied in the decolonization process of the third world countries (Ovwasa et al, 2021). Ovwasa et al, (2021) further stated that Community development in Nigeria can be traced to 1946 during the colonial rule. It can also be traced to the activities of Non-governmental organizations that sprang up immediately after political independence in 1960 and the protest against military regimes by civil society organization from 1966 to 1999.

Ramsey-Soroghaye (2021), defined community development as a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community development can be seen as emphasizing self-help, mutual support, the building up of neighborhood integration, the development of neighborhood capacities for problem-solving and

self-representation, and the promotion of collective action to bring a community's preferences to the attention of political decision-makers.

2.1.3 Youths Organization and Community Development

According to Holtom et al, (2016), youth organizations, in their many forms, have an important role to play, both for the personal and social development of individuals, and for the subsequent civic and 'political' contribution of those individuals to their communities and society.

In the pre-independence era, many Africa communities including Nigeria witnessed a vibrant, community development process through the participation of both youths and elderly people. During this period and beyond, community infrastructures were constructed out of the community efforts, with immense youth participation. Youth groups contribute to development of their respective communities, and their participation could be felt from the point of contributing physical labour, mobilization and engaging youths in agricultural activities, and repairs and maintenance of already established projects (Ezeh et al, 2018).

2.2 Youth Organizations and Socio-economic Development of the Community

Socio-economic development is often defined as the process by which the economic and social conditions of a society improve over time. This improvement is typically measured by indicators such as GDP per capita, literacy rates, life expectancy, and access to basic services like healthcare and education (Todaro & Smith, 2015). However, socio-economic development is more than just

economic growth; it also involves the equitable distribution of resources, the reduction of poverty and inequality, and the enhancement of social cohesion and stability (Eze et al, 2024).

The youth population in Nigeria, constituting over 60% of the country's total population, is a significant demographic that holds the potential to drive socio-economic development (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). This demographic advantage, often referred to as the "youth bulge," presents both opportunities and challenges. The opportunities lie in the ability of young people to innovate, adapt to new technologies, and spearhead social change, while the challenges include unemployment, underemployment, and a lack of access to quality education and resources (Eze et al., 2024).

An increasing number of studies demonstrate the key role played by voluntary workers in our societies. From an economic point of view, they are now being regarded as fully-fledged members of the workforce, indicating that they perform a productive activity providing useful services to the public, especially when their work supports that of the non-profit sector in areas as diverse as social action, health, education, culture, and so forth (Holtom et. al, 2016).

2..2.1 Contributions of Youth Organizations to the Socio-economic Development

According to Thomas (2013), youth have contributed to their communities through a variety of venues. They have provided public policy consultations on youth issues to public leaders and policy governance bodies. They have served on community coalitions for youth development where they have provided a voice on youth issues to a broad range of groups. Youth have been

involved in organizational decision-making as well as youth organizing where youth organize programs and initiatives.

According to Holtom et al (2016), youth organizations contribute to increase in human and social capital, and therefore to young people's skills and to improving access to information about employment, education and training opportunities, youth organizations can contribute to a range of positive outcomes including increase in the numbers of young people in work and in the quality of their work (e.g. moves toward more highly skilled and more highly paid work, with better progression opportunities) (Sildnik, 2015)

One study also highlights the role youth organizations can play in providing an “early warning network” that can help identify young people at risk of disengagement, ensuring that they can then be referred on for advice and support (Frenzel, 2014). Holtom et al (2016) further stated that youth organizations contribute to increase in young people's sense of subjective well-being. And this can flow from, for example:

- a) The enjoyment that involvement in youth organizations (frequently expressed in terms of “fun”), can bring (Gretschel et al., 2014; Frenzel, 2014);
- b) The extension and deepening of social networks – such as friendships (Kiilakoski, 2014);
- c) The sense of purpose and achievement that civic and political activism (discussed in section five) can bring (Cicognani et al., 2015);
- d) The sense of community and belonging that involvement can foster (ibid.); and

- e) The sense of empowerment young people can experience as their skills develop (discussed above), enabling them, for example, to access and progress in education, training and employment.

Holtom et al, (2016), cited that youth organizations can promote range of civic engagement, including volunteering (both within youth organizations themselves and also with other organizations). The experience of, for example, volunteering can contribute to personal outcomes, such as increases in social and emotional and skills, and can also contribute to social outcomes, such as increases in inter-cultural dialogue and service delivery (where, for example, young volunteers help deliver a service for others).

2.3 Youths Organizations as mechanisms for Community Development

Youth organizations serve as pivotal mechanisms for community development, empowering young people to become agents of positive change. These organizations provide a platform for youth to develop essential life skills; Youth organizations foster leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills through structured activities and projects (Benson et al, 2014). By focusing on local issues like poverty, environmental concerns, and lack of education, youth organizations can directly address community challenges. (Taylor, et al., 2016). Youth organizations encourage civic participation by providing opportunities for young people to volunteer, advocate for change, and become active members of their communities (Matthews, 2016). Furthermore, youth organizations can act as catalysts for intergenerational learning and knowledge exchange. By collaborating with older community members, young people can gain

valuable insights and perspectives while contributing their own unique energy and ideas (Florida, 2014). By supporting and investing in youth organizations, communities can cultivate a more vibrant and sustainable future for all members of the community.

2.4 Effectiveness of Youth-Community Collaboration

Youth-community collaboration, where young people actively participate in decision-making processes and contribute to community development initiatives, has emerged as a critical strategy for fostering positive social change. This collaborative approach recognizes the valuable perspectives, skills, and energy that young people bring to the table, while simultaneously empowering them and fostering civic engagement. Some of the key benefits of youth-community collaboration include;

- i. **Community Development:** Youth involvement can bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to address pressing community challenges, such as poverty, environmental degradation, and social inequities (Brough et al., 2018). Youth engagement can contribute to more sustainable development outcomes by ensuring that the needs and aspirations of young people are considered in community planning and implementation processes (UNICEF, 2017). Youth-led initiatives can enhance community well-being by fostering social cohesion, promoting civic engagement, and improving access to essential services (Corbett & Furlong, 2014).
- ii. **Youth Development:** Participation in community projects provides young people with valuable life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, and communication (Lerner & Galambos, 2013). Youth-community collaboration fosters a sense of civic

responsibility and encourages young people to become active and engaged citizens (Benson & Scales, 2016). Engaging in community service can enhance young people's self-esteem, confidence, and sense of purpose (Luthar et al., 2014).

Some of the factors contributing to effective collaboration include:

- a) *Meaningful Youth Participation*: True youth-community collaboration requires meaningful youth participation beyond tokenism. This involves providing young people with genuine decision-making power and ensuring their voices are heard and valued (Brough et al., 2018).
- b) *Strong Community Partnerships*: Building strong partnerships between youth organizations, community leaders, and other stakeholders is crucial for successful collaboration. This requires open communication, mutual respect, and a shared vision for community development (Corbett & Furlong, 2014).
- c) *Adequate Resources and Support*: Providing adequate resources, such as funding, training, and mentorship, is essential to support youth-led initiatives and ensure their sustainability (UNICEF, 2017).
- d) *Addressing Power Imbalances*: Recognizing and addressing power imbalances between youth and adults is critical for ensuring equitable and inclusive participation (Benson & Scales, 2016).

2.5 Challenges in Implementing Community Initiatives

Ovwasa & Onimisi, (2021), in their study identified the following as contemporary challenges to community development in Nigeria:

- i. **Poverty and Illiteracy:** One of the major challenges of community development in Nigeria is poverty and illiteracy across the various segments of the country. The degenerating condition of the various communities in the country despite the existence of policies and plans, such as Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRFRI), People's Bank of Nigeria(PBN), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Community Bank (CB), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and Poverty Eradication Programme (PEP) has not provided much needed assistant because illiteracy and poverty in the rural community in Nigeria remain alarming, which has unfortunately hindered the sincere community development in the country (Aminu & Onimisi, 2014). Illiteracy largely inhibits the community development and social progress of the citizens, because it hinders power to see and seek opportunities and good investment within their communities which invariably would have driven the development agenda of the government (Ovwasa & Onimsi, 2021).
- ii. **Economic Challenges:** The escalated unemployment in Nigeria in recent time has not only increased depression, substance abuse, physical illness, and domestic violence, in the country but it has also contributed, in no small measure to the challenges of community development. Economic imbalance and inequality affect the citizen's stress levels, prospects of getting the quality education, access to social services in communities, exposure to violence and toxins, high rate of mortality and high-risk

behavior. Nigerian governmental programs and policies for sustainable community development suffer huge setbacks because of the nature of the country economic development strategy which has contributed greatly to the slow pace in achieving unemployment reduction, community development, and structural transformation (Adah & Abasilim, 2015).

- iii. Social Exclusion: Social connectedness, cohesion, and the inclusion of the community members have a direct relationship to social and physical development, which can invariably encourage civic participation in the overall community development project. Unfortunately, exclusion remains one of the big challenges for community development in Nigeria. Community development is more meaningful when the people actively participate as agent and not just passive beneficiaries because the people themselves should monitor the developmental projects in the local communities (Ovwasa & Onimisi, 2021).
- iv. Insecurity: Insecurity is one of the greatest threats to community development (Onimisi, 2014). Insecurity can derail the developmental thrives of any community (Ovwasa & Onimisi, 2021).
- v. Cultural Factors: Cultural beliefs remains of the challenges to community development in the country which have a bearing on efficiency, social inclusion, and income inequality in Nigeria. This cultural factors also include, some traditional beliefs, religion and gender especially in the case of Nigeria. The roles gender plays in Nigeria cannot be

overemphasized. The activities of various cultural beliefs may lead to the denial of opportunities for the people, especially women and children (Ovwasa & Onimisi, 2021).

2.5.1 Challenges Faced by Youths in Implementing Community Initiatives

Ezeh et al, (2018) identified 3 factors/challenges that young people face when implementing community initiatives, they are:

- i. **Social Factors:** These social factors constraining youth groups' participation in community development projects includes; non-inclusion of youths in community development activities, mismanagement and embezzlement of funds.
- ii. **Institutional Factors:** Some of the institutional factors which arose out of poor government's policy framework for engaging youths into active participation in community development projects were: poor leadership skills among youths, political rivalry and conflict, and poor government support.
- iii. **Economic Factors:** Specific economic factors hindering youth groups' participation in community development projects include; increasing rural-urban migration and lack/inadequate access to fund.

The willingness of youths to participate in community development projects can be realized provided they are carried along from the stage of initialization to completion of project, in addition to their availability in the rural areas.

According to Ezema (2014) poor educational background of most youths, incompetent community youth organizations, conflict in the community, rural-urban migration of majority of

the youths and lack of clear ideas of what the projects have to offer constrained youths from effective participation in self-help community development projects.

2.6 Strategies to Enhance Youth Organizations' Impact on Sustainability

Youth organizations play a crucial role in promoting sustainability by fostering environmental awareness, encouraging responsible consumption, and empowering young people to become agents of change. To enhance their impact, these organizations can employ several key strategies.

1. Empowering Youth Leadership:

- i. Youth-led Initiatives: Encourage young people to take the lead in designing and implementing sustainability projects. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility. (United Nations, 2013)
- ii. Leadership Training: Provide training programs that equip young leaders with the skills and knowledge to effectively manage projects, communicate their vision, and mobilize community support. (UNESCO, 2014)
- iii. Mentorship Programs: Pair young leaders with experienced mentors who can provide guidance, support, and access to resources.

Youth organizations play a crucial role in promoting sustainability by fostering environmental awareness, encouraging responsible consumption, and empowering young people to become agents of change. To enhance their impact, these organizations can employ several key strategies.

2. Promoting Environmental Education:

- i. **Experiential Learning:** Offer hands-on activities, such as nature walks, community gardening, and environmental clean-ups, to enhance learning and engagement.
- ii. **Digital Platforms:** Utilize social media, online resources, and interactive tools to raise awareness about sustainability issues and share best practices (UNESCO, 2018).
- iii. **Partnerships with Schools:** Collaborate with educational institutions to integrate sustainability concepts into the curriculum and provide resources for teachers and students

3. Fostering Community Engagement:

- i. **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with local businesses, government agencies, and other organizations to create a network of support and leverage collective resources.
- ii. **Community-Based Projects:** Encourage youth to engage in projects that address local environmental challenges and benefit the community.
- iii. **Advocacy and Policy Change:** Empower young people to advocate for policies that promote sustainability and environmental justice.

4. Promoting Sustainable Practices:

- i. Resource Conservation: Encourage the adoption of sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and using renewable resources.
- ii. Green Skills Development: Provide training programs that equip young people with the skills needed to pursue green careers and contribute to a sustainable economy.
- iii. Sustainable Consumption Campaigns: Organize campaigns that promote responsible consumption habits and raise awareness about the environmental impact of consumer choices. (Hans, 2021)

By implementing these strategies, youth organizations can significantly enhance their impact on sustainability, empowering young people to become leaders in the global movement for a more sustainable future.

2.7 Review of relevant theories

2.7.1 Empowerment Theory

According to Zimmerman et al (1995), there are various definitions of empowerment but the various definitions are generally consistent with empowerment as "an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources". In other words, empowerment is simply a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community (Rappaport, 1987).

Huang & Huang (2023) in their study stated that empowerment, means to improve the social disadvantaged groups' own capabilities and change their disadvantaged status. Barbara Solomon introduced the concept of empowerment in 1976 and developed the theory of empowerment based on the following basic assumptions: First, personal powerlessness is due to the exclusion and oppression of the environment. Second, there are barriers in the social environment that prevent people from being able to perform, but the barriers can be changed. Third, individual capabilities can be continuously increased through social interaction. Fourth, the service recipients are capable, valuable, and have access to capacity enhancement. Fifth, the relationship between social workers and clients is a partnership. They proposes that social workers should avoid taking an authoritative stance and instead establish an equal partnership with the recipients.

Solomon (1976) propounded empowerment theory. According to him, the main assumption of this theory is that personal, interpersonal and environmental resources are needed to increase and improve the skills, knowledge and motivation of people to achieve valid social roles. Solomon (1976) is of the view that lack of these personal, interpersonal and environmental resources leads to powerlessness. He argues that denial of access to resources needed for good health, sources of learning and interpersonal skills and valued social roles produces powerlessness and undermine the competent functioning of group or individuals.

Solomon (1976) defined empowerment as a process whereby individuals are made to engage in activities that aim at reducing the powerlessness that has been created through negative valuation based on membership in a stigmatized group. This theory is very important to this study because

youths organizations are mostly seen as agents of change in the society. Empowerment theory proposes strategies of reducing the marginalization and inequity in society. It demands for capacity building, awareness building and skill development to improve the status of the marginalized. Batliwala (1994) in support of empowerment theory argues that empowerment should center on the control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. The material asset over which control can be exercised may be physical, human, or financial such as land, water, forest, people's bodies and labour, money and access to money. Intellectual resources include knowledge, information, and ideas. Control over ideology signifies the ability to generate, propagate, sustain and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour, virtually determining how people perceive and function within given socioeconomic and political environment.

The process of empowerment in community development must address all relevant structures and sources of power. Since the challenges faced by youth, such as limited opportunities for leadership, participation, and decision-making, are deeply rooted in historical, cultural, social, and institutional systems, the solution to youth marginalization must involve transformative change within these structures and ideologies. Empowering youth requires dismantling barriers and creating inclusive spaces where young people can actively contribute to and influence community growth and development. Nelly Stromquist also developed a model in support of the empowerment theory. Stromquist's (1995) model of empowerment suggests that empowerment should focus on transforming the distribution of power not only in interpersonal relationships but also within institutions across society. Applying this framework to youth organizations and

community development, factors such as family structures, cultural norms, social roles, educational access, community leadership practices, and local policies collectively shape the opportunities available to young people. Youth organizations, therefore, play a critical role in challenging these hierarchies by promoting inclusive participation, skill development, and advocacy, enabling young people to influence decision-making processes and drive positive change within their communities. According to this model, a full process of empowerment therefore must include cognitive, psychological, political and economic components.

The cognitive component refers to youth understanding the factors contributing to their marginalization at both community and systemic levels. It requires equipping young people with knowledge about social structures, leadership roles, and community development processes, enabling them to recognize the behaviors and systems that influence their participation and growth. The psychological component includes fostering self-confidence and the belief that young people can create positive change both personally and within their communities. The political component of empowerment entails the ability to organize, mobilize, and participate actively in decision-making processes for social transformation. Youth organizations can empower members by involving them in advocacy efforts, civic engagement, and community leadership roles, ensuring they have a voice in shaping policies and initiatives that affect their lives. The economic component of empowerment requires enabling youth to engage in income-generating activities that promote financial independence, no matter how minimal. Youth organizations can support this through skill-building workshops, entrepreneurship programs, and financial literacy training, helping young people access resources for economic self-sufficiency.

These components of empowerment as stated by Stromquist are needed to enhance the holistic nature of youth empowerment, addressing both individual capacity building and systemic change, ultimately enhancing the role of young people in driving sustainable community development.

2.7.2 Systems Theory

According to Makiniova et al, (2024), Systems theory deals with people who are left with unmet biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs in their social, ecological, and cultural environments. This is often the reason that leads to the escalation of social problems. It also deals with the study of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, delinquency, social exclusion, etc. It also highlights the contradiction in the relationship between social control and assistance.

Systems theory focuses on the study of the complex relationships between the parts of a social system and the ways in which these parts interact and influence each other. This theory is often concerned with the analysis of social structures, relationships and dynamics between individuals, groups or organizations. It looks at the ways in which these parts work together and contribute to the overall functioning of the system (Makiniova et al, 2024).

The proponents of the system theory include Niklas Luhmann and Walter Buckley. According to Buckley (1967) “The kind of system we are interested in may be described generally as a complex element or components directly or indirectly related in a causal network such that each component is related to at least some others in a more or less stable way within any particular period of time” Stark (2004) outlined the major assumptions of general systems theory as follows: A system

consists of a number of separate components or parts. Sociologists recognize that social roles, groups and activities are not randomly arranged within societies but tend to be clustered. Moreover, each of the clusters makes fairly specific contributions to the overall welfare of a society by satisfying the basic needs the society requires to exist; A set of interdependent parts: The components of systems are interdependent, or connected, so that changes in one part produce changes in at least one other part. Change in the status of women, as a group will definitely affect the family institution and the society at large; Equilibrium and change: Because the components of a system are interdependent, they tend to fall in some kind of equilibrium or a balance, or steady state, in their interrelationship. Society as an open system can never be static. Because it is open to external influences. These external influences lead to change in the society. There is morphostasis which refers to those processes that help the system maintain itself whereas morphogenesis refers to those processes that help the system change. Social systems develop more and more complex “mediating systems” that intervene between external forces and the action of the system (Ritzer, 2008). The general system theory is important in understanding interdependency of groups in a given society. Youths as a group are part and parcel of the society. It has been observed that youths constitute a significant number of the world population and what it signifies is that changing their status by empowering them will have significant impact on the development of the society.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

Stromquist (1995) and Batliwala's (1994) models of empowerment emphasize that cognitive, psychological, political, and economic components are essential to improving the status of marginalized groups and increasing their participation in development processes. This framework can be effectively applied to youth organizations and community development, particularly in contexts where systemic exclusion and limited access to opportunities prevail. In communities where youth face barriers to leadership, education, and resource access, empowerment must address these four components to foster meaningful inclusion. The cognitive component involves equipping young people with knowledge and awareness of their rights, societal structures, and the factors limiting their potential. The psychological component builds self-confidence and the belief that they can influence positive change within their environments. Politically, youth need to be supported in organizing, mobilizing, and participating in decision-making processes that affect their communities. Economically, providing access to skills development, entrepreneurship opportunities, and financial literacy can help youth achieve financial independence and contribute productively to their communities. By addressing these dimensions of empowerment, youth organizations can help young people break free from systemic barriers, actively participate in community development, and drive long-term positive transformation in society.

Batliwala (1994) in her own perspective outlined three approaches to empowerment which include integrated development, economic empowerment, and consciousness raising. The integrated approach proceeds by forming youth organizations and coalitions that engage in development activities and address social issues such as unemployment, educational disparities, substance abuse, and youth violence. By promoting mentorship, leadership training, and

collaborative initiatives, youth groups can work towards reducing systemic inequalities and enhancing community welfare. The economic empowerment approach attributes youth marginalization to limited access to economic resources and opportunities. Youth organizations can address this by facilitating skills development, entrepreneurship training, and access to financial literacy programs. By organizing savings groups, exposure to microcredit schemes, and promoting income-generating activities, young people can gain financial independence and reduce their economic vulnerability. The third approach is consciousness rising which argues youth empowerment also requires creating awareness of the systemic barriers limiting youth participation in development processes. This can be achieved through education, workshops, and advocacy campaigns.

This theory is relevant in this study for if these approaches are fully adopted, youth would be able to gain economic, political and educational empowerment that will enable them participate significantly in development processes.

2.9 Empirical framework

Ezeh et al, (2018), conducted a research on the participation of youth organization in community development project in Ivo local government area of Ebonyi State, Nigeria, the result of their study shows that youth groups participate in community development efforts although their participation was generally low. The youth groups' participation in community development projects were mainly felt in contributing physical labour for execution of projects, mobilization and engagement of youths in agricultural activities, and repairs and maintenance of already

established projects. Consequently, most of the youth groups could not initiate and execute new projects such as building of health centers, digging of boreholes, construction of classroom blocks, and rural electricity projects because they were excluded from the framework of community development initiatives. Based on this, Ezeh et al (2018), study recommended that community leaders, community development agents and practitioners should integrate youth groups into every stage of projects' development, especially at the stage of conception, initiation, planning, monitoring, evaluation and supervision of community development projects. It also recommends improving their access to fund in forms of grants and subventions. This will enhance effective participation of youths in community development projects.

More so, Olatunji and Duruji (2021), conducted a research on youth participation in politics and community development projects: a study of Ota community, Ogun state, Nigeria, the result of their study shows that because the youth had varying levels of education, they took part in the community projects in different ways. Education also encouraged youth to participate in the implementation of community development projects, according to the findings. Individual factors on youth participation in community project implementation, the study concluded that individual factors influenced youth participation in community project implementation, and youths were unaware of the importance of participating in community development project implementation. The study also found that age has an effect on how one approaches his surroundings and activities.

Thomas (2013), carried out a research on youth participation in community development in the United States. The result of the research shows that youth possess the will and desire to be

integral and contributing members of their community. Youth have love, passion and a sense of pride for their community, which spurs them to take part in, as youth say, “building it back up.” Youth living in blighted neighborhoods aspire to see the community in a better place for themselves and their fellow residents. Youth need more than rhetoric and token offers of participation; they need rich and meaningful experiences to express themselves and to share their resources with others.

Issaka et al. (2022) conducted a study on the role of youth groups in community development in the Nkwanta South Municipality. The result shows that, there is a positive correlation between youth development and their contributions towards community development. The correlation coefficient between youth development and contribution of youth is 0.568 and this correlation is significant at a one percent significance level. Communities should put in place mechanisms that will promote youth development to enable them to contribute meaningfully to community development. Challenges such as poor leadership, lack of accountability, lack of funds, and lack of commitment to group activities have bedeviled the contribution of the youth groups in community development. For effective contributions of youth groups in community development, there is the need for communities to address the challenges facing youth groups such as poor leadership and lack of funds to enable youth people to contribute meaningfully towards community development.

Yusuf and Ali (2014), conducted a study on youth participation in community development programmes in Damaturu local government area, Yobe State, Nigeria. The result of the study

shows that, youth involvement in community development should be central to the development effort of any community. From this perspective, community development is facilitated by the ability of the local needs. Their need for extension workers, programme developers and policy planners to better understanding the role of youth are energetic and custodian of societal norms and values. Whatever social plan that the youth are involved, such will continue even after the adult may have pass on. The only different may be that such plan or attend some levels of modification. Therefore, they are in position to be suitable and long term contributors that help to guide this process. They presented vast and untapped resources for immediate and long term community development. It is important to note that, we pay a price when we derived children of the exposure to the values, principle and education they need to make them good citizen. Therefore whatever positive effort that is going on in our communities without youth involvement is a waste project. This is because when the old past on what become on such effort, or better still when the youth are not well inculcated in the value and principles of the society, they tend to build their own value and principle which may result in to a lot of social vices and all the development effort will be thwarted.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter explains the methodology utilized in this research. It contains the research design, the population and sampling techniques, the operationalization and measurement of variables, the research instrument, reliability of research instrument, sources of data, method of data analyses and model specification.

3.1 Research Design

According to Selltiz, Wrighttsman and Cook (2011), Research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The mixed method research design was adopted for this study. According to Dawadi et al (2021), a mixed-methods approach is a research methodology in its own right. As stated by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), a mixed-methods research design is a research design that has its own philosophical assumptions and methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it includes philosophical assumptions to provide directions for the collection and analysis of data from multiple sources in a single study. A mixed-methods design offers a number of benefits to approaching complex research issues as it integrates philosophical frameworks of both post-positivism and interpretivism (Fetters, 2016) interweaving qualitative and quantitative data in such a way that research issues are meaningfully explained. It also offers

a logical ground, methodological flexibility and an in-depth understanding of smaller cases (Maxwell, 2016). In other words, the use of mixed-methods enables researchers to answer research questions with sufficient depth and breadth (Enosh, Tzafrir, & Stolovy, 2014) and helps generalize findings and implications of the researched issues to the whole population. For example, the quantitative approach helps a researcher to collect the data from a large number of participants; thus, increasing the possibility to generalize the findings to a wider population. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, provides a deeper understanding of the issue being investigated, honoring the voices of its participants. In other words, whereas quantitative data bring breadth to the study and qualitative data provides depth to it. Moreover, quantitative results can be triangulated with qualitative findings and vice versa. Triangulation, as a qualitative research strategy, is the use of multiple methods or data sources to develop a comprehensive understanding of a research problem or to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources (Carter et al., 2014).

3.2 Population of the Study

The population is the totality of the objects or elements being studied and to which the conclusions or generalization of our results will apply. The population of this study comprises Youth aged 15-35 residing within Uselu community in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria which is 197,980 (NPC, 2006).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The population of this study was 197,980 (NPC, 2006)

There are 10 wards in Egor Local government area, Edo State

$$\therefore \text{Each ward} = \frac{197,980}{10} = 19,798$$

Sample size of eachward (Uselu) using:

$$\text{Taro Yammane} = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^e}$$

Where: $e = 0.05$

$$N = 19,798$$

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{19798}{1+19798(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{19798}{1+19798 \times 0.0025}$$

$$= \frac{19798}{1+49.50} = \frac{19798}{50.50} = 392$$

\therefore The sample size of the study is 392 respondents

3.4 Instrument for Data Collection

This study will employ a Questionnaires; structured questionnaires will be administered to youth members, and community members, to gather quantitative data on their perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards youth organizations and their impact. The questionnaires will include: Demographic information (Age, gender, education level, occupation, etc), Attitudes and perceptions (Questions assessing attitudes towards youth organizations, perceived impact of youth

organizations on the community, and satisfaction with community development initiatives), Participation (Questions assessing levels of participation in community activities, membership in youth organizations, and involvement in youth-led initiatives), Socio-economic factors (Questions assessing income levels, employment status, and access to resources).

3.5 Validity of Instrument

The questionnaire to be used for this study will be thoroughly scrutinized by the supervisor for clarity, precision and comprehension. Both the preliminary test and the main research results will be treated similar especially in the pattern of response from respondents to fundamental questions relating to the research study under consideration.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire will be administered personally to the participant by the researcher, the researcher will also guide the participants with regards to filling questionnaires. The respondents will be informed that their responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

This study adopted the simple percentage and Kendall's measure of concordance and will be presented in frequency distribution tables. These techniques are used because they are easy to comprehend and considered adequate for the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 PREAMBLE

This chapter contains the data presentation, analysis and interpretations of the various data collected for this study. Consequently, it entails the application of both mathematics and statistical techniques to provide the basis for analyzing the research objectives listed in chapter one. Hence, it is a vital part of this study since it forms the basis for conclusion and policy recommendations.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analytical Techniques

Tables and percentages were used in this chapter in this research work; the use of table was the most appropriate means of interpreting information for easy understanding. In analyzing the data, judgment was based on the number of favorable or unfavorable responses received on each statement in the questionnaire. Generally, the favorable response is, “Yes” while the unfavorable response is “No” and the neutral response is ‘Not Sure’. The results of the data collected are analyzed below based on each research questions.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1 Demographic of Respondents

1	Age	Frequency	Percent
	15 – 24 years	235	60%
	25 – 34 years	118	30.1%
	35 years and above	39	9.9%
	Total	392	100%
2	Gender		
	Male	176	44.9%
	Female	216	55.1%
	Total	392	100
3	Educational Level		
	No formal education	5	1.3%
	Primary	20	5.1%
	Secondary	132	33.7%
	Tertiary	235	59.9%
	Total	392	100%
4	Occupation		
	Students	275	70.2%
	Employed	39	9.9%
	Unemployed	20	5.1%
	Self - Employed	58	14.8%
	Total	392	100%
5	Duration of Residence in Uselu		
	Less than 5 years	235	59.9%
	5 – 10 years	78	19.9%
	More than 10 years	79	20.2%
	Total	392	100%
6	Do you belong to a youth organization		
	Yes	157	40.1%
	No	235	59.9%
	Total	392	100%

Source Field work 2025

Table 4.1 contains and shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Accordingly, 44.9% of the total respondents are male while 55.1% percent of the total respondents are female. This implies that we had more female respondents. 60% of the total respondents are between the age brackets of 15 - 24 years; 30.1% of the total respondents are between the age brackets of 25 - 34 years; and 9.9% of the total respondents are between the age brackets of 35 years and above. It also shows that 1.3% of the total respondents have no formal education; 5.1% percent of the total respondents have primary education; 33.7% of the total respondent have secondary education and 59.9% of the total respondents have tertiary education. This implies that the majority of the respondents are in university of have completed university. It also indicated that 70.2% of the respondents are students; 9.9% of the respondents are employed; 5.1% of the total respondent are unemployed and 14.8% are Self-employed. This implies that the majority of the respondents are students. . It also shows that 59.9%% of the total respondents have lived in Uselu for less than five years; 19.9% percent of the total respondents have lived in Uselu between five to ten years; and 20.2% of the total respondents have lived in Uselu for more than ten years. It also indicated that 40.1% of the respondent belong to a youth organization; and 59.9% do not belong to a youth organization. This implies that the majority of the respondents do not belong to a youth organization.

4.2 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question one: What are the contributions of youth organizations to the socio-economic development of Uselu community?

Table 4.2: Have youth organizations contributed to improving access to education and skill development in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	250	63.8%
No	82	20.9%
Not Sure	60	15.3%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2 above revealed that 63.8% of the total respondents agreed; 20.9% of the total respondents disagreed; and 5.3% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.3: Have youth organizations introduced economic activities or programs in Uselu that have had a positive impact on the economy of Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	180	45.9%
No	120	30.6%
Not Sure	92	23.5%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.3 above, it revealed that 45.9% of the total respondents agreed; 30.6% of the total respondents disagreed and 23.5% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.4: Have youth organizations implemented projects or initiatives that have improved living standards in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	140	35.7%
No	150	38.3%
Not Sure	102	26%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.4 above, it revealed that 35.7% of the total respondents agreed; 38.3% of the total respondents disagreed; and 26% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents disagreed.

Table 4.5: Have youth organizations contributed to the health improvement or awareness in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	220	56.1%
No	90	23%
Not Sure	82	20.9%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.5 above, it revealed that 56.1% of the total respondents agreed; 23% of the total respondents disagreed; and 20.9% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Research Question two: How do youth organizations address unemployment, poverty and social instability in Uselu community?

Table 4.6: Do youth organizations provide job opportunities or training to reduce unemployment in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	158	40.3%
No	137	34.9%
Not Sure	97	24.7%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.6 above, it revealed that 40.3% of the total respondents agreed; 34.9% of the total respondents disagreed; and 24.7% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.7: Do youth organizations provide support to vulnerable groups in Uselu community, such as the elderly, disabled or women?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	212	54.1%
No	98	25%
Not Sure	82	20.9%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.7 above, it revealed that 54.1% of the total respondents agreed; 25% of the total respondents disagreed; and 20.9% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

4.4 Research Question three: How effective is the collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders in fostering sustainable development?

Table 4.8: Do youth organizations collaborate with local government, businesses or other stakeholders in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	195	49.7%
No	82	21.7%
Not Sure	112	28.6%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.8 above, it revealed that 49.7% of the total respondents agreed; 21.7% of the total respondents disagreed; and 28.6% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.9: Have collaborations between youth organizations and community stakeholder been successful in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	208	53.2%
No	85	21.7%
Not Sure	99	25.1%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.9 above revealed that 53.2% of the total respondents agreed; 21.7% of the total respondents disagreed; and 25.1% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.10: Do youth organizations and community stakeholders effectively communicate and share resources for development in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	138	35.2%
No	82	20.9%
Not Sure	172	43.9%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.10 above revealed that 35.2% of the total respondents agreed; 20.9% of the total respondents disagreed; and 43.9% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents were undecided.

Table 4.11: Do these collaborations contribute to sustainability of development initiatives in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	160	40.8%
No	75	19.1%
Not Sure	157	40.1%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.11 above revealed that 40.8% of the total respondents agreed; 19.1% of the total respondents disagreed; and 40.1% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Research Question Four: What barriers and challenges do youth organizations face in implementing development initiatives?

Table 4.12: Do youth organizations in Uselu community face financial challenges in implementing development initiatives?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	245	62.5%
No	60	15.3%
Not Sure	87	22.2%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.12 above, it revealed that 62.5% of the total respondents agreed; 15.3% of the total respondents disagreed; and 22.2% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.13: Do youth organizations in Uselu community face logistical or operational barriers in their initiatives?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	268	68.4%
No	48	12.2%
Not Sure	76	19.4%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.13 above revealed that 68.4% of the total respondents agreed; 12.2% of the total respondents disagreed; and 19.4% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.14: Do youth organizations face a shortage of human or material resources that impact their effectiveness in Uselu?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	282	71.9%
No	42	10.7%
Not Sure	68	17.4%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.14 above revealed that 71.9% of the total respondents agreed; 10.7% of the total respondents disagreed; and 17.4% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.15: Are there social or cultural barriers that hinder the work of youth organizations in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	188	47.9%
No	67	17.1%
Not Sure	137	35%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.15 above revealed that 47.9% of the total respondents agreed; 17.1% of the total respondents disagreed; and 35% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.16: Do youth organizations face challenges with local authorities or other community leaders in their initiatives?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	189	48.2%
No	110	28.1%
Not Sure	93	23.7%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.16 above revealed that 48.2% of the total respondents agreed; 28.1% of the total respondents disagreed; and 23.7% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Research Question Five: What strategies can be proposed to optimize the impact of youth organizations on the sustainable development of Uselu community?

Table 4.17: Should youth organizations focus on improving financial sustainability in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	306	78.1%
No	34	8.7%
Not Sure	52	13.2%
Total	392	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.17 above, it revealed that 78.1% of the total respondents agreed; 8.7% of the total respondents disagreed; and 13.2% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.18: Should youth organizations engage more with the community to ensure the success of their initiatives?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	336	85.7%
No	20	5.1%
Not Sure	36	9.2%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.18 above revealed that 85.7% of the total respondents agreed; 5.1% of the total respondents disagreed; and 9.2% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.19: Should youth organizations collaborate more with local businesses and government to enhance development in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	324	82.7%
No	24	6.1%
Not Sure	44	11.2%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.19 above revealed that 82.7% of the total respondents agreed; 6.1% of the total respondents disagreed; and 11.2% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.20: Should measures be taken to overcome the challenges faced by youth-led organizations in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	354	90.3%
No	13	3.3%
Not Sure	25	6.4%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.20 above revealed that 90.3% of the total respondents agreed; 3.3% of the total respondents disagreed; and 6.4% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 4.21: Should the community take more responsibility in supporting youth-led development initiatives in Uselu community?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	267	68.1%
No	59	15.2%
Not Sure	66	16.7%
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.21 above revealed that 68.1% of the total respondents agreed; 15.2% of the total respondents disagreed; and 16.7% of the total respondent were undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents agreed.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the contributions of youth organizations to the socio-economic development of Uselu community, their role in addressing key challenges, the effectiveness of collaborations, the barriers they face, and potential strategies for optimization. Research question one reveals that youth organizations make significant contributions to the socio-economic development of Uselu. This suggests that youth organizations are actively involved in initiatives that enhance the capabilities of individuals within the community and contribute to tangible improvements in infrastructure and services. This aligns with the work of Anyaegbunam, et al. (2015) emphasized the role of youth in driving community-based development initiatives in Nigeria. However, a notable percentage were unsure or perceived limited impact, indicating a potential need for youth organizations to strengthen their outreach and demonstrate the tangible outcomes of their activities more effectively. This underscores the importance of impact assessment and transparent communication of results, as highlighted by the World Bank (2018) guidelines on participatory development which emphasizes the need for transparent monitoring and evaluation.

Research question two explored how youth organizations address critical challenges like unemployment, poverty, and social instability. The findings suggest that these organizations are actively engaged in initiatives aimed at tackling these issues. 40.3% of respondents indicated that

youth organizations are involved in skills training, and entrepreneurship programs, This aligns with Okonkwo & Ibe (2020) who found that youth-led initiatives contribute significantly to poverty reduction in rural communities. However, 24.7% expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of these efforts, highlighting the need for more robust strategies and greater community involvement. This reinforces the need for collaborative approaches and sustainable funding mechanisms, as discussed by UNDP (2021) Sustainable Development Goals report which discussed the importance of partnerships in achieving social and economic development.

Research question three examined the effectiveness of collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders. The findings indicate 53.2% generally positive view of these collaborations, suggesting that partnerships are contributing to sustainable development efforts. This emphasizes the importance of collaborative approaches in community development, as underscored by Chambers (2005) which highlights the importance of participatory approaches in fostering sustainable community development. However, a substantial portion of 40.1% were unsure about the effectiveness of these collaborations, indicating potential areas for improvement in communication, coordination, and resource sharing. This highlights the importance of building trust and fostering open communication channels between youth organizations and community stakeholders, as discussed by Putnam (2000) emphasizing the role of social capital in fostering effective community engagement.

Research question four identified several barriers and challenges faced by youth organizations. The findings suggest that financial constraints are a major impediment. Logistical and operational challenges were also identified, which could include access to resources, infrastructure, and

technical expertise. Furthermore, 48.2% of respondents indicated challenges related to community support and engagement. This highlights the need for capacity building and resource mobilization strategies tailored to the specific needs of youth organizations, as recommended by O'Connell (2012) which provides a framework for capacity building in non-profit organizations.

Based on the findings from research question five, several strategies can be proposed to optimize the impact of youth organizations. First, strengthening financial sustainability is crucial. This could involve exploring diverse funding sources, developing fundraising skills, and improving financial management practices. Second, enhancing collaboration and communication with community stakeholders is essential. This includes building trust, fostering open dialogue, and establishing clear mechanisms for coordination. Third, capacity building initiatives should focus on developing the leadership, management, and technical skills of youth organization members. Fourth, promoting community engagement and participation is vital. This could involve raising awareness about the work of youth organizations, involving community members in project planning and implementation, and recognizing their contributions. Finally, establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of youth-led initiatives is crucial for demonstrating their effectiveness and informing future strategies. This aligns with the broader literature on community development best practices, as discussed by Ezeh et al (2015).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Preamble

This chapter presented the conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the results of the findings.

5.1 Summary

This study was structured into five chapters to effectively carry out this research. The study raised five objectives that guided the study. Based on these objectives, research questions and hypotheses were formulated, the assumptions and significance of the study were highlighted, area of study and scope were also discussed. Chapter two reviewed literature related to the research topic. The review critically examined and analyzed the views of some social workers and other concerned scholars on the concepts. The theoretical frame work used in the study was Empowerment theory. In chapter three the design and methodology of the study were discussed. The research design was a cross-sectional survey design, the population of the study comprised of young people between the ages of 15-35 living in the area of study. A total of 392 persons were sampled using simple random sampling procedure. One instrument was used for data collection, the questionnaire. The returned questionnaires were analyzed using simple percentage table for the demographic response collected from the respondents through the questionnaire. Chapter four presented the analysis of the data collected which were analyzed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings in this study after the analysis gave the following results:

1. Findings revealed that youth organizations contribute to education, skill development, and health awareness, though their impact on the economy and living standards is perceived variably.
2. Findings also revealed that youth organizations provide job training and support vulnerable groups in Uselu community.
3. Findings indicated that while youth organizations collaborate with stakeholders, the effectiveness of communication and resource sharing requires improvement for sustainable development.
4. Findings highlighted that youth organizations face significant challenges, including financial constraints, logistical barriers, and resource shortages.
5. Findings showed that strategies such as improved financial sustainability, increased community engagement, and enhanced collaboration are strongly supported to optimize the impact of youth organizations.

5.2 Conclusion

Youth organizations represent a vital force in community development, presenting a dynamic landscape of opportunities and challenges. They play a crucial role in addressing socio-economic needs, yet their effectiveness is influenced by various factors. In this research, we found that youth organizations have contributed to education, skill development, and health awareness within Uselu community. However, their impact on the local economy and residents' living standards is perceived with less consistency. We conclude that while youth

organizations possess significant potential, their ability to fully realize this potential is hampered by challenges such as financial instability, logistical hurdles, and resource limitations. It is important to explore these challenges further and develop targeted interventions that enhance the organizational capacity of these groups. Effective collaboration with community stakeholders and clear communication channels are also crucial for sustainable development. It is probable that a stronger, more collaborative ecosystem will empower youth organizations to achieve greater impact. The conclusions drawn from this research have significant implications across multiple domains. Practically, these findings should inform the development of future interventions and policies aimed at supporting youth-led development. Socially, this research underscores the need for greater inclusion and recognition of youth organizations' contributions. Academically, further research is necessary to delve deeper into the dynamics of youth organizations, their challenges, and the most effective strategies for maximizing their positive influence on community development.

5.3 Recommendations

We recommend a multi-faceted approach to optimize the impact of youth organizations on sustainable development in Uselu. Youth organizations should prioritize strengthening their internal capacity through improved financial management, strategic planning, and leadership development. This includes diversifying funding streams, developing sustainable income-generating projects, and enhancing their ability to manage resources effectively. Furthermore, youth organizations should actively engage with the community to ensure their initiatives are

aligned with local needs and priorities. This can be achieved through regular dialogues, participatory planning processes, and transparent communication. We also recommend fostering stronger collaborations between youth organizations, local businesses, and government agencies. This includes establishing formal partnerships, creating platforms for resource sharing, and advocating for policies that support youth-led development. Community members should also play a greater role in supporting youth organizations by volunteering, donating resources, and actively participating in their initiatives. The government should invest in capacity-building programs for youth organizations, providing training in areas such as project management, fundraising, and leadership. Additionally, the government should create an enabling environment for youth-led development by streamlining regulations, providing access to funding opportunities, and recognizing the contributions of youth organizations. With these combined efforts, the impact of youth organizations on the sustainable development of Uselu can be significantly enhanced.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the Department of Social Work, with a degree in view B.Sc Social Work, Faculty of Social Science. The objective of this questionnaire is to obtain relevant information which will help in providing answers to the research questions of the study "The Impact of Youth Organizations on the Development of Uselu Community in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State." When this study is completed, you are invited to read my findings because it will be useful to government agencies, non-government organizations—international, national, and local—and policy makers. You are hereby assured that information gathered with this questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Socio-Demographic Profile

- AGE: 15-24 years () 25-34 years () 35 and above ()
- GENDER: Male () Female ()
- EDUCATIONAL LEVEL: No formal education () Primary () Secondary () Tertiary ()
- OCCUPATION: Student () Employed () Unemployed () Self-employed ()
- DURATION OF RESIDENCE IN USELU: ≤ 5 years () 5-10 years () ≥ 10 years ()

- DO YOU BELONG TO A YOUTH ORGANIZATION: Yes () No ()

SECTION A. (Please tick the option you think is appropriate)

Research Question One: What are the contributions of youth organizations to the socio-economic development of Uselu community?

- Have youth organizations contributed to improving access to education and skills development in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- Have youth organizations introduced economic activities or programs in Uselu that have had a positive impact on the economy of Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- Have youth organizations implemented projects or initiatives that have improved living standards in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- Have Youth Organizations contributed to the health improvement or awareness in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

SECTION B: (Please tick the option you think is appropriate)

Research Question Two: How do youth organizations address unemployment, poverty, and social instability in Uselu community?

- Do youth organizations provide job opportunities or training to reduce unemployment in Uselu? Yes () No () Not sure ()

- ii. Do youth organizations provide support to vulnerable groups in Uselu community, such as the elderly, disabled or women? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

SECTION C: (Please tick the option you think is appropriate)

Research Question Three: How effective is the collaboration between youth organizations and community stakeholders in fostering sustainable development?

- i. Do youth organizations collaborate with local government, businesses, or other stakeholders in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- ii. Have collaborations between youth organizations and community stakeholders been successful in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iii. Do youth organization and community stakeholders effectively communicate and share resources for development in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iv. Do these collaborations contribute to the sustainability of development initiatives in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

SECTION D: (Please tick the option you think is appropriate)

Research Question Four: What barriers and challenges do youth organizations face in implementing development initiatives?

- i. Do youth organizations in Uselu community face financial challenges in implementing development initiatives? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

- ii. Do youth organizations in Uselu community face logistical or operational barriers in their initiatives? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iii. Do youth organizations face a shortage of human or material resources that impact their effectiveness in Uselu? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iv. Are there social or cultural barriers that hinder the work of youth organizations in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- v. Do youth organizations face challenges with local authorities or other community leaders in their initiatives? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

SECTION E: (Please tick the option you think is appropriate)

Research Question Five: What strategies can be proposed to optimize the impact of youth organizations on the sustainable development of Uselu community?

- i. Should youth organizations focus on improving financial sustainability in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- ii. Should youth organizations engage more with the community to ensure the success of their initiatives? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iii. Should youth organizations collaborate more with local businesses and government to enhance development in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()
- iv. Should measures be taken to overcome the challenges faced by youth-led organizations in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()

- v. Should the community take more responsibility in supporting youth-led development initiatives in Uselu community? Yes () No () Not Sure ()