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Ilorin Journal of Human Resource Management (IJHRM) is an interdisciplinary journal that publishes high quality theoretical, empirical and review papers, covering the broad spectrum of Social and Management Sciences research. Ilorin Journal of Human Resource Management is dedicated to increase the depth of knowledge about Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management and other range of disciplines from scholars across the world.

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ANALYSES OF CONTEMPORARY LABOUR MARKET AND UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study analysed a contemporary labour market and unemployment spectrums in Nigeria. The stratified sampling technique was employed to select 50 respondents from the Head Offices of five (5) HR Consulting Firms and 300 job seekers in Nigeria, making a total of 350 respondents. The findings revealed that the presence of expatriates in Nigeria labour market has a significant relationship with the rate of unemployment in Nigeria and that reforms and regulations in the labour market have a significant relationship with the unemployment situation in Nigeria. The study concluded that the presence of expatriates and labour market reforms and regulation correlates with the unemployment situation in Nigeria. The study, hence recommends that there is need for the Nigerian government to implement a broad set of employment generation strategies that can help abridge unemployment, for instance, fighting corruption in all sectors of the nation's economy, invest more on entrepreneurship education, facilitating work environment for foreign direct investment, provision adequate power supply, among others.

Keywords: Employment Rate, Labour Force, Labour Market, Policies, Unemployment Situation

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, with a population of over 200 million people, could be considered the giant of Africa. Approximately youths are more than half of the entire population. As of the 2nd quarter of the year 2016, 24% of the youths are unemployed while 1.6m are under-employed (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). In underdeveloped and developing nations, including Nigeria, the prolonged unemployment situation is the utmost challenge, and it constitutes a particular issue to their respective labour markets. Meanwhile, if the labour's supply is outweighing the labour' demand, there is a tendency to result in unemployment in a country. Each year, Nigerian higher institutions produce thousands of graduates that enter the labour market under the condition of uncertainty, and this makes the trend of unemployment to be high over the years. Olatunji and Abioye (2011) in Uddin and Uddin (2013) described the unemployment situation as the condition of the people who are without jobs. While the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2009) termed unemployment as several parsimoniously people without work or job. These people are seeking employment and readily available when a job is secured, in addition to formerly employed people or voluntarily resigned from a particular job.

In resources apportionment, labour market plays a pivotal role especially in employment situation of a country, and it could be an avenue in which labour is traded like commodities and by this means a systematic relationship will exist between workers and the organizations (Grimshaw, Ward, Rubery & Beynon, 2008). In principle, labour market policies, such as hiring or employment subsidies, are said to be the right incentives for job creation and generation of employment. The growing concerns about the alarming rate of unemployment which has littered streets with unemployed youths roaming about, engaging in motorbike riding, internet fraud, virus distribution, kidnapping, cybercrime, such as yahoo-yahoo, unethical hacking, hijacking, and other social vices. Several youths' empowerment and developmental programmes have been put in place by federal, some state governments and several private organisations. For instance, in 1986, the federal government of Nigeria created the National Directorate of Employment to established a programme, skills acquisition for the youths. Also, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) was introduced in 2001, likewise the coming of Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWIN) during 2011, the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) 2012 and recently the distribution of N-Power 2016 and 2017, just to mention few, are some of the various and lofty interventions aimed at ensuring jobs creation in Nigeria.

Despite these efforts, it appears as if the country has been flooded with expatriates working in nearly all sectors of the economy ranging from oil and gas to telecommunication, construction, and the inclusion of the South African super mall, Shoprite, among others. This is ridiculous because the rate of unemployment in Nigeria continues to rise at an increasing rate. For instance, the rise of unemployment youths from 11.9% in 2005 to 19.7% in 2009, while over 48% increment in 2015 (Aganga, 2010; Ogunmade, 2013; Asaju, Arome & Anyio, 2014). Given the above, the study aimed at analyzing the contemporary labour market and unemployment situation in Nigeria with a focus on some selected recruitment firms and targeted unemployed youths in the country. The main objective of the study was to analyse the contemporary labour market and unemployment situation in Nigeria. Other specific objectives:

- i. to examine the extent to which the presence of expatriates in the Nigerian labour market associated with the high rate of unemployment.
- ii. to determine the correlation between the reforms and regulations in the labour market and unemployment situation in Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of labour market refers to an external supply of and demand for human resources to a particular industry, area, or economy from which organisations attract employees. In the labour market institution, employers usually go for capable and loyal employees while applicants were contending for lucrative jobs. Meanwhile, the supply of labour workforce and demand for labour force is necessitated on the bargaining power of the social partners (Umoru &Yaqub, 2013; Aganga, 2010).

The study by Stampini and Verdier-Chouchane (2011) described labour market from different perspectives; for instance, the inactivity, unemployment, regular wage employment, casual wage employment, and self-employment. The inactive and unemployed have not worked or have worked less than one hour during the last week before being interviewed; hence, the unemployed are either (a) looking for a job or (b) not looking for a job but willing to start working if they receive an offer. Wage employees are those working for at least one hour during the week before the interview and have received a salary. They are usually segmented into regular employees and

casual/seasonal, the latter being a proxy for informality, and finally, self-employed have been working independently for at least one hour.

On the other hand, Du, Nie, and Wei (2015) considered labour market from internal and external angles. The internal labour market refers to the mechanism by which existing employees are given particular roles within the organization. The main features of an organisation's internal labour market are reflective of several human resource policies and procedures. For instance, the level of investment in employee training and development, the availability of career development opportunities, and the extent to which employee retention and job security are prioritised. The external labour market also represents its external supply or available stock of labour. The types of labour that the firm requires and the potential pool of workers available are determined by the sector in which the organization operates. For instance, an organisation's external labour market can be local, regional, national, or international, and many large organisations can operate in all these markets and also depend on the type of labour sought and its relative scarcity.

The National Bureau of Statistics (2016) describes people in employment as those that work for wages in the formal sector and those members that work for at least 20 hours in the informal sector. However, the under-employed people are those who work part-time, usually for at least 20 hours and less than 40 hours; they are willing to give more hours than usually do. In the labour market institutions, labour utilise their time and efforts to secure wages from organisations while organisations demand labour to produce goods and services. The interface of demand and supply usually determines the price of labour force, which is known as the wage rate. The wages are most likely to be high in some industries and jobs where the demand for labour is high and where the supply of labour is relatively low (Kim, 2011; Ellen, 2012; Andersen, 2012).

Forms of Unemployment Situation in Nigeria

Several studies such as Udu and Agu (2005); Grimshaw, *et al* (2008); Harold, (2009) cited in Feldmann (2009); Anyanwuocha (2010) cited in Umoru and Yaqub, (2013); Fajana (2000); Oladele, Akeke and Oladunjoye (2011); Uddin and Uddin (2013) identified seven major types of unemployment; (i) seasonal unemployment; this occurs in the industrial sector and in the enterprise that is seasonal engaging labour temporarily during peak periods. For example, during the rainy season, many men who are engaged in fishing and building may go out of work as a result of bad weather. (ii) Unemployment can be structural; this is a situation where there is a mismatch between supply and demand for labour. For instance, where demand for a particular type of skill for a particular task is low, those in possession of the skill are at relatively greater risk of being out of work. (iii) frictional unemployment; this reflects a temporary mismatch in the demand and supply of labour which is always present in an economy. For instance, a worker might be unemployed while looking for a particular type of job but yet to identify an appropriate existing vacancy. Also, (iv) unemployment is also transitional; this is sometimes referred to as normal unemployment because of its short duration. Besides, it does not affect the economy of the nation in any form. In construction, contract jobs, which rely heavily on manual labour, workers are temporarily laid off at the end of major assignments. Such workers are re-engaged when other jobs are available.

(v) Residual unemployment; this may be caused by old age, physical or mental disability, irresponsible attitude towards the job, and inadequate training. Also, (vi) cyclical unemployment reflects business or economic cycles. For instance, in times of recession, the demand for labour

in general falls and unemployment rises. Lastly, (vii) technological unemployment; this is caused by the constant technological changes that have increased mechanisation of production. This results in less demand for workforce and displacement of human labour. For example, the introduction of automated teller machines (ATMs) decreased the number of teller attendants needed in the banks. In summary, unemployment can be voluntary or involuntary according to Uddin and Uddin (2013), voluntary unemployment is attributed to an individual's decision, which includes workers who reject low wage jobs. Involuntary unemployment, on the other hand, exists because of the socio-economic variables such as the market structure, government policies, etc. which saturate the environment in which one operates. This includes the dismissal of workers due to an economic crisis, industrial decline, bankruptcy or organisational restructuring. In most cases, unemployment in Nigeria is usually involuntary (Kim, 2011; Andersen, 2012; Uddin & Uddin, 2013).

Analysis of Labour Market in Nigeria

As of 2010, Nigerian workforce employment by sector was about 70% in agriculture, 20% in services, and 10% in the industry. The oil industry, for instance, though, a major contributor to foreign exchange earnings, employs less than 1% of the workforce (Sodipe & Ogunrinola, 2011; Umoru, 2013). The National Bureau of Statistics (2016) revealed that more than 1.5m Nigerians became unemployed in the first quarter of 2016. Therefore, the nation's unemployment rate grew from 10.4% in the last quarter of the year 2015 to 12.1%. In 2016, the workforce population, i.e., those within the working-age population, willing, able, and actively looking for work increased to 78.4 million in the year 2015. This means that an additional 1.5 million active persons within 15-64 entered the workforce, that is, those that were able and willing and actively looking for work between January 1st and March 31st of the year 2016. It consisted of newly qualified graduates, new entrants into the economically active population, and within the same period, the total number in full-time employment decreased by 528,148 people or 0.97% in the year 2016. This involves people who lost their jobs and were either forced or for various reasons to choose to move from full employment to under-employment. Within the same period, number of unemployed persons increased by 1.4 million. That is, the increase of 518,000 between 3rd quarter and 4th quarter in the year 2015 and between the fourth quarter in the year 2015 and the first quarter of the year 2016. Out of a total youth workforce of 38.2 million representing 48.7% of the total workforce in Nigeria, 15.2 million were either unemployed or under-employed in the first quarter of 2016, representing a youth unemployment rate of 42.2%.

The total workforce in Nigeria is approximately 52 million people as of 2010 (Nigeria Economic Fact Sheet, 2013). This is the population between the ages of 20 and 59 years. The government employed about 2.4 million more workers in the workforce. This is almost 5% of the working population and represents only 8% of the employment in the country. Thus, the rest of the employment, 92% is provided through the private sector. A total of 28,421,008 people were employed in the private industry and service sectors between the years 2010 and 2016. Between the periods, several private firms laid off almost 9% of the workforce owing to tightening the business environment. This led to a decrease in employment in the formal private sector between the years 2010 and 2016 (Umoru, 2013; NBS, 2016). Accordingly, there was a total of 24.5 million people between the ages of 15-64 that were willing and able to work and actively seeking work in the workforce that were either unemployed or underemployed compared to 22.4 million in the 4th quarter of 2015 and 20.7 million in the 3rd quarter of 2015.

Theoretical Framework

Classical Theory: The classical economists assumed that in any nation, there is always full employment. But, the situation where there is unemployment, there should be an amendment in general wages, which is likely to help the economy to achieve full employment. The theory assumed that if there is a reduction in the money wages, the cost of production and the price of the commodities will be left with no option than to drop. The moment the prices are falling, the demand for products and services will eventually upsurge. The likelihood increase in sales will compel the employment of more labour, and ultimately the full employment may likely be accomplished. This classical view was based on the assumption that change in wages is directly and proportionately related to real wages. Therefore, when the wage rate is reduced, the real wage is also reduced to a certain extent. Consequently, unemployment is reduced, and full employment is attained.

Institutionalist Approach: This approach believed that some social, political, and psychological factors are effectively influencing decisions of workers regarding labour supply. Admittedly, that firms do not lay more stress on wages as a factor in determining the volume of employment; instead, they consider market (demand) for their product as a more important factor in determining the volume of employment. In summary, the Classicists advocated a reduction in wages to achieve full employment in the economy. However, Keynes was against wage-cutting and argued for an increase in effective demand to remove unemployment.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey by collecting data from a defined population. Five (5) human resource (HR) consulting firms; Workforce Management Centre, Lagos; Integrated Corporate Service Limited, Lagos; Learners Edge Consulting, Lagos; Institute of Professional Recruitment Consultants, Lagos; and Stronix Consults Nigeria Limited were randomly sampled. They are recruitment and employment firms with a focus on recruitment, selection, and placement of job applicants into different organisations. Since the population was unknown, this made the study adopt a hypothetical sample in line with the views of Bradford and Cullen (2012) and Attewell and Rule (1991), which state that hypothetical samples may be used for an unknown population.

However, a total of 700 samples were drawn, which composed of fifty (50) staff of the HR consulting companies and three hundred (300) job seekers. This was in line with the opinion of Dillman (2000), Hill, Barley, and McDougall (2003), who reported that a sample size of one hundred (100) and above is enough to represent good research findings. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the study population, the samples were selected using stratified random sampling. With stratified sampling, the researcher divided the population into separate groups. A hypothetical sample was drawn from each group to serve the study purpose. The data used in this study were derived from two sources: primary and secondary. For the primary data, a structured questionnaire was employed to solicit a response from the respondents. The secondary sources focused on previous researches of scholars, government data, newspapers, journal articles as well as internet search engines, specifically, in the construct variables. The questionnaire was structured basically to ascertain the opinion of the respondents to have a logical basis to refute or accept the study hypotheses. The data obtained from the respondents were collated, analysed and presented using a correlation model of inferential statistics. This was employed to assess the relationship between the construct variables.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from respondents via the administration of the questionnaire. The data obtained were analysed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics to described mean, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviation of the given data. Out of the 700 questionnaires administered on the respondents, 640 representing 91% were appropriately filled and found usable for analysis. Data collected were analysed using SPSS version 23 for the Bivariate Correlation.

Table 1: Analysis of respondents' level of agreements

S/N	Constructs	SD	D	Un	A	SA
1	The presence of expatriates in Nigeria Labour market affects the unemployment rate in the country	3.9	2.7	8.4	39.2	45.8
2	Lack of Labour Market information funding unemployment situation in Nigeria	2.	5.8	14.7	15	61.9
3	Labour market policy effective in combating unemployment in Nigeria	2	2.3	7.5	13.4	74.7
4	The active labour market and its effect on an individual level	2.3	10.2	10.8	40.6	36.1
5	The Labour union-wage demand encourage unemployment in Nigeria	1.3	2.5	4.2	30	62
6	The alarming rate of unemployment rate in Nigeria is as a result of the economic recession	11.7	4.8	6.6	44.5	32.3
7	Analysis of the impact of outsourcing employee arrangement on the unemployment situation in Nigeria	3	4.2	6.3	55.6	30.9

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 revealed that 25(3.9%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the presence of expatriates in Nigeria labour market contributes to the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria, 17(2.7%) disagreed, 54(8.4%) indifferent, 251(39.2%) agreed. In comparison, 293(45.8%) strongly agreed. Also, the Table shows that 18(2.8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the lack of labour market information funding the unemployment spectrums in Nigeria, 37(5.8%) disagreed, 94(14.7%) indifferent, 93(15%) agreed. In comparison, 398(61.9%) strongly agreed that the lack of labour market information often leads to unemployment issues in Nigeria. The analysis in Table 1 provided that 13(2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the labour market policy effective in combating unemployment situation in Nigeria, 15(2.3%) disagreed, 48(7.5%) indifferent, 86(13.4%) agreed while 478(74.7%) strongly agreed that respondents always see the policy of the federal government, specifically on labour market as effective with the introduction of several empowerment programmes. Besides, the information provided in Table 1 revealed that 15(2.3%) strongly disagreed that the active labour market affects the individual level, 65(10.2%) disagreed, 69(10.8%) indifferent, 260(40.6%) agreed. In comparison, 231(36.1%) strongly agreed that the active labour market and its effect affect an individual level in Nigeria labour market.

The Table 1 shows that 8(1.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the labour union wage demand usually encourages unemployment, 16(2.5%) disagreed, 27(4.2%) indifferent, 192(30%) agreed. In comparison, 397(62%) were on the opinion that the activities of labour unions continue to demand increment in wages affect the federal government resistant to improve on employment level. Information provided in Table 1 revealed that 19(3%) of the respondents

strongly agreed that the alarming rate of unemployment is a result of economic recession, 27(4.2%) disagreed, 40(6.3%) were indifferent, 365(55.6%) agreed. In comparison, 198(30.9%) were strongly agreed that the new situation of the economic crisis in Nigeria may be the cause of the alarming rate of unemployment in Nigeria as shown above. Table 1 shows the analysed of the respondents on outsourcing employee arrangement and it impacts on unemployment, 19(3%) strongly disagreed, 27(4.2%) disagreed, 40(6.3%) were indifferent 356(55.6%) agreed. In comparison, 198(30.9%) strongly agreed that outsourcing employee has an impact on employment.

Table 2: The mean statistics and standard deviations on the view of labour market and unemployment situation in Nigeria.

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Presence of expatriates in Nigeria Labour market contribute to the high rate of unemployment	335	1.00	5.00	4.2031	.97992
Lack of Labour Market information funding unemployment situation in Nigeria	335	1.00	5.00	4.2750	1.08598
Labour market policy effective in combating unemployment in Nigeria	335	1.00	5.00	4.5641	.88402
The active labour market and its effect on an individual level	335	1.00	5.00	3.9797	1.04270
The Labour union-wage demand encourage unemployment in Nigeria	335	1.00	5.00	4.4906	.79704
The alarming rate of unemployment rate in Nigeria is as a result of the economic recession	335	1.00	5.00	3.8094	1.26636
Analysis of the impact of outsourcing employee arrangement on the unemployment situation in Nigeria	335	1.00	5.00	4.0734	.89648
Valid N (listwise)	335				

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 shows the analysis of respondents views on independent variable of labour market institution (presence of expatriates in Nigeria Labour, Labour Market Information, Labour market policy, The active labour market, Labour union-wage demand, economic recession and outsourcing employee arrangement) and the dependent variable of the unemployment situation in Nigeria. It was revealed that the respondents mostly agreed that labour market flexibility can impinge on the cause of unemployment issues in Nigeria, likewise other variables used in the study. Also, the Table 2 revealed that the current minimum wage demand might likely the causes of unemployment and may cause federal government from employ new hands, in the same vein, the issue of the working environment and work-related outcome have an impact on the skyrocketing rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Likewise, the other variables of labour market found positively correlated with unemployment situation in the country with means statistics of 4.20, 4.28, 4.56, 3.98, 4.49, 3.81 and 4.07 and the corresponding standard deviations of 0.98, 1.09, 0.88, 1.44, 0.80, 1.27 and 0.90 respectively.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 3: Symmetric Correlation between the unemployment situation in Nigeria, the presence of expatriates and regulations in the market

Variables		Unemployment	Presence of expatriates	Regulations and Reform
Unemployment	Spearman's rho	1	.585**	-.012
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	Sum of squares and cross-product	488.555	89.066	77.051
	Covariance	1.463	0.267	0.231
	N	335	335	335
Presence of expatriates	Spearman's rho	.225**	1	.624**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	Sum of squares and cross-product	89.066	320.997	203.952
	Covariance	.267	.961	.611
	N	335	335	335
Regulations and reform	Spearman's rho	-.191**	.624**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	Sum of squares and cross-product	77.051	203.952	333.236
	Covariance	.231	.611	.998
	N	335	335	335

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), a. Not assuming the null hypothesis b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis. c. Based on 640 sampled tables

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The Symmetric Measures of Spearman's rho presented in Table 3 premised on the perceived unemployment situation in Nigeria and the presence of expatriates in the country and reform and regulation in the labour market. The cells on the principal diagonal show the relationship of each variable on itself, which yields a perfect relationship. The unemployment situation was positively correlated with the presence of expatriates ($r=0.225$; $p<0.05$), indicating both are moving in the same direction. Also, with a value of reform and regulation (-0.012 ; $p<0.05$), which suggests a negative relationship with the unemployment situation. The presence of expatriate variables, on the other hand, have a positive relationship with reform and regulation variables (0.961 ; $p<0.05$ and 0.624 ; $p<0.05$), respectively. This implies that the unemployment situation in Nigeria is positively correlated with the presence of expatriates but negatively correlated with reform and regulations. Since all elements of labour market and unemployment are jointly significant with established variables and the p-values are less than the designated alpha level at 5%. i.e. $p\text{-values}=0.00<0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted by posited that there is enough evidence to suggest a positive relationship exists between construct variables.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings indicate that there was a significant effect of labour market on the unemployment situation the P-value of all the variables gives a significant value of less than 0.05 or less than 5% level of significance. Since the ($r=0.225$; $p<0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the presence of expatriates in Nigeria labour market has a significant relationship with the

rate of unemployment in Nigeria. The outcome was in tandem with the study of Uddin and Uddin (2013). The findings also revealed that there was a negative correlation between construct variables with the p-values of the relevant variables are less than 5% level of significance. Since (-0.012; $p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, since the null hypothesis is rejected, it implies that the reforms and regulation in the labour market have a significant relationship with the unemployment situation in Nigeria. The result of this hypothesis supports the views of Stampini and Verdier-Chouchane (2011) and Ellen (2012) that reforms and regulations affect the change in the supply and demand for labour and the labour market situation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings revealed that reforms and regulation in the labour market have a significant relationship with the unemployment situation in Nigeria. It is therefore concluded that there is a need for strong reforms and regulations that will enhance labour market and reduce the unemployment situation facing the country. The study also established that the presence of expatriates in Nigeria labour market has a significant relationship with the rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Therefore, it could be concluded that the use of expatriates in the Nigeria labour market breeds unemployment, especially when such expatriates are employed in sectors where the teeming army of unemployed Nigerians has the knowledge, skills, and expertise to perform.

It is therefore recommended that the government should engage in reform and the adoption of policies that may improve the quality of employment and minimize the possible negative short-term effect. Nigerian government at all levels may need to implement a broad set of employment generation policy reforms that can help ameliorate the unemployment situation: investing more in entrepreneurship education, which will enable the youth to become self-reliant; creation of enabling environments for Foreign Direct Investment; improvement in the agricultural sector. Likewise, the need to provide an adequate power supply that is capable of creating employment for local artisans, cottage, SMEs, among others, cannot be overemphasised. The government should also enforce the regulation on the influx and the use of expatriates in the Nigeria labour market. These will minimise the unemployment situation facing the country and chart a path for a prosperous future

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