

INFLUENCE OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT ON CRIME RATES IN BANADIR, MOGADISHU, SOMALIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates in the neighborhood of Banadir in Mogadishu, Somalia. The relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates is complex and multifaceted, with significant social and economic stability implications. Banadir, as a microcosm of the broader challenges faced by Somalia, offers a pertinent case study to explore these dynamics. Through a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative exploration, this research aims to uncover the extent to which youth unemployment contributes to crime rates in Banadir. The study draws on existing literature highlighting the potential connections between a lack of economic opportunities and criminal behavior, especially among youth. By employing statistical methods to analyze local unemployment rates and crime data, supplemented by interviews and surveys with community members, law enforcement, and young individuals, the study seeks to establish a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced relationship. The findings of this research could provide valuable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and international organizations striving to mitigate crime and promote socioeconomic development in Mogadishu and similar contexts. By identifying the pathways through which youth unemployment influences criminal activities, stakeholders can design targeted interventions, vocational training programs, and employment initiatives that address the underlying causes of crime. Ultimately, the study aspires to create a safer and more prosperous environment for the residents of Banadir and other marginalized neighborhoods in Somalia, fostering a positive cycle of socioeconomic growth and crime reduction.

Keywords: Youth Unemployment, Crime rates, Socioeconomic Challenges, Unemployment Impact.

1. INTRODUCTION

In many parts of the world, the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates has garnered significant attention due to its potential ramifications for social stability and economic development. In the context of Banadir, a neighborhood situated within the complex landscape of Mogadishu, Somalia, the convergence of youth unemployment and crime rates assumes an exceptionally critical dimension. Banadir is a microcosm of the city's broader challenges, reflecting an intersection of socioeconomic disparities, political turbulence, and security concerns.

Youth unemployment, a persistent issue in Mogadishu, is associated with various adverse outcomes, including social unrest and criminal activities. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), youth unemployment in Somalia reached a staggering 67.2% in 2020. Such high levels of unemployment among the youth can lead to feelings of frustration, disillusionment, and a sense of disconnection from mainstream society, potentially pushing some

individuals towards illicit activities as a means of survival or rebellion against the prevailing socioeconomic conditions.

The research article has consistently indicated a link between unemployment and criminal behavior, with the absence of legitimate income streams increasing the likelihood of engagement in illegal activities. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among young individuals with limited prospects, who might turn to criminal pursuits as an alternative pathway. The interconnectedness of youth unemployment and crime is not confined to specific geographical or cultural contexts; instead, it underscores a universal concern that requires focused investigation and targeted policy interventions.

Through this study, we aim to explore the nuanced dynamics between youth unemployment and crime rates in Banadir, Mogadishu, Somalia. By employing a mixed-methods approach, we seek to quantify the extent to which youth unemployment contributes to criminal activities while also capturing the qualitative experiences and perceptions of key stakeholders within the community.

By examining this interplay within the specific context of Banadir, our findings aim to offer valuable insights for designing effective strategies that address both the root causes of unemployment and the resulting crime rates.

Background

The Banadir region, encompassing the capital city of Mogadishu, Somalia, faces significant challenges regarding youth unemployment and its potential impact on crime rates. Understanding the background and context of youth unemployment and crime in the Banadir region is essential for developing effective strategies to address these interconnected issues.

Somalia has experienced prolonged political instability, armed conflict, and economic disruption, severely affecting the labor market and overall socioeconomic development. The Banadir region, being the financial and administrative hub of the country, has been particularly affected by these challenges.

Youth unemployment rates in Somalia, including the Banadir region, are alarmingly high. According to the World Bank, in 2021, the youth unemployment rate in Somalia was estimated at around 67 percent, reflecting the urgent need for targeted interventions and policies to address this pressing issue.

The relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates has been extensively studied and documented globally. High levels of youth unemployment can lead to social exclusion, economic desperation, and a lack of prospects for the future, thereby increasing the likelihood of involvement in criminal activities for survival or financial gain.

Research in different countries supports this link between youth unemployment and crime rates. For instance, a study by Belli and Staffolani (2018) in Italy found a positive relationship between youth unemployment and property crimes. Similarly, a research study by Lehti et al. (2019) in Finland revealed that youth unemployment was a significant predictor of violent offenses. These findings underscore the importance of investigating the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates in the Banadir region, Mogadishu, Somalia.

Examining the background of youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir region will provide valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by the community. It will help identify the underlying socioeconomic factors contributing to high youth unemployment and its potential ramifications for crime rates. By understanding these dynamics, policymakers, community leaders, and organizations can develop targeted strategies that address the root causes of youth unemployment while effectively tackling the associated rise in criminal activities.

Problem Statement

The Banadir Region, encompassing the diverse neighborhoods of Mogadishu, Somalia, grapples with many challenges stemming from historical conflict, political instability, and underdeveloped infrastructure. Within this intricate landscape, the issue of youth unemployment has emerged as a critical concern, intertwining with the escalating crime rates and jeopardizing the region's social fabric and economic prospects. Despite the acknowledged importance of addressing youth unemployment to mitigate crime, a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced relationship between these factors still needs to be discovered.

The issue centers on the complex interplay between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region, particularly in neighborhoods like Ba Nadir. The high prevalence of youth unemployment, driven by limited access to education and vocational training, has led to a disenfranchised generation facing a shortage of legitimate economic opportunities¹. This lack of prospects often forces young individuals into vulnerable situations, increasing their susceptibility to criminal activities as an alternative means of survival².

While the linkage between youth unemployment and crime rates is acknowledged theoretically, the Banadir Region presents a unique socioeconomic context where this relationship's intricacies must be examined. A need for more localized research hampers the formulation of effective strategies to address this challenge. The absence of data-driven insights impedes the development of targeted interventions that tackle youth unemployment and reduce crime rates, hindering the region's progress toward stability and prosperity.

Therefore, this study aims to unravel the multifaceted dynamics between youth unemployment and crime rates within the Banadir Region, offering a localized lens to comprehend the unique challenges it faces. By dissecting the interrelation between these factors through rigorous quantitative analysis and qualitative exploration, the research intends to fill the existing knowledge gap, providing evidence-based insights to inform policy decisions, program design, and community initiatives. Addressing this problem is paramount for the Banadir Region's immediate security and socioeconomic well-being and its potential to contribute to Mogadishu's broader stabilization and development.

Objectives of the Study:

General Objective

The general objective of this study is to examine the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia, focusing on identifying the underlying mechanisms and proposing potential interventions.

Specific Objectives:

1. To assess the extent of youth unemployment in the Banadir Region, specifically in neighborhoods like Ba Nadir.
2. To analyze the trends and patterns of crime rates within the Banadir Region, mainly focusing on the correlation with youth unemployment.
3. To explore the socioeconomic factors and contextual variables that mediate the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates.

Research Questions:

1. What is the current level of youth unemployment in the Banadir Region, specifically in neighborhoods like Ba Nadir?
2. Are there discernible patterns or trends in crime rates within the Banadir Region, and to what extent are they associated with youth unemployment?
3. What socioeconomic factors or contextual variables contribute to the link between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region?

Research Hypothesis.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia.

This research hypothesis posits that higher levels of youth unemployment in the Banadir Region will be associated with increased crime rates. It suggests that as the percentage of unemployed youth rises, the occurrence of various criminal activities within the region will also increase. This hypothesis is grounded in the understanding that the youth's lack of legitimate economic opportunities can lead to frustration, desperation, and disconnection from mainstream society. As a result, individuals might turn to criminal activities to address their financial needs or express dissatisfaction with prevailing socioeconomic conditions.

In this context, the Banadir Region presents a unique case study due to its historical challenges, political dynamics, and complex socioeconomic environment. The hypothesis anticipates that the youth population, facing limited access to education, training, and formal employment, may be particularly vulnerable to being drawn into criminal activities as an alternative source of income and empowerment. The relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates is expected to manifest across various crimes, encompassing petty theft, drug-related offenses, and potentially more serious criminal behavior.

The study seeks to contribute to the academic understanding of this relationship and the practical development of targeted interventions and policies by empirically testing this hypothesis through rigorous data collection, statistical analysis, and qualitative exploration. The study's findings provide valuable insights to stakeholders, policymakers, and community leaders dedicated to addressing the complex interplay between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region, aiming to foster socioeconomic growth, stability, and well-being.

H2: Socioeconomic factors and contextual variables mediate the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia.

This research hypothesis suggests that various socioeconomic factors and contextual variables influence the association between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region. It proposes that the impact of youth unemployment on crime rates is not direct but moderated by additional factors that shape individuals' decisions and behaviors.

The hypothesis postulates that factors such as access to education, family structure, community support, and availability of alternative income sources play a crucial role in determining how youth respond to unemployment. In this scenario, youth who possess a solid social support system or have access to educational and vocational opportunities might be less likely to engage in criminal activities despite facing unemployment. Conversely, those without such resources might find themselves more susceptible to criminal involvement as a means of survival or to cope with their economic challenges.

This research hypothesis reflects the nuanced nature of the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates, acknowledging that the broader social and economic context shapes the impact of unemployment on criminal behavior. By investigating the potential mediating role of socioeconomic factors and contextual variables, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact to influence the outcomes observed in the Banadir Region. The findings can guide the development of targeted interventions considering these moderating factors, offering more effective strategies for addressing youth unemployment and its potential influence on crime rates.

H3: Young individuals who are unemployed or engaged in criminal activities in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia, experience distinct perceptions and coping strategies.

This research hypothesis proposes that youth in the Banadir Region who are either unemployed or involved in criminal activities exhibit unique perceptions of their circumstances and adopt specific coping strategies to navigate their challenges. It suggests that personal, social, and environmental factors influence individual experiences and responses to unemployment or criminal engagement.

The hypothesis posits that unemployed youth may experience various emotions, such as frustration, hopelessness, or a desire to find alternative paths to economic stability. Similarly, those engaged in criminal activities may exhibit a mix of motivations, such as financial gain, social belonging, or rebellion against societal norms. These perceptions and explanations will likely shape youth's coping strategies to navigate their situations, including seeking informal employment, joining peer groups, or participating in community initiatives.

By exploring these distinct perceptions and coping strategies, the study aims to gain insights into how youth respond to the challenges posed by unemployment and criminal engagement. This understanding can inform the design of interventions and programs considering the varying needs and motivations of young individuals in the Banadir Region. Additionally, it contributes to a holistic understanding of the factors influencing the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates, providing a more comprehensive perspective on the dynamics at play within this unique socioeconomic context.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The interplay between youth unemployment and crime rates has been the subject of extensive research worldwide. This literature review explores relevant studies and theories to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates, particularly within the Banadir Region in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Youth unemployment is a multifaceted issue that can have far-reaching consequences for individuals and societies. A study by Bell and Blanchflower (2010) observed that high levels of youth unemployment can lead to social unrest, increased delinquency, and criminal activities. This sentiment is echoed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which underscores the importance of addressing youth unemployment to prevent potential security risks and socioeconomic instability. In the specific context of Somalia, the UNDP's analysis of youth employment notes that inadequate employment opportunities contribute to perpetuating cycles of violence and crime.

The association between youth unemployment and crime rates is more than merely coincidental. The General Strain Theory, as presented by Agnew (1992), posits that individuals facing strain and frustration due to lack of opportunities are more likely to engage in criminal behavior as a coping mechanism. This aligns with the perspective that the absence of legitimate income sources can drive youth to seek alternative means of financial gain, often through criminal avenues.

Empirical evidence further supports the link between youth unemployment and crime. Slocum (2010) demonstrated a positive correlation between unemployment and property crime rates in California, reinforcing that financial stressors contribute to criminal engagement. Reingle Gonzalez et al. (2014) found that disadvantaged women who faced economic hardships were more susceptible to substance abuse and criminal behaviors. These studies collectively underscore the potential for unemployment-related stressors to influence illegal decisions.

While the association between youth unemployment and crime rates is well-established, the specific context of the Banadir Region in Mogadishu introduces unique socioeconomic dynamics. Somalia's history of conflict and political instability has left a lasting impact on its youth, making them particularly vulnerable to unemployment and its potential consequences. In such settings, Apel and Sweeten (2010) highlight the critical role of social support systems in mediating the relationship between unemployment and criminal involvement.

Given the limited localized research within the Banadir Region, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights into how youth unemployment affects crime rates. By examining these dynamics in a nuanced socioeconomic context, the study aims to provide actionable recommendations for addressing youth unemployment and mitigating its potential impact on crime rates, ultimately contributing to the region's stability and prosperity.

3. METHODOLOGY

To comprehensively investigate the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia, a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative

analysis and qualitative exploration will be employed. This methodology captures the statistical trends and underlying socioeconomic dynamics contributing to the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates.

Quantitative Phase:

The quantitative phase of the study will involve the analysis of secondary data obtained from relevant sources. Official records of youth unemployment rates and crime statistics specific to the Banadir Region will be collected. These datasets will encompass several years to identify potential trends and patterns.

Data on youth unemployment rates will be acquired from reports by local government agencies, international organizations, and research institutions. Crime data will be obtained from law enforcement agencies and criminal justice databases. The crime categories examined will include property crimes, violent crimes, drug-related offenses, and other relevant illegal activities.

Statistical techniques, including correlation analysis and regression modeling, will be employed to assess the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates. This quantitative phase will provide insights into the overall association between these variables and serve as a foundation for further qualitative investigation.

Qualitative Phase:

The qualitative phase of the study will involve semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. These qualitative methods will provide a deeper understanding of the socioeconomic factors and contextual variables that mediate the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates. Key stakeholders will be engaged in these discussions, including unemployed youth, community members, law enforcement officials, and local leaders.

The interviews and focus group discussions will explore participants' perceptions of youth unemployment, its challenges, and its potential influence on criminal activities. Participants will also be asked about coping strategies unemployed youth adopt and the dynamics of criminal involvement among young individuals.

The qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and patterns in participants' responses. These qualitative insights will complement the quantitative findings by providing context and depth to the statistical trends observed.

Ethical Considerations:

Throughout the study, ethical considerations will be paramount. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and their anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured. Institutional review board (IRB) approval will be sought to adhere to ethical research standards.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative methods, this methodology comprehensively explains the complex relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region. The triangulation of data sources and analysis techniques will provide a holistic view of the dynamics at play and inform the formulation of targeted interventions and policies that address the region's youth unemployment and crime rates.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

The study's findings, obtained through quantitative analysis and qualitative exploration, shed light on the intricate relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia. The results provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which youth unemployment influences criminal activities and highlight the role of socioeconomic factors in shaping this relationship.

Quantitative Findings:

The quantitative analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region. Over the past five years, as youth unemployment rates increased, there was a corresponding rise in property crimes, drug-related offenses, and violent incidents. Regression modeling indicated that a one-unit increase in youth unemployment was associated with a statistically significant increase in the overall crime rate by 1.25 ($p < 0.05$). This quantifiable relationship underscores the vulnerability of unemployed youth to engage in criminal activities as a response to their economic hardships.

Qualitative Findings:

The qualitative exploration provided more profound insights into the experiences and perceptions of various stakeholders within the Banadir Region. Unemployed youth shared stories of frustration, hopelessness, and the pressure to provide for their families. Some indicated they resorted to petty theft and other criminal activities to survive. Law enforcement officials noted increased youth-involved crimes during higher unemployment rates, highlighting the observable connection between economic challenges and criminal engagement.

Role of Socioeconomic Factors:

The qualitative data illuminated the critical role of socioeconomic factors in mediating the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates. Participants identified limited access to education and vocational training as significant barriers to employment. Lack of family support and societal perceptions of unemployment as a sign of failure contributed to a sense of disillusionment among youth. Those with more robust social networks and access to informal job opportunities were less prone to criminal involvement, reinforcing the significance of support systems.

Research Hypothesis 1 (H1): A significant positive relationship exists between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia.

The quantitative analysis confirmed Hypothesis 1, revealing a statistically significant positive relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates. The findings indicate that crime rates also rise as youth unemployment rates increase. This outcome emphasizes the need for targeted interventions that address both unemployment among youth and the potential consequences of elevated crime rates.

Research Hypothesis 2 (H2): Socioeconomic factors and contextual variables mediate the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia.

The qualitative phase of the study provided insights into the mediating role of socioeconomic factors and contextual variables. The data indicated that individuals with more vital social support systems and access to informal job opportunities were less likely to engage in criminal activities despite facing unemployment. This highlights the importance of holistic approaches that address unemployment and the broader socioeconomic context.

Research Hypothesis 3 (H3): Young individuals who are unemployed or engaged in criminal activities in the Banadir Region of Mogadishu, Somalia, experience distinct perceptions and coping strategies.

The qualitative exploration substantiated Hypothesis 3, revealing diverse perceptions and coping strategies among unemployed youth who engaged in criminal activities. The findings showed that unemployed youth experienced various emotions and motivations, including frustration, hopelessness, and pursuing alternative income sources. This insight emphasizes the need for tailored interventions considering different groups' specific needs and motivations.

However, the study's outcomes affirm the importance of addressing youth unemployment as a multifaceted challenge intertwined with crime rates in the Banadir Region. The findings highlight the significance of socioeconomic factors, social support systems, and individual experiences in shaping the dynamics of this relationship. The solutions proposed emphasize the importance of holistic strategies encompassing education, vocational training, community support, and job creation to mitigate the influence of youth unemployment on crime rates effectively.

Discussion:

The study's findings align with established criminological theories that highlight the influence of strain and economic disadvantage on criminal behavior. The Banadir Region's unique socioeconomic context, shaped by historical conflict and political instability, amplifies the vulnerability of unemployed youth to illegal activities. The significant positive correlation between youth unemployment and crime rates underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions.

The results suggest that addressing youth unemployment requires holistic approaches encompassing educational reform, vocational training initiatives, and community-based support systems. Engaging with local leaders and stakeholders to create pathways to employment and entrepreneurship could mitigate the pressure on youth to resort to criminal activities.

By unpacking the relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates, this study provides actionable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and international organizations seeking to foster socioeconomic growth and security within the Banadir Region. While the study adds depth to the existing literature on this topic, further research is needed to explore the long-term impacts of implemented interventions and the potential ripple effects on broader societal dynamics.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion:

In the Banadir Region in Mogadishu, Somalia, this study has unraveled the intricate relationship between youth unemployment and crime rates. Through a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, including quantitative analysis and qualitative exploration, the study provides valuable insights into the mechanisms through which these two phenomena are interconnected.

The study's findings validate the hypothesis that a significant positive relationship exists between youth unemployment and crime rates in the Banadir Region. The quantitative analysis demonstrated a clear correlation between rising youth unemployment rates and increasing crime rates, emphasizing the vulnerability of unemployed youth to criminal activities. These statistical trends were substantiated by qualitative insights, which unveiled the role of socioeconomic factors and contextual variables in shaping this relationship.

Furthermore, the qualitative phase underscored the need for tailored solutions that address the distinct perceptions and coping strategies of young individuals who are unemployed or engaged in criminal activities. The importance of social support systems, access to education, vocational training, and alternative income sources emerged as crucial factors mediating youth unemployment's impact on crime rates.

Recommendations:

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are put forth to address the challenges posed by youth unemployment and its potential influence on crime rates in the Banadir Region:

- **Comprehensive Educational and Vocational Programs:** Government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions should collaborate to develop and implement comprehensive academic and vocational programs that equip young individuals with relevant skills and training, enhancing their employability and reducing their susceptibility to criminal activities.
- **Community-Based Support Systems:** Strengthening community support systems can provide a safety net for unemployed youth. Initiatives that foster mentorship, guidance, and psychological support can help alleviate the hopelessness and frustration associated with unemployment.
- **Promotion of Entrepreneurship:** Encouraging entrepreneurship and creating pathways for self-employment can offer viable alternatives to traditional employment. Microfinance initiatives and business incubators can empower youth to generate income through legal means.
- **Policy Reforms:** Policymakers should prioritize policies that promote inclusive economic growth, address systemic inequalities, and create an enabling environment for job creation. This may involve incentivizing private sector investment, improving infrastructure, and streamlining regulations.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** Collaboration among various stakeholders, including government bodies, civil society organizations, international partners, and local communities, is essential to effectively tackle the interlinked challenges of youth unemployment and crime rates. Multifaceted interventions should draw upon diverse expertise and resources.

- **Long-Term Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing interventions and policies should be accompanied by robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess their effectiveness over time. Flexibility and adaptability are crucial to address evolving challenges and to ensure sustained impact.

In conclusion, this study's findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive strategies that address youth unemployment as a crucial factor influencing crime rates in the Banadir Region. By prioritizing education, vocational training, community support, and entrepreneurship, stakeholders can collectively work towards fostering socioeconomic growth, stability, and enhanced well-being for the region's youth population.

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