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EDITORIAL NOTE

Navigating Nigeria's Economic Crossroads: Subsidies, Exchange Rates, and Human Capital

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *African Journal of Business and Innovation (AJBI)*. As we launch this platform dedicated to dissecting the complex interplay between economic policy, business strategy, and societal progress, the timing could not be more critical. The articles featured in this first volume offer a timely and rigorous examination of the profound economic challenges and opportunities shaping Nigeria and, by extension, the broader African continent.

Our first article, "Energy Subsidy Reforms and Inflation Dynamics in Nigeria," by Oluwaseun Sunday Lawal and Olumide Ishola, tackles one of the most contentious and consequential policy decisions in recent Nigerian history. The removal of the fuel subsidy in 2023 sent shockwaves through the economy, and this study provides a vital empirical lens through which to understand its inflationary consequences. By applying the Asymmetric Price Transmission (APT) theory and the NARDL model, the authors confirm a stark reality: the impact of fuel price shocks is not symmetrical. Prices rise like rockets but fall like feathers, creating a persistent, second-round inflationary effect that permeates every sector. The study's conclusion that energy-price shocks are the dominant long-run driver of inflation is a sobering one. It underscores the urgent need for the policy recommendations offered: robust social safety nets, stringent market regulation, and a decisive pivot toward domestic refining capacity to mitigate future shocks.

Complementing this analysis of macroeconomic stability is the second article, "Human Capital Development and SMEs Sustainability in the 21st Century: An Empirical Evidence from North Central Nigeria," by Popoola Tajudeen Abolaji. This study shifts the focus to the micro-level foundations of economic resilience by examining the factors that determine the survival and growth of small and medium enterprises the engine room of Nigeria's economy. Grounded in the Resource Based View and Human Capital Theory, the research provides compelling empirical evidence that strategic investment in people pays tangible dividends. The findings reveal that both training and development and employee skills acquisition exert significant positive effects on SME sustainability, collectively explaining over 55% of the variance in sustainability outcomes. This paper serves as a powerful reminder that alongside fiscal and monetary policy reforms, the deliberate cultivation of human capital within enterprises is indispensable for long-term business continuity and regional economic development.

The third article, "Youth Employment and the Mismatch Between Education and the Labour Market in Africa: Nigeria as a Case Study," by Jimoh Omotola Hajarat, shifts our attention from macroeconomic policy to the foundational issue of human capital. This paper provides a compelling review of the systemic disconnect between Africa's educational systems, which often prioritize rote learning, and the dynamic, skills-driven demands of the modern labour market. The result is a paradox of high youth unemployment coexisting with unfilled jobs. Hajarat argues persuasively that without a fundamental restructuring of school curricula to incorporate practical and digital skills, alongside government efforts to stimulate job creation, the continent risks squandering its most valuable resource its youth.

The fourth article, "The Impact of Technology on the Insurance Industry: A study on Insurtech Innovations," by Akinfela Eesuola, offers a forward-looking perspective on how innovation is reshaping a traditional sector. While the preceding articles focus on policy and structural challenges, this piece highlights the transformative potential of technology. Insurtech innovations are not merely

about digitizing existing processes; they are creating new business models, enhancing customer experiences, and expanding access to financial protection. This study serves as a pertinent reminder that alongside necessary policy reforms, private-sector innovation and technological adoption are powerful engines for growth and resilience.

Collectively, these articles paint a comprehensive picture of a nation at an economic crossroads. They highlight the delicate balancing act between fiscal necessity and social welfare, the external pressures of a volatile global economy, and the internal imperative to build a skilled and adaptable workforce. The insights offered here are not just diagnostic; they are a call to action for policymakers, business leaders, and academics alike. We hope this inaugural volume of AJBI stimulates the rigorous debate and innovative thinking necessary to navigate these challenges and build a more prosperous and stable future.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the authors for their valuable contributions and to our readers for joining us on this journey.

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND THE MISMATCH BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE LABOUR MARKET IN AFRICA: NIGERIA AS A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Youth employment is one of the most discussed topic in Africa. youth employment is supposed to contribute to the development and the growth of the economy but due to the challenges faced such as the skills mismatch , economic instability , education and labour market misalignment it has seem impossible, however policy reforms can be implemented to solve these problems. This paper aims to review and analyze the mismatch between education and labour market in Africa a factor that contributes to youth employment in Africa and how it can be eradicated. The article reviews evidence provided by recent research studies from the ILO, UNESCO on youth employment and labour market mismatch. The mismatch between education and labour market in Africa is a big challenge that can't be ignored, a situation whereby an employee applies for a job and is rejected because their skill don't match with what the employer is seeking for at the moment which draws back to how the education system is structured in Africa particularly Nigeria whereby schools don't focus on practical and digital skills but are more particular on rote learning and at the time they graduate they have no skills that might be useful in the labour market. Schools curriculum should be restructured and incorporate practical and digital skills that is needed in the labour market, while the government ensures the creation of more job opportunities.

Keywords: youth, employment, skills, education, mismatch, Nigeria, jobs,

Introduction

Youth employment is one of the major problem in Africa countries, especially Nigeria. Youth employment does not just affect people's livelihood but it also affects the growth of the economy. Young Nigerians who consist of most of the population and can contribute effectively to the economy should have access to employment opportunities. Therefore lack of employment opportunities has promoted economic instability, extended poverty circles and threats to social stability (World Bank, 2022). Youths employment is an important issue as the economic imbalance ruins the nation's potential for the future and even the present (Sele & wanjiku, 2024). This article examines the causes of high unemployment rate using Nigeria as a case study with focusing on the structural economic issues, and the mismatch in education and skills. Furthermore it examines the need to address these issues and their consequences (ILO, 2022). The main focus is to

emphasize on the significance of policies that encourage economic expansion, education reform and the role youths can play in the development of the economy and creating to solution to employment problems.

Statement of the problem

The continuous issue of youth unemployment poses significant challenges to the economies worldwide especially in the context of labour market reforms and education mismatch. In spite of various policies implemented at tackling youth unemployment, statistical data show ongoing disparities in youth employment rates. According to recent statistics from the international labour organization (ILO), global youth unemployment remains disproportionately high, with an estimated 13.6% of young people unemployed worldwide as of 2021 (ILO, 2022). This statistical fact underscores the urgent need for research to examine the efficacy of labour market reforms

in discoursing youth unemployment and to identify gaps in existing policy frameworks.

Aims and Objective of the Study

This study aims to examine the nature and importance of education Labor market mismatch among Nigeria youths, to evaluate the connection between educational qualifications and skills requested by the Nigerian Labour market, to also recognize the significant characteristics contributing to education Labor market mismatch and youth employment challenges in Nigeria, this study will also analyze the consequences of education Labour market mismatch on the employment opportunities and school to work evolution of Nigeria youths, it will evaluate the significances of education Labor market mismatch for Nigeria's economic development and youth employment, this study will also indicate applicable strategies for enhancing the alignment between education and Labor market conditions to facilitate sustainable youths employment.

Significance of the study

This study will assist policy makers to understand the gap between what educational institutes can create and what employers need, this can publicize employment and skills development policies, universities and institutions can use these findings to comprehend whether their programs and curricula sufficiently equip students for the Labor market. This study can also enable employers understand the skills gap among young graduates and enable substantial affiliation between employers and educational institutes, it will also be able to aid Nigerian youths in selecting careers that correspond with the Labor market. This study can also contribute to the existing literature on education labour market mismatch, youth employment and human capital development in Nigeria, while delivering a rationale for future research. This study is significant because decreasing the mismatch can enhance transition from education to employment and contribute to sustainable employment.

Scope of study

This study concentrates on education labour market mismatch and it's implication on youth

employment in Nigeria. However the study evaluates the comprehensive global and African youth employment context but Nigeria suffices as the primary geographical emphasis of the study. The study analyzes the relationship between educational qualifications and the skills requested by Labour market, with certain attention to skills mismatch, unemployment, underemployment and the evolution from education to employment among young people. The study focuses on young people partaking in or aspiring to join the Nigerian labour market and considers characteristics that contribute to the disconnect between educational outcomes and employment opportunities. It also analyzes the significances of this mismatch for youth employment and economic development, as well as likely procedures for enhancing the alignment between education and Labor market requirements. This study is theoretically conducted by the human capital theory and the structural market theory. These theories provide complementary viewpoints for comprehending how education and skills impact employment opportunities and how structural conditions within the labour market influence the utilization of human capital. The study accordingly concentrates on the connection between education, skills, and employment instead of examining all characteristics of Nigeria's education system or labour market.

Literature review

The Concept of Youth Employment

There is no certain description for the term youths as the age range used to describe young people in various counties differs. According to the world youth report (2020), about 1.2billion young people are under the age range of 15-24 amounting to 16 percent of the world population. While some countries due to economic, social or cultural factors they extend the ages up to 29-34. Youth employment is known as the engagement of young individuals aged 15-24 in work opportunities that contributes to their economic Independence (UNESCO, n.d). There are different types of employment we have the formal employment which refers to a job with a legal contract, and fixed wages in an organized sector, while informal employment lacks organizational structure which can be insecure and not

sustainable. Youth employment is important because it grows the economy in terms of productivity, it also reduces the rate of poverty if more job opportunities are created, and it allows youth to participate actively in the society which creates a sense of belonging. When it comes to youth employment especially in countries like Africa, most especially Nigeria there are different challenges they come across like the skills mismatch, a young job seeker may have a skill the employer is not actively looking for, and economic instability has also affected employment opportunities in Africa. For instance in a country like Nigeria the heavy dependence on oil has caused several economic fluctuations which has limited economic growth and job creation. Therefore the limited diversification of the economy has reduced the number of employment opportunities available to young people. Also young people may be engaged in jobs that undermine their potential skills or jobs that are underpaid leading to frustration (Quaker, 2025).

The concept of youth employment definition goes beyond young people participating in the labour market due to several issues hindering the sustainability of employment opportunities. According to ILO (2024), accounted that young men and women are significant to the society due to their skills and idea they can offer which could evolve the economy, however because of the challenges faced in the labour market young men and women around the world are two to three times as adults are out of work, while on the other side a large number of young people work for long hours and are underpaid with little job security. This is where the mismatch arrives. In a country like Nigeria, universities produce new graduates every year but the economy is not wide enough to accommodate all, a situation where a job seeker skills does not match what the employer is looking for or a young person fixed in a job that does not match their actual skills and this is a huge problem because both are intertwined, it's either the government adjusts schools curricula or enough jobs are created to match up with what students are learning in school currently, this will make a great improvement because looking through the lens of the colonial history of Nigeria, During the colonial era the job system structure was built simply for clerks not to truly use their skills

to work (Uchime, 2025). This is has already become a growing system in Nigeria. Also students are mostly taught to read and pass to acquire certificates, rather than incorporating digital skills that can be used in the global world today. This is also a great issue that needs to be addressed immediately. All of these have decreased the growth of youth employment in Nigeria

Hence youth employment is a tremendous challenge faced in Africa affected by different characteristics including the skills mismatch, lack of job opportunities, economic instability and the misalignment between education and Labour market demands. These challenges require immediate attention that focuses on practical, digital skills development, curriculum reform, and job creation and policies that can provide the youths a more sustainable job opportunity.

The Nature of the Education-Labour Market Mismatch

Education and employment are the most important phase of one's life. According to trajkov et.al (2023). Education refers to acquiring knowledge, skills, beliefs and values while employment means the state of having a paid job, they both play a significant role in shaping one's future. However a good education system and a strong job market are essential to the growth of the economy and society.

While the labour market is the supply and demand of labour whereby employers provide the demand while employees provide supply. However the relationship between education and labour market. A good education does not always resolve to instant employment. Because the qualification and skills acquired through education may not correspond with requirements of the labour market. This gap can be described as the education labor market mismatch a situation whereby one's skills and degree levels does not match with the requirements of the job they apply for, education labour market can be perceived in different forms that is the vertical mismatch whereby a worker is over educated or undereducated for their required jobs, also horizontal mismatch, an employee works in a field where it has no relation with their course of study and the skills gap whereby the exact competencies taught in

school do not match the digital and soft skills required by employers(nature index , 2026). These forms of mismatch clearly points to the fact that acquiring a degree does not guarantee an immediate job. Therefore educated young people may find themselves in job that is a job outside of their field, a job that is below their qualifications and some may remain unemployed because their skills no not match the requirements.

In Nigeria one of the major socio economic issue is youth employment which is affected by high population, economic instability and and the disconnection between education and the labour market. According to the national bureau of statistics (2023). Nigeria has the highest rate of youth employment in the world with a rate of about 35% in recent years. This has led to frustration and disappointments amongst many Nigerian youth of not being able to apply for jobs and it is worse because enough jobs are not created and some don't have the skills required in particular jobs. The Nigeria economy high dependence on oil without sectoral diversification are part of the issues affecting youth employment indirectly in Nigeria (World Bank, 2023). Only a small portion of workforce is employed in the oil industry, although it generates over 80% of the government income. Because of the over dependent on oil there are limited job options which has underdeveloped the growth in labour intensive industries like manufacturing and agriculture (Adepoju & fakunle, 2021). To resolve youth employment and its challenges and promote a sustainable job creation policy changes towards industrialization and economic diversification are essential. The difference between educational outcomes and labour market demands is another factor affecting youth employment. Regardless of completing higher institutions, many young people do not possess the practical and digital skills most companies require for (Adebayo & Jimoh, 2021). The educational structure fails to give graduates technical and vocational abilities that match up with the changing industrial requirements because it mainly focuses on theory rather than practical skills. According to ILO (2022). To match up with the expanding economy, the Nigeria educational structure needs a reform. High population is another growing concern

which has also contributed to unemployment problems according to World Bank (2023). Nigeria's population is expected to expand at a pace of 2.6% per year which translate to over 4 million new job seekers join the work force yearly. Demographic pressures needs to be addressed in order to close the gap between job seekers and employers and also eradicate economic instability (World Bank, 2023). Due to high youth unemployment rates, lack of job opportunities might promote criminal activities such as cybercrime and insurgency (Musa, 2023). While poverty and lack of youth employment opportunities coexist, issues like rural urban immigration deteriorate, burdening of infrastructure can also lead to the rise of slums in major cities like Lagos (ILO, 2023). To tackle the policy and causes of youth employment there's a need for Nigeria to reduce socioeconomic risks and create the term for a more justifiable growth. The mismatch being present in many Africa countries is one that can't be ignored whereby the expansion of educational opportunities does not match up with the employment opportunities in the labour market. Furthermore, graduates who are ready to explore the labour market may continue to experience challenges in getting jobs that match their qualifications and skills this is what makes education labour market mismatch a significant issue that helps in understanding youths employment especially in Africa countries like Nigeria.

Africa's Position in Global Youth Employment Discussion

Africa holds the world's youngest population with about 60% of its people who are under the age of 25. However youth unemployment continues to decline, with millions of young people finding it hard to secure a sustainable employment. According to the international labour organization (ILO), youth employment rates Subsaharan Africa covers up to 12%, with many underemployed, underpaid and others stranded in informal jobs. Lack of job opportunities for young people is not only an economic issue but also a social crisis that promotes poverty, insecurity and migration. To counter these problems youth employment programs are created, enabling African youths with skills and opportunities they need to

survive in today's job market. In spite of having a large youth work force there are various obstacle that prevents young people from the right to quality and sustainable jobs. Several graduates leave school without acquiring the necessary skills needed for modern workforce, employers mostly complain about the skills gap whereby young job seekers do not possess soft skills and problem solving abilities like communication and teamwork. Also the job mismatch a situation where there a disconnection between the courses offered in educational institutions and the demands in labour market, many young people study for careers with limited employment opportunities, which leads to them being unemployed or forced to work in unrelated fields. Economic barriers and and limited access to opportunities cannot also be ignored , high cost of education and limited access to career orientation prevent many young people from a good starting point.

Furthermore, companies prefer to hire candidates with years of experience, making it difficult for new graduates to secure jobs. Many African economies face challenges with low job creation rates most especially in high growing industries like technology, renewable energy and manufacturing. Because of this most qualified young people find it hard to get employed. All of these have contributed to youth employment in Africa decorating the growth of the economy (nerdsfactory, n.d). According to the international labour organization (ILO). It is estimate for 2019 projects that while Africa's youth employment rate of about 11% appears low by global standards, more than five young Africans are not in education, employment or training (NEET), with young women affected at 27.4%. However the global youth unemployment rate covers around 12.4% to 13.6%, affecting many young people worldwide meanwhile over 257million people are classified under NEET (not in employment education or training) projecting a repeated obstacle in the process of moving from education to employment , while advanced economy face job market challenges lead by automation and artificial intelligence, also developing countries are challenged with slow formal job creations inspire of post pandemic economic recoveries (ILO, 2026). In sub Saharan they experience massive

underemployment and working poverty, about 80% to 90% of youth employment is informal which consist of farming , street bending characterized by underpayment and no job security. Africa is internally fractured, Northern Africa consistently holds some of the highest youth employment rates globally exceeding 22% as seen in the structural exclusion in the Arab states, while sub Saharan Africa suffers mainly from work deficit rather than lack of activity. Furthermore in wealthier nations whereby higher education reduces the rate of unemployment, it is a different case in sub-Saharan Africa because they get to experience higher unemployment rates amongst universities graduates than among those with only basic education which leads to shortage of high skill formal wage jobs. This is to justify that education alone does not equally transmit to securing a job. These crisis points that the challenges of youth employment in Africa expands beyond the availability of jobs and accessibility of employment opportunities. The difficulty of transmitting educational qualifications into sustainable employment projects a continuous challenge in the school to work transition. This create a significant context for examining the education labour market mismatch and its implication for youth's employment in Nigeria. To fight these challenges African government, private sectors must work together. Investing in digital skills, and vocational training programs is important to prepare young people for the demands of the modern labor market, job creation. In high sectors like the technology, agriculture and manufacturing could also provide sustainable employment and pathways for Africa young growing population. Youth employment in Africa is a major challenge that needs urgent action. By understanding its roots causes And adopting solutions ranging front educational reforms to entrepreneurship promotion, African nations can discover the prospect of its young people, with significant efforts the continent can improve its unemployment crisis into an opportunity for economic growth , stability and prosperity(right for education , 2025).

Nigeria's Strategic Role in Africa's Youth Employment Landscape

A significant socio economic issue in Nigeria is the youth unemployment, which is made worse by immediate population increase, irregular economic conditions and a disconnect between market demands and educational achievement. Nigeria has a population of more than 200 million. People and more than 60% are under 30. This demographic situation puts a lot of pressure on the Labor market. The Nigeria economy is distinguished by a high unemployment rate among young people, worsened by economic instability, restrained access to quality education and a lack of skills that align with market demands. Characteristics such as inefficient infrastructure, a challenging business climate and inadequate access to allocation have further suppressed entrepreneurial prospects among youths. In most nations globally, some of the job output are not ecofriendly therefore contributing to climate change challenges. For instance Nigeria immigrants have been expanding overtime, dispatching 487,882 to be the eleventh immigration nations in 2000 and expanded to 920,118 in 2010 to be the fourth immigrating nations in South Africa. The country shifted to the third position in 2015 dispatching 1,199,115, while south Africa was in second position with 1,943,099 in 2010 shifted to the first position recording 3,142, 511(world bank, 2018). This indicates that the number of Nigerians proceeding out of the country for adequate economic situation is expanding with all of these estimation this condition calls for prompt policy reform. However Nigeria stays devoted to assuring proper and effective work for young people (NIYEAP, 2012). The national youth employment policy and the national digital economy policy and strategy accentuate the centrality and possibility of job creation for young people. At the global level, Nigeria endorses the commission of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and came to be the first partner from Africa to make an obligation towards the global enterprise on reputable jobs for youths. In August 2019, Nigeria hosted the global youth employment conference set up by the international Labor organization, the conference resulted in the Abuja youth declaration, a substantial call by young people

for improved and transformative efforts on youth employment. Despite several endeavors to make a difference, discovering a reputed and effective job when coming into the Labour market stays a demanding task. Around the Nigerian youth employment action plan for the duration 2021-2024, the government seeks to address the problem by concentrating our joint actions on a number of emphasis areas for action, areas with high prospect for the innovation of reputable jobs. The Nigerian youth employment action plan (NIYEAP 2009-2011). Advocated endeavors of the government of Nigeria intended to create enabling environment for youth employments. This action plan, which had reasonable achievements and has outlasted its bearing in perspective of recent facts, therefore, the problems of human capital growth and employment generation have been prioritized by the government in the economic recovery and growth plan (ERGP), the national youth policy (2019) and the national employment policy (2017). The revised NIYEAP (2021-2024) strives to address the youth employment challenge in an extensive and collaborative manner. The study of the prior action plan was a endeavor to profit from lessons comprehended, create on existent frameworks and techniques, align interventions, build synergies and involve all pertinent stakeholders in the designation of essential focus areas and interventions on youth employments which comprises economic recovery and growth plan (ERGP), the national employment policy (NEP), the national youth policy on Labour migrations and the national social protection policy. The development and enactment of adequate youth employment policies and entrepreneurship endeavors are important for sustainable job invention in Nigeria. As the nation tussles with high unemployment rates and a rising youth population, encouraging an environment conducive to entrepreneurship can enact as an inspiration for economic development and innovation. Also the integration of applicable educational schedules, access to finance, and mentorship opportunities can authorize young people to start their own enterprises, thereby decreasing reliance on conventional employment paths. Moreover strategic alliances between the government, private sector, and

educational institutions can promote the invention of a strong ecosystem that endorses entrepreneurship and promote skills development. Similarly, discoursing recurring challenges such as insufficient infrastructure, regulatory blockages, and market accessibility is important for assuring the success of youth led enterprises by prioritizing these areas Nigeria can harness the possibility of its youth to navigate economic diversification, develop sustainable jobs, and eventually improve the all-around prosperity of the nation.

Gaps in existing studies

There are several existing literature on youth employment, education and labour mismatch, but gaps still exist in understanding how these characteristics interact within the Nigeria context. Existing analyses have primarily concentrated on youth employment, skills shortage or the general evolution from education to employment, with slight attention provided to the extent to which educational qualifications and skills correspond with the needs of the Labour market. In expansion, while some studies only highlight on the role of education and individual skills in enhancing employment consequences, less awareness is given to the structural constraints of the labour Market that differentiates the availability and quality of employment opportunities. This study hence aims to address these gaps by analyzing education labour market mismatch among Nigerian youths through the complementary viewpoints of human capital and dual labour market theory. Additionally, it seeks to contribute to the awareness of how improving the alignment between education and labour market demands can endorse sustainable youth employment in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

Human capital theory

Human capital theory was pioneered by economist Gary Becker in the 1960s, the theory claims that investments in education, training, and skill development are important for improving an individual productivity and attaining potential (Becker, 1964), according to this theory, people acquire human capital through education and understanding, which expands their significance in the labour market.

In the context of labor market reforms and youth employment, this theory emphasizes the implication of policies that promotes investments in human capital growth among young people. Labour market reforms intended to improve access to quality education, vocational training and life-long learning opportunities can improve youth employability and mitigate employment rates. By training young people with relevant skills and qualifications requested by employers, labour market reforms leveled in human capital theory can stimulate smoother transitions from school to work and contribute to decreasing youth employment.

Dual labour market theory

The dual labour market theory, presented by sociologist William Julius Wilson and economist Micheal piore in the 1970s, asserts that labour market can be split up into two distinct components: the primary sector and secondary sector, The primary sector consist of stable, well paid jobs, with opportunities for improvement, while the secondary sector consist of low paying provisional and repeatedly insecure jobs. The theory underscores structural characteristics such as education, race and socio economic status that impact individual access to various components of the labour market (Wilson 1975, piore 1979), in the context of labour market reforms and youth employment thus theory is pertinent as it underlines the challenges encountered by young people in accessing quality employments opportunities. Labour market reforms that concentrate exclusively on primary sector may ignore the necessities of youths who are more likely to be caught up in the secondary sector, necessitating a more extensive strategy to discourse the dual Nature of labour markets and enable remarkable inclusivity.

Research methodology

The study embraced a desktop research methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be compiled without field work, it pertains to compiling data from existing resources. This studies relied already published studies, reports, and statistics. This secondary data was easily assessed through online journals and library, journals and articles like the

international labour organization (ILO), World Bank, NIYEAP.

Findings and discussions

Connecting with this studies it was discovered that young people most times do not graduate with the skills needed by the Labour market that is there's a gap between the qualifications and skills obtained by young people through formal education and the conditions of the Labour market. A good amount of young people obtain tertiary education, but it was discovered that a good education does not equally translate to immediate employment that correspond with their qualifications or field of study. Employers also continue to identify the lack of digital and practical skills among young job seekers. This indicates that the challenge expands beyond the availability of educational opportunities and relevance of skills acquired through education. This finding can be illustrated through the human capital theory, which beliefs education and training as an investment that improve individual knowledge, skills and productivity. From this view, education is counted on to enhance employment opportunities by preparing individuals with productive skills. However a situation whereby the skills acquired through education do not correspond with what employers are seeking, the anticipated advantages of human capital may not be completely recognized. The finding can also be comprehended through the dual labour market theory, which distinguishes between primary and secondary segments of the labour market. The theory implies that disparity in wages, job security, working conditions and opportunities for improvement can impact the type of employment that can be functional to various group of workers. In the Nigeria context this helps to understand why some educated young people are underpaid or involved in insecure jobs in spite of having tertiary qualifications. Generally this finding indicates that enhancing youth employment in Nigeria needs more than expanding access to education. The alignment between educational programs and labour market requirements is needed to fix the gap and promote sustainable employment also skills development and industries collaboration could

enhance the transition of young people from education to sustainable employment.

Recommendations

Educational institutions should examine their curricula regularly to confirm that student obtain the skills that are applicable to employment opportunities.

Universities should work hand in hand with employers through internships, career programs, and joint skills development initiatives. This will give students practical experience before joining the labour market.

Governments should reinforce technical and vocational education and training (TVET) so that young people can obtain practical and occupational skills alongside academic qualifications.

Career guidance and counseling should be reinforced so that students can have the best knowledge of the Labour market and choose the right course of study for their careers.

Education and youth employment programs should make great emphasis on digital literacy, communication and teamwork, critical thinking to ensure that graduates are well prepared for the labour market.

Employers should consider creating graduate trainee programs and entry level programs rather than requiring expansive prior experience for roles intended for new graduates.

The Government should create an enabling job for the private sector growth, entrepreneurship and investment in productive sectors. The aim should not be creating more jobs but a stable and sustainable employment.

Conclusion

Education and employment are two foundation for individuals and economic development. Education provides individual with skills and knowledge that can improve their productivity and prepare them for the labour market, while employment provides a pathway through which skills can be used to generate income and contribute to economic development. However this study has specified that the relationship between employment and education is not always straightforward. The presence of educational qualifications does not equally translate to employment. Rather a

significant gap can occur when the knowledge and skills obtained through educational institutions do not correspond with requirements of the labour market. The education labour market mismatch has become an important challenge to youth employment, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. The discussion has indicated that youth employment is not only a Nigeria concern but also a global development issue. Young people across the world experience complications when transitioning from education to employment, however Africa occupies an extremely important position in this discussion because of its fast growing and youthful population. The continent's large youths population embodies both a challenge and an opportunity. While the rising number of young people puts increasing tension on education systems and labour markets to provide pertinent skills and sufficient employment opportunities, it also equips Africa with a useful human resource for economic development. To be able to achieve this possibility depends primarily on African economies to develop productive employment and assure that young people acquire skills that are relevant to adjusting labour market demands. Within this expansive African context Nigeria occupies a strategic position because of its large population, significant youth population. This study has indicated that Nigerian youth unemployment challenges is beyond the absence of jobs. Young people experience, underemployment, unemployment, informal employment and problems in securing job that do not align with their qualifications. Hence, some graduates are compelled to accept jobs outside their course of study while others remain unemployed or involved in informal jobs or are underpaid. This situation shows that access to education alone is not enough to eradicate youth employment challenges, there should also be an effective relationship between what education institutions provide and what the labour market requires. One of the major issues identified in this study is the skills gap between graduates and employers expectations. Educational institutions provide young people with knowledge and academic qualifications while employers increasingly require for practical, digital, communication capacities. Graduates may have formal qualifications

without having the skills required to qualify for available jobs. The issue is not lack of education but the relevance and application of the education obtained. Inadequate skills acquisition training, lack of career guidance and counseling, disconnection between educational curricula and the Labour market requirements all contribute to these challenges. The human capital theory provides a significant explanation for this situation. The theory emphasizes on training as investments that emphasize on education and training. As investments that improve an individual knowledge skills and productivity. From this viewpoint, incredible investment in education should improve employment opportunities and economic growth, however due to the findings of this study it implies that the expected benefits of education can be depleted. When education outcomes don't align with labour market requirements. Hence the significance of human capital does not only depend on the amount of education acquired but also on if the knowledge and skills can be effectively utilized with the economy. The dual labour market therefore reinforces the explanation of youth employment challenges by underlining the unequal structure of employment opportunities. The theory differentiates between primary labour market, characterized by stable employments, paid jobs, job security while secondary labour market is where employment is mostly low paid and insecure jobs. In Nigeria context, the existence of an extensive informal sector implies that young people may acquire employment without attaining sustainable employment.

Similarly, young people, possess educational qualifications, structural conditions within the labour market may limit their ability to access quality employments. The combination of human capital theory and dual labour market theory thus demonstrate that youth employment outcomes are impacted by both the skills individual possesses and the structure and quality opportunities available to them.

The study consequently discovers that addressing education labour market mismatch requires an extensive strategy rather than a single intervention educational institutions need to ensure that curricula respond more actively to recent and emerging labour market demands

substantial partnerships between educational institutions, industries, organizations can provide students practical skills and readiness for work requirements. While career guidance can also help students in selecting careers that can be of relevance to them while applying for jobs also government and private sector should address the shortage of job opportunities by endorsing productive investments, entrepreneurship and sectors capable of developing sustainable jobs. Eventually, the study finalizes that youth employment challenge cannot be sufficiently addressed by increasing educational achievement or creating more employment opportunities. What is needed is a substantial connection between educations, skills, employment. Young people need education that prepares them with relevant skills and competencies, while the economy needs to provide enough opportunities so that the competencies can be productively utilized. Improving this alignment will not only improve the transition from education to employment but it will also reduce the rate of unemployment, underemployment and waste of human capital.

Effectively incorporating Nigeria's growing youth population into a significant driver of economic development can transform the country's demographic strength into a significant driver of economic growth. Thus reducing education labour market mismatch should remain an important emphasis in Nigeria's effort to achieve sustainable youth employment and economic growth.

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