
THE IMPACT OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES ENROLMENT AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN NIGERIA (1980 – 2014).

Dang, Emmanuel Istifanus

Department of Social Sciences
Faculty of Education, University of Jos-Nigeria
Email: dange@unijos.edu.ng, dangenmanuel@yahoo.com

***Abstract:** Unemployment is one of the major macroeconomic problems that are bedevilling the Nigerian economy. This paper examines the impact of university's enrolment on the unemployment situation in Nigeria (1980-2014). The work is centred on finding out the type of relationship that exist between unemployment and university enrolment, and how funding of education affects unemployment situation in Nigeria. Three research questions are raised, to guide the researcher. Secondary data on the Nigerian unemployment rate, Nigerian universities enrolment and percentage of government annual expenditure on education from 1980-2014 have been used for this analysis. The multiple regressions have been adopted for this study. The result of the analysis which was run using E-Views 7 revealed that enrolment has a positive relationship with unemployment in Nigerian with a coefficient of 0.45, which implies that there are loop-holes in the curriculum currently use in our universities, since increased enrolment increases unemployment rate. The relationship between unemployment and government expenditure on education reveals a negative relation with a coefficient of -0.07, which implies that increased education funding decreases unemployment rate. The implication is that an increased education funding by the government, enhance quality in the educational system, which will lead to decrease in the unemployment rate in the economy. R^2 Of 0.40 reveals the level of dependence of the dependent variable on the independent variables, which is about 40%. The recommendations put forward among others are that, there is need to review the current university curriculum, to include practical aspect of learning that will encourage creativity among Nigerian graduates; government is encouraged to increase funding of education to add quality to the system, students are encouraged to be very committed to their studies to enable them get the best, while parents are also encouraged to help their children make career choice that reflect their abilities.*

Keywords: Unemployment; Enrolment; Education; Government Expenditure; Economic Development

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INTRODUCTION

Unemployment rate, measures the number of people actively looking for job, as a percentage of the entire labour force. According to report from National Bureau of statistics, the unemployment rate in Nigeria has risen from 5.3% in 2006 to 23.9% in 2012 in a span of 6 years, these calls for an urgent attention. The 2014 budget which was

tagged as "the budget of Job creation and inclusive growth" did not reflect the expression of a will power to curb the unemployment menace by the government, when we consider the mode of government expenditure as expressed in the 2014 budget we cannot see a deliberate action by the government to create jobs so as to enhance economic growth, this is because over 70% of the budget was going for recurrent expenditure and less than 30%, set aside for capital expenditure. We have to remember that capital expenditure is that part of the budget that stimulates economic growth and enhances the creation of jobs. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2006) recommends that, to enhance and stimulate economic growth 70% of the country's budget should be allocated to capital expenditure but the reverse is the case in Nigeria.

The Nigerian educational system has been experiencing a high increase in terms of students' enrolment. A quick look at annual total university enrolment in the 1980's, reveals that, enrolment was averaged between 20,000 to 30,000 for all universities, but today applications for admission into Nigerian universities is averaged between 30,000 to 40,000 per university, and this number is increasing every year. Though, a good number of these applicants end up not even being admitted into the universities, due to problems that the universities are facing in terms of personnel and facilities to meet up with the number of students demanding for places. This development was noticed by Ezekwesili and Adelami (2006), where they observed that "in 2005, an average of 868,000 Nigerian youths sought admission into Nigerian universities, out of which only 23% (200,000) were adjudged to have been successfully admitted. According to them, Nigerian universities only have the capacity to absorb only about 150,000 candidates; the critical question asked here is where the rest are? If the Nigerian educational system did not change, then we will end up producing miscreants in the name of graduates, this could be the reason why we are having many unemployable youths in our cities. Facilities in Nigerian universities need to be enhanced to meet the high demand for university education and the system has to be developed such that these young men/women after graduation should have a place where they should earn a living.

Any individual that passes through the university system is expected to have acquired the needed and necessary skills that will enable him/her to be able to live a comfortable life, but the case in Nigeria is a different case. Reasons deduced for this high unemployment rate cannot be separated from the fact that, since the discovery of oil in Nigeria, the initial main stay of the economy which is agriculture suffers great neglect. Cash crops that used to be exported have disappeared. The agricultural sector is one of the informal sectors that if given greater attention will go a long way in reducing the current problem. It may not be out of place if our educational system can be developed in such a way that it will explore the agricultural sector in a way that it can absorb a large proportion of these university graduates. Unemployment has been a perennial problem in Nigeria, studies have not been able to capture the specific nature of the problem as noted by Oluseyi and Elegbede (2012), who were able to note this flaw in most studies that have been carried out on unemployment where fresh university graduates that are first time job seekers are

lump up together with other category of unemployed people and they were able to limit their own study to fresh university graduates. It is on that premise that this study intends to investigate further. According to a research conducted by Diejomaoh (1979) he discovered that, between 1965 - 1972 unemployment was not a serious problem in Nigeria, which is contrary to what is obtainable today. But from the 1970's to date the trend has significantly change, today we have over 100 universities in Nigeria(Public and Private), with increase in the number of graduates every year, the pressure in the labour market today is high. Sylvester (1982) attributed the increase in the number of universities in the country to the increased demand for higher education by Nigerians. This study is set to investigate the relationship between university enrolment and unemployment situation in Nigeria. This study intends to investigate the enrolment policy of Nigerian universities, the training and the unemployment challenges of graduates in Nigeria

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study intends to achieve the following objectives:-

1. To find out if there is any significant relationship between student enrolment at the university and graduate unemployment in Nigeria.
2. To critically examine some of the government's education policies and implementation.
3. To empirically review the literature and statistics on university enrolment in Nigeria.

To see to the need to develop curriculum that can lead graduate to the level of self employment and empowerment

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have been formulated by the researcher as a guide in this study:-

1. To what extent does student's enrolment relates to unemployment rate in Nigeria?
2. To what extend does government spending on education affects student's enrolment and unemployment?
3. To what extend can the expanded curriculum help in curbing unemployment situation in Nigeria?

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

One of the veritable instruments that accelerate political and economic development in any nation is Education. According to Aliu (2001) a major determinant in a nation's growth and development is its human resources. Shultz (2002) added that the needed man-power to accelerate the growth and development of the economy is the main relevance of education to Nigeria. Okuneye and Adelowokan (2014), noted that because of the believed in the efficacy of education as a powerful instrument of development has led many nations to commit a colossal amount of their wealth to the establishment of

educational institutions at various levels. Ekundayo and Ajayi (2007) stated that funds allocated to education should not be considered as mere expenses, but as a long-term investment, which brings about immense benefits to the society as a whole. The role education play in development is an important one and hence, the need for policy makers and economic planners to give serious attention to it, if our developmental problems are to be solved.

Cameron and Heckman (2001) observed that there are many literatures on the determinant of schooling that has established a positive correlation between family income and school attainment. This implies that improved financing of education is very important in the development of the educational sector. That means that in a country where majority of the people are poor, their situation affects, development in the educational sector, hence the need for government to step in and cut the cost of education so as to enhance students educational attainment, which will subsequently lead to development in the economy. Carneiro and Heckman (2002) points out that the importance of family income and other family factors has been confirmed in many different environment including those with free tuition and no restriction on entry (enrolment).

Okuneye and Adelowokan (2014) revealed that tertiary enrolment has relatively been increasing over the years with the highest growth rate of 219.64% in 1997 and the lowest in 2004, based on their study distortion in the tertiary enrolment was experience in 1995 and 2004 which was essentially due to the political crisis and industrial dispute during these periods. With the exception of 1996 and 2004 the growth rate reveals positive trends, though in an inconsistent pattern. The conclusion of their study reveals that tertiary enrolment is positively related to economic growth in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This research work makes use of secondary data for its analysis, these data, are obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the International Labor Organisation (ILO). The data obtained include the National unemployment rate, Universities enrolment data, and government expenditure on education from 1980-2014. The method adopted in the analysis of these data is the multiple regression analysis, in determining the extent of relationship that exists between the variables under study from 1980-2014. Regression provides information that has to do with modelling the relationship between one dependent variable and one or more explanatory variables. The paper is aimed at evaluating the type of relationship that exists between unemployment and universities enrolment and government expenditure level on education in Nigeria within the period under study. This analysis will help us understand how effective is our university curriculum, in terms of imparting the requisite skills that are relevant in curbing the unemployment problem plaguing the Nigerian economy.

Definition and Justification of the Variables

The variables in this study are the total annual universities enrolment figures from 1980–2014. These figures are selected to give us the picture of number of candidates that have access to university education in Nigeria which is a major variable in this study, the enrolment figures are used as independent variable. The other independent variable used in this study is the annual budget allocation to education as a percentage of total annual budgets presented by the government. This variable is important in this study because it explains the extent to which the government is committed towards the development of education in the country, and helps us to determine the level of development in education in the country. Expenditure on education should determine the availability of infrastructures in the system that can adequately facilitate teaching and learning, and also the quality of graduates that the systems produce each year. The dependent variable adopted for this study is the unemployment rate in Nigeria from 1980–2014. Unemployment is a serious macroeconomic problem that has metamorphoses into many societal disasters in Nigeria. A fight to reduce or eliminate unemployment is a fight for a better society. Unemployment is a dependent variable in this study, and we want to investigate to what extent university enrolment and government expenditure on education affects it. The relationship between these variables is very important for us in reaching conclusion for this study.

Apriori Expectation

The apriori expectation (sign and sizes) of the parameter estimates, of the variables in the model will be evaluated to check whether they confirm to economic theory. There are no specific sizes for the parameters in the model but a priori expectation is that annual university enrolments will have a negative impact on unemployment, since the expectation of the society is that the more skills acquired the more productive an individual is to the society. That is as more candidates gain enrolled into universities the less the unemployment rate, considering the relationship between education and employment while the on other hand Government expenditure on education will also have a negative relationship with unemployment rate. Expectation is that as government increased its expenditure on education the system should be developed in such a way that graduates should be very equipped to create jobs rather than being job seekers.

Model Specification

A model is an abstraction from reality. Econometrics build model as a way of simplifying the complexities of real life. According to Nwokama (2001) two types of models are identifiable definition of behavioural models. Definitional model are some kind of identity $D=S$ while behavioural models describe how a particular unit behaves. Behavioural models will be applied in this study as Koutsoyiannis (2003) recommended that the first and most important step in econometrics when attempting to study relationship between variables is to express this relationship in mathematical form. The model shall only include the most relevant variables for the study.

In this study we are interested in determining the relationship between Nigeria's unemployment rate and universities enrolment with government expenditure on education as a percentage of annual total expenditure. The model therefore specify the Unemployment rate(*UNEMPL*) as the dependent variable while the independent variables are the Nigerian universities annual enrolment figures(*UNENRL*) and governments annual budgetary allocation to education as a percentage of total government expenditure(*GEXEDU*)

The functional relationship between the variables is express as follows:

$$UNEMPL = f(UNENRL, GEXEDU) \quad (1)$$

The mathematical form of the model is expressed as:

$$UNEPL = B_0 + B_1UNENRL + B_2GEXEDU + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

Establishing the working of the three variables, the variables are Log to smoothing results since the figure is not express in the same unit. Therefore equation (2) is re-written as follows:

$$LogUNEPL = B_0 + B_1LogUNENRL + B_2LogGEXEDU + \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

Where:

UNEMPL = Unemployment rate

UNENRL = Universities Enrolment figures

GEXEDU = Government Expenditure on education as a percentage of total Expenditure.

ε = Error term or stochastic variable.

The presence of error term (ε) takes care of other variables that have influence on the unemployment rate, but not specified in the model like Economic recession, collapse of other sectors of the economy, corruption, Government policy etc.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The table below shows the data collected by the researcher for the purpose of this analysis:

Table 1: Profile of the unemployment rate, Student Enrolment into Universities and the rate of government expenditure on education in Nigeria (1980 – 2014).

S/N	Year	Unemployment Rate	% Change of Unemployment Rate	Enrolment into Universities	% change of Universities Enrol.	Govt. Exp. Rate on Education	% Change Govt. Exp. Rate on Education
1	1980	6.40	-	57,742	-	4.95	-
2	1981	5.20	-23.08	77,791	25.77	6.45	23.26
3	1982	4.30	-20.93	90,751	14.28	8.09	20.27
4	1983	6.40	32.81	104,774	13.38	4.04	-100.25
5	1984	6.20	-3.23	116,822	10.31	4.49	10.02
6	1985	6.10	-1.60	126,285	7.49	3.79	-18.47
7	1986	5.30	-15.10	125,783	-0.40	2.69	-20.89
8	1987	7.00	24.30	151,967	17.23	1.93	-39.38
9	1988	5.10	-37.30	160,767	5.47	2.40	19.58
10	1989	4.50	-13.30	174,133	7.68	3.55	32.39
11	1990	3.50	-28.60	179,494	2.99	2.83	-25.44
12	1991	3.10	-12.90	200,774	10.60	1.09	-159.63
13	1992	3.50	11.40	232,282	13.56	3.86	70.76
14	1993	3.40	-2.90	255,730	9.17	5.62	31.32
15	1994	3.20	-6.30	281,303	9.10	7.13	21.18
16	1995	1.90	-68.40	309,433	9.10	7.20	0.97
17	1996	2.80	32.10	269,687	-14.74	12.32	41.56
18	1997	3.40	17.60	862,023	197.65	17.59	29.96
19	1998	3.50	2.90	941,329	8.42	10.27	-71.28
20	1999	17.50	80.00	983,689	4.32	11.12	7.64
21	2000	13.10	-33.60	1,032,873	4.76	8.36	-33.01
22	2001	13.60	3.70	1,136,160	9.10	7.00	-19.43
23	2002	12.60	-7.90	124,776	-800.56	12.20	42.62
24	2003	14.80	14.90	1,272,772	90.20	11.30	-7.96
25	2004	13.40	-10.40	417,281	-205.02	10.50	-7.62
26	2005	11.90	-12.60	1,540,021	97.29	11.30	7.08
27	2006	12.30	3.30	1,562,010	1.41	11.00	-2.73
28	2007	12.70	3.10	1,567,550	0.35	8.09	-35.97
29	2008	14.90	14.80	1,602,441	2.18	13.00	37.77
30	2009	19.70	24.40	1,680,112	4.62	6.54	-98.78
31	2010	21.10	6.64	1,701,123	1.24	6.40	-2.19
32	2011	23.90	11.72	986,673	-72.41	1.69	-278.70
33	2012	24.30	1.65	862,601	-0.14	10.00	83.10
32	2013	28.50	14.74	1,252,913	31.15	8.70	-14.94
35	2014	30.00	5.00	1,622,123	22.76	10.63	18.16

Source: (1) Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja
 (2) CBN – Annual Report and Statement of Account, 1980 – 2014
 (3) General Household Survey Report/NBS/CBN surveys 2014
 (4) National Universities Commission Report

MODEL ESTIMATION AND RESULT

This work benefited from some computer packages. E-views 7.0 for the models specified. The result of the analysis is presented table 1 below:

Table 2: The Regression Result

Dependent Variable: LOG(UNEMPL)

Method: Least Squares

Date: 03/18/15 Time: 10:36

Sample: 1980 2014

Included observations: 34

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-3.661949	1.263719	-2.897755	0.0068
LOG(UNENRL)	0.452398	0.107266	4.217544	0.0002
LOG(GEXEDU)	-0.074456	0.181003	-0.411352	0.6836
R-squared	0.406439	Mean dependent var		2.041881
Adjusted R-squared	0.368145	S.D. dependent var		0.761715
S.E. of regression	0.605482	Akaike info criterion		1.918513
Sum squared resid	11.36486	Schwarz criterion		2.053192
Log likelihood	-29.61473	Hannan-Quinn criter.		1.964443
F-statistic	10.61359	Durbin-Watson stat		0.585257
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000308			

Source: Researchers Computation using E-Views

From the regression result in table 2, the relationship between Unemployment rate and the universities enrolment is positive, which implies that, in Nigeria during the period under review, as enrolment increases, unemployment rate increase. The relationship between unemployment and government expenditure on education within this period under review is negative, which implies that as government increases its education expenditure, unemployment rate will decrease. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.40, explains that, 40% of variation in the dependent variable (Unemployment rate) is explained by the independent variables (Universities Enrolment and education expenditure). This implies that these two variables are key, in determining unemployment rate in Nigeria, though not absolute.

Tests for Statistical Significance of the Regression Equation

There is need to test the statistical significance of the parameters, and we are going to use t-test and f-test to test.

T-test

At 5% level of significance with the degree of freedom = $n - k = 35 - 3 = 32$.

$t_{0.05} = 2.021$. Therefore any value of t^* greater than $t_{0.025}$ implies that the parameter estimate is significant. For $B_0(C)$, $t^* = \frac{-3.661949}{1.262719} = -2.897755$. since the calculated value of "t" is greater than the critical value of "t" we conclude that the parameter is significant.

For $B_1(UNENRL)$, $t^* = \frac{0.452398}{0.107266} = 4.217544$. since the calculated value of "t" is greater than the critical value of "t" therefore we conclude that the parameter is significant.

For $B_2(GEXEDU)$, $t^* = \frac{-0.074456}{0.181003} = -0.411352$. Since the calculated value of "t" is less than the critical value of "t" we conclude that the parameter is statistically insignificant. Its estimation of government expenditure as an independent variable to unemployment is not statistically significant.

F-test

The calculated F-value obtained is $F^* = 10.61359$

The theoretical value of F at the 5% level of significance with $V_1 = K - 1 = 3 - 1 = 2$ and $V_2 = N - K = 35 - 3 = 32$ degrees of freedom is found from the F - tables

$$F_{0.05} = 3.15$$

Since $F^* > F_{0.05}$ we conclude that the estimated equation is statistically significant.

Analysis of Research Question

The multiple regression result, obtained in table 2 above provides us with information that is used in other to answer the research questions earlier raised in chapter one. The economic implications reached through each research question on educational policies adopted by the relevant authorities are also highlighted.

Research Question One

The research question one, states that "to what extent does students enrolment relates to unemployment rate in Nigeria?" From the result of our regression equation, it has been obtained that within the period under study the relationship between unemployment and the students enrolment is positive with a coefficient value of about 0.45 which implies that for an addition enrolment of one candidate the unemployment rate will increase by 0.45, to a greater extend it is a complex policy issue in education. The economic implication of this is that, the curriculum of our universities needs to tend toward the direction of self dependence and reliance rather than certification, so as additional enrolment should not increase unemployment but rather reduce unemployment.

Research Question Two

The research question two states that "Does government spending on education affects students' enrolment and unemployment rate in Nigeria?" From the correlation coefficient result obtained in table 3, the correlation between government spending and

students' enrolment is 0.48 which implies a positive but weak relationship between the two variables. From these results we can understand that, government allocation of funds to education alone cannot impact on the educational system but appropriate spending of such funds, on critical educational activities that can positively impact on the system is the most important area that needs to be looked at. The economic implication of this conclusion is that funds are scarce economic resources and spending need to be done rationally so as to maximise the results. Teacher motivation and availability of learning materials and infrastructure are key in the development of the educational system.

Research Question Three

The research question three states that "to what extent can the expanded curriculum in Nigerian universities help in curbing unemployment in Nigeria?" The regression result in table 2. Shows a positive relationship between unemployment and enrolment into Nigerian universities with a coefficient of 0.45 in which it implies that an increase in enrolment implies an increase in the unemployment rate by 0.45. From here we can see that within the period under study increase in enrolment increases the menace of unemployment which indicate the faulty part of the current curriculum of our universities today, which give premium to certification and graduation rather than the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge that can help graduates to be self reliant, since the system does not provide jobs that can absorb this unemployed graduates.

Therefore the economic implication of this is that an expanded curriculum that will cater for and give premium to skills rather than certification will be of great importance in curbing the unemployment menace in the country, that is it will help us in the area of human development with relevant and needed skills that will go a long way in curbing the unemployment menace.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed the nature of relationship that exist between unemployment rate and enrolment of candidates into universities and the annual government expenditure on education, shows that unemployment have a positive relationship with students enrolment, while unemployment has a negative relationship with government expenditure on education. Unemployment has been established as one of the major macroeconomics problems of Nigeria. Efforts has been put in place by successive governments over the past decades with the aim of ameliorating the unemployment rate in Nigeria, but these efforts has yielded little or no result. This study has led us to the point of identifying some of the causes of unemployment in Nigeria among them are the enrolment of students in Nigerian universities and the funding level of education in Nigeria compared to the government total annual expenditure over the period of thirty four (34) years.

Enrolment into Nigerian universities has been on the increase side, and government funding/expenditure on education has not gone near the UNESCO recommended level of 26% of government annual total expenditure. Unemployment has continued to be a serious macroeconomic problem to the Nigerian economy, With the increase in the number of universities in the country and number of graduates that are produced annually by this institutions, unemployment has become a point of concern and hence, the need to take a look at the curriculum currently in use in our universities, through the skills acquired by our university graduate, whether they promote self reliance, other than depending on jobs provided by the government that are not forthcoming. The educational system in Nigeria is today marred by the incessant strike action by both the teaching and non teaching staff of our institutions. This development has negatively affected the students' performance, leading to our schools producing graduates that are either unqualified or deficient in the necessary skills that are needed to enhance their productivity and self reliance.

Furthermore, in this study we were able to find out that unemployment has a positive relationship with university enrolment and negative relationship with government expenditure during the period under study. This implies that increase in enrolment increases the incidence of unemployment in the economy, which reflect a loophole in the curriculum currently in use in our universities, hence the need to redevelop the curriculum to meet the need of the society by creating the consciousness for self reliance among our graduates through the development of the potentials in them that have economic values. The findings also revealed that unemployment has a negative relationship with government expenditure on education. This implies that increase in government expenditure in terms of staff welfare, infrastructures and facilities that are needed for an enhance and quality teaching to take place can result into producing qualify students with the needed skills that can reduce the unemployment rate by making the graduates job creators rather than job seekers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and observations of this study, the following recommendations have been put forward:

1. Government should put in more effort in ensuring that funding of education is increased so that welfare of both teaching and non-teaching staff will be enhanced. This will go a long way in boosting their motivation level thereby increasing their commitment to work. Increased funding will also brought about infrastructures and teaching materials that can bring about meaningful teaching and learning. Nigeria has never attained the UNESCO funding of education benchmark of 26%, if effort can be put in place to attain that, it will go a long way in enhancing the quality of graduates our schools produce.
2. Deliberate efforts should be put in place to re-design the current curriculum of our universities, to be more of practical rather than the theoretical aspects that leaves

the graduate with no any relevant skill. The curriculum should be such that can be able to go beyond certification and graduation, but one that can help in developing the necessary and relevant skills, that are needed for self reliance, so that our graduates will be job creators rather than being job seekers.

3. Students, currently studying in our universities, should take their learning process very serious, and ensure that they go beyond the theories they learn in class, to the point of bringing out some practical aspect of their learning. This will help them after graduating from the university, they can have something to depend on, in case the jobs they are looking for are not forthcoming.
4. Parents should help their children, in choosing careers that perfectly relate to their abilities, so as to ensure that they make the best of what they will learn in school. Many parents in this regard are fond of forcing their children, to take up careers that the child have little or no interest in, this is an unhealthy development, because it will push the child to the point where he will gives no attention to what he is learning in school. This will in turn, affect the acquisition of relevant skills that are needed in adding value to the economy.
5. Since government is finding it very difficult to create jobs for the teeming youths that are graduating from our universities, an enabling environment that will give the private sector and non-governmental organisation opportunities to assist the government in this respect should be created.
6. The informal sector needs to be given serious attention, by the government, because this sector has the potential of helping the economy provide employment opportunities for our youths. This can be made possible if young Nigerian men and women are organised into corporative society, which will help them access funds and other facilities they need in operating the informal sector.

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