

Graduate Unemployment in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Remediable Approaches

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Abstract

The study explored the phenomenon of graduate unemployment as well as its causal factors, consequences and remedies in Nigeria. Using quantitative research method, data were collected from 360 Abuja (Nigeria Federal Capital) based professionals through a self-administered questionnaire structured in line with the modified Likert scale. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique and the choice of these participants was influenced by their orientation in people value added and experience in development planning in the country. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, mean and standard deviation and Kurtosis. The study identified a combination of causal factors as responsible for the aggravated incidence of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. Findings also indicated that the socio-economic implications of graduate unemployment on the nation and affected individuals were gruesome. Aside from being a waste of human capital on the nation, those caught in the web were often susceptible to frustration and non-conforming behaviours. Furthermore, findings showed that there was no effective collaboration between universities and labour employers in providing relevant skills required for employability and employment fulfillment of university graduates. From the perspective of remediable measures, the study found amongst others, counter-active top-down approach to job creation programme design and implementation as pathway to graduate unemployment reduction in Nigeria. The study concluded that graduate unemployment was one of the Nigerian's socio-economic challenges and to remediate this social ordeal would require soft wired deliberate policies of government, innovative all all-inclusive approach and concerted efforts of various stakeholders in the country.

Keywords: Graduate unemployment, Human capital, Labour market and Pathway

1.0 Introduction

In the contemporary global world, the up-shoot of graduate unemployment has become an all reaching concern. It is a challenge that most economies are facing under the current economic circumstances (Oppong & Sachs, 2015). Even the developed nations have not shown exception to this frightful social problem, although the up-surge is more pronounced in the developing countries. In Africa and Nigeria in particular, graduate unemployment is a very daunting challenge in the labour market. Oddly enough, Balogun (2016) hinted that almost half of the 10million graduates, churned out of the over 668 universities in Africa yearly, do not get jobs. This by implication goes to establish that, graduate unemployment is one of the most critical developmental problems facing the African continent. It has not only disallowed some of the countries to achieve their economic greatness and developmental aspirations, but has also kept them as nations with jobless growth economy.

By statistical information in Nigeria, the phenomenon of graduate unemployment has reached an alarming state. For instance, Akintoye (2008) indicated that graduate unemployment as a percentage of total unemployment rose in Nigeria from 1% in 1974 to 4% in 1984. In less than a decade, between 1992 and 1997, it accounted for 32% of the unemployed labour force in the country (Dabaleni, Oni & Adekola 2000). Conservatively, Eneji, Mai-Laifa & Weiping (2013) put the rate of unemployed graduates at about 60% of the Nigeria labour supply market. Recent publication supplied by National Bureau of Statistics (2016) indicated that a total of 52million citizens within the economically active population of Nigeria is jobless and this figure consisted mostly of newly qualified university graduates.

By any standard, the picture that emerges from these statistical information seem to have portrayed Nigeria as a country that is incapable of providing wage employment opportunities to a substantial number of her trained university graduates. According to Afolabi, Yusuf and Idowu (2014), of all the problems facing Nigeria in recent time, none is as virulent, persistent and agonizing as the problems of high unemployment among Nigerian graduates. The deleterious effects on the nation's economy and affected individuals are highly unquantifiable. Aside from being a huge waste of human capital and loss of investment in higher education, those caught in the web of this social menace are often susceptible to frustration and non-conforming behaviours. As Baku, Ashiaagbor, Simon and Alfred (2008) put it, rampant unemployment of university graduates is not only a disincentive to schooling, but could also be recipe for social unrest, if not checked. For these reasons, reducing the problems of graduate unemployment in Nigeria is tantamount to solving one of the greatest macro-economic challenges militating against rapid transformation of the nation's economy.

With flood of unemployed graduates, Nigeria as a country will continue to be a disoriented nation, if she cannot effectively apprehend this social ordeal, which requires deliberate policies of government to arrest. Some emerging economies like South Korea, Thailand, Israel, and Brazil amongst others have successfully taken decisive and bold actions to ameliorate the enigma of graduate unemployment by creating jobs for their trained graduates. Although, over the years, it is not that successive governments (both past and present) in Nigeria have been folding arms and doing nothing to remediate the problems of this social malfesance, it is the ineffectiveness of the programmes designed and implemented by government for the reduction of graduate unemployment that is worrisome. These programmes failed to achieve the desired results partly because of poor implementation and other intervening factors in Nigeria (Chukwu & Igwe, 2012).

Given the sickening current trend of graduate unemployment in Nigeria, it is surprising that research efforts have been passive in this area of study which is of strategic importance to sustainable growth and development in the country. As such, there is need for more studies to complement and build on the extent of the earlier works. Moreso, that previous studies have largely focused on youth and general unemployment situation in Nigeria (Uddin, 2013., Adawo, Essien & Ekpo, 2012., Ezie, 2012; Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010., Akintoye, 2008., Fapohunda, 2003., Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2002). Hence, the present study which is empirical is fully justified.

Study Objectives

The broad aim of this study is to explore the problem-solving of graduate unemployment in Nigeria, while the specific objectives are to:

- (i) unravel the causal factors of unemployment among university graduates in Nigeria,
- (ii) examine the economic and social consequences of graduate unemployment in the country
- (iii) investigate the level of collaboration in existence between the Nigerian universities and labour employers on the employability of university graduates, and
- (iv) explore the remediable pathway to graduate unemployment reduction in Nigeria.

The study will capture the realities of graduate unemployment and enhance the platforms for employment intensity and job creation in an emerging economy like Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Graduate Unemployment

Literature is replete with various definitions of graduate unemployment. According to Oppong & Sachs (2015) graduate unemployment is defined as the number or proportion of degree holders (graduate and post graduate) in a given economy who are capable and willing to work, but unable to find jobs. This definition established graduate unemployment as a specific type of unemployment among people with academic degree from higher institution working zero hour and earning zero income. Viewed almost in the same context, Eneji, Maifa, & Weiping (2013); Akinyemi & Ikunomore (2012) and Ogege (2011) described graduate unemployment to encompass graduate of universities and polytechnics who are fit and ready to work, but could not find a job or discriminated by experience. In these categories of people are fresh and young tertiary institution graduates, retrenched graduates seeking re-engagement and those who are underemployed or on disguised employment.

Within this perspective, graduate unemployment has been construed in this study to mean condition of involuntary idleness for higher education graduates who are actively seeking for remunerative employment, but cannot find any, under the prevailing economic circumstance.

Causal Factors of Graduate Unemployment

Various causal factors traceable to the prevailing general status of socio-economic system in some emergent nations were held responsible for exacerbating the growing incidence of graduate unemployment (Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria. (CIPMN), 2016, International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2012; Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWCA), 2008; Oppong & Sachs, 2015; Oluwajodu, Blaauwu, Greyling & Kleynhans, 2015; and Oluyomi & Adedeji, 2012). In terms of specificities, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPMN, 2016) identified some factors that predisposed tertiary institution graduates to unemployment in the country. These were lack of national employment policy, sub-optimal quality of graduates, educational system not tailored and aligned to industry need and inappropriate educational curricula. Others are poor political governance, poor setting of policy direction, inconsistent government policy and harsh business environment. Besides, in recent decades, the Nigeria economy has not achieved any significant diversification and the country's tertiary education system has witnessed a ponderous admission overload of students, resulting into massive over supply of higher education graduates. This lack of synergy between the production of graduates and employment opportunities underscore the complexity of the graduate unemployment issue in Nigeria (Ogege, 2011).

In Ghana, Oppong (2013) gave over supply of university graduates, mis-alignment of the educational system output, inadequate practical training and inelastic labour absorptive capacity in both the private and public sectors as causal factors of graduate unemployment. This was as a result of the non-expansion of job market employment opportunities and slow growth in sustainable economic development in that country. Similar findings have been documented in Malaysia by Sirat & Shuib (2012) and Noor (2011) where job mis-match, English proficiency, misguided educational qualification and lack of employable skills were given as factors accountable for unemployment among university graduates. Madoui (2015) also found the disconnection between the university education system and the world of work as the striking cause of graduate unemployment in Algeria. The skills acquired from the tertiary institutions appeared dysfunctional and irrelevant. In consequence, some of the university graduates saw themselves in predicament because of the gap in skills acquired in the university and skills requirement set by employers in the Algerian working environment.

Following the same context, Naong (2011) established that most South African graduates struggled to find employment because they have chosen the wrong field of study and other weaknesses in the country's educational system. Aside, employers of labour in South Africa were only interested in applicants having practical experience and marketable workplace skills suitable for paid job fulfillment. As such, the gap between available skills possessed by applicants and labour market needs, in addition to graduate turn-out intensity, resulted into high rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa (Oluwajodu, Blaauw, Greyling & Kleynhans, 2015). More importantly, large scale corruption remains unabated, stagnating and retarding economic development with negative spill-over effects on the economies of most of the developing nations. This unwholesome practice coupled with misdirection of resources aggravated the incidence of graduate unemployment especially in Nigeria.

Economic and Social Consequences of Graduate Unemployment

According to Shadare and Elegbede (2012), the phenomenon of graduate unemployment as it is being experienced today in the developing countries like Nigeria, constitutes a peculiar problem to the labour market and the general economy of these countries. The economic cost of this social problem involves reduction in gross domestic product of any nation. It reduces economic welfare, reduces output and erodes human capital (Oluwajodu, Blaauwu, Greyling, & Kleyhans, 2015). As such, the performance of the economy in most of the developing countries, where graduate unemployment persists, is enfeebled as a result of under-utilization of the labour resource. The maximum economic benefits that would have accrued from genuine harmonization of socio-political and economic forces, have eluded the economy of these countries leading to unpleasant dirges of poverty (Ajayi, 2015). In essence, graduate unemployment is an immense way of human resources that could contribute to the economic progress of any nation.

Viewed seriously, Madoui (2015) opined that beyond the deprivation of salary, graduate unemployment entails removal from the indispensable socializing effect of work. It undermines the self-esteem of the affected persons and raptures them from social ties and relationship. Hence, in Nigeria and other developing nations, the unemployed graduates are characterized by shame, boredom and hardship. With the concurrent marginalization from the world of work, the unemployed graduates have been put in a state of worklessness and made to become dispossessed persons with no income value in the society. They are perpetually unhappy with themselves in the world of material consideration (Adawo, Essien & Ekpo, 2012). Also, they suffer social exclusion and lack social recognition which often make friends and relations to regard them as liabilities in the society. These destroy morals and break social relationship (Asmare & Mulate, 2014) which paves way for disaggregation of social bond and instability in the level of social order in a country. Thus, the accelerated level of non-conforming behaviours among the unemployed graduates has culminated into unpleasant social vices which have suffocated the entire Nigeria's environment.

Remediable Approaches to Graduate Unemployment Reduction

According to Adetayo, Oke & Aderonmu (2015), despite various intervention programmes by the federal government of Nigeria such as establishment of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP). Problem of graduate unemployment remains unabated in Nigeria. This is because of the hard wired implementation of the intervention programmes and non-inclusive approaches adopted coupled with the weak institutional frame work and uncertainty arising from frequent policy changes and inconsistencies of government. Aside, these government policies and programmes have not been designed to generate adequate economic opportunities capable of reducing graduate unemployment in Nigeria (Chukwu & Igwe, 2012). In the real sense of it, achievements reported by the NDE in particular are mere paper indices that do not reflect the reality of the state of graduate unemployment level in Nigeria.

However, as part of the remediable approaches to the reduction of graduate employment in Nigeria, Bassey & Atan (2012) and De Grauwe (2008) posited that today's volatile labour market requires government's policy linking education to world of work and developing university curricula content that go beyond theoretical knowledge or specific technical skills but transversal skills that include reasoning and relations. Indeed, most university curricula in many developing nations especially in Nigeria bear little or no practical relevance to the needs of their national economy. In order to remedy this grievous problem, Poletaes and Robinson (2008) suggested that universities should engage in concrete partnership with employers of labour to develop a demand driven curriculum that will produce graduates with skills suitable for employment fulfillment. They also proffered a competency based educational scheme to blend theory and practice, thereby inculcating entrepreneurial and vocational acquisition skills in tertiary institution graduates.

Some Nigerian scholars and researchers have also suggested various approaches to graduate unemployment reduction such as: empowerment of agricultural sector and encouragement of private sector industries, (Ajayi, 2015) agriculture and tourism as priority sectors for employment generation, (Eneji, Mai-Laifa & Weiping, 2013), entrepreneurship development and venture capital promotion (Adawo, 2015), rendering mentoring roles to university graduate to become self employed (Chukwu & Igwe, 2012). No doubt, these methods could be bottom-up approach and innovative path to solving unemployment among university graduates, but should not be seen as all-sure strategies. Considering the present state of hostile economic environment, weak governance, enfeebled institutional frame work and poor consumer spending power presently in Nigeria, over-reliance on some of the approaches may be ill pre-disposed to reduction of graduate unemployment. Enforcing university graduates to become self-employed through the arrays of sublunary entrepreneurial and other puerile vocational acquisition programmes like bead making, carpentry, tailoring, barbing as being presently pursued in Nigerian universities may be waste of human capital. In this scenario, university graduates should only be pulled into entrepreneurship using soft-wired approaches and deliberate policies of government but not pushed if the nation genuinely wants to reduce graduate unemployment.

Research Method

Survey research design was employed for this study. The targeted population comprised 360 Abuja, (Nigeria Federal Capital) based professionals selected through purposive sampling technique from twelve (12) professional groupings through a self administered questionnaire structured in line with the modified Likert scale.

These professions were Human resources Management, Law, Accountancy, Agriculture Journalism, Marketing, Business Consulting, Lecturing, Engineering, Architecture, Medicine and Teaching. Out of the 360 copies of the questionnaire administered, 342 copies were appropriately filled, and fit for analysis with a response rate of 95%. In each of the profession, availability and willingness to respond were the overriding factors used as criteria for inclusion in the sample. The validity and reliability of the research instrument used were authenticated by Psychometric and Test and Measurement experts with minor reviews. Their suggestions were used to amend some of the items in the questionnaire which further improved on the contents before being distributed to respondents. Using Kunder-Cronbach Co-efficient Alpha at 0.05 level of significance, the reliability co-efficient of 0.81 was obtained, which was considered high enough for the study. Data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

4.0 Result of findings

4.1 Personal Attributes Details

Findings on the personal attributes of the respondents showed that their mean age is 37.6 years with a standard deviation of 5.2 years. The gender of respondents revealed a disproportionate representation where males accounted for 67.3% of the respondents and female respondents represented 32.7%. This presented a ratio of 2:1 across the gender group skewed in favour of male. This finding is not unconnected with the fact that men are mostly available since women are still not numerically strong as their male counterparts in most professional occupations in Nigeria (FITC, 2012). On marital status, an overwhelming majority (89.3%) of the respondents were married, while the rest (20.7%) were either separated, divorced or widowed. Findings equally revealed the involvement of the respondents to three known religious affiliations with Christians (63.6%), Muslims (33.9%) while the rest (2.5%) of the respondents were traditionalist. It is significant to note that all the respondents possessed higher education and various professional qualifications, an indication of the setting where the research was conducted. There was no significant differentiation in the professional /occupational distribution of the respondents except in Engineering (6.9%), Architecture (6.9%), and Medicine (6.1%). All other professions like: Human Resources Management, Law, Accountancy, Agriculture, Teaching, Journalism, Marketing, Business Consultancy and Lecturing had (8.3%) across board.

Causal Factors of Graduate Unemployment

Data presented in Table 1 showed the responses of participants on casual factors of graduate unemployment.. The mean score values ranged between 4.00 (lowest) to 4.65 (highest) indicating a perceived feeling of strong casual factors. The findings of the mean score values were derived from the Likert numerical scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) with poor political governance and non-diversification of the nation's economy having the highest mean score value of 4.65, which is higher than the standard mean response average of 2.5 on the 5-point Likert rating scale.

Table 1: Causal Factors of Graduate Unemployment

Causal factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indecisive	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness
Poor political governance and undiversification of the nation's economy	35% (120)	40% (137)	2% (7)	18% (61)	5% (17)	4.65	.616	.865	-.648
Lack of synergy between the supply and demand for graduates in the Nigerian labour market	30% (102)	40% (13%)	4% (14)	10% (34)	16% (55)	4.56	.721	.834	-.612
Sub-optimal quality of graduates production.	28% (97)	42% (143)	2% (7)	15% (51)	13% (44)	4.50	.832	.843	-.643
High profile corruption and misdirection of nation's resources	30% (102)	45% (154)	6% (20)	10% (34)	9% (32)	4.30	.837	.716	-.631
Lack of national Employment policy	15% (51)	50% (171)	8% (28)	17% (58)	10% (34)	4.00	1.47	.482	-.558

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

From the analysis, three-quarters, that is, (75%) of the respondents agreed in both strong and mild terms that poor political governance and non-diversification of the nation's economy were part of the contributory factors of graduate unemployment. Almost, one quarter, that is (23%) disagreed in strong and mild term while a negligible few (2.0%) of the total respondents were indecisive. Furthermore, result showed the standard deviation of opinion of respondents to be .616 and skewness was-.648, which indicated that the opinions were dispersed to higher side of the respondents. The value of kurtosis was .865 which was platykurtic, supported the poor political governance and non-diversification of the nation's economy as potent causal factors. The respondents view relating to lack of synergy between the supply and demand for graduates in the labour market as part of the underpinning factors of graduate unemployment has mean score value of 4.56 which was higher than the average mean of 2.5 at 5-point rating scale. The variation in opinion and skewness were put at .721 and -.612 respectively. These depicted that the opinions of the respondent were scattered at higher side. A significant finding is that majority (70%) of the respondents also agreed in both strong and mild terms that lack of synergy between supply and demand of graduates in the Nigeria labour market was accountable for the high incidence of graduate unemployment. The calculated value of the kurtosis was -.834 which implied that the distribution of the view was platykurtic, thereby indicating the construct as a major cause of graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

On the variable, sub-optimal quality of university graduates, the mean score value of respondents was 4.50. Majority (80%) of the respondents agreed in both strong and mild terms to this construct as a strong causal element of graduate-unemployment in Nigeria. The standard deviation and skewness were .832 and -.643 respectively, showing that the respondents' opinions were on the higher side. The calculated value of Kurtosis which was -.843 also indicated that the distribution of respondents' opinion was platykurtic thereby suggesting the variable as a contributory causal factor of graduate unemployment. Regarding the variable high profile corruption and misdirection of nation's resources as causes of graduate unemployment, the mean score value of the respondents was 4.30. A significant majority (75%) of the respondents agreed in both strong and mild terms to this indicator. The standard deviation and skewness were .837 and -.631 respectively indicating that the respondents' opinions were on the higher side. The calculated value of Kurtosis (.716) depicted that the distribution of respondents' opinion was platykurtic, thereby suggesting a strong casual factor of graduate unemployment. Worthy of note is that there was no significant line of differentiation in the construct of lack of national employment policy with mean score value of 4.00 in comparison with other constructs.

Standard deviation and skewness were recorded as (1.47 and -.558) respectively, which portrayed the distribution of views as platykurtic, with Kurtosis of .482 denoting the variable as a major contributory cause of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. The striking communality in these findings was that the causal factors were forcible contributory elements responsible for the aggravation of the incidence of graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

Economic and Social Consequences of Graduate Unemployment

Examining the economic consequences of graduate unemployment (GU), data presented in Table 2 showed that GU reduces gross domestic product has the highest mean score value of 4.66 (sd =.718) and decreases economic welfare and quality of living with mean score value of 4.25 (sd = .762). Furthermore, GU erodes human capital and creates under-utilisation of labour resources has mean value of 4.00(sd=.852) and dispossesses graduate of salary income having the least mean score value of 3.68 (sd = 1.05). On social consequences, GU creates perpetual unhappiness to the affected individuals has mean score value of 4.68(sd=.726), paves way for disaggregation of social bond and instability in the level of the social order with mean score of 4.62(sd =.766)destroys moral and breaks social relationship with mean score value of 4.22(sd = .831)and increases social vices and crimes having mean score value of 3.85(sd = .931).

Table 2: Economic and Social Consequences of Graduate Unemployment.

Consequential effects	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std deviation	Std error of mean
Economic						
Reduces gross domestic product	342	1.00	5.00	4.66	.718	0.902
Decreases economic welfare and quality of living	342	1.00	5.00	4.25	.762	0.112
Erodes human capital and creates underutilization of labour resources	342	1.00	5.00	4.00	.852	0.105
Dispossesses graduates of salary income value in the society	342	1.00	5.00	3.68	.852	0.105
Social						
Creates perpetual unhappiness to the affected individuals	342	1.00	5.00	4.68	.766	0.08
Paves way for disaggregation of social bond and instability in the level of social order	342	1.00	5.00	4.62	.766	0.093
Destroys morals and breaks social relationship	342	1.00	5.00	4.22	.831	0.603
Increases social vices and crimes	342	1.00	5.00	3.85	.931	0.618

Source: Field survey, 2017

Collaboration between Universities and Employees of Labour

Data in Table 3 showed that majority (76%) of the respondents were of the opinion that there was no effective collaboration between universities and labour employers in providing skills required for employability while (24%) of the respondents held contrary opinion. On the second construct, that there was concrete partnership between industries and universities to develop demand driving curriculum for market suitability and employment fulfillment, more than eight(8) out of ten (10), that is (82.1%) of the respondents disaffirmed the statement while the rest(24%) affirmed of the statement. On the third variable that, there was adequate coordination on hiring decisions of graduate between the universities and industries, a significant majority(72.5%) of the respondents disagreed, while just above one-quarter (27.5%) of the respondents agreed. On the statement that, there was perfect link between the university curricula and industry requirement, an overwhelming majority (86.3%) of the respondents disagreed, while the remaining (13.7%) of the respondents agreed. On the item that, there was a piteous disconnect between the supply and demand for graduates in the labour market, a significant majority (77.7%) of the respondents held a contrary view, while the rest (22.3%) of the respondents upheld this view. Generally, from the responses of the respondents, it is obvious that the level of collaboration in existence between the Nigerian universities and labour employer on employability of university graduates was basal.

Table 3: Responses on Level of Collaboration in Existence between Nigeria Universities and Labour Employers on Employability of University Graduates.

Statement /Construct	Yes	No
There is effective collaboration between university and labour employers in providing relevant skills required for employability	(24%) 82	(76%) 260
There is concrete partnership between industries and universities to develop demand driving curriculum for market suitability and employment fulfillment.	(21.9%) 61	(82.1%) 281
There is adequate coordination on hiring decision between the universities and industries.	(27.5%) 94	(72.5%) 248
There is perfect link between university curricula and industry requirement.	(13.7%) 47	(86.3%) 295
There is piteous disconnect between supply and demand for graduates in the labour market.	(22.3%) 76	(77.7%) 266

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Remediable Approaches to Graduate Unemployment Reduction

Exploring the remediable approaches to graduate unemployment reduction, data presented in Table 4 depicted that the mean score value of responses ranged between 4.05 (lowest) to 4.72 (highest) on the standard mean response average of 2.5 at 5 point rating Likert scale, denoting an efficacious problem solving approach to graduate unemployment.

Rectification of the imbalance between rapid economic growth and slow transformation of the nation's economy has the highest mean score value of 4.72 (sd=0.75). There was no significant line of differentiation from other findings as counter active of top-down approach to job creation programmes design and implementation has mean score value of 4.65 (sd=0.71), total abatement of high profile corruption having mean score value of 4.35 (sd=0.76), enforcement of accountability and transparency in corporate and national governance with mean = 4.21 (sd=0.88) and pedagogical changes in University education curricula in matching needs and focusing on both skills and knowledge acquisitions having mean score value of 4.05, (sd = 0.81).

Table 4: Mean Score Analysis of Some Remediable Approaches to Graduate Unemployment

Items	Min	Max	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rectification of the imbalance between rapid economic growth and slow transformation of the nation's economy	1	5	342	4.72	0.75
Counter active of top-down approach to job creation programmes design and implementation	1	5	342	4.65	0.71
Total abatement of high profile corruption	1	5	342	4.35	0.76
Enforcement of accountability and transparency in corporate and national governance.	1	5	342	4.21	0.81
Pedagogical changes in University education curricula in matching fields within nations' needs and focusing on both skills and knowledge acquisitions.	1	5	342	4.05	0.88

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Discussion of Findings

The major issue addressed in this study was to undertake the problem-solving of the current situation of graduate unemployment rout in Nigeria. The study revealed that multi approaches could be used to reduce the high incidence of graduate unemployment in the country. The first was to identify the causal factors, which the findings indicated amongst others as poor political governance and undiversification of the nation's economy, lack of synergy between the supply and demand for graduates production and lack of national employment policy. These findings were similar with those of Oluyomi & Adedeji (2012); Shadare & Elegbede (2012) and Ogege, (2011) on the causal factors of graduate unemployment. They also mirrored the views of Basse and Attan (2012) that graduate unemployment was indicative of the deteriorating level of the Nigeria's economy and within the Nigerian labour market, distortions were prevalent.

Extending this line of reasoning, University graduates were facing serious unemployment situation because of the imbalance in the Nigeria's economic growth and slow development in nation's socio-economic transformation.

The study further exposed the economic and social consequences of graduate unemployment as reduction of gross domestic product, decrease of economic welfare and quality of living, erosion of human capital and under utilisation of labour resource, perpetual unhappiness of the affected individuals and destruction of morals and emergence of non-conforming behaviours and social vices. These findings confirmed the studies of Danjos & Ali (2014) and Eneji, Mai Laifa & Weiping (2013) that the concomitants side effects of graduate unemployment served as big threats to the nation and the affected individuals, polluting socio-economic terrains of the Nigerian environment and rendering the affected graduates hopeless and frustrated. These findings are suggestive that unemployment among university graduates may influence the spectra of social vices and encourage criminality in Nigeria.

Another approach was to unravel the level of collaboration in existence between Nigeria Universities and labour employers on employability of university graduates which was found to be low. Finding concurred with the views of Poletaes and Robinson (2008) that universities were often not in concrete partnership with employers of labour to develop a demand driven curriculum that will produce graduates with skills suitable for employment fulfillment. This poor collaboration between the university and labour employers made the problems of graduate unemployment more difficult to grapple with by development planners and policy makers in Nigeria.

On the remediable pathway to graduate unemployment reduction in Nigeria, findings indicated that an all-inclusive, holistic and soft-wired, approach needed to be adopted as remediable measures. Amongst these were counter active of top down approach to job creation programmes design and implementation, rectification of the imbalance between rapid economic growth and slow transformation of the nation's economy and total abatement of high profile corruption to stimulate sustainable growth and development, thereby creating employment opportunities for the unemployed graduates. These findings corroborated the study of Adawo (2013) that tackling graduate unemployment requires development and implementation of inclusive programmes that will create an enabling environment to encourage entrepreneurial activities. This implies that public policy emphasis should be on the increase to stimulate the economy for the promotion of employment intensification in Nigeria. Furthermore, government needs to diversify the nation's economy and initiate a more pragmatic sustainable strategy for reactivating better economic performance in order to offer more employment facilities for the unemployed university graduates.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has emphasized that graduate unemployment is one of the most critical problems facing contemporary Nigeria. As such, the nation cannot reasonably expect to achieve her developmental aspirations if she cannot effectively put to productive use a large number of her trained graduates. The study unravelled the main underpinning elements responsible for the rising profile of graduate unemployment and established that graduate unemployment impacted gruesomely and negatively on the nation's economy and the affected individuals. From the foregoing, the findings of this study have led to the following recommendations. Government must undertake an effective reappraisal of her various public policies and programmes designed to generate adequate economic opportunities capable of creating jobs for the unemployed graduates. The issue of diversification of the economy must be pursued with vigour and utmost sincerity largely with the aim of creating self sustainable employment scheme. In order to ensure the workability of this idea, overhauling of the university system must be carried out in terms of pedagogical changes and reconfiguration of curricula to focus on both skills and knowledge acquisitions. Effective partnership between industry and university must be put in place to develop curriculum for employment fulfillment and market suitability. The Universities in Nigeria must also be equipped and made to play pivotal role in capacity building and leadership training in order to produce functional graduates for employment suitability.

Furthermore, high priority must be accorded to the development of agriculture, agro-allied industry and rural transformation with the provision of necessary infrastructures to reduce migration to the urban areas for job hunting. Graduates of farm-skill programmes should be provided with venture capital to start farm business. The government must be prepared to create investor friendly policy through the provision of supportive quality infrastructures to reduce cost of doing business. The Nigerian government needs to be sincere and total on the abatement of high profile corruption and ensure transparency and accountability in corporate and national governance.

In order to ensure robust national data base for employment generation, job employment centres must be established in all the local government area headquarters in the country to assist unemployed graduates once they have been discharged from the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC). Graduate unemployment census should also be carried out across the country to identify university graduate with innovative ideas thereby equipping them with necessary entrepreneurial development. In sum, grappling with graduate unemployment reduction in Nigeria will require an all-encompassing and inclusive approach of all professionals and concerted efforts of all stakeholders in order to rescue the nation and restore the fate of affected graduates in the country.

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