

ATTITUDE AND ORIENTATION OF UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN TOWARDS LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract

The level of unemployment in Nigeria has grown large that it cannot be addressed by mere campaign or words of mouth. It required the combined efforts of both individuals and the government of the country in particular and the world at large to formulate a lasting solution to it. The study assessed attitude and orientation of undergraduates towards labour market in Nigeria. Descriptive research of survey type was adopted for this study. The population of this study was all undergraduates in Nigeria while target population was undergraduates in University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State in 2019/2020 academic session in which sample of 300 students was drawn as respondents using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for the collection of data was Attitude and Orientation towards Labour Market Questionnaire (AOLMQ) and was validated using construct validity with reliability value of 0.75r. Demographic data collected were described using percentage. Research questions were analyzed using mean ranking and standard deviation. The study concluded that undergraduates in Nigeria had negative attitude towards labour market. It was concluded as well that undergraduates in Nigeria had good orientation about labour market. It is therefore recommended that government in conjunction with ministry of labour and productivity should ensure total transformation of labour market to be fair to all qualified candidates and should be based on merit.

Keywords: Attitude, orientation, labour market employability skills, undergraduates

Introduction

The labour market, otherwise called the workers market, alludes to the supply of and demand for work, in which employees give the supply and employers give the demand. It is a significant part of any economy and is complicatedly connected to markets for capital, products, and administrations. The Nigerian labour market is entirely adaptable with skilled, low work cost level, profoundly energetic and useful workforce. Nigeria additionally has a solid practice of cooperation among higher institutions and private-area organizations, which co-work on research that frequently finishes in imaginative, prize-winning items.

The labour market situation of youngsters in Nigeria is in like manner impacted by developments that go past public boundaries, for example, population growth, climate change, relocation, advancement and mechanization, and which call for

intense and dire activity by every single pertinent partner (Obisanyan & Akinbami, 2010). It also in recent times witnessing high joblessness rates, high casual area work with its related low usefulness, generally significant degree of work in the public authority area (counting public venture), as well as low female support rate in the work. The crumbling labour market position of low skilled laborers challenges economic efficiency and social value in the country (Anyadike, Emeh, & Ukah,2012).

Nigeria Youth Sustainable Development Goals Network (NYDSGN) is committed to achieving the country's aspirations and viewpoints on the world of work. Over 100,000 young ladies and men across all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory were surveyed by the network in the year of 2020. The data assembled demonstrated that youth aged 15 to 29 across Nigeria were studied on the web and disconnected. This view was held all the more often among young ladies (45%) than youngsters (38%). Conversely, young fellows all the more often shown that the capacity to finance a business is urgent (27%, contrasted and 19 percent among young ladies). This is despite the fact that 37% of youngsters feel that subsidizing for a business or having the right training are generally vital to acquiring a fair work.

Over the last decade, the employability of university graduates has monopolized much education and employment policy. The connection between higher education and the labour market is central to graduate employment prospects. The growth of mass higher education has coincided with the progression to a so-called knowledge-driven or post-industrial economy (Drucker, 1993; Amin, 1994 cited in Tomlinson, 2007). The knowledge-driven economy is said to necessitate individuals with the knowledge, skill, and creative potential to meet the challenges of a global economy marked by quick transformation.

Tertiary education is essential for economic and social development and meeting the needs of the knowledge economy (Phago & Thwala, 2015). Tertiary education can also offer an opportunity to those individuals excluded in the past to compete in the labour market (Chinyamurindi,2016). This emphasized the need for orientation of the undergraduates towards securing their place in the labour market which is unequivocally a valuable assets to enhance employability amongst graduates (' There are many generic skills needed to get along in the work place apart from ordinary academic skills because employers are of the mindset that graduates possess the qualities needed to carry out any task assigned to them ', Hooley & Mellors-Bourne, 2017; ""'. Lourens (2016) maintained that tertiary education provides individuals with subjective contentment and financial benefits. Students cite employment prospects as the primary purpose of pursuing tertiary education '-, Goodwin & Cameron, 2014). However, employment prospects of students are significantly affected by the inadequate schooling system in Africa (Rogan & Reynolds, 2016). It therefore worrisome that after many years of schooling, graduates still roam about looking for job which creates the endemic of unemployment in Nigeria.

According to the Ajaegbu (2012), Nigeria rate of unemployment stand at 19.7%. In fact, George and Oseni (2012); Ezie (2012) and Ede, Ndubisi, and Nwankwo (2013), identifies unemployment as one of the major challenges confronting the Nigeria-economic development. This earliest thinking on economic issues did not fail to give a central point of reflection on the undesirability of unemployment. Unemployment has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of Nigerian youth, causing increased militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness and socially delinquent behavior. Youth unemployment is deviating to the individual and the society as a whole both psychologically and economically. Youth unemployment is really troublesome issue in many parts of the world Nigeria inclusive (Njoku & Ihugba, 2011). In Nigeria, it has become one of the most serious socioeconomic problems confronting the country. The magnitude of this can be appreciated if accurate statistic could be obtained from the Federal Bureau of statistic on the number of unemployed youths roaming the streets of Nigerian cities. This makes it imperative that youth should have a sustainable attitude and cogent orientation towards establishing themselves in the labour market in the light of high rate of unemployment.

The growth in crude oil revenue in Nigeria is accompanied by relatively limited employment growth, and deteriorating education standard. Graduates are meant and expected to be intelligent and creative people with the ability to think critically beyond average (Grareth, 2011) and who compete for job in the domestic and global labor-market places. The contrary is the case in Nigeria as unemployment rate is begging for attention since graduate unemployment imposes socioeconomic costs; it is a waste of man power resources, the investment in education and training is unused. Ekwuzie (2012) asserts that the harsh economic realities in the country today, notwithstanding upcoming generations of graduates when given proper orientation and entrepreneurial education can become successful here in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education is the programme designed to inculcate the knowledge, skills and mindset needed to conceived and start your own business.

Youth unemployment is one of the characterizing difficulties within recent memory, this is not peculiar to Nigeria but global phenomenon. Addressing the issue means looking for remedy for young people who are in search of a decent and productive job and are working but living in poverty or are discouraged by what future holds in the labour market. In that case, such solutions should address labour supply (via education, skills development and training), labour demand (through job creation and orientation and an enabling environment for entrepreneurship), as well as the quality of work available for young people (including with regard to labour standards, working conditions and wages) and their orientation and attitude of the youths towards labour market

Many youths face high unemployment, joblessness and difficulties in getting a firm foothold into the labour market. These have led to problem of unemployment especially among youth leaving various educational institutions. The youth graduate from school without the needed skills or competencies that would enables them

function in today's emerging society. In 2017, the Nigerian government launched the Nigerian Economic Recovery and Growth Plan. This plan highlighted key strategies to drive inclusive growth aiming at a real GDP growth of 7%, reducing the inflation rate to 9.9% and bring back unemployment from 14.2% to 11.2% (Ilo, 2015). This comes in the heels of Nigeria Vision 20:2020, which had as one of its strategic objectives to improve the nation's prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and creating employment in a sustainable manner (Nwokoye, Dimnwobi, & Ibe, 2017). It is on this premise that the researcher deem it fit to investigate attitude and orientation of undergraduates in university of Ilorin towards labour market.

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

Many graduates raised their eyebrows towards inability to gain employment but failed to add values to themselves while in school beyond what they are taught in the four walls of classroom. Enfield (2019) investigated gender roles and inequalities in the Nigerian labour market and it was revealed that religion, education, digital connectivity and financial gaps create gap for women participation in labour market. Olubiyi and Olarinde (2015) as well examined emigration and labour market dynamics in Nigeria and found that emigration of highly skilled workers leads to increase in high and low skilled wage with the former preponderant. Furthermore, Sodipo (2014) investigated employability of tertiary education graduates in Nigeria: closing the skills-gap. The study realized that the graduates from Nigerian Universities lack certain requisite skills for sustainable employment. In addition, Olurinola and Fadayomi, (2016) examined labor market expectations of final year university students in South-western Nigeria and gathered that the study shows an optimistic labour market expectation from the sampled graduating students in terms of expected earnings and duration of job search. The array of studies cited above were conducted in Nigeria which is the same locality as that of this study. Nonetheless, the studies were on labour market and employability of graduates but the gap to be covered by this study has dearth of research which is attitude and

orientation of undergraduates towards labour market in university of Ilorin

The main aim of this study was to investigate attitude and orientation of undergraduates towards labour market in university of Ilorin while specifically, this study seeks to:

1. examine attitude of undergraduate towards labour market in university of Ilorin
2. determine orientation of undergraduate towards labour market in university of Ilorin

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

1. What is the attitude of undergraduate towards labour market in Nigeria?
2. What is the orientation of undergraduate towards labour market in Nigeria?

Methodology

Descriptive research of a survey design was harnessed for this study because it enables the researcher to make generalization from the sample respondents on the whole population. According to Purpura (2011), descriptive research is enriched with culture of engaging psychometric procedures and a strong orientation of quantitative research methods focusing on test score validity by using sample for generalization. On this note, this design is considered appropriate for this study since the findings realized was used to generalize on the whole population. The population of this study comprised all undergraduate students in university of Ilorin while the target population is all final year students in 2019/2020 academic session being the fact that they have spent certain number of years in the universities and have acquired needed skills or competencies that would enable them function in the labour market. Sample of 300 undergraduates participated as respondents in this study and they were selected using multi stage sampling technique. Firstly, simple random sampling technique of a ballot type was used to select four (4) faculties out of 15 faculties in university of Ilorin. This was done by using numbers to represent names of each faculty into a spinner and the number that comes up was picked up one after the other without replacement. Lastly, proportionate sampling technique was used to select 75 undergraduates from each faculty totaling 300 respondents.

A researcher-designed questionnaire was adopted in collecting data for the study and the instrument was titled "Attitude and Orientation towards Labour Market Questionnaire (AOLMQ) and the instrument was structured under three (3) sections as follow: Section A: Personal information of the respondents, section B: Attitude of undergraduate towards labour market and section C: Orientation of undergraduates towards labour market. The questionnaire was constructed with closed responses on a four-point Likert scale type as thus: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and (SD) for section B and C. The draft copy of the questionnaire was checked by the experts in the field of Educational Research

Measurement and Evaluation and Sociology of Education for perusal in order to make sure that the items in the questionnaire are relevant and apt to achieve the intended objectives. The instrument was checked for face and content validity. After which, the final copy of the questionnaire was produced in line with all adjustments made. On the other hands, the instrument was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach alpha reliability method. The procedure was carried out by administering sample of 20 questionnaires on Kwara State university students only once and the data were checked for internal stability using Cronbach alpha method and reliability coefficient of 0.75r was realized.

Results

Research Question One: What is the attitude of undergraduate towards labour market in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question one in this study, an average mean score value of 3.00 was adopted as benchmark for use. Thus, any mean score that tallies with 3.00 and above were taken to be positive attitude while any mean value less than the benchmark is categorized as negative attitude. The response is given in table 2 below:

Table 1: Mean count on attitudes of undergraduates towards labour market

N	Items	Mean	Remark
1.	labour market is big enough to get every graduate employed	2.45	Negative
2.	labour market is not competitive	2.35	Negative
3.	one needs to be well equipped with necessary skills to survive in the labour market	2.39	Positive
4.	There is no need for connection to secure employment in the labour market.	2.10	Negative
5.	Labour market is reliable enough to accommodate all with necessary skills	2.40	Negative
6.	having knowledge of doing business is not relevant in securing employment in the labour market.	2.00	Negative
7.	securing job in the labour market is very easy	2.22	Negative
8.	self-development skills are key to surviving the labour market	2.91	Negative
9.	Labour market in Nigeria is fair enough to anybody that has merit	2.32	Negative
10.	becoming an entrepreneur is the necessary approach to entering labor market	2.56	Negative
	Average	2.44	Negative

Table one shows total number of respondents mean score value obtained on the attitudes of undergraduates in university of Ilorin towards labour market in Nigeria.

Data available revealed that all the items in the table had mean scores below the criterion mean value of 3.00 which signifies that the attitudes of undergraduates in University of Ilorin towards labour market in Nigeria was negative.

Research Question Two: What is the orientation of undergraduate towards labour market in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question two a benchmark on a 2.50 was set and used in the study this any mean score value that is equal to 2.50 and above were considered positive and good orientation while mean value below 2.50 were considered negative or bad orientation towards labour market in Nigeria.

Table 2: Mean count on orientation of undergraduates towards labour market

I perceive that:	Mean	Remark
The status of this university is a significant asset to me in job seeking.	2.87	Positive
People in the career I am aiming for are in high demand in the external labour market.	2.91	Positive
My degree is seen as leading to a specific career that is generally perceived as highly desirable.	2.81	Positive
There are plenty of job vacancies in the geographical area where I am looking.	2.66	Positive
My degree is seen as leading to a specific career that is generally perceived as highly desirable.	2.85	Positive
There is generally a strong demand for graduates at the present time.	2.57	Positive
I am generally confident of success in job interviews and selection events.	2.73	Positive
I feel I could get any job so long as my skills and experience are reasonably relevant.	3.05	Positive
The skills and abilities that I possess are what employers are looking for.	2.74	Positive
A lot more people apply for my degree than there are places available.	3.00	Positive
Mean	2.79	Positive

The analyzed data in table three (3) indicates that majority of sampled respondents agreed to the items on orientation of undergraduates towards labour market in Nigeria. This is evident in mean score value of 2.50 and above that were obtained for all the items, this implies that undergraduates in University of Ilorin had positive and good orientation towards labour market in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

This study assessed undergraduates' attitude and orientation towards labour market in Nigeria. It was revealed that undergraduates in Nigeria had negative

attitude towards labour market in Nigeria since they believe labour market is not big enough to get every graduate employed, labour market is strictly competitive and that one needs to have connection to secure employment even after having skills. This is in line with finding of Williams, (2011) who found out that Nigerian labour market is not based on creativity or people's ability to think critically and those that can compete for job in the domestic and global labor-market places are not eventually job beneficiaries. Similarly, Davies, Gore, Shury, Vivian, Winterbotham, and Constable (2012) affirmed that there is a need for orientation of the undergraduates towards securing their place in the labour market which is unequivocally a valuable asset to enhance employability amongst graduates.

Undergraduates in Nigeria have positives and good orientation towards labour market in Nigeria and this is because they believe people in their career are in high demand in the external labour market, their degree is highly desirable and feel they could get any job as long as their skills and experience are reasonably relevant. The study affirmed that undergraduates in Nigeria are aware of the necessary skills needed to be possessed regarding labour market in Nigeria such as public speaking skills, entrepreneurship education and business skill. This finding is in line with that of Ilo,(2015) which stated that the harsh economic realities in the country today, notwithstanding upcoming generations of graduates when given proper orientation and entrepreneurial education can become successful here in Nigeria. Farashah (2013); Jiménez Arribas,(2021).; Lanero et al. (2011) also asserts that many empirical studies have shown that entrepreneurship education and training influence individuals' intentions to start a business, and have called for integrating entrepreneurship intern programs with the education curricula. In the same vein, Ferreira et al. (2012) was of the opinion that Entrepreneurship education is important for equipping graduates with the required entrepreneurial competencies, such as innovativeness and risk-taking.

Conclusion

Based on the findings made in this study, the following conclusions were drawn that:

Undergraduates in Nigeria had negative attitude towards labour market in Nigeria and they believe labour market is strictly competitive and that one needs to have connections with necessary skills to survive in the labour market. Undergraduates in Nigeria had positive and good about labour market in Nigeria and believe their career are in high demand in the external labour market.

Recommendations

In line with the conclusion from the findings made in this study, it is therefore recommended that:

1. The government in conjunction with ministry of labour and productivity should ensure total transformation of labour market to be fair to all qualified candidates and should be based on merit.

2. The ministry of labour and youth development in conjunction with ministry of education should endeavour to devise a way in which undergraduates could gather updated orientation about labour market as this will enhance further the good orientation they had.
3. More trainings, seminars, conferences, programs should be made available for undergraduates to equip them with above average relevant skills needed to approach labour market.

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