NIGERIAN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND SECURITY ISSUES: EVALUATING THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPTION

MUSA MOHAMMED BELLO, PH.D.
GENERAL STUDIES UNIT, FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY BABURA, JIGAWA, |
musamohammedbello@gmail.com, 08034522242

JIBRIN UBALE YAHAYA, PH.D
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, JABI, ABUJA.
jibrinubaleyahaya@gmail.com, 08035876786

ISYAKU ADAMU
YUSUF MAITAMA SULE UNIVERSITY, KANO, NIGERIA
isyakuadamu73@gmail.com, 08068075380

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ABSTRACT
Nigeria's jobless rate—especially for young people—has been increasing to the point where it is overwhelming and too much to bear in light of the nation's security and socioeconomic problems. Consequently, in order to address security concerns, this paper investigates the government's entrepreneurial option. This was accomplished by compiling secondary data from qualitative and quantitative studies and utilizing the theoretical framework of empowerment theory. The study finds that Nigeria's economy regrettably still has a high rate of youth unemployment, reaching up to 53%, despite the frantic entrepreneurship aimed at ending unemployment. This high rate of youth unemployment is directly linked to the country's growing security issues. It is obvious that insufficient security, erratic power supplies, and other problems must exist before the private sector can get involved in this. Infrastructure needs to be addressed. If the relevant authorities do not act quickly to create jobs, crime will rise and public resentment will grow. Security issues will become the only game in town.

Introduction

In Nigeria, the rate of unemployment, particularly among the youth, has been rising to the point where it is not only piercing but also uncontrollable in light of the country's socioeconomic and security challenges. In Nigeria, it has become one of the most destructive flaws impeding long-term economic growth and development, and it is the root of many social vices. They include, among other things, armed robberies, kidnappings, prostitution, destitution, terrorism, and political thuggery. Taken together, these crimes pose a serious threat to Nigeria's security (Okoye, 2014).

One of the main causes for concern is the nation's youth unemployment rate, which is rapidly rising. Many school dropouts and working adults are either having trouble finding jobs or getting fired for various reasonsalternative. Learning a trade or graduating from school is no longer the main focus; instead, it's about preparing for the reality of being unemployed after graduation and joining the ranks of the unemployed with no idea of what the future holds. Nigeria lacks a social security system to support the unemployed, in contrast to the situation in the majority of developed nations. Because they are not eligible for government unemployment benefits, the majority of unemployed people are unable to support themselves. Thus, a lot of people have turned to taking part in activities that pose security risks to Nigeria.

Scholars, commentators, and practitioners have called on the government to develop various forms of empowerment programs through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in order to prepare Nigerian youths to thrive and prevent future catastrophes. This can only be achieved through the development of creative, intelligent, and enterprising people with the guts to take on and overcome obstacles in all areas of life (Aja & Adali, 2013). This is due to the fact that youth unemployment is so common and that it presents a security risk.

In keeping with this conscientious mindset, the Nigerian government has recently directed a significant number of resources toward empowering and training young people in diverse entrepreneurial endeavors through itsVarious agencies, the World Bank, NGOs, and even philanthropists in the private sector (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2012). Among other things, the government established the Microfinance Policy, the Regulatory and Supervisory Framework for Nigeria, and supported the establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Centers (EDCs) through the CBN but yet there is still wide gap of unemployment among the population. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the degree to which an entrepreneurial choice becomes a signpost to Nigeria's security issues.

Conceptual Frame Work

Youth Unemployment

According to the United Nations, "youth without prejudice to other member states is defined as those between the ages of 15 and 24" (Secretary General Report, 1985: A/40/265). However, youth is defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1999) as the period of life during which a person is young, particularly the period before a child becomes an adult. Ages 15 to 29 are considered youth according to the Commonwealth. The goal of the African Youth Charter is to end the long-running discussions about what constitutes youth in Africa, taking into account the continent's development realities and defining youth as any individual between the ages of 15 and 35. While anyone between the ages of 18 and 35 is considered a youth according to Nigeria's National Youth Policy.

Nigeria uses the ILO definition of unemployment to determine the unemployment rate in the nation. As per the International Labour Organization (ILO), the unemployed population comprises individuals above a designated age who could have provided labor for the production of goods and services but chose not to. Measuring over a brief reference period, it encompasses all unemployed individuals who actively sought to start a business or accept a job during that time if provided with the opportunity.

Most people consider unemployment to be as simple as "people not having a job." Nevertheless, unemployment is a much more nuanced concept than the ones listed above. According to an International Labor Organization resolution from 1982, unemployment is generally defined by the

global community. To qualify as "unemployed," a person must meet one of three requirements: they must be "without work," which indicates they were not engaged in paid work or self-employment during the reference period; they must be "currently available for work," which indicates they were prepared for paid work or self-employment during the reference period; or they must be "seeking work," which indicates they have taken specific actions in a recent period to pursue paid employment or self-employment. (ILO, 1982).

Entrepreneurship

According to Drucker (1998), entrepreneurship is the practice of establishing new organizations, particularly new businesses, taking risks, and generating new wealth through the application of novel ideas. It also involves the creation of new values that did not previously exist. According to Drucker (1998), the shared characteristic of entrepreneurs is not their personalities, but rather their dedication to innovation. In order for innovation to happen, an entrepreneur needs to possess not only skill, creativity, and knowledge but also hard work, focus, and purpose.

Entrepreneurship, according to Howard (2008), is the pursuit of opportunities regardless of the resources under one's current control. Being enterprising means always having your mind and eyes wide open. It is to possess sufficient talent, self-assurance, and creativity, sufficient, and self-control to take advantage of opportunities when they arise, regardless of the state of the economy this suggests that entrepreneurship is the process of producing something unique and valuable by investing the required time, energy, and social risk and reaping the financial and personal rewards. Nwafor (2007).

According to Baba (2013), who examines the difficulties facing the growth of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new and valuable by investing the required time and effort, taking on associated financial and social risks, and reaping financial rewards, independence, and personal fulfillment in exchange.

Theoretical Framework

The empowerment theory serves as the study's theoretical foundation. Zimmerman (1995) applied this theory first, and it became popularized in 2000. Afterwards, in an effort to make the empowerment theory more grounded in reality, Sazama and Young (2006) and Reischl (2011) revised it.

The thesis essentially states that the development of entrepreneurship and empowerment among youth depends largely on a set of actions that encourage them to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors, help them become better decision-makers, and create conditions and opportunities that will allow young people to learn, practice, and develop their skills (Zimmerman, 2000). The theory goes on to say that involving young people in worthwhile, pro-social, community-based activities that they create and manage themselves helps them develop critical skills, skills, and self-assurance that would support their increased independence, productivity, and well-being (Reischl et al., 2011).

Since the empowerment theory has significant implications for the study, it serves as the theoretical basis for this investigation. The theory posits that the creation and implementation of empowerment programs pertaining to entrepreneurship development can enhance youth development, elevate their entrepreneurial skills and assets, and inspire them to effectively apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired to become positive change agents in their communities and the nation as a whole (Ledford & Lucas, 2013). Youth in Nigeria would be encouraged to build more assets through their entrepreneurial endeavors and, as a result, participate in community development activities that would hasten the growth and development of the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria's Unemployment and Security Challenges: The Intersection

The proverb that states, "A perfect mind is a devil's workshop," describes the dire circumstances in Nigeria. This suggests that it is not difficult for jobless people to pose a security risk in order to survive. In numerous instances, unemployment has been linked to the nation's security challenges. The situation in which the majority of people are hungry and

impoverished, and many young people are jobless and unemployed, will surely lead to a high level of insecurity in the nation, in accordance with the proverb "the idle hand is the devil's workshop." Thousands of jobless people typically show up in response to job advertisements when only a small number areto work. Gross human resource abuse and underutilization are facing the nation, and they have an immediate effect on competitiveness and productivity. As a result, a large number of Nigerians have turned to various activities that endanger national security due to unemployment.

Graduating students have occasionally been arrested for their involvement in various crimes. Most of these criminal graduates attribute their involvement in these crimes to the high unemployment rate in the country. For instance, the headline for the September 26, 2011, news magazine cover story read, "Graduates bandits on the prowl." Most of the graduating robbers who were interviewed for the report stated that they became involved in criminal activityin order to obtain employment. In addition, the government's responsibility to maintain a good road network, electricity supply, and other infrastructure has failed, leaving small and medium-sized enterprises—which create jobs for the unemployed—fast disappearing. Many craftspeople, including aluminum, welding, and furniture makers. Today, many without access to power generators, such as window fitters and tailors, are out of work. Many young Nigerians, desperate to keep their bodies and souls together, have taken to riding commercial motorcycles, while others start off as street vendors.

Due to recent banking reforms implemented in the nation, the banking sector—which employs the largest number of people—was compelled to reduce its workforce, and the naira redesign increased the number of young people without jobs. Moreover, organizations and sectors such as steel, textile, and Nigerian Railways are collapsing. Private companies offering job opportunities to Nigerians are gradually expanding their operations to other West African nations, such as Ghana, Cote d'ivoire, Togo, and South Africa. Due to constant power outages, which force them to rely on generator sets that require expensive fuel, many manufacturers are facing low turnover rates in their operations. As a result, the majority of these jobs cause many indigenous workers to lose their jobscan barely make ends meet because their monthly salary might only cover half of it.

Nigerian Entrepreneurship and Unemployment

According to Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010), entrepreneurship is becoming recognized as a significant way to improve young people's livelihoods and financial independence, as well as a framework for potential efforts and strategies to boost employment and job creation for them. Unfortunately, neo-liberal approaches to improving human capital have not made the unemployment problems faced by educated youth and even skilled but uneducated youth any less pitiful in many developing economies. As a result, they advise that, as a temporary intervention measure, it is critical to teach citizens of these impacted economies—particularly Nigerians—how to practice self-employment and entrepreneurship through vocational and entrepreneurial training programs.

Youths are a crucial stakeholder in any society, according to Ajufo (2013) and Salami (20013). What happens to children today will determine how adult problems are solved tomorrow. If effective measures are not taken to lessen the unpleasant effects of high youth unemployment, unemployment in Nigeria is a ticking time bomb waiting to explode. In addition, he draws a connection between youth unemployment and entrepreneurship, and he suggests that sufficient focus be placed on fostering a supportive political and socioeconomic environment that can inspire young people to view job creation differently from the perspective of job seekers. Additionally, he advocates for a radical shift toward a culture that has been proven to value integrity, inventiveness, diligence, and nobility of characterfor young people to reject taking the easy route in life.

In his analysis of the obstacles to the development of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Baba (2013) noted that while self-employment is a viable option for many Nigerians, particularly the younger generation, self-employment is a necessity, and the pursuit of non-existent white-collar jobs must be lessened. He suggests that the government make an effort to provide the infrastructures needed so that its citizens can acquire the skills they need.

Oladele, Akeke, and Oladunjoye (2011) examine the need of promoting employment in Nigeria through the development of entrepreneurship and conclude that the government and its agencies should intentionally encourage entrepreneurial culture and skills in Nigeria in order to attack the country's high unemployment rate. They do this by using secondary data from the Central Bank of Nigeria's Statistical Bulletin, the CIA Fact Sheet, and other institutional publications as an empirical basis. They use the statistical tool known as multiple regression to achieve this. Nigeria's youth are poised to benefit greatly from the development of information and communications technology (ICT), which will create job opportunities and secure the country's social and economic future. Nigeria's actual and concerning unemployment rate can be reduced by youth empowerment and developmentlack of employment Consequently, they suggest that youth potential be enhanced to promote ICT application (Emeh 2012; Oladunjoye and Audum, 2014).

The main objective of entrepreneurial education is to equip students and our young people with the right mindset, information, and abilities to behave in an entrepreneurial way. The youth unemployment rate in the nation has skyrocketed, especially for recent graduates. The economy is currently losing more jobs than it is creating. Thus, the entrepreneurial idea should be taught in the curriculum from elementary school through post-secondary education. Olajire and Comfort 2013, Uzoma and Onene 2013, Akhuemonkhan, Raima and Sofoluwe 2013, Ayatse 2013, To offer the entrepreneurial educational experience, pedagogy and facilities must be updated. Youths must also be ready to absorb the culture of entrepreneurship both inside and outside of the classroom as a potential cure for unemployment.

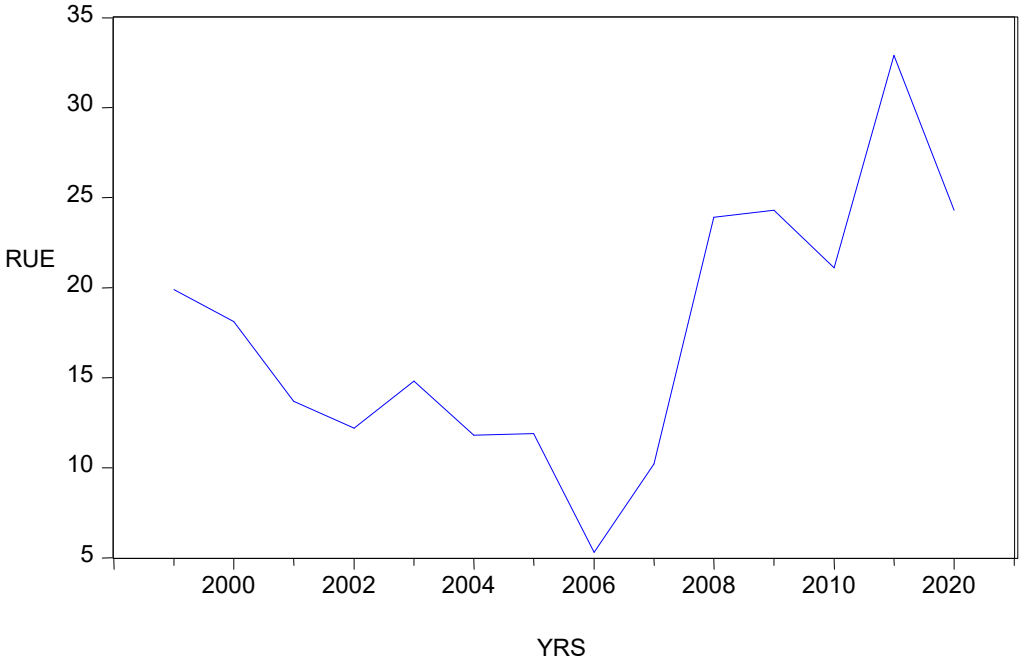
According to Ojeifo (2013), Nigerian entrepreneurship education aims to promote sustainable development within the nation. The government must now give attention to this subsector since entrepreneurship skills are still essential for the real sector and the maintenance of economic development. The government recognized this fact and introduced entrepreneurial studies in tertiary institutions as a response to the numerous issues facing the nation, which include extreme poverty, youth and graduate unemployment, reliance on foreign goods and technology, youth restlessness and violence, and more. Encouraging young people to pursue meaningful careers is the main concern.

According to Charles (2013), professors saw the value of entrepreneurship education as a means of empowering recent graduates to pursue self-employment. The relevance of entrepreneurship education to graduate self-employment was not significantly rated differently by male and female lecturers. Information literacy was ranked by lecturers as the most crucial skill that students should develop in order to prepare for entrepreneurship, ahead of risk-taking and financial management. The main obstacles to the effective delivery of entrepreneurship curriculum content were identified as being large class sizes, insufficient funding, and students' negative attitudes toward entrepreneurship education. The government should give universities enough funding to enable them to set up and outfit entrepreneurial development centers for hands-on work, based on these findingsUniversities should hire a sufficient number and quality of instructors to teach courses on entrepreneurship

Evaluating Entrepreneurs' Choices for Security Challenges

Nigeria has been battling the persistent problem of job creation through a variety of initiatives, including job counseling and connections, training for acquiring vocational skills, training for entrepreneurship and enterprise creation, training for promoting employment in rural areas, training for labor-based temporary jobs, cooperation with other pertinent agencies and organizations, etc.

But more than 60 million Nigerians lack a job, according to NBS (2020). The majority of people in the population between the ages of 15 and 40 make up 55% of the total. The Senate Committee on Labour, Productivity and Employment expressed shock upon learning of the financial release provided to NDE by the Federal Ministry of Finance in the 2020 appropriation, according to a 2020 news article from Daily Independent. This is additionallydemonstrating the following figure, which plots Nigeria's unemployment trend from 2000 to 2020:



The above figure suggests that despite annual budgetary allocations that are substantial, the rate of youth unemployment is rising. The graph suggested that the unemployment rate and the amount of money allotted to the NDE were rising. As also indicated by the table below, the figure illustrates how the rate of unemployment increased dramatically between 2000 and 2020:

Table 2: Adult and Youth (15–24) Unemployment Rates

Year	15-24	25-44	45-59	60-64	National Aggregate
20 12	32.1	14.7	10.7	13.4	14.8
2013	28.9	11.4	7.7	10.1	13.4
2014	34.2	11.3	6.6	9,7	11.9
2015	30.8	8.8	4.8	7.3	12.3
2016	30.7	8.5	4.5	7.1	12.7
2017	32.6	9.4	7.6	8.3	14.9
2018	41.6	17.0	11.5	16.7	19.7
2019	35.2	20.7	19.9	21.3	21.4
2020	37.7	22.4	18.0	21.4	23.3

Source: Annual Socio-economic Report (various years), National Bureau of Statistics (2020).

Based on this supposition, the Senate Committee had inquired of the NDE management how the Directorate had been involved in creating jobs for the unemployed who were banding together and swarming the National Assembly every day in an attempt to find representatives who could help them find the elusive job in Nigeria. The Director-General of NDE responded to the Senate Committee by stating that the agency's operations had been hindered by a financial issue. In the first and second quarters of the year, N301 million of the N2.2 billion allocated to NDE in the 2020 budget was released.

Nonetheless, there is cause for concern regarding the NDE's viability and applicability given Nigeria's rising unemployment rateand other pertinent government organizations, including the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), among others. The Nigerian people were not satisfied with their performance. The sector's inability to carry out its legal duties in a respectable manner is ascribed to wanton corruption, which is the cause of the weakness.

The virus of unemployment is most prevalent among young people. Despite her potential economically, Nigeria has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world, according to a report. When we juxtapose this situation with the fact that forty-five percent of Nigerians are between the ages of 15 and 40 and that only three percent of Nigerians live to be sixty years of age or older, the social essence of this situation becomes evident.

It doesn't take intelligence to understand why there is so much instability, high-level crime related to cattle rustling, kidnapping episodes, unrest among young people, and most importantly, a highly unstable socialeconomic system that has plagued Nigeria up until now. The horrific actions of the current Boko Haram and the disregard for kidnapping in the northwest are a glaring indication that the majority of Nigerian youth are not doing well. Is the federal government genuinely committed to generating employment? Developing and designing an employment program without a genuine purpose and focus is a pointless exercise.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that the government lacks the resources to provide jobs for everyone, both in practice and in reality. Many analysts believe that the government's efforts to create jobs should be led by the private sector. It is clear that in order to encourage private sector involvement in this area, the problems of insecurity, an intermittent power supply, and an inadequate infrastructure must be resolved. If the appropriate authorities don't take decisive action to generate jobs, unemployment will continue to rise, which will in turn lead to an increase in crime, a generalized feeling of annoyance, and security issues as the main focus of attention.

Recommendation

i. The nation's current youth restlessness and social vices could only be subdued by creating a large number of jobs. In order to ensure that the organization trains and resettles the hordes of unemployed Nigerians, additional funding should be allocated to the appropriate authorities.

ii. To lower the rate of unemployment among Nigerians, new approaches and innovations should be implemented within the constraints of the limited resources that are currently available. In an effort to give the unemployed access to training and jobs, this can be accomplished through collaborations with other pertinent governmental organizations and the business sector.

iii. The relevant organizations and agencies tasked with overseeing employment must continuously evaluate their operations, and more has to be done to connect with the unorganized sector. Liaison offices should be established in local government headquarters throughout the federation, where entrepreneur activities will take place.

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