



THE MENACE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AMONG STATES

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined comparatively the menace of unemployment among states in Nigeria. The study relied on the secondary data while content analysis was employed in analyzing the gathered data. Marxist Theory of Unemployment was used as a framework of analysis in this study. The study discovered that in Nigeria no one single state is without the problem of unemployment. However, some states have been experiencing high rate of unemployment. Among the drivers of unemployment include poor curriculum in higher institutions, lack of steady electricity, and corruption among others. It is recommended by this study that for unemployment to be arrested there should be serious efforts by the government to revisit the curriculum, steady electricity as well as doing away with all sorts of corruption in the public sector.

Keywords: Unemployment; menace; corruption; Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human Population across the globe is increasing daily. This daily increase in human population is leading to competition over scarce resources. It is estimated that at present, world population reached 7.9 billion [1]. The resultant effect of this increase is Unemployment as well as poverty in societies across the world.

Nigeria like all other countries is bedeviled by young and able bodied men living without jobs. 23,187,389 people are currently unemployed. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, One in three Nigerians able and willing to work had no jobs in the fourth quarter of 2020 [3]. The result of this is seen in the

many ills ravaging Nigeria such as arm robbery, banditry, kidnapping among others. The problem becomes so burdensome that former President Goodluck Jonathan affirmed that Unemployment among our youth is one of our biggest challenges. The time has come to create jobs and lay a new foundation for Nigeria's economic growth.

Therefore, this study examined the comparative unemployment rate among states in Nigeria. The Study was guided by the following questions: 1. what are the drivers of unemployment? 2. What is the rate of unemployment in each state as related to the labour force? 3. What can be done to solve the problem of unemployment in Nigeria?

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2. METHODOLOGY

Considering the nature of this study, it is purely qualitative and relied on secondary data via the use of published materials and government publication while content analysis was used for data analysis.

3. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopts the Marxist Theory of Unemployment. The thrust of this theory is that Unemployment is as a result of a capitalist setting which was based on capitalist exploitation of wage labour. Karl Marx, in this theory argued that the capitalist system deliberately creates unemployment and a wide gap between the haves and the have not. The masses continue to wallow in abject poverty while the capitalist setting continues to be rich.

4. DRIVERS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA

Scholars have presented a number of factors responsible for unemployment in Nigeria. Echebiri [4] and Morphy [5] have identified the main causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria as follows:

Rural Urban Migration: Due to the fact that most social amenities like water, electricity and others are located in the urban centers, people tend to migrate to these centers in search of better life. Consequently, the urban centers became congested and available job opportunities became scarce which aggravates the unemployment problem in urban centers.

Inability of government and the private sector to create jobs: Nigerian government is unable to provide job opportunities for the teeming population coupled with the fact that there are no privately owned industries that can accommodate the citizens by giving them employment [10]

Low Standard of Education: The quality of education in Nigeria is not up to standard. The Higher institutions which supposed to produce quality graduates are wallowing in lack of required facilities for better teaching and learning

The Rapid Expansion of the Educational System: More schools are being established daily while there are no provisions for jobs to the graduates. For instance, according to Manning and Junankar [6], the total number of graduates turned out by the higher

institutions in Nigeria, which were 73,339 in 1986/1987 which rose to 131,016 in 1996/1997. At present there are 205 universities in Nigeria both Federal, State and privately owned. The higher institutions continue to produce graduates that ended up roaming the streets of Nigeria [7].

Lack of Steady and Sustainable Power Supply: Electricity is an important requirement for any meaningful development as without it industries cannot operate effectively. In Nigeria, lack of steady supply of electricity hinders the operation of factories and discourages the establishment of new ones. This had denied willing and ready Nigerians the opportunities to work in industries [8], [11].

Corruption: Corruption is one of the problems disturbing Nigeria that led to the loss of resources as well as retarding the development of the country. Leaders failed to formulate and implement good policies that can provide employment to the teeming population. Though Nigeria is blessed with abundant mineral resources, those in government refused to utilize them for the benefit of all and ended up siphoning them for their own use [9]. This singular act crippled the economy and led to unemployment and poverty.

5. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY STATES IN NIGERIA

The following is the unemployment rate of Nigerian States in percentages in relation to the labour force population of each state.

Table 1. North-Eastern Region

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Gombe	33.3
2	Adamawa	29.3
3	Bauchi	21.9
4	Yobe	26.8
5	Borno	19.9
6	Taraba	39.4

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) August 2020 Report

From the above data, it is clear that Taraba State has the highest rate of unemployment with 39.4% followed by Gombe in the region. The state with the lowest rate is Borno with 19.9% of the labour force population. Despite the Boko Haram insurgency Borno State happened to be the least unemployed population.

Table 2. North-West

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Kano	31.6
2	Jigawa	22.4
3	Zamfara	14.0
4	Kebbi	16.1
5	Kaduna	39.8
6	Sokoto	18.6
7.	Katsina	23.6

Source: NBS August 2020 Report.

As shown by the data, Kaduna state has the highest rate of unemployed persons in this region with 39.8% whereas Zamfara has the least with 14.0%. It should be noted that despite the fact that Zamfara State has the least number of unemployed persons, one can say maybe it is because of the fact that they have the least number of people in the labour force. Kano, Kaduna and Sokoto are the states with the highest population so one must expect a higher number of people who are looking for a job.

Table 3. North-Central

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Benue	23.4
2	Kwara	13.8
3	Plateau	35.2
4	Fct Abuja	29.1
5	Nasarawa	16.0
6	Kogi	36.0
7	Niger	33.8

Source: NBS August 2020 report

It is understood from the above data that in the region Kwara State has the lowest number of unemployed persons while Kogi with 36.0% unemployment rate has the highest number. The information contained here represents each state's number of people looking for what to do.

Table 4. South-West

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Lagos	19.5
2	Oyo	16.4
3	Ondo	21.1
4	Ogun	16.3
5	Osun	15.3
6	Ekiti	15.5

Source: NBS August 2020 Report

In this region, the NBS data revealed that, with 21.1% unemployment rate of total number of labour force population, Ondo is the one on top while state with the least number is Osun with 15.3. It should not be forgotten that despite the fact that Lagos state has the highest unemployment rate, the state can be regarded as the first state when looking at the number of people who are working among Nigerian states. In essence, most Nigerians from other parts of the country run to Lagos to find employment. For having the average unemployment rate 12%, the region can be said to have tried considering the fact most of the educated Nigerians are from the region.

Table 5. South East

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Imo	48.7
2	Abia	35.5
3	Anambra	13.1
4	Enugu	27.2
5	Ebonyi	14.6

Source: NBS August 2020 Report

The information contained in the above table showed that Imo happened to have the highest unemployment rate in the region whereas Anambra with 13.1 is the least number. The states such as Anambra and Ebonyi might have the lowest unemployment rate because of the fact that the rest of the states in the region have a significant number of people in the labour market.

Table 6. South-South

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Bayels	27.8
2	Delta	40.3
3	Rivers	43.7
4	Akwa Ibom	45.2
5	Edo	19.0
6	Cross River	31.6

Source: NBS August 2020 Report

It is obvious from the above data that Akwai Ibom with 45.2% unemployment rate is the highest number while Edo has the lowest with 19.0. This region being the oil producing region, one could be surprised to find out the state with the highest rate of unemployment is located in the region. States such as Rivers have in the past experienced serious crises from Niger Delta Militants and pipe-line vandals. Perhaps this can be part of the reason why those states have not been able to provide their people with the needed employment opportunities.

Table 7. Top five States with the Highest Rates of Unemployment

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Imo	48.7 (South East)
2	Akwa Ibom	45.2 (South South)
3	Rivers	43.7 (South South)
4	Delta	40.3 (South South)
5	Kaduna	39.8 (North West)

Source: NBS August 2020 Report

The data above indicated that among the 36 states plus the FCT Abuja, Imo in the second quarter of 2020 has the highest rate of unemployment. It was then followed by Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Delta and Kaduna. In comparative terms, the South South region of the country has the highest rate of unemployment compared to the North Eastern region which has three states in the list of 5 states with least number of unemployment rate. It is worthy of note that despite the fact that the North Eastern states as shown by the data have come to be regarded as the region with least rate of unemployment, one can aptly argue that it is because of their least number of labour force population. Some states such as Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom and Rivers who are oil producing states can be said to have appeared at the top because of their significant number of the labour force population.

Table 8. Five states with the Lowest Rates of Unemployment in Nigeria

S/NO	State	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	Anambra	13.1 (South South)
2	Zamfara	14.0 (North West)
3	Ebonyi	14.6 (South East)
4	Osun	15.3 (South West)
5	Ekiti	15.5 (South East)

Source: NBS August 2020 Report

As revealed by the above table, Anambra has the lowest number of unemployed persons with 13.1% of the total labour force population. It was closely followed by Zamfara 14.0%, Ebonyi 14.6%, Osun 15.3% and Ekiti 15.5%. From the information above one can argue that the South Eastern region has the majority of the states with the least unemployment rate.

6. FINDINGS

It has been discovered that the menace of unemployment is a serious problem bedeviling Nigeria presently. This menace is caused by a number of factors including but not limited to poor standard of

education, lack of steady electricity, corruption among others. No state is without the problem of unemployment though some states have a very high rate while others with the least number of unemployed population.

Imo State which is located in the south eastern part of Nigeria is the state with the highest rate of unemployment (48.7%) while Anambra state located in the south with 13.1% is lowest.

7. CONCLUSION

Nigeria is disturbed by the problem of unemployment that affects all the nooks and crannies of society. This problem has eaten deep and is affecting all the states in the country. The menace is responsible for many social vices in the society and serious efforts need to be done so as to arrest this ugly situation.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the daily increase of unemployed persons in Nigeria, one can rightly argue that concerted efforts need to be done in order to arrest this ugly situation. This study recommend that:

Government should revisit the curriculum in the higher institutions in the country so as to introduce skills related courses that can prepare graduates for self-reliance.

As a matter of urgency, electricity supply should be steady. This paves way for smooth industrialization which in turn can serve as employment opportunities for the teeming population in the country.

The issue of corruption in the public sector can be arrested without further delay. Leaders should be held accountable and anti-corruption agencies be strengthened so that they can be able to investigate and arrest on time whoever is found guilty.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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