

# Impact of Unemployment on Nigerian Economic Development: A Study of Selected Local Government Area in Anambra State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The problem of unemployment in Nigeria is a national issue that should be handled with care. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria since 1973 has been growing in a geometric progression. Its source could be traced to the diversification of Nigeria economy into oil sector that only provides less than 10% employment opportunity to its labour force. The purpose of this study was to find out the causes of unemployment in Nigeria and how it has impeded the economic development. These and others form the researcher's reason for this study. Descriptive research design was adopted. The population includes all the unemployed youth from the three selected Local Government Council (Oyi, Idemili North and South) which its figure is estimated to be about 2.3 million youth (NPC, 2006). 30 youths were drawn from each of the Local Government Council. Convenience sampling technique was applied. Both primary and secondary data source was used. Pearson correlation test was used for the test of hypotheses. The results of the test hypotheses revealed that unemployment impedes the economic growth and development of Nigeria. Government programmes have in many ways helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria. There are possible ways that could be put forward in ensuring the reduction of unemployment level in Nigeria. Furthermore, the paper recommends that the federal government should hasten the power sector reforms and re-stabilize the power sector to end the looming energy crisis in Nigeria. In order to encourage entrepreneurial activities which are believed to be the remote cause of unemployment problem in Nigeria?

**Keywords:** Unemployment, Economic Development, Causes and Consequences, Way forward

## INTRODUCTION

As history would have it, Nigeria as a nation has experienced several forms of economic, political and social unrest. In recent times, unemployment which is caused by individuals and government forces had joined the list of the social evils we experience Nigeria today. The issue of unemployment has become a world-wide phenomenon demanding for increased attention, though the impact is more devastating in developing nation (Wamukonya, 2003). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2012), Nigeria rate of unemployment stand at 19.7%. In fact, Feridum and Akindele (2006); George and Oseni (2012); Ezie (2012) and Ede, Ndubisi, and Nwankwo (2013), identifies unemployment as one of the major challenges confronting the Nigeria-economic development. The menace of unemployment in Nigeria both now and in the recent past has been an issue of great concern to the economists, policy makers, economic managers, individuals, government and many others (Bello, 2003). This earliest thinking on economic issues did not fail to give a central point of reflection on the undesirability of unemployment (Njoku and Ihugba, 2011). Unemployment has been defined as a situation where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment (Fajana, 2000). The same writer went further to say that, the higher the rate of unemployment in an economy, the higher the level of poverty and associated welfare challenges.

However, the number of people in any country is divided into two groups; the economically active and the economically inactive. According to Njoku and Ihugba (2011), the economically active group (Labour force) are the group that are willing and able to work, including those actively engaged in the production of goods and services (employed) and those who are not employed. On the other hand, the economically inactive group refers to neither people who are not looking for jobs nor those who are not capable enough as a result of health related issues. To further buttress this, International Labour Organisation (ILO) defined the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available and seeking for work, including people who have lost their job and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1998).

The menace of unemployment is geometrically increasing and the effects falls heavily on the economic development of this nation (Nigeria). To address this situation, this study is poised to evaluate the causes, effects and possibly, proffer the way forward in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The level of unemployment in Nigeria has grown large that it cannot be addressed by mere campaign or words of mouth. It required the combined efforts of both individuals and the government of the country in particular and the world at large to formulate a lasting solution to it. Unemployment in Nigeria has affected the youth and the economic development of the country from a broad spectrum of socio-economic perspective. It is obvious that unemployment especially that of graduates impedes Nigeria's progress in several ways. Apart from the economic waste it brought to the nation, it also constitutes political unrest for the country (Ipaye, 1998). According to Ezie (2012), the unemployment situation in Nigeria is disturbing and even more disheartening that the country's economic condition cannot absorb an optimal proportion of its labour force. This situation has contributed to the increase in crimes and other social vices experienced in our society in recent time, because an idle mind is always the devils workshop.

Another problem facing the employment situation in Nigeria centered on power generation. The poor power generation in Nigeria has contributed to the level of unemployed people. Despite all the efforts made by both the past and present administration to salvage the problem of epileptic power supply, the country has experienced little or no change. Since the problem of power cannot be tackled, the industries, institutions and agencies which are expected to provide the much needed employment flow out of the country for some better opportunities, thus leaving our work force unemployed. This paper is determined to address some of these challenges.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Since the problems of unemployment cannot be tackled at ease, this paper has the following objectives:

1. To find out the causes of unemployment in Nigeria and how it has impeded the economic development.
2. To examine the activities and programmes of the government in her efforts to tackling unemployment problems in Nigeria.
3. To look for the way forward in reducing the rate of unemployment in Nigeria.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions have been put forward to address research objectives;

1. Does unemployment impede the Nigerian economic growth and development?
2. To what extent has the government programmes helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria?
3. Are there possible ways that could be put forward in reducing the unemployment level in Nigeria?

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Unemployment does not impede the Nigerian economic growth and development.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Government programmes have not in any way helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There are no possible ways that could be put forward in ensuring the reduction of unemployment level in Nigeria.

## THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Walterskirchen (1999) there can be no negative relationship between economic growth and unemployment, because GDP and unemployment are both rising in the long run. It is evident that employment will only increase if GDP is rising faster than productivity. Other things being equal, the greater the amount of goods and services produced, the greater the labour required for production; because economic growth and employment go hand-in-hand. But there is also the notion that higher productivity could mean fewer jobs. According to Calmfors and Holmlund (2000) there is often a failure to distinguish between increases in output that are due to higher capacity utilization and those that are due to long-term growth. Labour-market reforms which states that lower wage costs and increase employment will of course, cause output to grow during the adjustment process (Njoku and Ihugba, 2011).

Similarly, one can also argue that higher employment among low skilled workers leads to higher growth because it becomes more profitable to invest in human capital when this is combined with more low-skilled workers. Higher employment also implies more human capital accumulation if this occurs mainly through learning the job (Aghion and Howitt, 1994; Davcri and Tabellini, 2000). An effect working in the opposite direction is however, that higher employment is likely to reduce the average time spent in the education system before students enter the labour force (Storesletten and Zilibotti, 2000). Unemployment in Nigeria increased by 69 percent from 6.1 in 1985 to 19.7 in 2009 while in 2010 and 2011 experienced an increased to 21.1 and 23.9 percent respectively. The economy grew by 72 percent from 281,407.4 in 1995 to 814,407.0 in 2011. What this means, is that, as unemployment was increasing, the economy was equally growing, why? The rate of

unemployment increases as a result of increase in the population of the country. An increase in population signals an increase in labour supply. With (88,992,220-140,003,542) 36.4 percent growth in population for 16 years (1991-2006), and a 55.5 percentage growth of the economy for the same period, unemployment should have reduced drastically but rather it increased by 74.8 percent. On the other hand, the average contribution of the oil sector to the GDP between 1995 and 2011 is 26.7 percent, while agriculture while is the main source of gainful employment in the country contributed 39.3 percent just a difference of 12.6 percent from that of oil that employs less than 10 percent of the labour force. In 1995, agriculture contributed 34.1 percent to the GDP and 43.5 percent in 2011; this represents an increase of 9.4 percent with this sector employing over 50 percent of labour in the country, there should have been a decrease in the rate of unemployment but rather the rate of unemployment increased by 69 percent (CBN, 2012). This can be attributed to the neglect of the important sectors such as agriculture where the country has comparative advantage. Other causes of this abnormal situation include: Gross mismanagement of national resources leading to wasteful spending and misappropriation of funds and priorities; weak infrastructural facilities in the country that did not aid rapid industrialization; and lack of political will to implement certain policies that could open up the Nigerian economy to private sector participation. One of such is the unwillingness on the part of the government to implement full deregulation in the downstream sector of the oil and gas. According to Bello (2003) another cause is the weak educational system that is not adequate to equip youths with requisite technical and entrepreneurial skills.

### CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Scholars have written widely on unemployment issue and its effects on the growth and development of Nigeria. According to Anyadike, Emeh and Ukah (2012), every nation's economy is characterized by both active and inactive populations. They observed that the economically active ones are those populations willing and able to work, and include those actively engaged in the production of goods and services and those who are unemployed. The International Labour Organisation in their contribution has it that the unemployed are numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking for work. They also include people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1999). On the part of Bassey and Atan (2012), Nigerian has the potential for rapid economic growth and development, with her rich human and material resources, yet the country's economic performance has been described as being truncated, erratic, dismal and largely unimpressed (Ajayi, 2002; Iyaha and Oriakhi, 2002; Kayode, 2004; Ekpo, 2008). The poor growth performance of the economy is depicted in the rising incidence of poverty, massive and graduate unemployment, skyrocketing inflation, worsening balance of payments disequilibrium, monumental external debt burden, widening income disparity and growing fiscal imbalances which takes into consideration the Nigeria crises of underdevelopment. This is why Ekpo (1987) in Bassey and Atan (2012), affirmed that all these problems are rooted in the pervasive distortions existing within the economy.

Unemployment, takes a doomsday scenario in Nigeria, it develops a decade after Nigeria had her independence. Akintoye (2008) in Bassey and Aten (2012) opined that the rate of unemployment rise from 4.3% to 6.4% and further rose to 7.1% in 1987. This rise in unemployment rate came as a result of economic depression which engulfed the nation and spread its effects that resulted to massive closure of businesses and retrenchment of workers. This was followed by the placement of embargo on recruitment which further worsened the situation.

Bassey and Atan, (2012) opined that the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) had a salutary effect on job creation leading to a sharp fall in unemployment figure from 7.1% in 1987 to 3% in 1994. However, the rate of unemployment in Nigeria kept on increasing. Table 1 has the rate of unemployment and the Nigeria's GDP between 1995 through 2011.

**Table 1: Rate of Unemployment and GDP**

Year Rates	Rate of unemployment	% change of unemployment	GDP	% change in GDP	% Agriculture contribution	% of Oil contribution
1995	1.9	-68.4	281,407.4	2.1	34.19267	33.23889
1996	2.8	32.1	293,745.4	4.2	34.11669	34.12445
1997	3.4	17.6	302,022.5	2.7	34.60471	33.67862
1998	3.5	2.9	310,890.1	2.9	35.00083	33.42773
1999	17.5	80	312,183.5	0.4	36.69979	30.79253
2000	13.1	-33.6	329,178.7	5.2	35.83011	32.45274
2001	13.6	3.7	356,994.3	7.8	34.32052	31.48997
2002	12.6	-7.9	433,203.5	17.6	43.89009	24.46935
2003	14.8	14.9	477,533.0	9.3	42.59599	27.50315
2004	13.4	-10.4	527,576.0	9.5	40.98149	25.71586
2005	11.9	-12.6	561,931.4	6.1	41.19072	24.26373
2006	12.3	3.3	595,821.6	5.7	41.72373	21.8511
2007	12.7	3.1	634,251.1	6.1	42.01446	19.59557
2008	14.9	14.8	672,202.6	5.6	42.1265	17.34516
2009	19.7	24.4	716,949.7	6.7	41.84351	16.04583
2010	21.1	26.8	775,453.6	7.9	43.24321	26.44831
2011	23.9	27.2	814,387.0	8.3	43.47722	21.67290

Sources: NBS, 2011, CBN 2005, 2006 AND 2011

#### CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The fundamental factor that accounts for the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria includes the following:

- a. **Poor educational planning:** The high rate of unemployment among our youth could be traced to the educational system of Nigeria. This is why none of our Nigerian universities were ranked among the first one thousand best universities in the world. The main point on the above statement is that our educational system does not equip our students with the much needed tools necessary to meet the expected needs of the society. On the other hand, the government is also faulted for the wrong orientation of students and poor salary structure in the public sector that has no special incentives for those who possess such skills. Furthermore, Gbosi (2005) opined that proliferation of higher educational institutions and those seeking higher education for the purpose of white-collar jobs is the main factor responsible for this problem.
- b. **Neglect of the agricultural sector:** The agricultural sector had been the leading provider of employment in Nigeria especially for more than 60% of the Nigerian population. However, in an attempt to discover oil crude, the sound of the music changed to the oil sector where employment capacity is very low to seekers who have no place in the oil industry. Even with the growth and expansion of the oil industry, the level of unemployment kept on increasing at a geometric rate.
- c. **Adoption of untimely economic policy measure:** Another important factor responsible for unemployment situation is the dismissing of small scale and cottage industries which operated in both formal and informal sectors. Within 1986 which ushered in liberalization, deregulation and the devaluation programme of the domestic currency, many of the teething domestic firms collapsed. This ugly situation resulted in the loss of many jobs and thereby rendering many people unemployed. Although, these policies were designed to jump-start the growth of the economy, but given the structure of the Nigerian economy, some of the policy packages became out rightly hostile to the system due to their unseemliness.
- d. **Wrong impression about technical and vocational studies:** The wrong impression most people have about technical education also contributed to the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria in recent time. There is an enduring societal biased attitude against technical and vocational education (Damachi, 2001). A large number, of job seekers lack practical skills that could enhance self-employment. This is why rather than providing jobs for others, the graduates and unemployed persons keep depending on the government and the non-vibrant private sector for job opportunities.
- e. **Poor enabling environment:** The poor-economic enabling environment that characterizes the economy over the years has continued to pose serious challenges to employment generation in Nigeria. This is coupled with the poor state of security which has continued to hamper investment drives and thereby reducing the prospects of employment generation. Many job seekers who have embarked on self-employment programmes are unable to do so because of the hostile production environment. Others

who make attempt are forced to wind up due to absence of infrastructures and the overall heat of the investment environment.

## CONSEQUENCES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The consequences of unemployment in Nigeria are very severe and threatening to the citizenry and the economy as a whole (Bello 2003). The unemployment episode has continued to pose many challenges to the survival of the Nigerian nation. Some of these consequences bother directly or indirectly on the unemployed youth. They include:

- a. **Unproductive labour force:** According to Njoku and Ihugba (2011), the most direct impact on the economy of an unproductive labour force is lost output in terms of goods and services. With no income tax to collect and the loss of receipts from indirect taxes payers. Most of youths that have the requisite skills in entrepreneurship, who even came out from institution of higher learning with wonderful results have no place in the work environment of Nigeria. This ugly scenario has made the labour force to be unproductive.
- b. **Contributes to crime and violence:** With the growth of youth unemployment, the gap between the rich and the poor kept growing, resulting in social tensions which could affect the entire spares of the community, state and the entire country (Niger-Delta militancy, North-East, North-Central insurgents killing, etc).
- c. **Contributes to drug addiction:** Due to frustration that results to the inability of engaging in a gainful employment, most people turn to drugs and even go ahead to be addicted to it.
- d. **Contributes to low GDP:** It is an established economic reality that the size of the workforce directly impacts on country's GDP. Not only does the work force produce manufactured goods or services or agricultural produce in direct proportion, but also brings in its wake increasing purchasing power, which in turn, fuels economic growth. Thus unemployment contributes to reduction in the potential which exists in spurring a country's GDP (Njoku and Ihugba, 2011).
- e. **Psychological effects:** Youths, who have spent two or more years in schools and colleges, have dreams and aspirations. These are dreams of securing satisfying jobs following their long years of struggle, meeting basic necessities of life (food, clothing, shelter and healthcare), graduating to a life of comfort and dignity and, eventually, enjoying the luxuries of life. The trauma of seeing their dreams trampled week-after-week, month-after-month, can and does lead to deep psychological scars that is very difficult to face at such a young age. This trauma can impact on individual's self-esteem and can lead to clinical depression.
- f. **Family support:** In a country like Nigeria, where the people retire when they are not tired and there is no social security net, very often families depend on their son or daughter graduating from school or college to take up employment in order to support the entire family. When that does not happen, the financial woes are unimaginably sorrowful.
- g. **Effect on health:** It is equally easy to visualize that lack of steady income could, apart from the above ills, also lead to inadequate nutrition and adversely affect health of the youth and their families.
- h. **Political instability:** When unemployment grows in a community, dissatisfaction with the incumbent Government follows. This in turn, leads to frequent changes in Governments or formation of unsteady coalitions. Neither it is healthy for long term stable economic policies nor could this situation lead to a vicious circle of political changes. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt had stated, "Not only our future economic soundness, but the very soundness of our democratic institutions depends on the determination of our government to give employment to idle men.

## STEPS AT COMBATING UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA

Several efforts have been taken by both the past and present government at reducing the effects of unemployment in Nigeria. They include;

- a. **National Directorate of Employment (NDE):** One of the steps taken by the Nigerian government to reduce the problem of unemployment in Nigeria was the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), which was established in November 1986. The objective of NDE was to promptly and effectively fight unemployment by designing and implementing innovative programmes, which are directed towards the provision of training opportunities through the guidance and management support services to graduate farmers and small scale entrepreneurs. The objectives of NDE spanned across the following programmes:
  - ❖ Youth employment and vocational skills development programme
  - ❖ Special public works
  - ❖ Small scale industries and graduate employment programme

❖ Agricultural development programme

The aim of the agricultural programme is to generate employment for graduates, non-graduates and school leavers in the Agricultural sector, with emphasis on self-employment in agricultural production and marketing. The programme is monitored by a team of Agricultural professionals in the Agricultural department of the directorate. However, factors which include inadequate funding and late release of funds from the federation account among others have impaired the effectiveness of the NDE agricultural programmes Chinedum (2006) in (Akintoye, 2008).

- b. **National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS):** The National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) was introduced in March 2004, in order to confront the various macroeconomic imbalances, social challenges and structural problems in the Nigerian economy. One of the principal goals is to build a modern Nigerian that maximizes the potential of every citizen so as to become the largest and strongest African economy, and a force to be reckoned with in the world. To achieve this goal, NEEDS as a development strategy anchored on the private sector and its objective is to engineer wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction. However, for NEEDS to achieve its objectives, there's need to design many integrated programmes that can generate employment for the youths to enhance growth and development (Adebayo and Ogunrinola 2006). As it is a medium-termed reform based development strategy, and action plan for the period 2003-2007, the impact of NEEDS was not realized in combating unemployment problem and this further point to the need to seek help in the informal sector in order to drastically reduce unemployment.

### UNEMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: A WAY FORWARD

One of the most crucial challenges facing Nigeria economy today is the formulation of effective policy measures that will drastically reduce unemployment and poverty. Given the damnable implications of this phenomenon in an economy, is apparently clear that no country would allow this episode to uninterruptedly proceed without mitigation. Therefore, in the continuous effort towards unemployment reduction in African economies especially in Nigeria, the following suggested policy measures are very useful;

• **Employment Generation through Educational System Restructuring**

Given the high level of unemployment in Nigeria, the development of entrepreneurial skills and initiatives should be of paramount important especially in higher education sector in order to facilitate employability of graduates who will increasingly be called upon to be not only job seekers, but above all to be job creators (Okebukola, 2001).

Nigeria is at its lowest ebb in human capital development and utilization because of its inadequate educational system which tends to produce more of those who lack job skills for employment than those the economy require to remains vibrant. In view of this, there is the need to restructure the educational system irrespective of manpower production. Again, vocational skills should be given higher priority as it is capable of generating self-employment. The technological institutions in the country on the other hand should be probably formed and equipped to ensure efficiency.

Prior to entrance into higher institutions, college students should be made to understand the implications of larger number of people enquiring academic certificate without practical skills in the present Nigerian economy. This could motivate the young people to opt for disciplines that could earn them job independence afterwards.

• **Provision to Enabling Environment**

The poor state of infrastructure in Nigeria has continued to remain a monumental problem to the Nigerian economic growth and development in all facets and the self-engagement of Nigerians is seriously inhibited due to poor or lack of infrastructures. The economic environment has continued to remain hostile to cottage, small and medium scale industries. Therefore, there is the need for the government to efficiently meet the challenges of infrastructural development in the entire country as this will help to launch the private sector into full potentials. This will stimulate private investment and induce remarkable economic growth much more than government direct involvement in investment. This is because the empirical evidence for most African countries indicates that private investment has a significantly stronger effect on growth than does government investment probably because it is more efficient and perhaps less closely associated with corruption (Tairu, 2003).

• **Re-prioritization of Agricultural Sector**

Nigeria is primarily an agrarian economy. The unemployment challenges demand that the agricultural sector should be prioritized again. This can be done necessarily through the erstwhile cheap money policy programme or agricultural enlightenment campaign in both rural and urban area of the country..

• **Discouragement of Exports of Jobs**

The taste of most Nigerians encourages the export of jobs to other countries at the expense of the domestic economy. The taste orientation of the Nigerian consumers largely inhibits the growth of the domestic firms, which would have created employment opportunities. Every Nigerian consumer must join the war against unemployment by halting the inordinate desire for foreign products for which its substitutes are available in Nigeria. The consumers must borrow leaf from the patriotism of the Chinese consumers by developing taste and patronizing the locally made goods. By so doing, the market would be expanded and employment opportunities would be created.

• **Appropriating Economic Growth Prospects**

One of the most important means of reducing unemployment phenomena in Nigeria today is the acceleration of the growth capacity of the economy. Over the years, the performance of the Nigerian economy has been far below expectation; thereby reducing the chances of the utilization of both human and material resources. Therefore, the need to stimulate economic growth in Nigeria with the utmost commitment cannot be over emphasized. The way forward is the diversification of the economy. This can be achieved through the dismantling of the current pseudo federalism that encourages indolence and absolute dependence on oil. Nigerian government should as a matter of urgency imbibe the spirit of true federalism by institutionalizing resource ownership for the country's resource management and reducing the inordinate urge for central power control that induces much political violence. In so doing, regional development, healthy competition and economic diversification will be achieved. This will greatly improve the growth process of the economy and generate employment opportunities.

**METHODOLOGY**

This research paper is targeted at evaluating the impact of unemployment in the economic development of Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design and its target population is all the unemployed youth from the three selected Local Government Council (Oyi, Idemili North and South) which age limits fall between 18years to 35years. Convenience sampling technique was employed and 30 youths were sampled from each of the three selected local government. Data was sourced from both primary and secondary sources. The instrument for data collection is questionnaire and this was validated through a pilot study of 3 youths from Anambra-East L.G.A. Method of data analysis was through the Pearson correlation test and this was conducted using SPSS Window 7, version 20.

**TEST OF HYPOTHESES**

**Re-statement of Hypotheses**

H0<sub>1</sub>: Unemployment does not impede the Nigerian economic growth and development.

H0<sub>2</sub>: Government programmes have not in any way helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria.

H0<sub>3</sub>: There are no possible ways that could be put forward in ensuring the reduction of unemployment level in Nigeria.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlations**

	Does unemployment impede the Nigerian economic growth and development?	To what extent has the government programmes helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria?	Are there possible ways that could be put forward in tackling unemployment in Nigeria?
Does unemployment impede the Nigerian economic growth and development? Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 .820** .000 80	.820** 1 .000 80	.964** .000 .000 80
To what extent has the government programmes helped in talking the Problems of unemployment in Nigeria? Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.820** .000 80	1 .796** .000 80	.796** .000 .000 80
Are there possible ways that could put forward in tackling unemployment Level in Nigeria? Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.964** .000 80	.796** .000 80	1 .000 80

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This work adopted the Pearson correlation in examining the impact of unemployment in the Nigerian economic growth and development and the various programmes the government has used in tackling the menace of unemployment in the country. The test was conducted with the data generated from selected Local Government Council (Oyi, Idemili north, and Idemili south), Anambra state, Nigeria. From the study conducted, the absolute value of the Pearson correlation indicates the strength with large absolute value indicating strong relationship. However, the absolute value of the correlation is 0.820 a value very close to 1. Since 0.820 is relatively close to 1, this indicates that the responses on whether unemployment impedes the Nigerian economic growth and development are positively correlated. This is to say that, unemployment has contributed greatly to the ineffectiveness of the country's economy in various ways like; unproductive labour force (Njoku and Ihugba, 2011), increase in crime and violence in the North-central, North-East, Niger-Delta etc, drug addiction, low GDP, political instability, psychological effects, disobedient for law and order and health effects.

In another vein, a test was conducted to examine the extent government involvement in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria. In this test, the absolute value of the correlation co-efficient indicates a stronger relationship. That is, the absolute value of 0.796 is a value very close to 1 with significance value of 0.05; in this case, the correlation is significantly related. This implies that Nigerian government has in many ways established and initiated various policies and programmes that have helped to eradicate unemployment in the country, but in view of these initiatives like; National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), amongst others, the objective of the initiated programmes and policies is yet to be realized owing to high level of corruption and nepotism in the country.

Furthermore, in an attempt to know whether there are possible ways that could be put forward in ensuring the reduction of unemployment level in Nigeria, the absolute value of correlation co-efficient which is 0.964 shows a strong relationship with a significant level of 0.000 is less than 0.05. This indicates that the two variables are strongly correlated. Based on the test conducted, the study revealed that there are other possible measures that could be adopted to ensure that unemployment rate in Nigeria are reduced to the barest minimum. They are; compulsory introduction and full inclusion of entrepreneurship studies in all curriculum of higher learning, monitoring of the disbursed funds and ensure that these funds get to the people it is meant for, setting training centres in all local government area of the states in Nigeria and amongst others.

Summarily, the findings are articulated in the following headings;

- ❖ Unemployment impedes the Nigerian economic growth and development and this has affected her efforts in achieving its objectives.
- ❖ Government programmes have in many ways helped in tackling the problems of unemployment in Nigeria. This is made possible through the introduction of many programmes like National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), amongst others.
- ❖ There are possible measures that could be adopted in ensuring the reduction of unemployment in Nigeria. This can be done through the establishment of more programmes that can inculcate on the youths vocational skill that will enable them focus on entrepreneurial activities instead of depending on white collar job. The lending rate should be reduced to encourage youths to borrowing in order to invest more on small scale business.
- ❖ Unemployment if not checked will continue to deprive Nigeria of actualizing her vision and this will raise the level of poverty, crime, violence, inflation, and above all reduce country's GDP.

## CONCLUSION

The challenges of fighting the rising unemployment level in Nigeria are the major task of policy makers and economic managers alike. The consequences of growing unemployment rates are such damning that no economy can afford to despise. Such implications are glaring in the economy of Nigeria where many negative developments are traceable to the non-availability of jobs for the teeming population of energetic youths. Therefore, the need to aptly address this ugly development becomes paramount. While the government takes the leading role in the task of employment generation by providing the necessary enabling environment for economic activities, it is necessary to note that the battle against unemployment in Nigeria is like war that is too important to be left for the Generals alone. Therefore, all stakeholders and hands must therefore be on deck in the fight against this ugly hurdle called unemployment so that Nigeria can join her members in enjoying the dividend of development experienced through gainful expertise.

The federal government should hasten the power sector reforms and re-stabilize the power sector to end the looming energy crisis in Nigeria. In order to encourage entrepreneurial activities which is believed to be the remote cause of unemployment problem in the country as power is a major factor in the economy.

Religious, Ethnic and Political violence and crisis should be controlled by all means necessary as it



displaces people and cause serious harm on their means of livelihood; many companies have left Nigeria because of violence in some part of the country. Therefore, increasing the employment rate in the country could help improve the people's standard of living.

There should be a process or programme geared towards training youths in Nigeria in the act of entrepreneurship. This is in lieu of the assertion that knowledge in power. We are aware that there are programmes like National Directorate of Employment and the inculcation of entrepreneurship development courses in all higher institutions curriculum in Nigeria but more still need to be done as these platforms are just being institutionalized. They ought to be proactive and pragmatic. If they cannot fit in the prescription, a new one should be created to take their place.

There should be a government regulated means of entrepreneurial development sponsorship devoid of politics and the likes that have crippled those developments in Nigeria in terms of financial sponsorship as lack of access to finance has contributed to the major problems of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

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