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SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG THE YOUTH IN NIGERIA *

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ABSTRACT

The issue of unemployment is a worldwide phenomenon. It has become topic of discussion across professional gatherings in media and commentary reviews, employer surveys, national economic debates, social networks and employee forums. The study was conducted to determine the socio-economic effects of unemployment among the youth within Azare metropolitan, Katagum local government area of Bauchi state, Nigeria. Two research questions were developed in consonance with what the study sought to find out and three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the probability at 0.05 level of significance. Structured questionnaire items were adapted by the researcher and validated by two experts for the face and content validation of the instrument. The questionnaire was used for collection of data from 286 respondents randomly selected as a sample within the study area. The data collected were analyzed using simple frequency, percentage and chi-square techniques. The analysis showed that there is significant relationship between unemployment and the youth involvement into social crimes which affects national security. Based on the findings of this study the paper recommended among other things that government should formulate and effectively implement proper policy measures that will drastically reduce youth unemployment rate in the country.

Keywords: Socio-economic; Unemployment; Youth unemployment; Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment has been categorized as one of the serious impediments to social progress and development of the Nations world over. Unemployment is a global trend, but it occurs most in developing countries of the world, with attendant social, economic, political and psychological consequences (Ayinde, 2008; Emeka, 2011; Chigunta, 2002). Thus, massive youth unemployment in any country is an indication of far complex problems. According to International Labor Organization (ILO), the proportions of world unemployment are steadily increasing and that the number of those without jobs remained at all time high of more than 195 million, or 6.3 percent in 2007. The issue of youths' unemployment in Nigeria has become a national concern as the unemployed youths tend to

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be more anxious, depressed and unhappy with their attendant sleeplessness than those with jobs (Samuel, Ofem and Samuel, 2006).

The problem of chronic youth unemployment is very evident in Nigeria. Every year thousands of graduates are turnout for whom there no jobs. Nigerian streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprises (Echebiri, 2005; Emeka, 2011; Uwoma, 2006). The large number of unemployed youths is capable of undermining peace as they constitute a serious threat if engaged by political class for clandestine activities (Adepegba, 2011). Youth unemployment is often considered as a social problem and is probably the most feared phenomenon of our times that touches all part of society; ... (Anyaele, 2003). This study intends to investigate the socio-economic effects of unemployment among youths in Azare metropolis of Katagum local government area, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

There seems to be a consensus among the various stakeholders on the definition of unemployment. The ILO defines unemployment as defines unemployment as number of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking for, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1998). According to Anyaele (2003), unemployment is a situation where some people who fall within the ages of working population, capable and willing to work are unable to obtain befitting work to do. The National Bureau of Statistics defines unemployment as the proportion of the labor force that is available for work but did not work for at least 39 hours in the week proceeding the survey period (Central Bank of Nigeria Annual Report, 2008). Abiodun (2010) regards unemployment as the proportion of the labor force, expressed in percentage, which is not employed at any given point in time.

Unemployment is measured among people in the labor force (Obadan & Odusola, 2001; National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The labor force of a country as defined by National Bureau of Statistics (2009) is a set of people or citizens of a country who are willing and are able to make available at any given point in time their efforts for gainful employment. The menace of unemployment has increasingly been recognized as one of the socio-economic problems currently facing many developing countries like Nigeria and Africa as a whole (Curtain, 2000; UNOWA, 2006).

Youth unemployment, therefore, could be described as the conglomerate of youths with diverse background, willing and able to work, but cannot find any. When the supply of labor outstrips the demand for labor, it causes joblessness and unemployment. Given the lack of sufficient employment opportunities in the formal sector, young people may be compelled to engage in casual work and other unorthodox livelihood sources, thus leading to underemployment (Echebiri, 2005; Onah, 2001; Venatus & Agnes 2010). According to Okonkwo (2005), the negative consequences of youth unemployment include poverty, psychological problems of frustration, depression, hostility, suspiciousness of people, food insecurity, all manner of criminal behavior and general insecurity of life and property. Majority of Nigerians are living under poverty (Omotola, 2008; Aigbokhan, 2000; Earth trends, 2003; Garba, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria with estimated population of about 167 million people (2011) and 60 percent youth, high rate of youth unemployment and high level of poverty in comparison to the abundant human and material resources in the country is a serious problem to the nation. Reports according to National Bureau of Statistics (2009; 2010), the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009 shown that the number of unemployed persons

constituted 31.1% in 2000; 13.6% in 2001; 12.6% in 2002; 14.8% in 2003; 13.4% in 2004; 11.9% in 2005; 13.7% in 2006; 14.6% in 2007; 14.9% in 2008; and 19.7% in 2009. It is important to note that the figures mentioned above may not have captured in totality the youth unemployment situation in Nigeria, but however, this shows that the phenomenon is a very critical issue with far reaching implications for the economic growth and the security of the nation.

Unemployed youths roam the streets jobless, sometimes going into criminal activities such as; drug abuse, child trafficking, kidnapping, political thuggery, cultism etc (Akpomi, 2008). It is against these backgrounds that the research investigated the socio-economic effects of unemployment among Nigerian youths with particular reference to Azare metropolis as a case study.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the socio-economic effects of unemployment among youths in Nigeria. Other specific objectives are to:

- Determine the extent to which unemployment has effect on socio-economic life of youths in Nigeria.
- Determine the relationship between unemployment and youths' involvement in criminal activities such as; drug abuse, child trafficking, kidnapping, political thuggery, cultism etc in Nigeria.

Research Questions and hypothesis

As a guide to the study, the following research questions were formulated:

- To what extent does unemployment influences youths' socio-economic life in Nigeria?
- Is there any significant relationship between unemployment and youths in criminal activities such as; drug abuse, child trafficking, kidnapping, political thuggery, cultism etc in Nigeria?
- Is there any significant relationship between unemployment and the youth engagement on prostitution and other social vices in the society?

The following null hypotheses were formulated to serve as a guide to the study, and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: That youth unemployment as a socio-economic factor will not have any significant

H₀₂: That youth unemployment as socio-economic factor will not have any significant influence in determining youth involvement in political thuggery and crises.

H₀₃: That youth unemployment as a socio-economic factor will not have any significant influence in determining the youth's involvement in prostitution and other social vices.

METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey research which agreed to be more appropriate in assessing people's perceptions, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, etc toward certain things or situations (Banabo, Ndiomu and Koroye, 2011). The research which is a case study was conducted using a structured questionnaire to a sample size of 500 respondents on which 286

questionnaires were filled and returned. The sample size which is considered adequate (Yamane, 1997) was selected using simple random sampling technique.

The questionnaires were personally administered and retrieved by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. The assistants were trained on the procedures of administering and retrieving the questionnaires from respondents by the researcher.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for collecting data on this study consisted of questionnaire forms on the socio-economic effects of unemployment among youth in Nigeria. The questionnaire was divided into four sections; section A, B, C and D. Section: A contained the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which includes such things as sex, marital status, educational qualifications and occupation. Section: B comprised of items on whether unemployment as socio-economic factor brings high rate of crimes in society and section: C contained items on whether unemployment as a socio-economic factor serves as determinant of youth involvement in political thuggery and crises.

However, section: D of the instrument comprised items on whether unemployment as a socio-economic factor determines youth involvement in prostitution and other social vices. The items on the instrument were scored based on five point likert scales as follows: Strongly Agree (5 points), agree (4 points), Undecided (3 points), disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 point).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1
Demographic Data

S/N	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Total
1	Sex	Male	212	74	286 [100%]
		Female	74	26	
2	Age	18-30 years	45	16	286 [100%]
		31-40 years	57	20	
		41-50 years	144	50	
		50 years above	40	14	
3	Marital Status	Single	154	54	286 [100%]
		Married	80	28	
		Divorcee	29	10	
		Widow	23	8	
4	Educational level	SSCE/WEAC	86	30	286 [100%]
		OND/NCE	132	46	
		Degree/HND	45	16	
		Others	23	8	
5	Occupation	Public sector	35	12	286[100%]
		Private sector	52	18	
		Self employed	45	16	
		Apprenticeship	12	4	
		Farmer	17	6	
		Unemployed	114	40	
		Other categories	12	4	

Note. Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE), West African Examination Certificate (WAEC), Ordinary National Diploma (OND) Nigeria Certificate of Education (NCE) and Higher National Diploma (HND).

The Table 1 above indicated that 154 respondents were single; this constituted about 54% of the total respondents. The demographic data also showed that 132 respondents were NCE/OND holders representing about 46% of the total respondents and followed by those with SSCE/WAEC with about 30%. On the occupation section, unemployed was rated high with about 40% and followed by people working with the private sector constituting about 18% while self-employed and civil servants represent 16% and 12% respectively.

It was also discovered from the study that 212 respondents out of the total of 286 were male while only 74 respondents were female, representing 74% and 26% respectively. The study also indicated that 5% of the total respondents were at the age between 41-50 years while 20% of total respondents were ranged between age of 31-40 years and 16% of the total respondents were the age of 18-30 years.

H₀₁: That youth unemployment as a socio-economic factor will not have any significant

TABLE 2

Unemployment as Socio-Economic Factor Brings High Rate of Crimes in Society

Item	SA	AG	DA	SA	UD	Total
Unemployment regarded as a social problem in society.	142 [50%]	75 [26%]	35 [12%]	17 [6%]	17 [6%]	286 [100%]
Unemployment brings about high of rate crimes in society.	63 [22%]	154 [54%]	29 [10%]	23 [8%]	17 [6%]	286 [100%]
Means (X) of Responses	102.5 [36%]	114.5 [40%]	32 [11%]	20 [7%]	17 [6%]	286 [100%]

Note. SA = Strongly Agreed, AG = Agreed, DA = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, UD = Undecided, Calculated $X^2 = 144.99$, Df = $k - 1 = 4 - 1 = 3$, Alpha level = 0.05, Table value = 7.82.

From the Table 2 above showed that 217 respondents representing 76% of total responses agreed with the statement that unemployment regarded as social problem in society while 52 respondents representing 18% of total responses disagreed with the statement and 17 respondents representing 6% of the total responses remained undecided. The table also indicated that 217 respondents were on the view that unemployment brings about high rate of crimes in the society representing 76% of the total responses while 52 respondents representing 18% of total responses disagreed with the view and 17 respondents representing 6% were undecided. The calculated Chi-square (X^2) of 144.99 is greater than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance at 3 degree of freedom led the rejection of the sub-hypothesis one above.

H₀₂: That youth unemployment as socio-economic factor will not have any significant influence in determining youth involvement in political thuggery and crises.

TABLE 3

Unemployment as a Socio-Economic Factor Serves as Determinant of Youth Involvement in Political Thuggery and Crises

Item	SA	A	DA	SD	UD	Total
Unemployed youths constitute major part of the labour force in	35 [12%]	177 [62%]	45 [16%]	12 [4%]	17 [6%]	286 [100%]

Item	SA	A	DA	SD	UD	Total
the economy.						
Unemployed youths are been instigated by politicians to commit crimes.	56 [20%]	166 [58%]	29 [10%]	23 [8%]	12 [4%]	286 [100%]
Means (X) Of Responses	45.5 [16%]	171.5 [60%]	37 [13%]	17.5 [6%]	14.5 [5%]	286 [100%]

Note. SA = Strongly Agreed, AG = Agreed, DA = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, UD = Undecided, Calculated $X^2=279$, Df = k-1 = 4 - 1 = 5, Alpha level = 0.05, Table value = 7.82.

The Table 3 above revealed that 212 respondents out of the total of 286 responses were on the opinion that unemployed youths constituted the major part of the labor force in the community while 57 respondents representing 20% of total respondents were in disagreement with the statement and 17 respondents representing 6% stood undecided. It was also revealed from the table that 222 respondents representing 78% were on the opinion that unemployed youths are been instigated by politicians to commit crimes while 52 respondents representing 18% were against the view that unemployed youths are been instigated by politicians to commit crimes and 12 respondents corresponding to 4% remain undecided. However, the calculated Chi-square (X^2) of 279.6 is higher than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance made the sub-hypothesis two to be rejected.

H₀₃: That youth unemployment as a socio-economic factor will not have any significant influence in determining the youth's involvement in prostitution and other social vices.

TABLE 4

Unemployment as a Socio-Economic Factor Determines Youth Involvement in Prostitution and Other Social Vices

Item	SA	A	DA	SD	UD	TOTAL
Unemployment serves as the determining factor for youth engagement in prostitution.	51 [18%]	132 [46%]	69 [24%]	23 [8%]	11 [4%]	286 [100%]
Unemployment serves as the factor for youth involvement for drugs abuse.	45 [16%]	114 [40%]	63 [22%]	29 [10%]	35 [12%]	286 [100%]
Means (X) Of Responses.	48 [16.78%]	123 [43%]	66 [23.08]	26 [9.09%]	23 [8.05%]	286 [100%]

Note. SA = Strongly Agreed, AG = Agreed, DA = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, UD = Undecided, Calculate $X^2 = 106.07$, Df = k - 1 = 4 - 1 = 3, Alpha level = 0.05, Table value = 7.82.

Glancing at Table 4 above, the result indicated that 183 respondents constituting 64% of the total responses were on the opinion that unemployment serves as the determining factor for youth engagement in prostitution while 92 respondents representing 32% of total responses were on contrary view and 11 respondents equivalent to 4% of the total responses has not make any decision. The result also revealed that 159 respondents representing 56% of the total responses indicated unemployment serves as the factor for youth involvement for drugs abuse while 92 respondents representing 32% of the total responses disagreed with the statement and 35 respondents constituting 12% of total responses stood undecided. Meanwhile, the result also indicated that the observed value of 106.07 is greater than the

critical value of 7.82 at 5% level of significance with 3 degree of freedom; thereby the third sub-hypothesis stands rejected.

DISCUSSION

The findings in Table 2 revealed that youth unemployment as a socio-economic factor have significant influence in bringing about high rate of crimes in community. The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents regarded unemployment as a social problem in the society which leads high rate of crimes in society. These findings were in consonance with the opinions of Adebayo (1999), O'Higgins (2001), Adepegba (2011), and Muhammad et al (2012), among others are in strong agreement the above findings.

On the issue regarding unemployment as socio-economic factor influencing youth involvement in political thuggery and crises, the findings in Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed that unemployed youths constituted the major part of the labour force in the economy. This finding is in line with the opinions of klasen and Woolard (1999), Axelson and Ejlertson (2002), and Enemale (2004) whom reported that youth unemployment constituted the large portion of the labour market in their studies. The study also revealed that unemployed youths are been instigated by politicians to commit crimes in the society. However, Schonteich (2001) stated categorically that there is no link between poverty or unemployment and crime level.

Findings from Table 4 revealed that youth unemployment has significant influence in determining the youth's involvement in prostitution and other social vices. Majority of respondents constituting 64% of the total responses were on the opinion that unemployment serves as the determining factor for youth engagement in prostitution. These findings correlate the studies carried out by Echebiri (2005), Olaleye (2010) and Akor (2011) among others. The study also revealed that unemployment serves as the factor for youth involvement for drugs abuse. This finding is consonance with the studies conducted by Kandal (1999) and Janlert and Hammarstrom (2002) among others, whom revealed that there is correlation between youth unemployment and abuse and drinking behavior among youth.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is logical to conclude that majority of the teaming unemployed youths are among the semi and unskilled workers with no higher qualifications. It is also clear that unemployment brings about high rate of crimes in the society which leads to the insecurity of the nation. Furthermore, unemployment negatively affected the social values of the society leading to social problems in the society. Drug abuse and crime are the major consequences identified in this study and there is no conflicting view among the respondents on the rates of drug abuse among the unemployed youths.

Recommendations/ Policy implications

With consideration of the nature of the present research which is a case study, a comprehensive research should be conducted in the area of socio economic effects of unemployment among youth so as to put in place policies that would ensure a balance between the demand for jobs by the youth and the availability for jobs in the economy. Especially, the policies should aim at providing opportunities for youth to pursue sustainable livelihoods. The social, economic, political and educational crises that have made the Nigerian economy unstable and unpredictable and therefore incapable of producing additional jobs for new entrants to the labor market must be urgently and sincerely addressed. Also, in view of the findings and the discussions of this study above the followings are recommended for policy implementations:

1. Since the youth constituted the major part of the Nigerian labor market then there is the need for the government to stimulate economic growth in the country with the utmost commitment and create enabling environment for national development which can create jobs opportunities for the teeming youths.
2. The government should formulate and effectively implement proper policy measures that will drastically reduce youth unemployment rate in the country particularly through vocational/technical training of the teeming youths roam on streets joblessness.
3. As a matter of urgency governments at various levels should resolve to human development projects which will enable the youths to skills and other prerequisites necessary for them to be self-employed, and at the vein encouraging economic growth and social order in the society.
4. The government should provide social amenities in the rural areas so as to discourage rural-urban migration which literatures reveal it increases unemployment rate in the country and the issue of electricity should be addressed nationwide properly since it affects every sector of the economy.
5. Entrepreneurship education should be encouraged at all levels of our educational system to inculcate entrepreneurship attitude and entrepreneurial mindset in students at all levels of education for self-employment and eventually self-reliant.

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