

INCREASING RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND PROBLEM OF YOUTHS INVOLVMENT IN CRIME IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2011 and 2020 showed that the number of unemployed persons constituted 23.9% in 2011, but surprisingly jumped to 27.1% in 2020. This study examined the increasing rate of unemployment and problem of youths involvement in crime in Ilorin metropolis. The research adopted a descriptive survey of correlation type. Random sampling technique was used to select youths.. “the increasing rate of unemployment and problem of youths Questionnaire” were used to gather information from the respondents. Research questions were raised for the study and answered with descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviation. Three hypotheses were formulated and statistically tested using inferential statistics of Pearson product moment correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the findings revealed that “Poor dispersal and diversification of economic base”, “Lack of skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development” and “Lack of foresight, bad planning and ineptitude execution on the part of the nations’ administrator” were the most causes of youth unemployment in Ilorin; that “Robbery”, “Breaking and Entering” and “Pick-pocketing and theft” were the most types of criminal behaviours committed by unemployed youths in Ilorin; that “Social stain, disgrace and labeling”, “Suffocated safety and undermined security” and “Erosion of social values” were the most Effects of Criminality on Jobless Youths within Ilorin metropolis. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Support services in terms of entrepreneurial training should be given to them to enhance skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development; Education planning must also be structured to take cognizance of self employment and self-sustainability with the possibility of the youths engaging in self-run enterprises.

Keywords: *Rate of Unemployment, Youths Involvement and Crime*

Introduction

Global unemployment remained stable at 8% between 2010 and 2018, according to Gallup surveys of 148 countries. Unemployment was highest in the Middle East and North Africa (22%) and sub-Saharan Africa 17% (Marlar, 2012). However, Nigeria’s unemployment rate is above the sub-region’s average that increased to 27.1% in 2020 23.1% in 2018 compared with 21.1% in 2010 and 19.7% in 2009 (National Bureau of Statistics). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2009; 2010; 2012), the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2011 showed that the number of unemployed persons constituted 31.1% in 2000 and it reduced to 11.9% in 2005 but again increased to 23.9% in 2011. Nigeria has a youth population of about 80 million, representing over 60% of the total population with a growth rate of 2.6% per year and the national demography suggests that the youth population remains vibrant with an average annual entrant to the labour force of 1.8m between 2006 and 2011. Yet, majority of the youth has been either unemployed or under-employed between 2006 and 2011 and worse still, with the introduction of N-Power programme by Buhari administration in 2016 that provided a seasonal employment for the youths, its cancelation in mid 2020 created a serious job problem in the country.. The overall unemployment rose from 12.3% of Labour force to 23.9% (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010).

The majority of the self-employed youths in the country have find it difficult to survive in their business operation due to; political instability in the country, high level of corruption, poverty, poor governance, increasing population without adequate policy initiatives among others. These factors have contributed enormously towards crime wave in our country (Okafor, 2011; Ekott, 2010). Owing to the above reason, the state of the economy of the nation has been affected on two distinct ways. Firstly, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person is adversely affected due to non-contribution of the teeming unemployed graduates and non graduates. Secondly, the state of the economy is also affected due to high rate of violent crimes resulting from; kidnapping, armed robbery among others which has negative effect on investment. The implication is that, foreign investors will be discouraged from coming into the country to make investment because they do not have confidence that the return of their investment will be realized. It is strongly perceived that youth unemployment has given rise to different forms of criminality which has badly affected the economy of the nation. Local businesses have in the wake of violent crime committed by the unemployed youth, resorted to hiring of armed guards for the security of their lives and property thereby incurring extra costs in the running of the business. Some who were unfortunate to have been victims of kidnapping pays huge ransom to secure their release.

A number of studies have investigated on the implications of youth unemployment and violent crime on the economy of Nigeria and results tend to be mixed. In view of this, Emejulu (2014) examined the effect of rising youth unemployment and violent crime in Nigeria: implications for economic development. The study found that violent crimes were strongly related to high rate of youth unemployment in the country and that violent crime has negative implications for business expansion and economic development. The study found also that government's past efforts at reducing youth unemployment failed principally due to poor implication strategy which includes poor targeting, inadequate funding and corrupt practices.

Related to this, Idemobi and Ejike (2012) studied on the implications of kidnapping on business development in the South East of Nigeria. This study was conducted using quantitative approach and study found that insecurity resulting from kidnapping has forced many businesses in the affected region to relocate or shut down completely, the upsurge of violent crimes especially kidnapping and armed robbery are principally caused by the prevailing youth unemployment situation across the nation. On the other hand, Ajaegbu (2012) also investigated on rising youth unemployment and violent crime in Nigeria. He found that if the factors that create the feeling of deprivation and frustration created by unemployment are addressed, Nigerian youth will be less attracted to violent crimes.

Again, Eze (2012) researched on youth unemployment and its socio-economic implications in Nigeria and found that youth unemployment was one of the core causes of the rising level of social disorder and insecurity permeating the entire country of Nigeria. Also, in a work done by Ajufo (2013) on challenges of youth unemployment in Nigeria, the author found that youth unemployment is a menace in the country and constitutes a real danger and a threat to social, economic and political development

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment is a social as well as economic issues which every nation deals with regularly but differently. In fact, the classical economists averred that there can never be a situation of total employment in any economy (Ogunyomi & Oginni, 2013). However, situation in Nigeria has assumed an unimaginable proportion. Within Ilorin metropolis today, Statistics shows that almost 73% of those who are able and willing to work, cannot find gainful employment especially among the graduates/ school leavers. The situation has become very bad, worrisome and appears to have defied any remedy. Owing to the problems identified above and few others, study objective is necessitated which is to investigates the relationship between unemployment and youth involvement in crime in Ilorin metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

This study is to investigate increasing rate of unemployment and problem of youths' involvement in crime in Ilorin metropolis. The study will find out the following:

1. to identify the causes of youth unemployment in Ilorin
2. to identify the types of criminal behaviours committed by unemployed in Ilorin
3. to determine the effects of Criminality on Jobless Youths in Nigeria

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria?
2. What are the types of criminal behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria?
3. What are the effects of Criminality on Jobless Youths in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between youth unemployment and violent crimes in Ilorin Metropolis

1. There is no significant relationship between the causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Ilorin Metropolis
2. There is no significant relationship between the types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Ilorin Metropolis
3. There is no significant relationship between the Effects of Criminality and Jobless Youths in Ilorin

Causes of Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

The level of unemployment is highly dependent on the overall status of the economy (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010). Despite its riches from oil economy, employment in Nigeria is actually falling. The years of corruption, civil war, military rule, and mismanagement have hindered economic growth. Nigeria is endowed with diverse and infinite resources, both human and material but years of negligence and adverse policies have led to the under-utilization of these resources. These resources have not been effectively utilized in order to yield maximum economic benefits. These are primary causes of unemployment. However scholars have identified other causes of unemployment as well (Anyadike et al, 2012). The first is population growth (140,431,790 as per 2006 census) and is projected to be over 180 million by 2020 if the annual growth rate of 3.2% continues (National Population Commission and ICF Macro, 2009). While the population increases, the number of industries growth is dwindling and if nothing serious is done, both population and unemployment will continue to rise.

The second is outdated school curricula and lack of employable skills. Some scholars have argued that as far as the formal sector is concerned, the average Nigerian graduate is not employable therefore, does not possess the skills needed by the employers (Anyadike et al, 2012). This is due to the curricula of most Nigerian schools that do not include entrepreneur skill acquisition to benefit job seekers. The third is adoption of untimely economic policy measures that contributed to the demise of small scale and cottage industries operated in both formal and informal sectors. Following the introduction of Structural Adjustment Program in September 1986 that ushered in liberalization, deregulation and devaluation program of the domestic currency, many of the teething domestic firms collapsed that resulted in serious job losses (Bello, 2003). The fourth is over emphasis on university certificates and neglect of skill acquisition trainings that contributes to youth unemployment. According to Manning and Junankar (1998), the total number of graduates produced in Nigeria was 73,339 in 1986/1987 that rose to 131,016 in 1996/1997. Over 97 universities occur in Nigeria with a demand for higher education while there is problem of unemployment. The reality is that the economy does not have the capacity to absorb all unemployed graduates because over 800 industries and 37 factories were closed down in 2009 alone (Anyadike et al, 2012).

Nigeria's Unemployment and Crimes

Security is a contextual issue which no state in the international system consigns to the periphery; it is a core-value that makes the state relevant in the international system (Ndifon, et al. 2012). Death rate attributable to violence in Africa is estimated at 60.9 per 100,000 people more than twice the global rate (WHO 2004a). Crime and violence have been increasing in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa among unemployed young people. The causes are not farfetched as studies have associated rising youth unemployment to increase of violent crime in Nigeria. The accelerating level of prostitution, armed robbery, rape, terrorism and all facets of violence can be largely attributed to the incidence of unemployment. Growth has not been in line with the aspirations of the people and has not been driven by higher productivity. The public perception is that there has been little job creation. Many young people who fail to gain employment have become a burden to the employed that bear the responsibility of meeting the needs of millions of educated but increasing frustrated group, a wasting generation.

The problem of violent crimes in Nigeria has been exacerbated by the high rate of unemployment and economic hardship which has pushed many jobless youths some of whom are graduates into various deadly crimes (Edward, 2011). A 2009 World Bank report on 'Employment and Growth', warned that, "The share of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 outside the labour force is growing, despite the country's strong growth performance over the years". Mass sacking in the Central Bank of Nigeria affected 7,500 banking jobs (Allafrica, 2010). The UN-Habitat study on crimes and violence stressed that socio-economic inequality and the lack of opportunities for social advancement and employment are some of the root causes of crime and violence. Children and youth from disadvantaged families are vulnerable to fall prey to criminal networks. Of the estimated 1 billion people living in slums, over half are under the age of 25, and 40% are estimated to be under the age of 19.

They are the primary victims of social exclusion through unemployment, lack of access to health and education (UN-Habitat, 2008). Furthermore, an empirical survey of Children and Youth in Organized Armed Violence in Nigeria, reported that disenchantment and frustration of young people due to mass poverty and unemployment, has increased the number of aggrieved youths and resulted in the emergence of area boys" and Almajiris who target the very society that alienated them (Ibrahim, 2006). The survey concluded that armed militant groups in Nigeria namely Bakassi Boys, Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) and Egbesu Boys were made up of youths within 16 - 17 years (40%), 18 – 19 years (10%), 20 - 21 years (20%), and 20 – 23 years (20%). Approximately 60% of them were unemployed (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010).

Bennel (2000) argued that urban society is becoming increasingly criminalized, especially with the proliferation of youth gangs. Neither homes, nor markets are safe in Nigeria because of frequent occurrence of armed robbery incidents. Unemployment problem, which now seems beyond remedy, has produced army of idle hands and some of them have decided to punish the society that fails to provide them with means of livelihood and dignity by robbing its members of their property at gunpoint (Ideyi, 2005). The police cannot perform effectively because they are overstretched by the amount of cases that awaits them daily, and is worsened by outdated instruments they use that are no match to the modern sophisticated weapons used by the criminals. The Research Director of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), Dr Sope Wiliams Elegbe revealed that: "The increasing poverty in Nigeria is accompanied by increasing unemployment. Unemployment is higher in the north than in the south. Mix this situation with radical group, which promises a better life for martyrs, and you can understand the growing violence in the north. Government statistics show that the northern states have the highest proportion of uneducated persons. If you link a lack of education and attendant lack of opportunities to a high male youth population, you can imagine that some areas are actually a breeding ground for terrorism" (Oxford Research Group, 2012).

The former Inspector General of Police, Muhammed Abubakar, once called on the three tiers of government to tackle unemployment in order to reduce crime rate in the country. He expressed concern at the rate youths were resorting to crime as an alternative means of survival due to unemployment: "We have a lot of graduates and even those who have not attended any school who have nothing to do. It becomes worrisome, when you go round this country and you see the faces of unemployed persons. You begin to wonder that we just have to do what we have to do at the level of federal, state and local governments to begin to plan and put policies in place for the employment of these persons". (Cruise news, 2012)

Youth Unemployment and Criminality

The role that work plays in the life of people may easily be understood when compared with unemployment. According to Ogunbameru (2004), most people work to earn a living, to make money and to confer a sense of achievement. In other words, being employed makes one happy, wanted and needed in the society. The converse is unemployment. It not only dehumanizes the affected individual directly, but also turns him or her into liability in the society. According to Uddin (2013), youth unemployment could be described as the conglomerate of youths with diverse background, willing and able to work, but cannot find any or cannot find the type of job that they are trained to do and which they will be proud of as their area of expertise. Such a situation has a pronounced socio-economic consequence which may weaken and damage the moral fabrics of the affected youths and societies, (Rao, 2006). In this connection, the symbolic relationship between youth unemployment and criminality exists, because it is one of the cheapest options, the young people can choose in intolerable circumstance in societies where social values are defective.

Consequent upon the intensity of youth unemployment in Nigeria, some of the youths tend to lose their moral conscience in order to meet the basic necessities of life. These categories of youths often see themselves as forgotten generation and are psychologically dejected for being unable to contribute productively to the society. This situation has increasingly encouraged criminality among youths such as armed robbery, murder, assassination and arson (Ogbebor, 2012). Criminality in any society is a legal wrong and behavioural act which deserves public condemnation. According to Paranjape (2012), it is essentially a part of social behaviours which emanates out of the relationship of individual in the society. Considered from this view point, a man or woman resorts to criminal act out of his or her intelligence and free will. The paradox of it, is that no one is born a criminal, but it is the circumstance that makes him or her so, not because he or she wants to be a criminal, but rather forced to lend to criminality.

Within this sort of context, youth-unemployment and criminality constitute an intertwined social problem which are mutually reinforcing. They are both symptoms of social disorganization in the society (Rao, 2006). Unemployment has affected the youths from a broad spectrum of socio-economic groups both the less educated and well read among them. As such, the rising wave of criminality, which has devastating effects on the society is traceable to various factors such as unemployment, poverty and greed among others (Ololo and Meisamari, 2012). Buttressing this view, Ademola and Olajubutu (2009) argued that unemployment has been identified as one of the major causes of social vices including armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, political thuggery, kidnapping and many more. Anderson (1999) observed that when the wider economy fails, many people particularly the youths go underground and take to crime. They seize such negative opportunity because they see it as an avenue to seek revenge on a system that has provided them nothing but frustration. Thus, most of those who engage in criminality in Nigeria are mostly young, educated persons who complain about hunger and unemployment (Obaro, 2012).

Methodology

The study is a descriptive research study and it was designed to seek descriptive information on the increasing rate of unemployment and problem of youths involvement in crime in Ilorin metropolis. This type of descriptive research employed in this study is the survey research. The study covered Ilorin

metropolis of Kwara state, and the population of this study consist of all youth in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara state. Random sampling technique was adopted and used to select adults for the study. The main instrument used for the study was questionnaire and it was prepared in two parts. Part one contained questions on personal data about each respondent while part two contained other set of items on increasing rate of unemployment and problem of youths' involvement in crime in Ilorin metropolis. The split-half method of testing reliability was used to ensure the reliability of the instrument. The scores gotten were correlated using Person Product moment correlation co-efficient and a co-efficient reliability of 0.69 was arrived at. The data collected from the subject was analysed using Percentage based on the 4-points scale and Simple Percentage method was adopted.

Result

Hypothesis 1: There is no significance relationship between the causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Nigeria.

Table 4: Pearson 'r' showing relationship between the causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calc. r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Causes	200	13.7800	2.47	198	0.810*	0.116	Rejected
Youth behaviour	200	13.5350	1.74				

Table 4 shows the Relationship between causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Nigeria. Based on the analysis of the results, it indicated that the calculated r of 0.810 is greater than the critical r of 0.116 at 0.05 level of significant. Thus the hypothesis is hereby rejected. Meaning that, There is a significance relationship between the causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significance relationship between the types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria.

Table 5: Pearson 'r' showing relationship between the types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calc. r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Types	200	13.7800	2.37	198	0.219*	0.116	Rejected
behaviours	200	13.7850	2.01				

Table 5 shows the Relationship between types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria. Based on the analysis of the results, it indicated that the calculated r of 0.219 is greater than the critical r of 0.116 at 0.05 level of significant. Thus the hypothesis is hereby rejected. Meaning that, there is a significance relationship between the types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significance relationship between the Effects of Criminality and Jobless Youths in Nigeria.

Table 6: Pearson 'r' showing relationship between Effects of Criminality and Jobless Youths in Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calc. r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Effects	200	13.7800	2.37	198	0.330	0.116	Rejected
Jobless Youths	200	13.5750	2.36				

Table 6 shows the Relationship between Effects of Criminality and Jobless Youths in Nigeria. Based on the analysis of the results, it indicated that the calculated r of 0.330 is less than the critical r of 0.116 at 0.05 level of significant. Thus the hypothesis is hereby accepted. Meaning that, there is a significance relationship between the Effects of Criminality and Jobless Youths in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The result of data analysed can be summarized thus: “Poor dispersal and diversification of economic base”, “Lack of skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development” and “Lack of foresight, bad planning and ineptitude execution on the part of the nations’ administrator” were the most causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria; “Robbery”, “Breaking and Entering” and “Pick-pocketing and theft” were the most types of criminal behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria; “Social stain, disgrace and labeling”, “Suffocated safety and undermined security” and “Erosion of social values” were the most Effects of Criminality on Jobless Youths in Nigeria; There is a significance relationship between the causes of youth unemployment and youth behaviour in Nigeria. There is a significance relationship between the types of criminal acts and behaviours committed by unemployed in Nigeria.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion reached, the following recommendations are made by the researcher:

1. Government should pursue the diversification of the economy with the objective of creating self-employment schemes in the country through the National Directorate of Employment (NDE).
2. Government must also intensify its National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NAOS) to provide unemployed youths between the ages of 15 and 35years with basic vocational skills that are needed in the economy.
3. Support services in terms of entrepreneurial training should be given to them to enhance skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development.
4. Education planning must also be structured to take cognizance of self employment and self-sustainability with the possibility of the youths engaging in self-run enterprises.
5. Government must also target the youth intensive sectors such as information communication technology, entertainment and hospitality industries to address the problem of youth unemployment. Unemployment allowance should be paid to youths that have graduated from tertiary institutions without work.

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